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Transacting and Negotiating Through Translanguaging in Bilingual Economic Contexts: Non-Observance of Linguistic Repertoire in Mtukudzi's 'Madam Let's Talk'

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Abstract—Translanguaging has always existed as a communication-facilitating practice in bilingual and multilingual contexts where speakers have different first languages (L1) but are not proficient in each other's language. The discussion focuses on a critical discourse analysis of the concept of translanguaging in practical language use, as reflected in Oliver Mtukudzi's song 'Madam Let's Talk'. Translanguaging has become a popular topic in the study of language practices in multilingual educational contexts, but critical discourse analysis of translanguaging outside the classroom is rare. In Mtukudzi's song, the message is encoded in English, yet the primary voice conveying the message predominantly uses the Shona language. The emerging language stemming from translanguaging is different from the 'named languages' involved in the message, which are Shona and English. A critical discourse analysis of Mtukudzi's song reveals that, in bilingual contexts when negotiating business, the customer's language takes precedence. Even if the seller is not so proficient in the prospective buyer's language, translanguaging is employed as a strategy for scaffolding communication. The translanguaging in Mtukudzi's song reflects the power dynamics arising from the economic standing of participants in a conversation taking within a bilingual context. The contextual use of English and Shona in the song also demonstrates that the coexistence of languages does not imply status. The language spoken as L1 by those with higher social and economic standing will occupy a more prestigious position.

Index Terms—emerging language, multilingual context, named languages, Shona-English bilingual, translanguaging

I. INTRODUCTION

Studies about translanguaging have mostly been theoretical, focusing particularly on proposed and envisioned language practices in multilingual and bilingual educational contexts. It has been noted that although translanguaging has evolved as a pedagogic strategy, it has long been a common communication practice in bilingual and multilingual contexts around the world (Too, 2023). Translanguaging is now recommended as one of the best instructional strategies to be adopted in bilingual and multilingual educational contexts. However, this paper diverges from antecedent studies in two ways. Firstly, it does not view translanguaging as a theory but as a practice by a bilingual speaker in a real-life practical communication situation. Secondly, the study examines how a bilingual speaker conveys a message to someone who uses a different language, with this language practice being performed in a song. The ideas advanced are hinged on a critical discourse analysis of translanguaging in Oliver Mtukudzi's song, 'Madam Let's Talk'. To understand the application of translanguaging in Oliver Mtukudzi's song, critical discourse analysis is used as both a theoretical framework and a methodology. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a mode of inquiry where both theory and methodology are linked (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010; Fairclough et al., 2011). Applying CDA to study translanguaging in the context of its practical functionality will help in understanding this language practice beyond its general perception as a pedagogic theory.

It has been observed that communication between human beings will always take place even if they do not share the same language. Communication is part of human life and because language is not biologically inherited like other instincts such as crying and laughing, translanguaging would emerge as a new language practice where people do not share a common language. Garcia and Wei (2014) note that translanguaging does not entail "two separate languages, nor to a synthesis of different language practices, nor to a hybrid mixture" (p. 40), but rather "new language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories" (Makoe, 2018, p. 17). On the other hand, Canagarajah (2011) argues that it is "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system" (p. 40). A detailed discussion on translanguaging is contained in the next section.

Works of art, particularly music, reflect societies in a dual way, that is, through the message conveyed in the song and the reflection of language practices within a society. English, an ex-colonial language in Zimbabwe, has become a

language of wider communication, encompassing a broad range of formal sectors such as commerce, education, the judiciary and the media. English is the second language (L2) for the majority of Zimbabweans. The first language (L1) speakers of English in Zimbabwe are associated with wealth and prestige, and the majority of these individuals are of European descent, commonly referred to as ‘whites’. The vendors target the L1 speakers of English when they sell their goods along the pavements outside the shops in the central business district. When the L2 speakers are selling their goods to the L1 speakers of English, they have no choice but to use English to ensure that they are understood by their customers. It is a common view among Zimbabweans that vendors are individuals who did not perform well in school and the occupation is seen as a last resort. This implies that most vendors are not so proficient in English as their L2, and this study aims to analyse how they communicate. In the song, ‘Madam Let’s Talk’, Oliver Mtukudzi adopts the persona of a Shona-speaking woman who sells home-made fabric. This woman is soliciting a purchase from a ‘white’ lady. The paper thus conducts a critical discourse analysis of the language used by this female vendor character created by Mtukudzi.

II. TRANSLANGUAGING IN EDUCATION AND IN GENERAL DISCOURSES

Research on translanguaging has primarily concentrated on language use in educational settings, with relatively little attention paid to everyday, general discourse. While translanguaging has been viewed as a language practice, it has also been conceptualised as a theory aimed at enhancing teaching and learning in multilingual contexts. Other researchers have viewed translanguaging as an instructional strategy that can enhance learners’ performance and appreciation of subjects like science and mathematics among English L2 speakers. Studies exploring translanguaging as an instructional approach in education have often been overly theoretical, with limited focus on the actual language practices in favour of conceptualised ones. This paper, however, focuses on the concrete practice of translanguaging in everyday speech, utilising Oliver Mtukudzi’s song ‘Madam Let’s Talk’ as a case study. According to Poza (2017), translanguaging is not new, even though the dramatic popularisation of the term is recent. Ideas of translanguaging as a language practice have long been studied and documented, particularly in the context of social life where societal multilingualism is more common (Poza, 2017). The arguments advanced in the paper are guided by Poza’s observation that translanguaging is a practice that is utilised in everyday social life in multilingual contexts.

Translanguaging is conceptualised as both a pedagogical approach to supporting multilingual learners and a critical lens through which to challenge traditional, monolingual perspectives that have marginalised specific language communities (Garcia, 2009). Translanguaging is a bilingual or multilingual approach that focuses on the dynamic practices of language users rather than on individual languages as discrete entities (Poza, 2017). Translanguaging allows bi/multilinguals to converse freely between named languages with the goal of meeting their communicative needs (Adhikari & Proudell, 2023). Perspectives about translanguaging challenge entrenched ideologies that prioritise monolingualism and the native speaker model in human communication (Cook, 1999; Grosjean, 2010). Translanguaging encompasses the full spectrum of linguistic behaviours employed by multilingual speakers, extending beyond structural combinations, code-switching, information exchange, to encompass the construction of identity, values, and social relationships (Wei, 2011). Given translanguaging’s capacity to enable bilinguals or multilinguals to shuttle fluidly between named languages, it is essential to examine how the Shona L1 speaker in Oliver Mtukudzi’s song conveys the message in English, her L2 where proficiency is limited.

Translanguaging is a dynamic process whereby individuals harness their linguistic repertoire to construct meaning, shape experiences, and acquire knowledge across languages (Baker, 2011). It involves the seamless integration of multiple languages to facilitate cognitive processes such as comprehension, expression, literacy, and learning (Lewis et al., 2012). This systematic combination of languages within a communicative context (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011) challenges traditional views of bilingualism as separate linguistic systems. Translanguaging recognises the bilingual as a competent language user who strategically selects from a unified linguistic repertoire to achieve communicative goals. Rather than focusing on monolingual norms, translanguaging centres on the actual language practices of bilingual individuals described as ‘named languages’ (Celic & Seltzer, 2011). Translanguaging challenges the idea that a bilingual thinks in a named language because bilinguals develop as agentive members through their experience with languages that they are exposed to (Carvajal-Redigor & Mortenson, 2023). However, contrary to Carvajal-Redigor and Mortenson (2023), the analysis of discursive practices in Mtukudzi’s work will demonstrate that the speaker is thinking in Shona, their L1, while communicating in English, their L2. This paper emphasises that translanguaging, before its formal adoption as a pedagogical strategy, has always been a fundamental tool for scaffolding communication in bilingual and multilingual practical language contexts. As a language practice, translanguaging reconceptualises bilingualism as a dynamic process, challenging the notion of separate, autonomous language systems. It emphasises the flexible and creative ways bilingual individuals select and deploy linguistic resources to communicate effectively (Velasco & Garcia, 2014, p. 7).

Translanguaging is distinct from structural linguistic concepts such as code-switching, code-mixing, crossing, or hybridisation, which involve the combination of closed linguistic systems to produce a new ‘hybrid’ language (Mazzaferro, 2018). Unlike code-switching, which focuses on strategic alternation between discrete languages based on contextual factors, translanguaging emphasises the creative and generative use of a single, unified linguistic repertoire (Wei, 2011). In contrast to the concept of code-switching as the movement between separate languages (Hornberger &

Link, 2012), translanguaging transcends linguistic boundaries, focusing on the dynamic language practices of individuals. Garcia (2009) says that translanguaging contains but goes beyond code-switching. Translanguaging is not going between linguistic systems but transcending them (Mazzaferro, 2018). While some scholars advocate for a paradigm shift that recognizes and normalises the diverse language practices of multilinguals, challenging monolingual ideologies, others have interpreted translanguaging as simply a repackaging of the concept of code-switching (Poza, 2017). However, it is clear from the preceding definitions that code-switching cannot be purely equated to translanguaging.

The bulk of research on translanguaging is focussed on education. Creese and Blackledge (2010) argue that monolingual instructional approaches in educating bilingual children should be repudiated for the adoption of bilingual instructional strategies in the form of translanguaging. Creese and Blackledge (2010) raised this argument when they were describing a flexible instruction in Chinese and Gujarati community language schools in the United Kingdom. Palmer et al. (2014) explored approaches to teaching in a bilingual context in Texas and concluded that by adopting translanguaging, teachers move towards using students' bilingual language practices as a resource for academic instruction. Sayer (2013) concluded that the teachers' adoption of a flexible bilingual pedagogy allows for translanguaging in the classroom not only as way of making sense of content and learning language, but also as a legitimised means of performing desired identities. Sayer's (2013) perspective is informed by a study examining how bilingual teachers and children utilised their home language to mediate academic content and standard languages among second-grade learners in a well-established Mexican American community in San Antonio. Similarly, Caldas (2019) examined the language ideology shifts of 20 Mexican American preservice bilingual teachers within a translanguaging space where all the research participants agreed that there were cognitive benefits in using this approach.

Liu (2020) examined the processes and patterning of translanguaging and trans-semiotising in facilitating Content and Integrated Language Learning (CLIL) in Cantonese-English bilingual classroom contexts. Liu (2020) suggested that translanguaging should be incorporated in multilingual CLIL classrooms as planned systematic scaffolding. Sun and Lan (2020) revealed that translanguaging goes beyond just speaking and can also be noticed in writing. They argued that translanguaging has significant influence on writing and pedagogy. Cenoz and Gorter (2020) argue that isolating languages within academic instruction can be detrimental, as it hinders students from leveraging linguistic resources acquired across different languages.

Research on translanguaging in education has mainly focused on language teaching more than on subject content. Makalela (2015) investigated the efficacy of alternating input and output languages within the same lessons to offset linguistic fixity prevalent in monolingual classrooms. The study findings revealed that multilingual learners derive cognitive and social benefits from employing multiple languages in classroom settings. Wildsmith-Cromarty (2018) investigated the impact of employing both isiZulu and English as languages of instruction on the learning and performance of third-year BA students pursuing a language teaching career in a course focused on teaching isiZulu as an additional language. The findings revealed that what began as planned and systematic code-switching ended up becoming translanguaging (Wildsmith-Cromarty, 2018). Mbiriri-Hungwe and Hungwe (2018) investigated translanguaging practices in a second-year computer science class at a South African university. Their findings revealed that students perceived translanguaging as a valuable learning tool and recommended its broader adoption across the faculty.

Ngcobo (2018) reported on a study that aimed to enhance summary writing abilities among first-year students by leveraging their L1 and L2, informed by translanguaging theory. Nhongo and Tshotsho (2019) advocated for translanguaging as a valuable instructional method in science and mathematics education, emphasising it as a complementary approach rather than a replacement for English with African languages. Hungwe (2019) demonstrated how paraphrasing can be integrated with a translingual approach to explicitly teach students reading and comprehension skills. The study findings offered insights into utilizing translanguaging to facilitate multilingual students' text comprehension through paraphrasing (Hungwe, 2019). The extant literature reveals a predominant focus on translanguaging within educational contexts. This study departs from this trend by examining the practical application of translanguaging in everyday speech, as exemplified by Oliver Mtukudzi's music. By analysing translanguaging as a discourse practice in communicative situations, this paper aims to contrast it with the often idealized and theorized representations of language use in bilingual educational settings.

A growing number of researchers have expanded the scope of translanguaging beyond its traditional focus as a pedagogical strategy in multilingual contexts. These scholars have demonstrated the applicability of translanguaging to everyday discourse, trade, and various domains of popular culture. Wei (2018) observes that translanguaging has been employed across pedagogy, everyday social interactions, cross-modal and multimodal communication, linguistic landscapes, visual arts, music, and transgender discourse. Mazzaferro (2018) characterises translanguaging as a practice or activity involving the strategic deployment of linguistic and semiotic resources in everyday life. Sibanda (2020) examined language use within two Zimbabwean theatre groups, critically analysing the political, social, ideological, and cultural meanings embedded in their theatrical language. The performances challenged and redefined the dominance of English and Shona through code-switching, translanguaging, and language mixing. Wei (2016) investigated the language practices of Chinese English users, concluding that the emergent language exhibited characteristics of both English and Chinese, warranting the label *Chinglish*.

Makalela (2013) examined the linguistic practices of Black township residents who identify with *kasi-taal*, a hybrid urban language variety from Johannesburg. The study found that traditional linguistic boundaries between indigenous African languages have been redefined to accommodate new expressions of identity. This linguistic expansion is facilitated by shared linguistic substrates, lexical borrowing, semantic shifts, and morphological adaptations from Afrikaans and English. Employing a translanguaging framework, Makalela (2013) argues that *kasi-taal* challenges conventional language categorisations and offers potential pathways for the convergence of African languages. While Makalela's research diverged from the typical focus on translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy, the study participants were still situated within an educational context as second-year university students. Given the paucity of research on translanguaging outside of educational settings, this study adopts a novel approach by examining translanguaging in the discourse of Shona-English bilingual vendors.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study employs critical discourse analysis within a broader qualitative research design. This study identifies and analyses instances of translanguaging in Oliver Mtukudzi's song, 'Madam Let's Talk', through the lens of critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA is a "problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods and agenda" (Fairclough et al., 2011, p. 357). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a qualitative research approach that examines how language is used to construct, maintain, and legitimise social inequalities (Mullet, 2018). The speaker in the song demonstrates limited conversational and negotiating power, highlighting the importance of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in examining the intricacies of translanguaging within Mtukudzi's lyrics. It is important to note that CDA generally argues that social practice and linguistic practice are dependent on one another as they seek to establish how societal power relations are exhibited through language use. This study employs CDA to illustrate how translanguaging is influenced by the power dynamics between English L2-speaking vendors and English L1-speaking potential buyers. CDA is a mode of inquiry where theory and methodology are inherently linked to one another (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010). According to Fairclough (2005), CDA focuses on four aspects of research which are the emergence, hegemony, recontextualisation, and operationalisation of discourses.

CDA assumes that language use is intentional, whether consciously or unconsciously driven (Mullet, 2018). The aim of the paper is to demonstrate that a unique type of discourse emerges through an 'unnamed language' that emerges through translanguaging as a Shona-English bilingual, who is not so proficient in English, is communicating with an English L1 speaker. Hegemony, a central concept in CDA, is evident in the vendor's strategic language choice, targeting the customer's L1 (English) despite the vendor's own L1 being Shona. This linguistic accommodation reflects the power imbalance between the two parties. The resulting discourse is a unique hybrid, recontextualised through translanguaging and defying traditional linguistic norms. This 'unnamed language' becomes a shared communicative tool for both Shona-speaking vendors and English-speaking customers within the vending context. While Mtukudzi's song provides a specific example, it can be generalised to represent the linguistic practices of many Shona-English bilingual vendors with limited English proficiency.

IV. A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TRANSLANGUAGING IN MTUKUDZI'S SONG

Oliver Mtukudzi's song, 'Madam Let's Talk', from the album *Tsivo* was released in 2003. The renowned Zimbabwean singer, who passed away in 2019 at the age of 66, gained international acclaim for his music. In the song, Oliver Mtukudzi adopts the persona of a woman who sells home-made fabric. The home-made fabric is called *dhoini* in Shona, an indigenous language with the highest number of speakers in Zimbabwe. These home-made fabrics are used as tablecloth, bed linen, seat covers, for decorating in the house and as place mats. They are made from knitting thread and making them requires artistic skills. In Oliver Mtukudzi's song, a female vendor persuades a 'white' lady to purchase her homemade fabrics. While the theme in Oliver Mtukudzi's song is about a woman who is a vendor and is selling home-made fabric, the most interesting feature of the song is in language use. The vendor is an L1 Shona speaker but is using English, her L2 in trying to persuade an L1 speaker of English to buy her products. Given musicians' role as societal observers, this linguistic practice is generalised in this paper to represent the language use of Shona-speaking vendors interacting with English-speaking customers. The full text song is attached at the end of this paper as an appendix.

A critical discourse analysis of Oliver Mtukudzi's song, 'Madam Let's Talk', reveals translanguaging as a novel discourse form emerging from imbalanced power dynamics between the vendor and the customer during negotiation. The imbalanced power dynamic in the negotiation, with the customer holding greater conversational power due to higher socioeconomic status, compels the vendor to resort to English, their second language. Despite limited proficiency in the customer's language, the vendor is compelled to adopt a translanguaging approach, incorporating elements of the customer's L1. This linguistic strategy, as defined by Wei (2018), enables language users to bridge social divides previously maintained by distinct linguistic practices. While the customer and vendor possess distinct first languages, the vendor employs English, the customer's first language, in their interaction. Due to the vendor's limited English proficiency, the resulting discourse is infused with Shona conversational norms. Consequently, an L1

Shona speaker without English knowledge and an L1 English speaker unfamiliar with the sociolinguistic context would find the vendor's language incomprehensible. The song begins with the lyrics:

Imi 'Madam Let's Talk' (Your honour 'Madam Let's Talk')
Madam come let's talk

The language that emerges as the song begins cannot be said to be Shona or English but an 'unnamed language' that has come in to facilitate communication between two people who have different first languages. '*Imi*' in Shona is a plural pronoun for 'you,' and is used as a sign of respect to honour the addressee. This pronoun '*imi*' is used when referring to many people but is also used as an honorific pronoun when referring to one person. English employs a single pronoun, 'you,' for both singular and plural second-person references, whereas Shona necessitates specific pronouns to differentiate between singular and plural individuals. In Shona, the pronoun '*imi*' must precede the proper name as a sign of showing respect or honour to a person being addressed. As a sign of respect or honour the pronoun '*imi*' in Shona is used over and above the proper name, a practice which is uncommon in English. When this language practice is imported into English through code-mixing as part of translanguaging then a new language emerges. The pronoun '*imi*' ('you' in plural) when used as a sign of respect represents 'your honour' in English. In this discourse the customer is being respected because she is likely to give business to the vendor. Although the vendor is persuading the customer to buy, she is saying 'Madam come let's talk' as if the client is the one who should go to the vendor. From a Shona perspective, the language that is used when one is negotiating the price would be 'come let's talk', which does not necessarily entail that the customer has to go to the vendor, as would be interpreted in English, but it means that the price is open for negotiation. However, when this utterance is interpreted in English, it would not carry the same meaning that a Shona L1 speaker would have intended to convey.

There are several instances that reflect the emergence of an 'unnamed language' with regards to the semantics of the contents of the song. The vendor says, '*You come down me up*' meaning that, 'if my price is too high for you, I am prepared to reduce if you suggest the figure that you are comfortable with'. The vendor's speech exhibits characteristics of both English and Shona, suggesting the emergence of a hybrid language, akin to *Shonglish*. This phenomenon parallels Wei's (2016) observation of *New Chinglish* as a product of translanguaging among Chinese English speakers. Wei (2016) argues that this new form of English in China possesses unique Chinese characteristics and fulfils a range of communicative, social, and political functions. In Zimbabwe, *Shonglish* is a variety of English that carries characteristics of Shona semantics and is used for trade and other communicative purposes between Shona L1 speakers and English L1 speakers. Other cases of the emergence of a new language in the song appear as follows:

You see madam I come far (Look madam I came from a far-away place)
Come far have Child I come from afar and I have a child
Me have child one two I have two children
One two three four child I have four children
My child no go school I no longer afford to send my children to school
No go school no food My children are not going to school, they have no food).

Because the vendor is speaking English in Shona, all the words used in these utterances are in English but spoken from a Shona perspective. A first language speaker of English who is not conversant with the Zimbabwean linguistic context would hardly understand the meaning conveyed through *Shonalised* English.

Other cases indicating the emergence of a new language, *Shonglish*, are as follows:

So madam buy my dhoiri (Please madam buy these *dhoiri*)
Buy my nice dhoiri Buy these nice *dhoiri*
If you cry I cut you half If you want to bargain I will halve the price
Cut you half napakati I will halve the price for you)

The most interesting part from this excerpt is in the third line '*If you cry I cut you half*'. To a native speaker of English, this statement sounds like a message of warning to a person on whom violence is being unleashed, that is, if he/she makes noise he/she would be cut into two pieces. The speaker is taking the idea from Shona and literally putting it in English. In Shona to bargain is '*kuchema*' which is a homonym of 'cry'. Homonyms are words that are spelled and sound the same but have different meanings. This linguistic overlap, or homophony, allows the vendor to transfer the concept of bargaining from Shona into English, using 'cry' as a substitute. As 'cry' is a more familiar word than 'bargain' for a Shona speaker with limited English proficiency, it becomes the preferred choice. Such a statement would not make sense to an L1 speaker of English unless in cases where there exists mutually exclusive understanding between the two participants in a conversation. There are also cases of code-mixing in these utterances which makes the emerging languaging become even more *Shonglish*. It is important to note that while code-mixing is a component of translanguaging, it does not encompass the full breadth of the concept, as Mazzaferro (2018) argues. Cenoz and Gorter (2011) confirm that translanguaging refers to the combination of two or more languages in a systematic way within utterances. Although I refer to the emerging language as *Shonglish*, it is, however, unnamed since there is no language with such a name. Garcia (2007) posits that since language is a human creation, our linguistic practices should be grounded in real-world language use rather than predefined language categories.

The adage "customer is king" often drives vendors to adopt the customer's language. However, when language proficiency is limited, translanguaging emerges as a communicative strategy. In Oliver Mtukudzi's song, the vendor's

efforts to use English highlight the linguistic dominance associated with wealth and power. The expectation of mutual intelligibility compels those seeking economic benefit to accommodate the language of the affluent. Interestingly, while the song employs English lexicon, the underlying meaning remains deeply rooted in Shona cultural context. The vendor's linguistic choices underscore the hegemonic position of English as the customer's L1 over Shona, the vendor's L1. The repeated use of the word 'madam' reflects the power that is embedded within the customer's language. The following excerpts from the song justify this observation:

Imi 'Madam Let's Talk' (Your honour 'Madam Let's Talk')
 'Madam Let's Talk'
Madam come let's talk
You see madam I come far (Look madam I came from a far-away place)

From a Shona perspective the word 'madam' is used as an honorific address term which implies that the vendor is looking up to the 'white' lady who is a prospective buyer of her products. There is also duplication of honorific address in the utterance where this vendor is saying '*imi* madam...' because '*imi*' a Shona word is an honorific address term. In cases where it is not used as an honorific term, '*imi*' is used as a plural pronoun to refer to many people. Honour is expressed using '*imi*' when addressing one person because this word is normally used when addressing two or more people. In the Shona context, the term 'madam' is a marker of high respect for women. When combined with *imi*, the level of deference is intensified. While translanguaging is often framed as a social justice tool, this Shona-English bilingual vendor's speech reveals English as the dominant lexical element in the emerging language. Despite her primary language being Shona, and limited English proficiency, the vendor's utterances are primarily in English. This suggests a cognitive process where Shona thought is translated into English speech, resulting in a unique linguistic hybrid characterised by English syntax and Shona semantics. Wei (2018) notes that translanguaging goes beyond simply shuttling between linguistic structures, cognitive and modalities.

The linguistic practices employed in the vending context, as exemplified in 'Madam Let's Talk', diverge from standard language use in other domains. The vendor's speech constitutes a unique linguistic repertoire characteristic of Shona-English bilinguals engaged in translanguaging within the vending discourse. This language can only be understood in the context of vending and not in any other context as in the following words:

Madam come let's talk
You come down, me up
If you cry I cut you half

The vendor's utterance of 'come' does not necessarily indicate a physical request for proximity but rather a solicitation for the customer's attention as a prelude to negotiation. The phrase '*Madam come let's talk*' might be perceived as impolite in standard English, but within this context, it is a respectful address. The term 'madam' has undergone a significant recontextualisation, originating from the *Fanigalo* pidgin of South Africa and Zimbabwe, where it was historically used by domestic workers to address their white employers. *Fanigalo* is a pidgin that emerged as a language that was used for communication between domestic workers and their employers. The word 'madam' has expanded in its semantic field to refer to 'white' women by vendors in Zimbabwe. In the language of the vendors, when the word 'talk' is directed to their customers, it does not merely refer to engaging in a conversation but in this context, it specifically means 'negotiating the price'. Translanguaging creates a social space where individuals integrate diverse elements of their personal and social identities into a cohesive and meaningful performance. This includes their life experiences, beliefs, knowledge, and physical context (Wei, 2018). The social space in this case is created through translanguaging where the language being used can only be understood in the context of vending in a bilingual situation.

In the context of vending, as reflected in Oliver Mtshali's song, when the vendor is saying 'You come down, me up' she is not literally saying that if the customer is asking for a lower price, she will raise the price but is saying that if the price is higher, she is prepared to reduce it. In this context again, when she is saying 'If you cry I cut you half', she is not saying that if the customer literally cries then she will fight her but she is saying that if the customer wants to bargain then she is prepared to reduce the price by a certain percentage. The language used in the song can only be understood in the context of vending by the Shona L1 speakers and those English L1 speakers who share the same linguistic ecology with the Shona. Language use in such contexts comes through creativity as Wei (2018) says that contacts between people of diverse linguistic backgrounds and traditions provide new opportunities for innovation and creativity as they engage in conversations. The creativity that the language users come up with in such contexts where they will be facilitating communication comes through the process of translanguaging. Over time, participants in this discourse become accustomed to these linguistic practices, fostering mutual comprehension.

As time progresses, the vendors' language becomes a functional mode of communication within this specific discourse community. While the emerging language may incorporate lexical items from the dominant language, the meanings conveyed by these expressions can diverge from their original interpretations. The very creation of this language in response to multilingual communicative needs underscores the inadequacy of traditional language classifications in capturing the linguistic complexities of the 21st century. Translanguaging acknowledges that language is neither fixed nor neutral but is "instead heteroglossic, an ongoing process existing in context and shaped by complex histories of use" (Carvajal-Redigor & Mortenson, 2023, p. 137). The whole idea of a language is to facilitate communication and therefore, sticking to 'named languages' or standard languages in bilingual or multilingual settings

defeat the whole purpose of a language. It is therefore important to emphasise that “translanguaging offers a way through which the creation and recreation of linguistic normalcy may be disrupted and reimagined, as it highlights the construction of speakers interrelated and complex discursive uses and practices that may not necessarily be categorized under the traditional definition of language” (Carvajal-Redigor & Mortenson, 2023, p. 136). The language that is used in Oliver Mtukudzi’s song proves that the most important feature about a language is to operationalise it so that it can facilitate communication in diverse ways between speakers with different first languages. Language classification has been a sociopolitical tool used to control linguistic diversity, excluding mixed language practices and other forms of language use prevalent in multilingual contexts (Poza, 2017). The interesting feature of the language reflected in Oliver Mtukudzi’s song is that it cannot be understood from the perspective of English as a strictly ‘named language’ and even an L2 English speaker who adheres to the strict rules of English would not understand the messages that are being conveyed. Translanguaging is a communicative approach that leverages humans’ ability to access and utilise multiple linguistic and non-linguistic resources flexibly and synergistically to create meaning (Blackledge et al., 2017). Mtukudzi’s song is inspired by his observation that Shona-speaking vendors engage in translanguaging, incorporating elements of both Shona and Ndebele to communicate with their English-speaking customers.

V. CONCLUSION

The translanguaging practice depicted in Oliver Mtukudzi’s song mirrors the power dynamics in an economic asymmetric set-up within a bilingual context. This linguistic phenomenon reflects a hegemonic relationship where English, the dominant language, serves as the lexical source while meaning is derived from the subordinate Shona language. Consequently, translanguaging arising from economic exchanges often exhibits a pattern wherein the language of the economically empowered provides the lexical framework, while the language of the less empowered underpins the semantic content. While traditionally associated with educational settings, research on translanguaging has expanded to encompass diverse contexts of human interaction characterized by bilingualism and multilingualism. Oliver Mtukudzi’s song, ‘Madam Let’s Talk’ exemplifies the adaptability of language in overcoming linguistic barriers. Translanguaging, a practice drawing on all available linguistic resources, generates unique language varieties that defy traditional classification. The ‘unnamed language’ in the song, characterised by English lexical items and Shona semantics, is context-specific and incomprehensible outside its communicative function. As this language emerging through translanguaging becomes normalised, participants develop a shared understanding of its idiosyncratic features.

The fact that an emerging language takes meaning from one language and lexical items from the other, is evidence that while an individual may have two languages that remain separate in the mind, there are instances where these languages interact during speech.

APPENDIX. MTUKUDZI – ‘MADAM LET’S TALK’

Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Madam come let’s talk
 Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Madam come let’s talk
 Iwe neni ngatisangane iyaa
 Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Tasangana titaurarine iya
 Madam come let’s talk
 You come down, me up
 Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Chara chimwe hachitswanye inda
 You see madam I come far
 Come far there have child
 Me have child one two
 One two three four child
 My child no go school
 No go school no food
 Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Madam come let’s talk
 Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Madam come let’s talk
 So madam buy my dhoiri
 Buy my nice dhoiri
 If you cry I cut u half
 Imi ‘Madam Let’s Talk’
 Cut u half napakati

Madam come let's talk
Chara chimwe hachitswanye inda
One finger can't crush lice

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Decoding Linguistic Dynamics: An Analysis of Chetan Bhagat's Select Novels

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Abstract—This paper undertakes a comprehensive examination of Chetan Bhagat's prominent novels through the lens of literary analysis, focusing on the intricate interplay of language dynamics within his narrative framework. Drawing upon a variety of theoretical frameworks and methodologies, particularly those rooted in linguistic analysis, the study seeks to decode the nuanced linguistic elements embedded within Bhagat's select literary works. Through a meticulous exploration of themes, character interactions, and narrative structures, this analysis endeavors to unravel the deeper implications of linguistic choices and their impact on the overall reading experience. By shedding light on the linguistic dynamics at play, this study contributes to a richer understanding of Bhagat's novels and their significance within contemporary literary discourse. Furthermore, this study endeavors to explore the intersection of language and society in Bhagat's works, examining how linguistic representations mirror and influence cultural norms, values, and identities. Through an interdisciplinary lens, we draw upon insights from sociolinguistics, cultural studies, and literary theory to elucidate the ways in which language operates as a vehicle for social commentary and critique within Bhagat's fictional universe. Ultimately, this paper seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of Chetan Bhagat's literary oeuvre by foregrounding the significance of linguistic dynamics in shaping the reading experience. By unraveling the complexities of language within his narratives, we aim to illuminate the enduring appeal and cultural relevance of Bhagat's novels within the landscape of contemporary Indian literature.

Index Terms—language dynamics, linguistic elements, narrative structure, character interactions, literary discourse

I. INTRODUCTION

Chetan Bhagat stands as a prominent figure in contemporary Indian literature, celebrated for his engaging storytelling and insightful exploration of societal themes. Through a series of bestselling novels, Bhagat has captivated readers with narratives that resonate deeply with the complexities of modern Indian life (Anu & Deepa, 2024). Central to his literary prowess lies not only his adept storytelling but also the intricate linguistic dynamics that underpin his narrative framework. In this paper, we embark on a journey to delve into the depths of Bhagat's literary world, employing a rigorous literary analysis to uncover the layers of linguistic complexity within his select novels.

Bhagat's novels serve as a fertile ground for linguistic exploration, characterized by a rich tapestry of dialogue, narration, and internal monologue. By closely examining the linguistic elements woven throughout his works, we aim to decode the underlying mechanisms that shape the reader's interpretation and engagement with the text. From the choice of words and idiomatic expressions to the syntactic structures employed, every linguistic facet contributes to the construction of meaning and the portrayal of characters and themes (Vimal & Pillai, 2024).

At the heart of our analysis lies the concept of narrative structure, which serves as the scaffolding upon which Bhagat's stories unfold. Through a meticulous examination of plot development, character interactions, and thematic progression, we seek to unravel the intricate web of linguistic choices that imbue Bhagat's narratives with depth and resonance. By interrogating the nuances of language within the context of each novel's unique narrative landscape, we aim to shed light on the broader implications of linguistic dynamics in shaping literary experiences.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (a). To analyze the linguistic elements present in Chetan Bhagat's select novels, including dialogue, narration, and internal monologue.
- (b). To examine the narrative structure employed by Bhagat, focusing on plot development, character interactions, and thematic progression, and how linguistic choices contribute to these elements.
- (c). To explore the implications of linguistic dynamics on reader interpretation and engagement with Bhagat's novels.
- (d). To investigate the intersection of language and society within Bhagat's works, considering how linguistic representations reflect and influence cultural norms, values, and identities.

(e). To contribute to a deeper understanding of Chetan Bhagat's literary contributions by highlighting the significance of linguistic analysis in unpacking the complexities of his narratives.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chetan Bhagat's novels have garnered significant attention both within and beyond the literary sphere, captivating readers with their relatable characters, engaging plots, and incisive commentary on contemporary Indian society. Scholars and critics alike have explored various facets of Bhagat's literary works, with a particular focus on their cultural significance, thematic depth, and narrative techniques. In this literature review, we examine key scholarly contributions that shed light on the linguistic dynamics present in Bhagat's novels and their implications for literary analysis and interpretation.

One prominent aspect of Bhagat's novels that has garnered scholarly attention is the use of language as a tool for social critique and cultural representation. Datta has explored how Bhagat's linguistic choices reflect the nuances of Indian society, including the complexities of class, gender, and regional identity. Through detailed textual analysis, these studies elucidate how Bhagat employs language to construct vivid portrayals of characters and settings that resonate with readers from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds (Datta, 2011).

Furthermore, researchers have delved into the narrative structure of Bhagat's novels and its relationship to linguistic dynamics. Singh's work on narrative techniques in contemporary Indian fiction provides valuable insights into Bhagat's use of dialogue and narration to drive plot development and characterize (Singh, 2017). Similarly, Kundan's examination of language and narrative in Indian popular fiction offers a framework for understanding the interplay between linguistic elements and storytelling strategies in Bhagat's novels (Kundan, 2019).

Additionally, scholars have explored the reception and interpretation of Bhagat's works within the broader context of Indian popular culture. Tripathi's study on the readership of Chetan Bhagat's novels examines the socio-cultural factors that shape audience responses to his writing, highlighting the ways in which linguistic dynamics contribute to reader engagement and identification with Bhagat's characters and themes (Tripathi, 2020).

While existing scholarship provides valuable insights into various aspects of Chetan Bhagat's literary works, there remains a need for further exploration of the linguistic dimensions of his novels and their implications for literary analysis. This study seeks to address this gap by conducting a comprehensive analysis of linguistic dynamics in Bhagat's select novels, with a focus on elucidating their role in shaping narrative structure, character development, and reader interpretation. Through a rigorous examination of textual evidence and engagement with relevant theoretical frameworks, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities of Bhagat's literary oeuvre and its significance within the landscape of contemporary Indian literature.

IV. RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This paper delves into an analysis of selected novels by Chetan Bhagat, utilizing speech act theory as a lens to understand the dynamics of fictional discourse. Central to speech act theory is the concept that speakers perform actions through their utterances, encompassing a spectrum from direct to indirect speech acts. Direct speech acts involve straightforward, explicit communication, such as a direct request for water when feeling thirsty. In contrast, indirect speech acts involve a more nuanced approach, where the listener must interpret the speaker's intended meaning. This interpretation process involves recognizing the illocutionary force behind the utterance, which may entail actions like requesting, promising, suggesting, or complaining.

The cooperative principle, a cornerstone of communication theory, plays a pivotal role in understanding indirect speech acts. It dictates that speakers and listeners engage in communication with the mutual goal of effective understanding. Consequently, when faced with indirect speech acts, listeners must infer the intended meaning based on contextual cues and shared knowledge. For instance, when an exhausted officer remarks to his wife, "Oh! I am completely dehydrated," the cooperative principle guides the wife to interpret the underlying request for water, despite the indirect manner of expression. Moreover, speech acts in fiction extend beyond mere literal utterances to encompass various figures of speech, such as hyperbole, simile, metaphor, irony, sarcasm, euphemism, and anecdotes. These literary devices allow authors to convey meaning indirectly, enriching the narrative and engaging readers on multiple levels. Understanding the interplay between speech acts and literary devices provides valuable insights into character development, plot progression, and thematic exploration within Bhagat's novels.

This paper underscores the significance of speech act theory in analyzing fictional discourse, particularly within the context of Chetan Bhagat's literary works. By examining the spectrum of speech acts, from direct to indirect, and considering their implications for reader interpretation, this study sheds light on the intricate mechanisms through which language shapes narrative meaning and reader engagement in fiction.

In everyday speech, people often employ figures of speech to create vivid imagery and convey meaning. These figures of speech serve various purposes, such as emphasizing, contradicting, reinforcing, or providing visual impact. Common examples include hyperbole, simile, metaphor, irony, sarcasm, and circumlocution.

A. *Hyperbole*

Hyperbole, a figure of speech characterized by exaggeration, is frequently utilized to emphasize a point. In the seventeenth century, the poet Marvell A employed hyperbole in his poem *To His Coy Mistress* to express profound love for his wife, demonstrating its enduring presence in literature. (Marvell, 2015) In contemporary settings, individuals use hyperbole to inject vitality into mundane situations. Abrams M H and Harpham G G define hyperbole as bold overstatement or extravagant exaggeration, employed for serious, ironic, or comic effect (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 169). For instance, Apple's advertisement for the new iPhone claims it is "bigger than bigger," employing hyperbolic language to emphasize its size and allure to consumers.

Consider the following excerpt from *Five Point Someone*, "Who knows? Maybe not, Ryan shrugged, But you can never tell when guys get into mob mentality. Trust me, I have lived in enough boarding schools" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 7). Ryan's actions were enough to unite us like superglue. Besides, we were hostel neighbours and in the same engineering department. They say you shouldn't get into a relationship with people you sleep with on the first date. In this dialogue between Ryan and Hari, set in a college hostel, Ryan's defiance against senior students earns him admiration from his peers. Hari, the narrator, compares their bond to superglue, exaggerating to underscore the strength of their friendship. Just as superglue binds objects physically, their shared experiences and emotions act as an adhesive, keeping them emotionally connected.

Now, let's examine an instance of hyperbole from *One Night @ the Call Center*, "Priyanka took out a few tissues from her bag... needed for survival in Antarctica" (Bhagat, 2005, p. 71). In this passage, the protagonist hyperbolically describes the contents of a woman's handbag, suggesting it could serve as a survival kit for extreme conditions like Antarctica. This exaggeration highlights the perceived abundance of items typically found in women's bags. The aforementioned conversation unfolds between Priyanka and Shyam. When Shyam discovers Priyanka's intention to marry Ganesh, a Non-Resident Indian, he becomes visibly perturbed. Tension mounts, leading Shyam to inadvertently press his hand against the table, causing staple pins to prick his finger. In response, Priyanka offers to tend to his wound, retrieving tissues from her handbag. The author subtly underscores the tendency of women to address and heal injuries, paralleling it with their inclination towards grooming and nurturing.

Shyam's subsequent comparison of women's handbags to survival kits carried by Antarctic expedition crews serves as a vivid exaggeration. While Antarctica mission survival kits are sizable and packed with essentials for extreme conditions, women's handbags lack such comprehensive contents. This hyperbolic assertion underscores the fantastical nature of the comparison, highlighting its lack of realism.

Consider the following example of hyperbole from *Five Point Someone*. "You, Prof. Dubey singled me out as his first target. It was a moment where speech eluded me, limbs seized, veins burst, and perspiration flowed freely" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 9). In this instance, Hari finds himself under the scrutiny of Professor Dubey's piercing gaze as the latter poses a seemingly innocuous question about the definition of a machine. Hari's apprehension stems not only from the pressure of providing a textbook response but also from the stifling academic environment at the Institute. His exaggerated description of physiological responses serves to amplify the perceived intensity of the moment, reflecting the coercive nature of academic expectations.

Another example from the same novel: "Still, I appreciate gallant men," she remarked, rearranging her bag amidst a plethora of possessions... challenging than acing a ManPro quiz" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 45). In this scenario, Hari grapples with deciphering the implications of Priyanka's statement. His exaggerated comparison underscores the complexity of decoding female signals, likening it to the formidable task of excelling in a notoriously difficult quiz.

The depicted exchange unfolds between Neha and Hari, with Neha, the daughter of Professor Chorian, encountering Hari by chance on the IIT campus, sparking a mutual affection. Neha's statement, "I like chivalrous men," (Bhagat, 2004, p. 47) encapsulates various layers of implication, leaving Hari perplexed. The statement could be interpreted in three distinct ways: Neha subtly indicates her fondness for Hari. Neha communicates her preference for chivalrous individuals to Hari. Neha encourages Hari to embody chivalry in his demeanor. Neha's utterance carries implicit meanings, suggesting either a desire for Hari to demonstrate chivalrous behavior or an admiration for someone else's chivalry.

Now, consider the following hyperbolic example from *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, "She checked her phone for any new SMSs... them back on the slice. Finally, she took a bite" (Bhagat, 2008, p. 88). This passage portrays a scene between Govind and Vidya, where Vidya's phone incessantly disrupts their time together, likened hyperbolically to a blaring fire alarm. This exaggeration emphasizes the intrusive nature of the phone's notifications. Additionally, the act of salvaging fallen cheese strands with her fingers underscores a casual disregard for conventional dining etiquette, amplifying the portrayal of the scene's informality and intimacy. Through hyperbole and nuanced dialogue, Chetan Bhagat's narrative vividly captures the complexities of human interactions and relationships in everyday settings.

B. Simile

Simile, a literary device and figure of speech, imbues language with vividness, enriching expressions with apt word imagery. Authors and poets employ similes to convey emotions and ideas through evocative comparisons. One of the most renowned similes appears in Robert Burns' celebrated poem *A Red, Red Rose*, where the speaker likens his beloved to a freshly sprung red rose in June and a melodious tune sweetly played. This simile serves as a literary assertion, emphasizing the beloved's beauty and charm, rather than a literal comparison (Burns, 2000). According to Abrams M H and Harpham G G, a simile is a figure of speech in which a comparison between two distinctly different things is explicitly indicated by the word 'like' or 'as'. For instance, colloquially, people often use similes in daily speech, such as Raghav

is as slow as a snail, drawing a comparison between Raghav's sluggishness and the leisurely pace of a snail. The use of "as" in this example maintains a clear distinction between Raghav and the snail, highlighting the contrast between their speeds (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 133).

Consider the following example of a simile from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, "It is 5.25 runs required per over," (Bhagat, 2008, p. 2). I remarked, unable to resist indulging in a mathematical calculation. That's one aspect of cricket I appreciate—the abundance of mathematics within. You're underestimating this team. If Tendulkar falls, they collapse. It's not about the statistics. It's akin to the queen's demise, and the hive losing its order.

In this excerpt, the character Ishaan employs a simile to elucidate the team's dependency on Tendulkar's performance. By likening it to the disorder in a hive following the queen bee's demise, Ishaan vividly illustrates the team's reliance on Tendulkar's stability and leadership. This simile not only captures the precariousness of the team's situation but also underscores the intricate dynamics of cricket, blending sports with metaphorical depth. The depicted conversation unfolds among Govind, Ishaan, and Omi as they gather to watch a cricket match between India and South Africa at Ishaan's residence. Their profound passion for cricket leads them to venture into the business of selling cricket equipment, reflecting the sport's immense popularity among Indian youths. For many, cricket holds a revered status akin to divinity, prompting Ishaan to indirectly critique this sentiment prevalent among Indians.

During the match, Ishaan metaphorically compares the dynamics of a cricket team to that of a beehive. He likens Tendulkar, a prominent player, to the queen bee, while likening the remaining team members to the other bees in the hive. Employing the word "like," Ishaan crafts a simile, effectively drawing parallels between the two entities. The loss of Tendulkar's wicket symbolizes the demise of the queen bee, precipitating a loss of confidence and subsequent collapse of the team, akin to the disarray within a hive following the queen's demise. This comparison serves to illuminate the profound impact of Tendulkar's presence on the team's cohesion and performance, visually rendering an abstract concept.

Now, consider another example of a simile from the novel *One Night @ the Call Center*, Esha exclaimed, her eyes widening as she fixed her gaze on Priyanka. "I don't know, it just felt right or something," (Bhagat, 2005, p. 54). Priyanka responded, absentmindedly toying with her milk cake instead of consuming it. "They demanded an immediate decision, and I simply said yes" (Bhagat, 2005, p. 54). "Wow! That's incredible!" the girls erupted into ecstatic exclamations at their peak pitch. Meanwhile, the systems guy trembled with apprehension under the table. I assured him that everything was under control, urging him to proceed. Yet, despite the facade of composure, inwardly, I grappled with a searing sensation, akin to the scalding heat of a hot coal lodged in my stomach.

In this excerpt, Priyanka's hesitant admission elicits an enthusiastic response from her friends, contrasting sharply with the systems guy's palpable anxiety. The comparison of Priyanka's internal turmoil to the burning sensation of hot coal vividly captures the intensity of her emotional distress, offering a visceral depiction of her inner turmoil amidst external celebrations. Through this simile, the author imbues the narrative with palpable sensory imagery, heightening the reader's immersion in the characters' experiences. The preceding dialogue unfolds between Priyanka and Shyam amidst the tense atmosphere of a call center, where the team awaits the resolution of a static call issue. While Priyanka joyously announces her engagement to an NRI named Ganesh, Shyam, nursing unrequited feelings for her, masks his inner turmoil with a facade of composure. His admission, likening his emotional turmoil to the sensation of hot coal in his stomach, employs a simile to convey the depth of his discomfort, jealousy, and alienation. This comparison intensifies the sense of his isolation and unfulfilled desires amidst the collective jubilation of others.

Now, consider an example of simile from the novel *Five Point Someone*, "I saw Neha. She had come with her father and sat primly among other faculty families... convocation hall in silence as profound as a tomb" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 257). This scene marks the climax of the novel, set in a packed convocation hall where Prof. Cherian, a feared figure, prepares to address the audience. The comparison of the hall to a tomb underscores the oppressive atmosphere, with silence not born of respect but of fear. Prof. Cherian's authoritarian demeanor and rigid approach to academia render him as intimidating as death itself, compelling the audience into speechlessness.

Additionally, another example from the same novel, "She placed her hand over my arm, and self-respecting nitwit that I am, I melted faster than ice cream; as if the bad mood bugs running through me suddenly got sprayed with Baygon" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 68). This scene unfolds in an ice cream parlour where Hari and Neha share a moment. Neha's initiative in their budding romance contrasts with Hari's passive response. His comparison of himself melting like ice cream vividly captures his overwhelming emotions. While ice cream melts physically under heat, Hari experiences a metaphorical melting—a thawing of his emotions—under Neha's touch and affection. This simile highlights the transformative power of love, contrasting the tangible melting of ice cream with the intangible melting of emotions and barriers between the characters.

Here are a couple of examples of simile from the same novel, in a classroom scene, Professor Sen distributes handouts to students, setting the stage for an academic atmosphere entrenched in rote memorization and fear. Classroom dynamics at the Indian Institute of Technology prioritize teacher authority over student engagement, stifling creativity and critical thinking. The frequent administration of quizzes, devoid of surprise, prompts Hari to compare them to "a snow in Siberia." Just as snowfall in Siberia occurs routinely without eliciting surprise, quizzes at the institute have become a mundane occurrence, stripped of their element of unpredictability.

In another instance, Ryan's dismissive attitude towards academic assignments is underscored as he casually refers to his completed work as "today's crap." When questioned by Alok about his choice of words, Ryan responds with a simile,

tossing his assignment on the table "like a used tissue." This comparison vividly conveys Ryan's nonchalant disregard for his academic responsibilities, equating his assignment to a disposable tissue discarded without a second thought. These examples of simile from the novel *Five Point Someone* serve to elucidate the oppressive academic environment and the characters' attitudes towards their studies, utilizing vivid imagery to evoke the stifling atmosphere and the characters' apathetic attitudes towards their academic pursuits.

The depicted conversation unfolds between Alok and Ryan within the confines of their hostel room. As previously noted, the academic climate at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) is characterized by an overwhelming onslaught of tests, quizzes, assignments, and examinations, leaving students fatigued and disenchanted. Their days are consumed by lectures, assignments, quizzes, and tests, leaving little room for leisure or enjoyment. Life within the walls of the institute revolves around monotonous routines and stifling rituals, where students are expected to commit facts to memory and adhere to regimented schedules, stifling their creativity in the process.

In the excerpt provided, Ryan's casual dismissal of an assignment as akin to "a used tissue" reflects the pervasive attitude among IIT students towards academic tasks. Much like discarding a tissue after use, Ryan regards the completion of his assignment as a perfunctory act, devoid of any intrinsic value or significance. This indifferent attitude towards academic pursuits is emblematic of the disillusionment bred by the relentless pressure and authoritarianism perpetuated by the faculty at IIT. The simile serves as a poignant symbol of the students' detachment from their academic obligations, a consequence of the shallow pedagogy and oppressive culture prevalent within the institution.

C. Metaphor

A metaphor, a potent literary device, imbues language with depth and resonance by implicitly likening one entity to another. Unlike a simile, which employs words like "like" or "as" to draw comparisons, a metaphor forges connections between disparate elements without explicit indicators. As Abrams M H and Harpham G G, elucidate, a metaphor transfers the qualities of one entity onto another, without directly stating the comparison (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 133).

Consider Shakespeare's masterful metaphor in the romantic comedy *As You Like It*, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances" (Shakespeare, 2000). Here, life is metaphorically equated to a stage, and individuals are likened to actors. The metaphor suggests that life unfolds as a theatrical performance, with people assuming roles and making entrances and exits akin to actors on stage.

In another instance from Shakespeare's repertoire, he metaphorically describes old age in one of his sonnets: "I am a leafless tree in autumn, an extinguishing fire, and the setting sun" (Shakespeare, 2000). In this metaphorical depiction, the speaker's advancing age is symbolized by a leafless tree bereft of vitality, an extinguishing fire losing its warmth, and the setting sun heralding the twilight of life. Through this metaphor, the speaker merges elements of nature with the human condition, evoking a poignant portrayal of ageing and decline.

Now, let us examine a metaphorical expression from the novel *One Night @ the Call Center*, "Looks like your mother-in-law likes melodrama... pulling the landline closer to her" (Bhagat, 2005, p. 83). In this exchange between Priyanka and Radhika, Priyanka metaphorically characterizes her own mother as "the Miss Universe of melodrama." By likening her mother to the iconic beauty pageant titleholder, Priyanka humorously emphasizes her mother's penchant for melodramatic behavior. This metaphor not only adds color to the conversation but also conveys the exaggerated nature of her mother's dramatic tendencies.

The aforementioned dialogue unfolds between Priyanka and Radhika. Radhika, feeling exasperated with her traditional mother-in-law's antics, confides in Priyanka. In response, Priyanka employs a metaphor to depict her own mother, describing her as "the Miss Universe of melodrama." This metaphor underscores the exaggerated dramatic tendencies exhibited by Priyanka's mother. Priyanka's contentment is palpable as she anticipates an auspicious turn of events: an NRI suitor, Ganesh, is poised to propose marriage to Priyanka, filling her mother with unbridled joy. Within this conversation, Radhika and Priyanka, portrayed as friends, navigate the challenges presented by their respective familial dynamics. Radhika, wedded to Anuj, finds herself entangled in Kolkata while contending with her melodramatic mother-in-law in Delhi. Anuj's persistent reminders for Radhika to conform to traditional daughter-in-law roles contrast with Radhika's mother-in-law's constant queries about how she can serve Radhika and her son, Anuj.

Priyanka, still unmarried, grapples with her mother's persistent concern for her well-being. Despite Priyanka's desire to wed Shyam, her mother disapproves due to his lack of financial stability and NRI status. Priyanka's mother fervently promotes Ganesh as the ideal suitor, extolling his financial security and NRI status. This incessant comparison leads Priyanka to liken her mother's melodramatic temperament to Radhika's mother-in-law, employing the metaphor "Miss Universe of Melodrama" to emphasize her mother's dramatic flair.

Now, let us delve into another example of a metaphor from the novel *Five Point Someone*, "Ryan, the man who lives for the moment... Ryan is Pied Piper..." (Bhagat, 2004, p. 73). In this passage, Ryan's magnetic persona is metaphorically likened to that of the Pied Piper. Ryan's charismatic allure captivates those around him, including Hari, who readily succumbs to Ryan's whims. Hari's actions mirror those of the characters lured by the Pied Piper's enchanting melody, symbolizing Ryan's persuasive influence. Through this metaphor, the author elucidates Ryan's persuasive power over Hari, illustrating how Hari becomes a willing participant in Ryan's carefree lifestyle, mirroring the tale of the Pied Piper's followers.

The aforementioned perception of Ryan's and Hari's personalities is narrated by Alok, who observes Ryan's desire to live freely and Hari's inclination to emulate him. Ryan, born into wealth, possesses striking looks and excels academically. He is decisive and takes action, particularly in his rebellion against the GPA system, which he perceives as stifling talent rather than nurturing it. Hari, in turn, admires Ryan's innovative ideas and readily supports his endeavors. Alok metaphorically compares Ryan to the Pied Piper, a character known for leading people to their doom, underscoring Ryan's persuasive influence over Hari, who unquestioningly follows him. This comparison, though not occurring within dialogue, is presented in the authorial narrative.

Now, let's explore a couple of examples of metaphor from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*. In a conversation between Govind and Ishaan, Ishaan, who coaches Ali, expresses his frustration with Ali's lack of interest in cricket, likening the situation to calling someone "the Preity Zinta of our pol." This comparison between Vidya and Preity Zinta, a renowned Bollywood actress, serves as a metaphor, suggesting that Vidya embodies the qualities or traits associated with Preity Zinta. Metaphors, unlike similes, directly equate two entities without using "like" or "as," intensifying the comparison and implying a deeper similarity.

In another instance from the same novel, Ali's father, offering advice as Ali boards a train, affectionately refers to Ali as "a piece of my heart," revealing the depth of his paternal love. This metaphorical expression highlights the emotional bond between Ali and his father, implying that Ali is an integral part of his father's being. The metaphor adds emotional weight to the sentiment, underscoring the profound connection between father and son.

The above conversation occurs between Govind and Ali's father as they prepare for a trip to Goa to watch a cricket match between Australia and India. Ali's father, feeling anxious as Ali embarks on his first journey to Goa, expresses his deep affection for his son by telling Govind, "He is a piece of my heart." While this expression may initially appear as a metaphor, it is actually an idiomatic phrase. It conveys the idea that Ali holds a special place in his father's affections and is as vital to his existence as his own heart. Essentially, it suggests that just as his father's well-being depends on the health of his heart, so too does it depend on Ali's well-being, emphasizing the profound bond between father and son.

D. Irony

Irony, as defined by Abrams M H and Harpham G G, is a figure of speech characterized by a statement where the implied meaning sharply contrasts with the expressed meaning (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 186). In Shakespeare's renowned play *Romeo and Juliet* (1597), there is a notable instance of irony in Juliet's words: "Go ask his name: if he is married. My grave is like to be my wedding bed" (Shakespeare, 1597). In this passage, Juliet instructs her nurse to inquire about the identity of Romeo, the object of her affection. However, the irony lies in Juliet's subsequent statement, where she suggests that if Romeo is already married, then her fate is likely to be death on her wedding bed. This statement is ironic because, as the audience knows, Juliet's tragic demise indeed occurs on her wedding day, fulfilling the grim prophecy she unknowingly utters. Thus, through Juliet's words, Shakespeare masterfully employs irony to foreshadow the tragic events that unfold in the play.

In the above excerpt from the novel *Five Point Someone*, irony permeates the interactions between the characters, particularly in the context of ragging—a cruel tradition where seniors subject juniors to humiliation. Let's dissect the instances of irony present in the dialogue:

(a). Baku's Comment

Baku, one of the seniors, directs Alok and Hari to step forward, ostensibly to provide a better view for the seniors' entertainment. He then delivers an ironic comment, likening them to "little Farex babies" who have been overfed by their mothers. Here, the irony lies in the fact that Farex, a brand of baby food, typically promotes healthy growth in infants. However, Baku's use of the term suggests excessiveness and implies that Alok and Hari are overly pampered or obese due to their affluent backgrounds.

(b). Use of Demon

Additionally, the term "demon" is employed by the narrator to refer to one of the seniors, Anurag. While "demon" typically carries negative connotations, in this context, it is used as a term of endearment or familiarity among the characters. This usage contrasts with the usual derogatory meaning associated with the word, adding a layer of irony. Another example of irony from the novel is depicted in Ryan's sarcastic response during a study session.

(c). Ryan's Mockery

Ryan, disillusioned with the academic system, sarcastically remarks about the prospect of studying to become "great engineers of this great country." His statement is laden with irony as it highlights the absurdity of the education system that prioritizes rote memorization over practical learning. Despite the mocking tone, Ryan's sentiment underscores the disillusionment felt by the characters towards the educational institution and its goals.

These instances of irony serve to underscore the satirical portrayal of the characters' experiences within the educational system, revealing the discrepancies between societal expectations and their lived realities. In the conversation involving Ryan, Hari, and Alok, irony is employed to underscore the dissatisfaction with the education system and the mediocrity it fosters. Let's analyze the examples.

(d). Ryan's Critique of the Education System

Ryan expresses frustration with the education system's emphasis on rote learning and standardized testing, which he views as a futile "rat race." His ironic remark to Alok, "let us mug and cram. Otherwise, how will we become great engineers of this great country?" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 23) reflects his disdain for the GPA-based education system. Despite the seemingly positive tone of Ryan's words, the underlying message is critical. His use of phrases like "great engineers" and "great country" is dripping with irony, suggesting that the education system fails to produce truly innovative and independent thinkers. Instead, it churns out individuals who conform to rigid academic standards, akin to "robots".

(e). *Discussion on Grades and Ranking*

Alok shares his and his friends' GPAs, which are all around the five-point mark. Despite the apparent congratulatory tone, the revelation that they are all "five-pointers" highlights their collective disappointment. Ryan's ironic comment congratulating Alok for "topping" among them underscores the absurdity of their situation. The term "topped" in this context is sharply contrasted with their actual mediocre grades, highlighting the discrepancy between their academic aspirations and reality.

Hari's internal reflection on being part of a group that ranks in the high 200s out of 300 students emphasizes the irony of their academic achievement. The absence of any real sense of accomplishment, coupled with the acknowledgement of the grim reality of their situation, reinforces the theme of disillusionment with the education system. Both instances of irony serve to critique the educational environment depicted in the novel, highlighting the gap between societal expectations and the actual outcomes of the education system. In the conversation involving Alok, Ryan, and Hari, irony is employed to convey criticism and highlight the dissonance between expectations and reality in the educational system.

When Alok reveals his GPA results, Ryan sarcastically congratulates him for "topping" among them, despite all of them being in the five-point category. This ironic remark reflects Ryan's disdain for the GPA-based education system and his rejection of conventional academic success. Ryan's comment is layered with irony, as he indirectly criticizes Alok's adherence to the system by mockingly praising his achievement within its flawed parameters. By framing Alok's performance as commendable, Ryan subtly underscores the absurdity of the situation and the superficiality of academic achievements. The irony in Ryan's words serves to highlight the discrepancy between societal expectations regarding academic success and the disillusionment experienced by the characters with the prevailing education system.

In *One Night @ the Call Center*, Shyam's internal commentary on Mr. Bakshi's behavior exhibits irony and sarcasm. Despite Mr. Bakshi's self-aggrandizing demeanor, Shyam sees through his pretence and compares him ironically to da Vinci finishing the Mona Lisa. This comparison underscores the vast disparity between Mr. Bakshi's actions and the accomplishments of a revered figure like da Vinci. Shyam's use of irony serves to expose Mr. Bakshi's deceitful behavior and highlight the stark contrast between his inflated self-image and his actual actions, particularly his plagiarism of Shyam and Vroom's work.

Similarly, in *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, Omi's comment to Ish about giving milk to Ali, referring to him as a "stick insect" with arms thinner than a cricket wicket, is laden with irony. Despite Omi's ostensibly helpful gesture of providing milk, his derogatory remarks about Ali's physique reveal a deeper irony. The irony lies in Omi's insensitivity and superficial concern for Ali's physical appearance, juxtaposed with the ostensibly charitable act of offering him milk. Omi's comment highlights the hypocrisy of his actions and the underlying prejudice within the characters' interactions.

In all these instances, irony serves as a powerful tool to critique societal norms, expose hypocrisy, and reveal the gap between appearances and reality. In a conversation between Omi and Ishaan, the latter's passion for cricket and his decision to mentor promising players like Ali are highlighted. Despite Ishaan's dedication to cricket, his efforts to make a mark in the sport have been unsuccessful, leading him to focus on coaching instead. Ali, a talented batsman selected by Ishaan for training, receives criticism from Omi due to his different religious background. During a break in cricket practice, Omi brings milk packets and suggests that Ishaan give one to Ali, whom he describes as "lanky" and compares to a "stick insect." Omi's remark carries undertones of disapproval and prejudice, reflecting his discomfort with Ali's religious affiliation.

E. *Sarcasm*

Sarcasm, a literary device often employed for sharp and biting remarks, serves as a form of humor aimed at inflicting hurt through mocking irony. According to Abrams M H and Harpham G G, sarcasm distinguishes itself from irony by its crude and taunting nature, particularly evident in apparent praise used to convey dispraise (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 187). An exemplary instance of sarcasm is found in Robert Frost's renowned poem "Mending Wall," where the speaker asserts, "Good fences make good neighbours." This statement, seemingly praising the benefits of boundaries between neighbours, is steeped in sarcasm as it implies the need for repair and maintenance due to the recurring collapse of the wall, necessitating joint efforts for its restoration.

In analyzing selected excerpts from the novel *Five Point Someone*, sarcasm emerges as a recurring device to convey sharp wit and mockery. Hari, the narrator in the novel, employs sarcasm to depict the physical appearances of Anurag and Baku in a rather scathing manner. Anurag is likened to a demon straight out of cheap mythological television shows, described as overweight, dark, hairy, and possessing conspicuously large teeth. On the other hand, Baku is sarcastically portrayed as a smelly, thin individual clad in a lungi, resembling a toothpick.

This use of sarcasm serves to express a critical and unfavourable attitude towards the characters, highlighting the negative traits perceived by the narrator. Sarcasm, functioning as a negative politeness strategy, employs positive

language to convey negative evaluations, distinguishing it from irony which typically uses negative language for the same purpose. Another instance of sarcasm in the novel occurs during a dinner at the Kumaon mess, where the menu promises a "continental" dinner, which turns out to be a disappointing excuse for substandard food. The description of the noodles as being stuck together like a composite mass, the French fries being cold and poorly cooked, and the cream of mushroom soup resembling muddy water, all serve as sarcastic commentary on the dismal quality of the meal offered.

Hari describes his dining experience with a heavy dose of sarcasm, remarking that although the menu sounded appealing with offerings like noodles, French fries, toast, and soup, the actual taste is far from satisfactory. He states, "The noodles made a composite mass because they are cooked in some glutinous substance. The French fries are cold and either undercooked or burned. The mushroom soup is like muddy water and tastes saltier" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 155). This comprehensive critique of the meal underscores Hari's sarcastic tone.

In another instance of sarcasm from the same novel, Professor Goyal delivers a derogatory comment aimed at his students, comparing them to commerce students in a dismissive manner. By insinuating that being likened to commerce students is a grave insult, Hari implies the perceived inferiority of the commerce stream in contrast to the esteemed status of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) students. He narrates, "Calling an IIT-ian a commerce student was one of the worst insults the Prof could accord to us, like a prostitute calling her client a eunuch" (Bhagat, 2004, p. 56). The analogy drawn between Professor Goyal and a prostitute, and IIT students and eunuchs, further emphasizes the disdainful nature of the comparison, suggesting that such educational institutions are no different from disreputable establishments.

In a separate example from the novel *One Night @ the Call Center*, Priyanka's response to an apology is laden with sarcasm, as she requests her interlocutor to "do me a huge favor and stay out of my life, please. Will you?" (Bhagat, 2005, p. 158). This exchange highlights the reciprocal nature of sarcasm and its potential to intensify interpersonal conflicts. The provided extract exemplifies the power of a sarcastic voice in transforming seemingly positive words into negative expressions. The discrepancy between positive words and a negative tone is pivotal in conveying sarcasm effectively. In this light, sarcasm thrives on incongruity and disparity between words and tone.

In a poignant example from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, Govind narrates an incident involving Ishaan's father. Ishaan, driven by his passion for cricket, abandons his pursuits at the National Defence Academy (NDA). Consequently, his father, disapproving of his son's decision and lack of accomplishment, delivers a biting remark, suggesting, "Cut a cake today to celebrate one year of your uselessness" (Bhagat, 2008, p. 3). This sarcastic comment highlights the disappointment and frustration experienced by Ishaan's father due to his son's perceived lack of direction and achievement.

F. Euphemism

The term euphemism denotes the use of polite and indirect expressions to replace harsh or unpleasant words or phrases. According to Abrams M H and Harpham G G, euphemism refers to "an inoffensive expression used in place of a blunt one that is felt to be disagreeable or embarrassing" (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 177). For instance, consider a scenario where a woman speaks to her husband about their daughter, who is experiencing a serious illness: "She is feeling under the weather today." In this example, the woman employs the phrase "feeling under the weather" as a euphemism to convey that their daughter is suffering from a significant illness, without directly stating so.

Now, let's delve into an example of euphemism from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*. In the bustling narrow lane, three bicycles vied for space as they attempted to overtake each other. To accommodate them, I had to step inside Qazi restaurant. Inside, the air was thick with the aroma of fried coriander and garlic, signalling the preparation of a grand dinner, a celebration of India's victory in the match. Occasionally, Ishaan and I frequented this place, always discreetly, drawn by the allure of affordable delicacies and exceptional mutton (Bhagat, 2008, p. 7). "The owner assured us of 'small mutton,' implying goat and not beef. I trusted his word, knowing well that serving beef in this neighbourhood would be untenable" (Bhagat, 2008, p. 7). Though tempted to dine here instead of at Gopi's, where we had promised Omi to eat, the food at both places was equally enticing. Food held a special significance here, particularly in Gujarat, a dry state where people found solace and indulgence in its flavors, akin to intoxication (Bhagat, 2008, p. 7).

The other euphemism in this extract is the use of the expression 'a dry state,' which means a state where liquor and wine are not sold or consumed. A dry day is a day when liquor and wine shops do not sell these beverages. Let us consider a couple of examples of euphemism from *One Night @ the Call Center*, "Priyanka returned from the restroom. I noticed she had washed her face. Her nose still had a drop of water on top of it" (Bhagat, 2005, p. 58). Here, the narrator Shyam uses the word 'restroom' instead of the word 'toilet.' The word 'restroom' is polite unlike the harsh expression 'toilet.' Usually, excretory activities such as defecating and urinating and sexual activities are not mentioned bluntly because such a mention is considered unpalatable or unpleasant. "I don't really know what to do. I'm in shock. Plus, right now there is this fear he may downsize us..." I said. "'Downsize us?' Vroom said and stood up. 'We worked on it for six months man. And all you can say is we can't do anything as he may downsize us?'" (Bhagat, 2005, p. 137).

The conversation takes place between Shyam and Vroom. When these agents come to know about the probable retrenchment, everyone gets worried. Shyam is worried because if he loses his job, he cannot be the team leader. 'Downsizing' is a euphemism for 'sacking' or 'firing' or 'dismissing.' Here is one more example of euphemism from the same novel: 'Can you promise not to judge me if I tell you something?' 'Of course,' I said. 'I'm a terrible judge of people anyway.' 'I slept with someone,' she said and let out a sigh, 'to win a modelling contract.' 'What?' I said, as it took me a second to figure out what 'slept' meant. It didn't mean 'zzzs' (Bhagat, 2005, p. 142).

The above conversation takes place between Shyam and Esha. She is a fashionable girl who wants to become a model or an actor in the film industry. She uses costly perfumes and cosmetics. But her parents don't like her modelling. She moves to Delhi from Chandigarh against her parents' wishes. She loses her virginity, but cannot become a model. When she realizes that she is duped by an agent, she wants to hurt herself. However, she narrates her traumatic sexual encounter euphemistically. She confesses to Shyam that in order to satisfy her dream of becoming a model, 'I slept with someone'. People do not want to refer to sexual organs such as the vagina, the penis or testicles and breasts. Instead, they refer to these organs as private parts of the body.

G. Circumlocution

Circumlocution is a roundabout way of saying something. It violates the maxim of quantity as well as the maxim of manner. Circumlocution leads to verbosity or wordiness. The speaker or the writer who uses circumlocution uses a hundred words instead of ten and ten words instead of one. For example, he is going to London in the tenth month of the English calendar. In this sentence 'the tenth month of the English calendar' is a circumlocution for 'October'.

Here is an example of circumlocution from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*, "I don't want to study this," she said... Too late I realized I had used the F-word. 'Sorry for the language.'" (Bhagat, 2008, pp. 102-103). The above dialogue takes place between Govind and Vidya. Govind tutors Vidya in mathematics, despite her lack of interest in the subject. Throughout their interactions, Vidya attempts to subtly flirt with Govind, hoping for a romantic relationship. However, Govind consistently refers to himself as her tutor rather than acknowledging any romantic involvement. Despite Vidya's repeated inquiries about the nature of their relationship, Govind maintains his position, leading to a circular conversation where both parties avoid directly addressing their feelings. In essence, Vidya's questions serve as a form of circumlocution, attempting to indirectly convey her desire for a romantic connection with Govind. However, Govind's responses deflect her inquiries, emphasizing their tutor-student dynamic rather than any romantic involvement. Despite their shared intentions, their conversation revolves around these carefully chosen words.

The analysis presented examines selected excerpts from Chetan Bhagat's novels within the framework of speech act theory. However, the discussion of these excerpts has not been structured around direct and indirect speech acts, nor has it been categorized according to locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary force. This omission is deliberate due to the inherent interconnectedness of locution, illocution, and perlocution within every speech act. Unlike the conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner, which can be individually violated, locution, illocution, and perlocution are integral components of speech acts and cannot be separated from each other. Consequently, the researcher has chosen to analyze the selected extracts under headings such as simile, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, sarcasm, euphemism, and circumlocution, all of which represent forms of indirect speech acts. These figures of speech are discussed in terms of their relation to the violation or adherence to conversational maxims, whether as positive strategies or negative strategies aimed at preserving the addressee's negative face.

V. CONCLUSION

In the grand tapestry of literary exploration, our journey through "Decoding Linguistic Dynamics: A Literary Analysis of Chetan Bhagat's Select Novels" has been akin to traversing a vast landscape rich with figures of speech, each acting as guiding stars illuminating the depths of Bhagat's narrative universe. Like a beacon in the night, Bhagat's novels beckon with the allure of metaphorical constellations, where characters shimmer like distant stars, each a metaphor for societal archetypes and cultural norms. Through hyperbole, Bhagat amplifies the human experience, stretching the limits of reality to reveal profound truths hidden within seemingly ordinary moments.

Yet, beneath the surface lies a river of irony, flowing with unexpected twists and turns, where words wear masks of contradiction, revealing deeper layers of meaning. Sarcasm dances like a mischievous sprite, casting shadows of doubt upon the facade of social niceties, challenging readers to peer beyond the veil of superficiality. Even in the face of harsh truths, euphemisms serve as gentle veils, cloaking harsh realities with soft whispers of linguistic diplomacy. Meanwhile, circumlocution weaves intricate patterns, leading us on a labyrinthine journey through layers of meaning, where words meander like winding paths in a dense forest, inviting exploration and interpretation.

Ultimately, our analysis stands as a testament to the power of language, a symphony of similes and metaphors, irony and sarcasm, euphemisms and circumlocutions, each contributing to the rich tapestry of Bhagat's literary landscape. Through this lens, we decode not only linguistic dynamics but also the very essence of human experience captured within the pages of his select novels.

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Learn Oral Skills Keeping in Mind the Issues of Interest

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Abstract—As has been said on many occasions, students' interest in specific topics is among the factors that determine autonomous and self-directed learning. This paper shows the results obtained from the experience of 60 accounting students from a Peruvian technological institute who recorded videos on topics of their interest. Mixed methods research was carried out. The quantitative stage consisted of two parts. The first one measured the difference between the pre-and post-tests, before and after the project. Second, they proposed a validated model, considering three constructs: oral skills, language difficulties, and video types; for this reason, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied from a survey completed by students at the end of the project. The qualitative stage consisted of coding the responses given by students to the survey's open-ended questions. This research highlighted the improvement of oral skills and an acceptable factor structure (RMSEA 0.058; CFI 0.965; and TLI 0.958) concerning students' opinions. The outcomes of this research are promising, with a significant enhancement in students' oral skills, increased confidence in public speaking, and a positive learning experience that can inspire and shape future educational practices.

Index Terms—interest topics, oral skills, recording videos

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, it is expected that Peruvian higher education students have doubts and fears in their first English class because the lousy experience of secondary school was marked by being scolded for their poor pronunciation during an English presentation or their grammatical problems in a written text. Furthermore, neither an approach nor a student-centered environment is considered in Peruvian schools. That gives an idea of how difficult it is for students to achieve autonomous learning. Even so, there are numerous proposals to foster the mentioned kind of learning these days. One of these is taking into consideration the topics of interest to them. In this respect, individual interest has been defined as a predisposition to pay special attention to particular issues (Ainley et al., 2002). This condition facilitates learning, motivates and promotes creativity when students share their favorite topics with the rest, and significantly reduces anxiety when dealing with issues of interest (Lai & Hung, 2019). In addition to this, there is greater engagement from students when their preferences, daily routines, and subjects of their choice are part of a learning project or simply a scholarly task. This emphasis on students' interests in the learning process is a significant revelation that can enlighten educators and researchers in language education (Shakourzadeh & Izadpanah, 2020).

For these reasons, many scholars have proposed teaching English language alternatives such as spreading information about regional and local cultures, lifestyles, and traditions, which are the day-to-day in the students' lives (Asgari et al., 2019; Renninger et al., 2014). On the other side, experiences such as those that encourage text drafting, considering the students' interests in issues like religion, war, love, suicide, and cooking, among others, have improved their writing skills (Behbudi & Sadeghghli, 2018).

At this juncture, the present research seeks to determine if recording videos with students' interest topics significantly affects their speaking skills and if the survey created by the author has validity for measuring the three constructs mentioned above. These questions are of the utmost importance as they can potentially revolutionize how we approach language education. In this sense, the following questions are addressed in this paper:

Q1: How significant is the improvement in students' oral skills when videos are recorded on topics that interest them?

Q2: Is the survey valid for measuring the constructs OS, LD, and KV?

Additionally, we considered the following null hypothesis:

Ho: Videos recorded with students' interests do not significantly affect their oral skills.

Ho: The survey is invalid for measuring OS, LD, and KV constructs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Interest topics in English learning

Interest is considered a learning facilitator associated with personal choice (Shiefele et al., 1992) and a personal goal (Sorić & Palekčić, 2009). Based on this, it has already been recommended that the students should choose their interest topics because it was noted their poor motivation when teachers decide on the assignment topic, which often is not familiar with their context, preferences, and ideals (Shakourzadeh & Izadpanah, 2020). Meanwhile, the authors argue the importance of students' participation in their learning if we, as teachers, want their autonomous learning. In this

regard, student autonomy is accomplished with a permanent teacher-student interaction, where choosing an exciting topic is an essential learning component (Benson, 2007). In addition, it has been clarified that the teacher's role is to suggest bibliographic sources or another trusted source where students can find factual and up-to-date information, avoiding risk (Threadkell, 2010). In that respect, it is also proposed that we as teachers inquire about our students' topics of interest because they need to achieve some learning goals; for this reason, teachers can associate their student's favorite topics with curricular content established by the Ministry of Education (Hsieh, 2016).

Record videos as part of the young student context

It is obvious how young people of today master technology, websites, and social networking to the degree that in many classrooms worldwide, the well-known WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube are considered teaching-learning strategies because these are part of their academic lives. The same applies to the majority sector of the Peruvian population context, who, at an early age, spend the most time "connected to the Internet." It is not unusual to see a student using an anatomy app on their cellphone, another who solves a specific task on a web platform, and another who takes virtual classes. For this reason, in this modern and changing world, these people have been called digital natives (Huang et al., 2013) or people of the future (Grenade & Boldy, 2008). Furthermore, much evidence shows that this group of people enjoys using social networking more than to take lessons (Wasiński & Tomczyk, 2015). Even so, it has been concluded that this situation is more of an opportunity than a problem (Bourgonjon et al., 2010). Therefore, video recording is a splendid opportunity to enhance oral skills because they will use the Internet, websites, and free platforms to achieve the best video (Kondal & Prasad, 2020). In addition to the above, it is now known that this type of project improves students' self-esteem. Second, recording videos allows oral training for the best presentation (Tailab & Marsh, 2019). Third, generally, students record videos at home, allowing them to learn at their own pace, far from their classmates' gaze, and, above all, far from ill-intentioned criticism and teasing; for this reason, several authors have argued that there is a positive side to home learning, without forgetting that there is a natural learning English vocabulary predisposition at home (Kwakkel et al., 2023), as the anxiety management in outside the classroom English language activities and the inference that English outside the classroom learning promotes motivation and students engagement (Myhre et al., 2023; Prince & Deggory, 2023).

Social support present in videos

The vital thing to recognize in our research is the social support of the student's videos. In this sense, the videos could be emotional, informational, companionship, and tangible. It is known that an emotional video contains love, empathy, family experiences, and happy memories with friends' messages. For this part, informational videos contain advice, suggestions, and exciting and valuable information. Meanwhile, companionship videos contain mainly support messages from friends and family. Finally, tangible videos contain financial and material assistance messages (Lahey & Cohen, 2000).

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants

A Non-probability sampling was considered for this study and was comprised of 60 accounting students, 19 males (31.6%) and 41 females (68.4%), aged between 16 and 35 years. All of them were enrolled in the introductory English course; at the same time, their English language performance level was below basic and following the institutional placement test. They also participated in the first quantitative stage (pre-, post-test, and video program application). Furthermore, 55 (91.6%) completed the survey, which is considered the second quantitative stage.

Instrumentation

The first data collection instrument was an oral test, which consisted of asking the student to make an oral presentation and considering his or her topic of interest. This oral presentation should last for about 2 minutes, and it was assessed according to the following criteria: fluency, pronunciation, management of the topic, and grammar.

The second data collection instrument was a survey (Google form) designed by the author. This had four parts: the first gathered socio-demographic data (sex, age, career), and the second contained a 25 5-point Likert scale (Appendix). This part gathered information about three components: Oral Skills (OS) achieved for interest topics video recording, Learning Difficulties (LD) overcome thanks to the mentioned activity, and Kind of Video (KV) related to video contents. The third part involved two multiple-choice questions about the advantages and disadvantages of interest topic video recording. The last part consisted of an open-ended question. This question served to gather the qualitative information. It must be pointed out that this survey was completed in Spanish by 55 students. On the other hand, it is important to mention that the instrument's reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.855. This survey was written in Spanish for ease of filling.

Data collection

The pre-test measured the oral skills of 60 students and classified their topics of interest. Among them were daily activities, sports, family, pets, places, and caring for the environment—recycling and reusing. This served to develop an English program, considering mainly oral skills. For 16 weeks, students received classes about their interest topics. This process concluded with a video recording and a post-test. Thereupon, 55 students completed the abovementioned survey.

Data analysis

First, using SPSS 27 software, it was determined if scores obtained from pre- and post-tests followed a normal distribution. The same happened when comparing the two samples through Wilcoxon signed rank. Furthermore, the JASP program was used to measure the efficacy of the survey model through a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was previously used to determine the number of constructs from the survey.

It is worth mentioning that the data handling used theoretical approaches found in papers written by Harris and Hardin (2013) and Williams et al. (2010). Additionally, it is essential to state that one limitation of this research is the sample size because the ideal is $n > 200$.

IV. RESULTS

Students recorded the next kind of videos: personal descriptions and family (22), recycling and environmental care (13), pets (8), places (7), cooking (5), and daily routine (5). According to the findings, emotional videos (EV) were most interesting to students. Secondly, there were the informational videos (IV). There were no companionship videos (CV) or tangible videos (TV) (Malecki & Demaray, 2003).



Figure 1. Videos Recorded

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PRE AND POST-TEST

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pre	60	3.02	1.662	0	8
Post	60	14.53	1.334	12	17

TABLE 2
TEST OF NORMALITY

Test	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	.137	60	.007
Posttest	.220	60	<.001

In Table 2, it is possible to observe that the data does not follow a normal distribution. Therefore, it was analyzed using the Wilcoxon Test, which is a non-parametric test.

TABLE 3
WILCOXON SIGNED RANKS TEST

Posttest-Pretest	N	Men Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	60 ^b	30.50	1830.00
Ties	0 ^c		
Total	60		

a. Posttest < Pretest

b. Posttest > Pretest

c. Posttest = Pretest

TABLE 4
TEST STATISTICS^a

	Posttest-Pretest
Z	-6.793 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001

a. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

b. Based on negative ranks

The table below shows that the negative Z score (-6.793) represents the enhancement in students' oral skills from time 1 to time 2. This is connected with the positive ranks in time 2. Additionally, asymptotic significance is less than .05 (<.001); therefore, it can be said that the video recording videos based on students' interest topics effectively improve oral English language skills.

The results of the second quantitative part started with an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), where the outstanding was a Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) of .795, a Bartlett's Test of Sphericity with the next results, 975.703 (approx. Chi-Square), df (300), and Sig. <.001. Likewise, the reliability of this survey, with a

Cronbach’s Alpha of.855, is considered good and acceptable. It is worth indicating that items four, six, seven, eleven, fourteen, fifteen, twenty, twenty-three, twenty-four, and twenty-five were removed to achieve the best fit in the next CFA process.

Amongst the CFA highlights are the parameter estimates, where Standard Estimation, in the last column of the following table, shows that all results are more significant than 0.4. In addition to the above, the results are significant ($p < 0.001$).

TABLE 5
PARAMETER ESTIMATES

Factor Loadings						95% confidence interval		
Factor	Indicator	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper	St. Est (all)
OS	ITEM 9	0.752	0.104	7.206	<0.001	0.547	0.956	0.810
	ITEM 16	0.858	0.107	8.049	<0.001	0.649	1.067	0.869
	ITEM 18	0.850	0.099	8.565	<0.001	0.656	1.045	0.902
	ITEM 19	0.935	0.127	7.339	<0.001	0.685	1.184	0.821
	ITEM 13	0.780	0.108	7.234	<0.001	0.568	0.991	0.813
	ITEM 8	0.647	0.148	4.365	<0.001	0.357	0.938	0.555
LD	ITEM 10	0.880	0.128	6.890	<0.001	0.630	1.130	0.787
	ITEM 17	0.789	0.139	5.684	<0.001	0.517	1.062	0.685
	ITEM 5	0.525	0.127	4.124	<0.001	0.276	0.775	0.556
	ITEM 1	0.888	0.128	6.922	<0.001	0.637	1.139	0.843
	ITEM 3	0.624	0.134	4.639	<0.001	0.360	0.888	0.620
	ITEM 2	0.796	0.137	5.825	<0.001	0.528	1.064	0.733
VT	ITEM 12	0.700	0.201	3.482	<0.001	0.306	1.093	0.489
	ITEM 21	0.804	0.120	6.677	<0.001	0.568	1.040	0.812
	ITEM 22	1.007	0.158	6.370	<0.001	0.697	1.317	0.781

According to this table, the standardized estimation of each item is greater than 0.04, and all of these are significant (< 0.001). Then, a criterion of factor loadings is accepted here.

TABLE 6
MODEL FIT MEASURES

X ²	df	X ² /df	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMSEA lower bound	RMSEA upper bound	p
102.958	87	1.183	0.977	0.965	0.958	0.058	0.000	0.098	0.117

X²: Chi-square

df: degrees of freedom

p: probability

RMSEA: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

CFI: Comparative Fit Index

TLI: Tucker Lewis Index

GFI: Goodness of Fit Index the RMSEA value (0.058) indicates a good fit. Furthermore, the CFI and TLI values are more significant than 0.9 (0.9658 and 0.958, respectively), which shows an appropriate model fit.

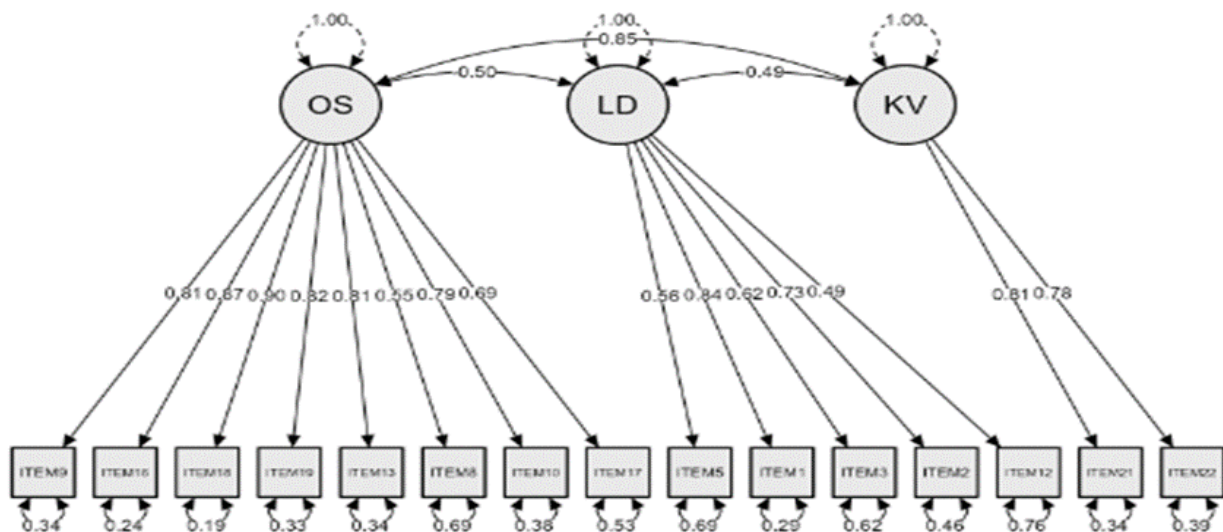


Figure 2. The Final Model of Students’ Interest Topics

TABLE 7
FACTOR COVARIANCES

							95% confidence interval		
			Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper	Std. Est (all)
OS	↔	LD	-0.495	0.120	-4.131	< .001	-0.730	-0.260	-0.495
OS	↔	VT	0.847	0.069	12.316	< .001	0.712	0.981	0.847
LD	↔	VT	-0.486	0.138	-3.528	<.001	-0.756	-0.216	-0.486

OS: Oral Skills

LD: Learning Difficulties

VT: Video Types, in Figure 2, is KV (kind of video)

The previous table shows the negative correlation between OS and LD (-0.495), meaning that a video program based on students' topics of interest promotes oral improvement and reduces learning difficulties. Similarly, there is a high correlation between OS and KV (0.847), which means that it depends on the kind of video (familiar, pets, caring for the environment, or places) for improving oral skills. Finally, there is a negative correlation between LD and KV (-0.486), which means that the learning difficulties decrease due to recording different kinds of videos.

TABLE 8
STUDENTS' POINT OF VIEW

Criteria	Expressions (coded)
Pronunciation improvement	<p><i>"That I could express myself better in English" (student 1).</i></p> <p><i>"By recording the video, I learned to improve my pronunciation, and not to be afraid of making mistakes in their pronunciation" (student 4).</i></p> <p><i>"It helped me to improve my pronunciation and oral participation in the language; I had no problems because I did it as accurately as possible" (student 8).</i></p> <p><i>"Learn little by little to become more fluent in speaking English" (student 9).</i></p> <p><i>"I think it is good (the project of video) for better pronunciation and fluency when speaking English" (student 10).</i></p> <p><i>"So important because I could improve my pronunciation, and a little bit, and have to speak in English" (student 14).</i></p> <p><i>"This motivated me to continue practicing my English pronunciation." (Student 17).</i></p> <p><i>"It is a useful tool, as it allowed me to practice my pronunciation, expand my English vocabulary, and lose the fear of speaking English" (student 22).</i></p>
Lose the fear of public speaking.	<p><i>"It was amazing because I learned to control my nerves when speaking English and my fears of pronunciation" (student 3).</i></p> <p><i>"That is a good idea to lose the fear of speaking in front of people and to know more about English" (student 6).</i></p> <p><i>"Recording the video was very important to me because I was able to lose my fear of speaking; even though my English is not good, I made an effort to do it" (student 16).</i></p> <p><i>"This is important (recording videos) because it will help in many aspects; for example, I have lost a little shyness in speaking, I feel that I have improved somewhat in pronunciation, and it requires much creativity to elaborate a video with evidence" (student 20).</i></p> <p><i>"The development of my project in English was a little difficult, but I could do it because I lost the fear and embarrassment of speaking in English" (student 28).</i></p> <p><i>"It has helped me learn to pronounce better, to lose my fears, and express that I learned in the English subject" (student 38).</i></p> <p><i>"I found it (record video) a very didactic way to loosen up my nerves and to learn English" (student 48).</i></p>
Pleasant experience (record videos)	<p><i>"These are very nice experiences because I enjoy learning another language" (student 2).</i></p> <p><i>"The smallest action is a big step toward new learning and knowledge, so it is important to persuade young people (citizens) to continue learning because knowledge is power, thank you, and keep improving" (student 5).</i></p> <p><i>"It has been a great experience for me. I have been able to express myself without any opposition, and it was fun to do it; all the time, I felt spectacular, and I hope to continue learning more and recording more videos" (student 7).</i></p> <p><i>"It was exciting. I can use what I learned in class to write the script of my text in English, as well as improve my pronunciation and vocabulary" (student 11).</i></p> <p><i>"It is a great opportunity that we have at the moment to learn the English language, improve and progress to do it correctly, and more if we have that necessary help that contributes to us in our way" (student 12).</i></p> <p><i>"Very beneficial (the project) as a student, I learned to speak the language more fluently, I felt excited and comfortable making the video, and through the videos, I can correct my mistakes and continue practicing" (student 13).</i></p> <p><i>"It is a better way to learn this language (English) as we get more involved in the subject by watching the images in the</i></p>

	<p><i>video” (student 15).</i></p> <p><i>Recording the video taught me to be more confident speaking English, creative, and eager to continue learning another language (student 26).</i></p> <p><i>“In my case, making the video in English was a challenge; I like to listen and sometimes write in English in pronunciation, but I have not mastered it; when I made the video, I lost a little fear. I knew the pronunciation was not the best, but I took the risk, so making that video was complicated. However, at the same time, it encourages me to continue pronouncing this language better” (student 27).</i></p> <p><i>“This activity (recording videos) is beneficial for me because it helped me a lot to improve my pronunciation and to know new words, it helped me to reduce my nerves and fears, and I think it is an effective way to learn English” (student 31).</i></p> <p><i>“Recording a video in English has been an excellent experience, as I have learned the importance of pronunciation and how to write some words in English. This helps me understand English better when an English-speaking person addresses me (student 37).</i></p> <p><i>“I felt good about recording my video; first, I thought about what my video would be based on, then I wrote down what I was going to say in my video, then I practiced the pronunciation of the words, and there I learned how to pronounce certain words, and improved my English vocabulary when I finished practicing the pronunciation. Finally, I recorded my video” (student 39).</i></p>
To be free to choose the topic	<p><i>“I could express an experience lived in the family” (student 4).</i></p> <p><i>“I liked that the video was free-themed” (student 8).</i></p> <p><i>“Recording a video in English and having the freedom to express it with feeling and pronounce each word delicately helps us to perform better and lose the fear of expressing ourselves to a listening audience” (student 18).</i></p> <p><i>“I liked that a video was made of our day-to-day life” (student 43).</i></p>

As we can observe in Table 8, there is a cheerful student view of the completed project, in principle, regarding their pronunciation improvement, and therefore more fluency speaking. This condition is due to their interest in the topic; for this reason, they expected that the product would be as perfect as possible. The second skill obtained and observed is to lose the fear of public speaking. This results from video sharing. Respect for calling the project a great experience, a learning opportunity, or a beneficial activity is related to the few times students develop projects where their interest topics are considered.

V. DISCUSSION

The present work has three aims. The first one seeks to find if there is a significant difference between pre- and post-tests. The second one is to determine the validity of the survey, and the third one seeks to classify the views given by students regarding the study's open question. Before starting the discussion, it is worth mentioning that the emotional nature of a good proportion of videos is due to our human condition, followed by providing authentic and meaningful information (Lloyd-Jones, 2021). Conversely, Companionship and tangible videos are less common because those mentioned above are easier to express. This situation is explained by Wakefield and Blodgett (1999), who assert that these are more likely affective than financial or material responses. Some research has concluded that human beings are social entities. Therefore, they grow up in a family and friend environment, resulting in feelings and emotions; for this reason, we as teachers should consider them for implementing our teaching strategies, as is the case of this research. The quantitative and qualitative stages will be analyzed in the next part of the discussion.

The results reported in Tables 1-4 are similar to the ones obtained by Encalada and Sarmiento (2019), Azkiya and Rahayu (2019), and Zhussupova and Shadiev (2023), who considered that the improvement of oral skills (pronunciation and fluency), and to lose the fear of public speaking, after their students' recorded videos. On the other hand, the confidence and satisfaction of recording videos at home are two of the many psychological benefits. Authors like Sargsyan and Kurghinyan (2016) explain that students' homes can be learning places with adequate teacher support in the classroom. Besides that, some authors consider that recording a video at home gives students enough confidence to create and design an authentic product, which is far from the students' gaze and non-constructive criticism, sometimes from teachers. CFA's results consider three constructs: oral skills, learning difficulties, and the kind of videos. In this sense, two components are highlighted. First, according to Steinmetz et al. (2009), the model has an appropriate fit, and second, a connection between the three constructs is visible.

Concerning qualitative results, Gilakjani et al. (2011) state that wrong pronunciation is not due to a lack of intelligence or grammar and vocabulary knowledge; it is more due to a lack of motivation and interest. In addition to the preceding, it has also been asserted that lack of attention and students' mother tongue confusion, especially in accent and intonation (Aulia, 2018), or their difficulties with multiple vowels and consonant sounds (Toçi, 2020), are part of innumerable aspects that are to be overcome with constant practice of pronunciation, as when student record a video. Based on the above, authors like Pham and Le (2023) and Frost (2021) coincide in pointing out that recording a video motivates the student to put much effort into presenting the best video without mistakes. For this reason, it is more possible for students to practice speaking consistently. Likewise, overcoming the fear of public speaking is similar to what we said earlier; that is to say, recording videos promotes students' prior pronunciation practice, which is precisely

what gives them enough confidence to speak in front of people without problems. This benefits the aforementioned and others, such as monitoring students' performance and improving linguistics and non-linguistics, contributing positively to oral and written communication skills (Pham & Le, 2023). To consider recording videos a pleasant experience is about the innovative aspect of achieving significant learning in students; in this sense, authors like Moulam et al. (2020) and Dunne et al. (2010) agree with highlighting the too-frequent use of technology in the teaching-learning process, and this, at the same time could be considered an excellent experience for young people, who are accustomed to the traditional teacher-centered learning environment. To have chosen the video's topic is for authors like MehdiYev (2020), an autonomous learning experience where students learn, considering their daily activities.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of combining traditional learning methods, where the teacher first provides theoretical content referred to in the Peruvian Education Ministry regulation. Then, students progressively achieve autonomy through products like videos discussing their interests. It is necessary to clarify that the teachers are to advise their students, as often as necessary, based on student's interests and preferences. Secondly, the survey's design considers three constructs: oral skills, language difficulties, and videos with the appropriate factor structure. Therefore, it can serve as a model for the future. Let us bear in mind that there is a clear link between oral skills and the kind of videos, and in addition to this, there is an inverse relationship between learning difficulties and the kind of videos. The last conclusion of this work is the positive appreciation by the students for recording videos with their interest topics, both because they improved their oral skills and allowed them to develop a topic of interest, also considering their learning pace and respecting their video design style.

APPENDIX

ITEM	Statement
1	When someone speaks English, I get stressed.
2	I get bored quickly when I hear English spoken.
3	I don't understand when someone speaks in English.
4	I easily forget the English vocabulary I am learning.
5	I do not easily understand the instructions in English.
6	Everyone speaks English except me.
7	The video recording project has improved my pronunciation.
8	The video recording project has lessened my fear of speaking English.
9	The video recording project has improved my motivation to learn English.
10	The project of shooting a video has enhanced my creativity.
11	Before recording a video in English, I had to practice a lot.
12	I am ashamed that anyone would watch my video recorded in English.
13	Recording a video has improved my oral English skills.
14	The video recording project has recharged my work as a student.
15	The video project fits my style of learning English.
16	The project of recording a video has made me realize that I can learn English anytime, anywhere.
17	I will continue to record videos independently, as it is an effective way to learn English.
18	Recording a video in English has increased my willingness to learn the language and improve myself in it.
19	Recording a video in English has been one of the things I have done best in this language.
20	Recording a video in English has improved my writing, listening, and reading in English.
21	In my video, I have shown mastery of the subject matter covered in it.
22	In my video, I have shared a topic related to feelings and emotions.
23	In my video, I have shared scientific evidence of the developed topic.
24	The best way to persuade with a video is to use deep knowledge of the subject, which comes from experience.
25	I believe the best way to persuade with a video is to show statistical evidence of the central theme.

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Teachers' Point of View Concerning the Impact of Bedouin Culture on EFL Speaking Skills Among High School Arab Students in the Negev, Israel

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Abstract—This research is aimed at exploring the influence of Bedouin culture on the development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills in high school Arab students residing in Israel's Negev region, as perceived by educators. To achieve this, the study involves conducting interviews with experienced English teachers and delving into various cultural factors, including the impact of dialects and accents in students' first language (L1), parental education levels, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics. The findings shed light on the intricate relationship between culture and language proficiency, revealing that students' strong attachment to their native dialects and accents can present challenges in acquiring English-speaking skills. Furthermore, the research highlights the significance of parental education, with higher levels of parental education positively correlated with students' speaking abilities. Socioeconomic status emerges as a notable influencer of language resources, which, in turn, affects language development and proficiency. Additionally, gender dynamics come into play, showing how cultural norms can influence male and female students differently in their language learning activities. These results underscore the importance of employing culturally sensitive approaches to language education, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers striving to enhance EFL speaking skills in students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Index Terms—cultural aspects, EFL speaking skill, dialects

I. INTRODUCTION

Proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) plays a crucial role in shaping the academic and professional success of students worldwide (Kadamovna, 2021). In diverse, multicultural societies, it is imperative to recognize the impact of cultural factors on EFL speaking skills for effective language instruction (Litiem & Mebrouki, 2012). The Bedouin community, located in the Negev region of Israel, possesses a rich cultural heritage that significantly influences the language learning experiences of its high school students. This study focuses on various cultural aspects, including the influence of parental backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics as perceived by teachers, which have the potential to affect the English-speaking skills of these Bedouin students.

It is essential to note that there is limited existing research dedicated to exploring the interaction between Bedouin culture and its effects on EFL speaking skills among high school students in the Negev. This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating teachers' perspectives and insights on this critical issue. By gaining a deeper understanding of the cultural factors influencing EFL speaking skills, this study seeks to contribute to the development of customized language teaching approaches that cater to the unique needs of Bedouin students.

In conclusion, the research question, "To what extent does Bedouin culture, including elements such as L1 dialect/accents, parental education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics, impact EFL speaking skills among high school students in the Negev?" addresses a significant gap in the existing literature and holds substantial implications for the field of language education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the specific context of the Bedouin community in the Negev, there is limited research exploring the impact of dialect/accents in L1, parents' education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics on the English-speaking skills of Bedouin students. Therefore, it is crucial to address this research gap and investigate the potential influence of these

cultural aspects on EFL speaking skills among Bedouin high school students in the Negev region. Additionally, by comparing the findings of previous studies on cultural aspects of language learning in different cultural contexts, we can gain insights into the unique dynamics within the Bedouin community and contribute to the existing body of knowledge in this area.

The effect of accent in L1 and dialect

The effect of accent and dialect on second language learning, particularly in the context of English language acquisition, is indeed a topic that has received significant attention in research. Understanding how accent and dialect can influence learners' pronunciation, speaking skills, and overall language proficiency is important, as it can influence effective communication and comprehension in the target language.

Definition of Dialect and Accent as mentioned, a dialect is a specific form of a language spoken in a particular region or by a specific group of people, and it may contain variations in words, grammar, or pronunciation when compared to other dialects or the standard form of the language. An accent, on the other hand, refers to the way in which people from a particular area, country, or social group pronounce words. Accents are a subset of dialects, primarily focusing on pronunciation.

Research on Dialect Influence: The study conducted by Siregar (2017) explored the influence of dialects prevalent among Indonesian people on their pronunciation and speaking abilities in English. This research is significant because it sheds light on how the unique characteristics of different dialects can affect students' proficiency in English. Pronunciation, which is a critical aspect of language communication, is highlighted as a key element influenced by dialect variations.

Pronunciation and Communication: Accurate pronunciation is essential for effective communication in English and many other languages. Dialectal differences can affect how words are pronounced, which may affect comprehension and intelligibility, especially when communicating with speakers from different regions. Understanding these variations can help learners adapt and improve their pronunciation skills.

Implications for Language Learning: Research into the influence of accent and dialect on language learning has several implications for educators and learners. Teachers can take into account the dialectal backgrounds of their students and tailor their instruction accordingly. Learners can also be made aware of the potential challenges posed by dialectal variations and work on improving their pronunciation and comprehension skills.

Cultural Sensitivity: It is worth noting that language learners should also be encouraged to embrace linguistic diversity and respect different dialects and accents. Learning about dialectal variations can be an enriching cultural experience and can foster better intercultural communication.

In conclusion, research into the impact of accent and dialect on second language learning, particularly in English language acquisition, is a valuable area of study. It highlights the need for a nuanced approach to language instruction that considers the influence of dialectal variations on pronunciation and speaking abilities. This research can help both educators and learners develop effective strategies to improve language proficiency and enhance cross-cultural communication.

Parents' education

Some studies have examined the impact of parental educational background on various aspects of a child's academic performance and achievement. In the context of language learning, research has explored how parents' education can influence their children's language proficiency, including speaking abilities in English as a foreign language (Jalili, 2017). Parents with higher education levels tend to have higher expectations and ideals for their children's education (Sembiring et al., 2022).

Sembiring et al. (2022) suggest in their study that parents who have received a higher level of education may recognize the importance of education and actively support their children's learning journey and they are more likely to create a supportive learning environment at home, engage in educational activities, and foster a positive attitude toward learning English. Furthermore, the study also examines the role of parental income in students' academic achievement. They suggest that higher income levels can assist students in meeting their educational needs, thereby facilitating the learning process and enhancing English language proficiency. This finding implies that financial resources can significantly support students' language development by providing access to relevant educational materials and opportunities.

Socioeconomic situation

Salameh's (2018) study focused on assessing the impact of socioeconomic factors on students' English language performance in EFL classrooms in Dubai public secondary schools. Through a mixed-methods research approach involving case study analysis, statistical tools, and interviews, the study found that socioeconomic factors, including parents' socioeconomic status, significantly influenced students' learning attitudes and performance. The research highlighted the relationship between students' socioeconomic background, such as their parent's education level and income, and their English language performance. The study emphasized the importance of considering the socioeconomic context when evaluating students' language abilities and performance.

Gender dynamics

In the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, the impact of gender within the classroom has been a topic of ongoing discussion. The role of gender varies across nations due to differences in social and cultural

backgrounds. Ara's (2019) research specifically focuses on the context of Bangladesh, where gender roles are shaped by social, cultural, and traditional beliefs. The study aims to investigate whether the genders of both learners and teachers create barriers to EFL learning in Bangladesh. The research methodology employed in the study involved 198 students who responded to questionnaires designed to assess the impact of gender on EFL classrooms.

In addition, 20 students and 9 teachers from a university participated in semi-structured open-ended interviews to provide further insights. The findings of this mixed-method study indicate that the socio-culturally defined gender roles of males and females in Bangladeshi society have an impact on English language learning within the EFL classroom. Alshebl (2021) conducted a study to examine gender differences in classroom interactions and preferences. Data were collected through questionnaires, observations, and interviews from 47 international students studying in the Language Academy in the UK. The findings revealed distinct patterns in participants' interaction styles based on gender, along with preferences influenced by gender.

Definitions:

Negev Bedouins:

According to Mann (2021), the Bedouins in Israel constitute a minority group within the larger Arab Palestinian community. They are a nomadic community residing in the Negev Desert. While the overall Bedouin population in Israel is estimated to be between 200,000 and 250,000 individuals, comprising roughly 3% of the country's total population, their presence is particularly significant in the sparsely populated Negev desert, where they represent one in four residents. The Bedouins' extensive kinship networks and rich culture set them apart from other groups.

In Israel, the Bedouin community experiences discrimination, especially since its districts lack the resources and services they ought to have (Mann, 2021). Related to Bedouin education, numerous obstacles prevented the Negev Bedouin schools from enhancing their educational offerings. First, they were short on staff members and equipment, especially in the "unplanned" tribal settlements, which the government considered temporary because they were not one of the seven it had established. Although it is legally required that Bedouin children receive an education, the government ignores this requirement and instead uses the educational system to persuade the Bedouins to move into permanent settlements (Abu-Rubiyya et al., 1996).

EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

English has emerged as an essential means of communication on a global scale. With its widespread use as the dominant language in business, academia, and tourism, the demand for English language education as a foreign language (EFL) in schools has gained significant importance worldwide (Vonkoya et al., 2021). EFL is regarded as English as a Foreign Language, mainly used by non-native English learners. The audience of EFL is those for whom English is not the first language or the official language of the country such as China, Japan, and South Korea. In such countries, English is not indispensable for daily communication (Si, 2019; Al Hosni, 2014) Speaking Difficulties Encountered by Young EFL Learners. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and*. According to the Cambridge English Dictionary, EFL is taught to students who reside in a nation where English is not the dominant language. In other words, neither the government, local media, nor day-to-day interactions use English. The only context in which students will encounter the language is in the classroom (Chugani, 2021).

Speaking skill

English has emerged as a global language, serving as a means of communication. Through language, we express our thoughts and understand the ideas of others (Litiem & Mebrouki, 2012). Communication is facilitated through speech, highlighting the immense significance of speaking skills for language learners. To ensure the smooth functioning of any communication system, individuals must receive targeted training in the skill of speaking. While proficiency in all four-language skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - is essential for effective communication, the ability to speak fluently offers distinct advantages (Kadamovna, 2021; Latha, 2012).

The acquisition of speaking skills poses a significant challenge for EFL learners as they need help to overcome their English-speaking skills challenges (Al-Hassaani & Qaid, 2021; Ge et al., 2019).

Akhter et al. (2020) indicate that for learners of English as a foreign language or English as a second language, constructing sentences without a firm grasp of grammar and sentence structure can be quite difficult and that a sufficient vocabulary is necessary for effective oral communication. The mastery of vocabulary holds a crucial role in the process of language learning. Nazara's research showed that Speaking is deemed the most vital skill in foreign language teaching and learning because it receives extensive attention in research, conferences, and teaching methods. Learners often see speaking ability as the primary gauge of language proficiency, emphasizing fluency in conversation above reading or writing. Hence, mastering speaking is considered the key aspect of language acquisition (Nazara, 2011).

III. METHODOLOGY

Study design

The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' points of view concerning the effect of Bedouin culture (including the cultural aspects: dialect/accents in L1, parents' education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics) on EFL speaking skills among high school students in Negev. Data will be collected using qualitative methods. The qualitative method depends on interviewing participants (teachers) to know their points of view concerning the topic.

Semi-structured interviews are adopted in this study because they are based on open-ended questions that deepen the topic under investigation and provide opportunities for the interviewer and interviewee to discuss some points in more detail. It also gives the interviewer the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee (Fox, 2006).

Study participants

This study relies on conducting semi-structured interviews with 10 experienced English language teachers who deeply understand Bedouin culture. These interviews took place at a high school in the village of Tel -Sheva. The following Table will present the participants for the study and their details.

TABLE 1
THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY, THEIR AGE, AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Participants' Number	Name	Age	Gender M= Male F=Female	Experience in teaching English (years)
1	Ahmad	30	M	6
2	Khalid	45	M	19
3	Eid	43	M	15
4	Adam	28	M	5
5	Jawad	35	M	10
6	Shifaa	30	F	4
7	Lyal	32	F	8
8	Najah	33	F	9
9	Iman	33	F	8
10	Yasmeen	39	F	17

Data collection

The study was conducted during the third semester (April to June) of the academic year 2022-2023, specifically at Tel-Sheva High School in Negev. It involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 10 experienced English teachers (males & females). The interview process spanned over a period of two months and included 10 questions concerning the chosen cultural aspects that affect EFL students' speaking skills.

Data analysis

The data obtained from the semi-structured interviews with experienced English teachers were analyzed using thematic analysis to explore their points of view concerning the effect of Bedouin culture, specifically focusing on dialect/accents in L1, parents' education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics, on EFL students' speaking skills in the Negev. Thematic analysis, a qualitative method, was employed to identify and interpret patterns or themes within the data, specifically related to these cultural aspects.

The analysis process involved several key steps, including familiarization with the recorded interviews through transcription and thorough reading. A coding system was then developed to categorize the data according to the identified cultural aspects, assigning descriptive labels or codes to segments related to each category. The coded data were reviewed to identify initial themes within each cultural aspect category, which were further refined and developed through an iterative process of grouping related codes. The themes within each cultural aspect category were reviewed and defined to accurately represent the data and reflect the teachers' points of view. In-depth analysis and interpretation of the themes within each cultural aspect category were conducted, considering the specific cultural factors and their implications for EFL students' speaking skills. The findings of the thematic analysis within each cultural aspect category were reported, presenting coherent and organized descriptions of the themes, supported by relevant excerpts from the interviews".

Results and findings

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews with experienced English teachers yielded valuable insights into the effects of Bedouin culture on EFL students' speaking skills in the Negev. This section presents the results and findings obtained from the thematic analysis, focusing on the cultural aspects of dialect/accents in L1, parents' education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics. The findings shed light on the various ways in which these cultural factors influence EFL students' speaking abilities and provide valuable implications for language instruction in the Negev region. The following subsections outline the key themes and patterns that emerged within each cultural aspect category. The following Table presents the cultural aspects highlighted in the research, the main themes that were repeated across the participants, and their points of view as said literally. Table 2 will present the cultural aspects, themes and teachers' perspectives

TABLE 2
THE CULTURAL ASPECTS, THEMES, AND TEACHERS' POINTS OF VIEW

Cultural aspect	Themes	Teachers' points of view
Accent in L1/ Dialect	The Influence of Bedouin Accents on Students' speaking skill	<p>Teacher 1: "The Bedouin accent presents a significant challenge as it differs considerably from English. Students with a strong L1 accent often face difficulties in speaking activities".</p> <p>Teacher 5: "There is a notable connection between their accent and their hesitancy in speaking. Many of them feel self-conscious when attempting to use a different accent".</p> <p>Teacher 7: "While the students' Bedouin accent is unique, it can still be a barrier in English speaking lessons".</p> <p>Teacher 8: "Part of my responsibility is to help students develop an English accent while speaking, but some of them prefer to retain their Bedouin influence when they speak".</p> <p>Teacher 10: "Many students are apprehensive about speaking in English, particularly due to the lighter pronunciation of English letters compared to their native accent. Some are convinced that English speaking is challenging".</p>
Parents' education	The impact of parents' education on students' achievement.	<p>Teacher 2: "I think that all the educated parents I've met in this school, are fathers and mothers for advanced students."</p> <p>Teacher 4: "Educated parents are always in contact with us about their children's learning process."</p> <p>Teacher 6: "It is noticeable that most skilled students belong to educated mothers or fathers, but we also have skilled students from illiterate families."</p> <p>Teacher 1: "Educated parents practice speaking with their children because they have a background in English and they realize the importance of speaking English post-school."</p> <p>Teacher 5: "Students from highly educated families tend to have better speaking skills."</p> <p>Teacher 7: "Students with educated parents realize the importance of English and its skill, even if they were not advanced. While others don't consider English lessons important enough, so they do not give themselves a chance".</p> <p>Teacher 2: "I think that all the educated parents I've met in this school, are fathers and mothers for advanced students".</p> <p>Teacher 4: "Educated parents are always in contact with us about their children's learning process".</p> <p>Teacher 6: "It is noticeable that most skilled students belong to educated mothers or fathers, but we also have skilled students from illiterate families".</p>
	The impact of parents' education on students' speaking skills	<p>Teacher 1: "Educated parents practice speaking with their children because they have a background in English and they realize the importance of speaking English post-school."</p> <p>Teacher 5: "Students from highly educated families tend to have better speaking skills".</p> <p>Teacher 7: "Students with educated parents realize the importance of English and its skill, even if they were not advanced. While others don't consider English lessons important enough, so they do not give themselves a chance".</p>
Socioeconomic status	The relationship between socioeconomic status and students' speaking skills.	<p>It appears that there are varying perspectives among the teachers regarding the relationship between students' socioeconomic backgrounds and their English-speaking abilities:</p> <p>Teacher 2 suggests that students from high socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to speak in English to demonstrate their social status, while students from low socioeconomic status might feel less confident about participating in class.</p> <p>Teacher 4, in contrast, believes that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds may be more motivated to speak English as a way to challenge themselves and make progress at their own level. High socioeconomic status students are seen as more dependent on their parents.</p> <p>Teacher 7 notes that there is a noticeable correlation between students' socioeconomic backgrounds and their speaking abilities, although they don't specify the nature of the correlation.</p> <p>Teacher 10 seems to imply that students from families with limited socioeconomic status may face challenges in providing educational support to their children due to their own situations.</p> <p>Teacher 3 suggests that some students face speaking challenges due to limited resources and opportunities, which could be related to their socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> <p>It is important to acknowledge that these are individual opinions and perceptions, and the relationship between socioeconomic status and English-speaking abilities can be influenced by various factors. Socioeconomic background can play a role, but it is not the sole determinant of a student's language proficiency or their willingness to speak in class. Additionally, generalizing about a group of students based on socioeconomic status may oversimplify a complex issue.</p>
Gender dynamics	Gender dynamics and their effect on EFL students.	<p>Teacher 5: "I noticed variations in speaking confidence among male and female students, with males often perceiving English as less essential".</p> <p>Teacher 10: "Cultural norms and expectations can sometimes influence the participation of both boys and girls in speaking activities".</p>

IV. FINDINGS

In this section, we will explore the primary outcomes obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted with seasoned English teachers. These interviews focused on understanding the impact of Bedouin cultural elements on the development of English as Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills within the Negev region. The findings have uncovered several noteworthy themes and factors associated with the influence of Bedouin culture on the speaking

proficiency of EFL students, encompassing aspects such as the influence of the local dialect or accent in their first language (L1), parental educational backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics.

Dialect/Accent in L1:

The researcher investigates how the Bedouin dialect and accent, which students have as their first language (L1), affect their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills. This exploration is based on the perceptions of experienced English teachers in the Negev region. The data for this study were collected via semi-structured interviews conducted with 10 teachers from various high schools, all of whom have considerable experience teaching EFL to Bedouin students.

Theme 1: The Impact of Bedouin Accents on Students' English Speaking Skills.

Teachers unanimously concur that the Bedouin dialect, as the students' primary language, has a detrimental effect on their English-speaking abilities. They emphasized that the unique phonological attributes and pronunciation patterns of the Bedouin dialect often persist in their English speech, impairing their clarity and their ability to communicate with non-Bedouin speakers. Teacher Khalid expressed this concern, stating, "Many of my students tend to carry over the phonetic features of their native Bedouin dialect into their English pronunciation, resulting in difficulties when conveying their intended message to native English speakers".

In summary, the findings underscore the substantial impact of the Bedouin dialect and accent in students' native language on their English-speaking skills. Educators acknowledge the necessity for targeted instruction and support to assist students in overcoming the linguistic transfer and pronunciation challenges associated with their native language.

To conclude, addressing the influence of the Bedouin dialect on students' English-speaking skills is a critical challenge for educators. Recognizing the linguistic transfer and pronunciation challenges constitutes the initial step in helping students surmount these difficulties and enhance their proficiency in English. Through focused instruction and support, students can develop their English-speaking abilities while still preserving and valuing their native language and culture.

Theme 2: The Impact of Parents' Education on Students' Achievement.

In the interviews, teachers highlighted the notable impact of parental education on students' academic success, particularly in terms of their English language proficiency. It was apparent that students with parents who had attained higher levels of education consistently excelled in English language assessments and earned superior grades in language-related assignments. One teacher conveyed her insights:

"Students whose parents possess advanced educational backgrounds frequently display superior academic performance across the board, especially in English. These students tend to showcase more robust language skills, which significantly enhances their speaking abilities as well."

Theme 3: The Impact of Parents' Education on Students' Speaking Skills.

Teachers also emphasized the correlation between parents' educational backgrounds and their children's speaking skills. Students whose parents had attained higher levels of education demonstrated a more advanced proficiency in spoken English, exhibiting superior pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary usage. One teacher commented, stating:

"We observed that students with parents possessing higher educational qualifications tend to exhibit more developed speaking skills. They demonstrate greater confidence in expressing themselves in English and are more adept at effective communication".

These findings underscore the importance of parental education in molding students' language development and speaking abilities. The educational background of parents not only affects their academic achievements but also plays a pivotal role in nurturing their language proficiency and oral communication skills.

Socioeconomic Status:

Theme 4: The Relationship between Socioeconomic Status and Students' Speaking Skills.

In the interviews, teachers consistently emphasized the significant influence of socioeconomic status on students' proficiency in English-speaking skills, particularly within the context of the Bedouin community. They found that socioeconomic factors, such as family income and financial stability, played a pivotal role in shaping students' language abilities. One teacher made the following observation :

The authors noticed a distinct correlation between students' socioeconomic backgrounds and their proficiency in spoken English. Students from families with higher socioeconomic status generally exhibited superior oral communication skills. They displayed greater proficiency in vocabulary usage, fluency, and overall coherence in their spoken English.

The teachers also noted that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds encountered additional challenges in developing their speaking skills. Factors such as limited access to resources, a lack of exposure to English outside the classroom, and reduced opportunities for language enrichment seemed to impede their progress. Another teacher added:

"Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often encounter difficulties in spoken English. They may have fewer opportunities to practice the language outside the classroom and face obstacles in accessing language-learning resources. Consequently, their development in speaking skills may not advance as swiftly as that of their peers from backgrounds that are more privileged".

These findings underscore the importance of considering socioeconomic factors when addressing English language learning in the Bedouin community. Recognizing the impact of socioeconomic status can provide valuable insights for

targeted interventions and support mechanisms aimed at narrowing the gap in students' speaking skills and ensuring equitable opportunities for language development.

Theme 5: Gender dynamics and their effect on EFL students.

The insights gained from interviews with experienced English teachers shed light on the impact of gender dynamics on EFL students' speaking skills within the Bedouin community. These teachers reported discerning distinct patterns in the way that male and female students approach and engage with English language learning, with potential repercussions on their speaking abilities. One teacher shared the following observations:

"Gender dynamics play a significant role in shaping students' confidence and participation in speaking activities. We have noticed that, generally, female students tend to be more assertive and vocal during classroom discussions, which often translates into increased practice and fluency in speaking. In contrast, male students at times exhibit hesitation in speaking English, resulting in reduced opportunities for language practice".

The teachers underscored the importance of creating an inclusive and supportive classroom environment to address gender-related challenges effectively. Another teacher emphasized:

"We must cultivate a positive and non-discriminatory learning atmosphere where every student feels at ease expressing themselves in English. By being mindful of gender dynamics and providing targeted support, we can assist male students in overcoming potential barriers to speaking confidently and ensure their progress in language learning".

Comprehending the potential influence of gender dynamics on students' speaking skills empowers teachers to devise inclusive teaching strategies that cater to the unique needs and learning preferences of both male and female students. Prioritizing a student-centered approach and offering encouragement to all learners can contribute to a more equitable and supportive language-learning environment.

V. DISCUSSION

The present study investigates the effect of Bedouin culture on EFL students' speaking skills in the Negev region, focusing on the aspects of dialect/accent in L1, parents' education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics. The findings from semi-structured interviews with experienced English teachers shed light on the significance of these cultural aspects in shaping students' speaking abilities.

Regarding the impact of dialect/accent in L1, the responses from teachers highlighted that Bedouin students' strong attachment to their native dialects and accents posed challenges in acquiring a neutral and standardized English pronunciation. This finding is in line with Siregar (2017) and Istiqomah (2016), both studies emphasizing the influence of accent and dialect in L1 on EFL students' pronunciation. Siregar's study delved into the role of accent and dialect in L1 on EFL students' pronunciation, while Istiqomah's study provided evidence of interference in pronouncing specific sounds of Javanese and English words among Javanese students.

Moving to parents' education, the findings revealed a positive correlation between parents' education level and students' speaking skills. Students with parents who had higher levels of education demonstrated better English-speaking proficiency. This aligns with Jalili's (2017) and Sembiring et al.'s (2022) studies, highlighting the significant impact of parents' educational level on students' English language proficiency and overall academic achievement. Jalili's research emphasized that children with highly educated mothers demonstrated higher levels of English language proficiency, like our findings regarding Bedouin students. Moreover, both studies underscored that parents' values, knowledge, beliefs, and goals for their children are affected by their educational level, indirectly influencing their children's academic performance.

Moreover, the research revealed a substantial influence of socioeconomic status on students' speaking abilities. Individuals hailing from less privileged socioeconomic backgrounds encountered more obstacles in obtaining high-quality English language resources and being exposed to language-rich environments. This adversity ultimately had a detrimental effect on their language development and speaking proficiency. This observation closely mirrors the findings of Salameh's (2018) study, which underscored the role of socioeconomic factors in shaping students' English language performance. Salameh's investigation delved into variables such as parental education, financial standing, and occupation as pivotal aspects of socioeconomic status, aligning seamlessly with our own discoveries regarding the impact of socioeconomic status on the speaking skills of Bedouin students.

Furthermore, the study found that socioeconomic status significantly affected students' speaking skills. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds faced more barriers in accessing quality English language resources and exposure to language-rich environments, affecting their language development, and speaking proficiency. This resonates with Salameh's (2018) study, which demonstrates the impact of socioeconomic factors on students' English language performance. Salameh's investigation explored parents' education, financial status, and occupation as key socioeconomic factors, aligning with our findings on the influence of socioeconomic status on Bedouin students' speaking skills.

Regarding gender dynamics, the study revealed that cultural norms and expectations related to gender roles influenced the participation and engagement of male and female students in language learning activities. Female students tended to exhibit higher levels of motivation and participation, while male students faced certain cultural barriers that affected their speaking confidence. This is consistent with Ara's (2019) study conducted in Bangladesh, which revealed that socio-culturally defined gender roles had an impact on interactions and behaviors in EFL classes.

Additionally, Alshebl's (2021) research indicated interesting differences in the interaction patterns of male and female students during EFL classes, with female students dominating speech in mixed-gender groups. The research findings align with both studies, emphasizing the role of gender dynamics in influencing EFL students' speaking skills.

The present study adds to the growing body of literature on the effect of cultural aspects on EFL students' speaking skills. By exploring the impact of Bedouin culture on speaking abilities, specifically focusing on dialect/accent in L1, parents' education, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics, this research contributes valuable insights to the field of language education. The findings highlight the importance of considering cultural factors in designing effective language learning programs and interventions, with implications for enhancing students' speaking proficiency and fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

VI. CONCLUSION

In summary, this study's extensive investigation has provided valuable insights into the intricate relationship between Bedouin culture and the speaking skills of EFL students in the Negev region. By examining various factors such as dialect and accent in their native language (L1), parents' educational backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and gender dynamics, we have gained a nuanced understanding of how these cultural dimensions collectively influence students' speaking abilities.

The results highlight the significant role that cultural elements play in shaping language acquisition. The influence of dialect and accent in L1 on speaking skills is evident, as reflected in the feedback from teachers and supported by previous research, including studies by Siregar (2017) and Istiqomah (2016). These studies shed light on how linguistic characteristics of the mother tongue can affect students' pronunciation. Underscoring the challenges faced by Bedouin students in maintaining a neutral English additionally, the strong correlation between parents' educational attainment and students' speaking abilities underscores the significant impact of parental involvement in education, aligning with the research of Jalili (2017) and Sembiring et al. (2022). These studies underscore the vital role of parents' educational backgrounds in shaping students' language proficiency, emphasizing the importance of taking into account parents' educational aspirations as a means to improve language-learning outcomes.

Socioeconomic status emerges as a powerful factor influencing speaking skills. The disparities in access to language resources and enriching environments experienced by students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds highlight the influence of external factors on language development, a theme supported by Salameh's (2018) research. Salameh's work further underscores the significant connection between socioeconomic factors and language performance, echoing the challenges faced by Bedouin students in similar circumstances.

Moreover, gender dynamics play a pivotal role in shaping students' speaking abilities. Cultural norms and gender roles affect students' participation and engagement, reflecting the findings of Ara (2019) and Alshebl (2021). These studies emphasize the intricate interplay of gender in language learning and reinforce the importance of cultivating an inclusive and supportive classroom environment.

These findings have important implications for the design of effective language programs, emphasizing the need to consider these cultural factors to enhance students' speaking skills and foster a supportive learning atmosphere.

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Restoring Gilgamesh Through AI With a Negotiation Algorithm Approach

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Abstract—In this study, the AI tool ChatGPT is utilised to enhance Tablet 2 of the Epic of Gilgamesh by using a perfected approach for restoration. The proposed negotiation algorithm regulates the interaction of ChatGPT with a human expert and ensures that the words generated are stylistically suitable. ChatGPT employs an interactive scheme, proposing different alternatives for each missing line, and the human specialist evaluates these alternatives in terms of their coherence, consistency, and adherence to the story. The expert evaluation is the key factor in the improvement of the text generation process, as this evaluation increases the restoration efficiency. This combination of AI and human intelligence, in turn, refines Tablet 2 by obtaining more accurate paragraphs and, thus, making the restoration more appropriate. Through this model, ChatGPT not only helps with the comprehension of the epic but also provides new insights into the work's literary and historical importance. The negotiation algorithm is an outstanding method that may provide a better understanding of the whole work by providing new insights. This study reveals the possibility of using the collaboration between AI and human thinking in the field of literary restoration, which represents a new direction for understanding and enjoying ancient literary texts.

Index Terms—negotiation algorithm approach, Gilgamesh, missing lines, restoration

I. INTRODUCTION

In the great expanse of old literature, the Epic of Gilgamesh represents a timeless story that reflects human truth and ethics and the eternal quest for oblivion. Since the era of Mesopotamia, this story has continued to amaze every generation by combining friendship, love, and mourning in an unending quest for knowledge. However, time has impacted the Epic; lines have been lost, and parts are fragmented, which reduces the understanding of this literary work as a whole.

The recovery of these missing lines is viewed as important in both scholarly debate and research. Scholars have used several methods to recreate the original version of the story, and such recreation efforts have been further facilitated by the development of artificial intelligence (AI), which has provided alternative approaches for addressing this challenge of text recovery and investigation. On the basis of these AI-dependent approaches, Google has invented a language model for common text generation called ChatGPT.

This paper presents a useful method for improving the process of identifying missing lines, especially on Tablet 2 of the Epic, with the aid of ChatGPT. Specifically, we propose a negotiation algorithm based upon ChatGPT's language generation capacity that allows the programme to generate real chunks of text that can be used in the epic and fill in the gaps. The algorithm provides the basis for a negotiation process between ChatGPT and a human expert. In particular, the expert human judge ensures cohesiveness, consistency, and adherence to the narrative structure, while ChatGPT generates segments of text in response to contextual cues from the surrounding text.

As an iterative operation, the negotiation algorithm involves ChatGPT generating a multitude of text segments for each unfinished tract of Tablet 2. Subsequently, the human expert assesses these segments in terms of grammatical accuracy, compliance with the narrative structure, and correspondence to the previously produced content. Of particular importance, the algorithm involves a secondary processing stage that allows for the enhancement of both the quality and coherency of the generated segments through feedback from an expert human source.

There are many advantages of such a method, in particular in relation to the restoration of Tablet 2. Indeed, this method makes use of ChatGPT's large knowledge base and text-generating capabilities to formulate text monads that reflect the context and are linguistically appropriate with respect to the original source. In addition, the process of negotiation guarantees that the produced pieces are checked and improved by a human expert, thus leading to more accurate text recovery. In the future, the synergistic integration-based approach of negotiation algorithms, which is based on both AI and human capabilities-, could help to significantly improve other lines of restoration for the Epic of Gilgamesh, Tablet 2. Indeed, the use of such algorithms represents a promising technique for clarifying the current understanding of this old classic and for highlighting different sides of its literary and historical significance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Epic of Gilgamesh is a poem written in ancient Mesopotamia during the 3rd millennium BCE. This Epic narrates the story of Gilgamesh, a legendary ruler in the Uruk kingdom who was looking for perpetual life. The Epic of Gilgamesh

is widely popular and has been studied and translated relatively often; furthermore, this poem has also attracted significant attention from scholars interested in its restoration.

The conventional restoration techniques used for this poem include the assessment of surviving fragments, comparative analysis of different versions of the Epic, and the application of linguistic knowledge to recreate lost lines (George, 2003). These methods have provided some good results, but the process of restoration is still problematic due to a lack of completeness in what has been preserved (Mitchell, 2004). However, the emergence of AI provides an opportunity for improving text recovery. Indeed, AI-based NLP techniques have been shown to be useful in many text-related tasks such as language modelling, text generation, and machine translation (Bird & Loper, 2009; Jurafsky et al., 2021).

Language models seem to be a powerful tool capable of generating text that is both contextually appropriate and coherent. Indeed, these models are trained on large amounts of textual data and learn statistical patterns as well as dependencies between words or phrases, which enables them to generate text that is not only grammatically correct but also aligned in style with the input data (Devlin et al., 2019). Specifically, ChatGPT, a model from Google, is a language model that performs well in various NLP tasks and is, thus, popular compared to other models. ChatGPT has proven to be effective in tasks such as text summarisation, question-answering, dialogue generation, and creative writing (Radford et al., 2021).

In contrast though, there is a class of algorithms that assist parties in negotiation, and these are referred to as negotiation algorithms. These types of algorithms use a cycle of introducing, evaluating, and rejecting proposals until acceptance occurs (Osborne & Rubinstein, 1990). The application of ChatGPT, an AI-powered text generation chatbot, along with the negotiation algorithm creates an alternative method for recovering lost lines from the Epic of Gilgamesh. With the help of the negotiation algorithm, ChatGPT can be prompted to fill in any missing text segments with numerous options that a human expert may select from accordingly based on certain standards.

The suggested recovery approach based on negotiation algorithms has several advantages over classical recovery techniques. Firstly, with the help of this algorithm passages that are contextually correct and resemble the original writing can be created using the use of the enormous knowledge data and text generation facilities provided by ChatGPT. Secondly, the dialogue between ChatGPT and the human expert not only makes it possible to correct the results of a translation based on the expertise of another person but also provides the opportunity to implement an approach that increases the meaning accuracy in restorations.

However, this approach also has some drawbacks. For example, ChatGPT may issue text fragments that are factually incorrect or do not match the historical and cultural background of the Epic. In order to address this issue, the segments that are generated must be subjected to critical analysis using other sources of knowledge, such as historical records or archaeological findings, during the negotiation process (Zadrozny & Elhadad, 2009). Furthermore, the standards of the human expert are relative. Indeed, disparity among experts in the definition of an ideal restoration could also make the generated segment choices unpredictable. To counter this problem, it is essential to create objective metrics for choosing the target segments and to involve multiple experts in the assessment process (Artstein & Poesio, 2008).

The suggested approach based on the negotiation algorithm that uses AI ChatGPT capabilities represents one of the prospective ways to improve loss restoration in the Epic of Gilgamesh. This approach, which combines AI and human expert knowledge, can significantly develop the current understanding of this ancient masterpiece, revealing a great deal of literary and historical knowledge. However, new research should be carried out to evaluate the efficiency of this approach, compare various negotiation strategies, and overcome the challenges in assessing the produced text segments. Furthermore, the use of this technique in other ancient books and historical papers can be researched to help support the maintenance of cultural heritage.

Since some lines of Tablet 2 of the Epic of Gilgamesh are missing, it is complicated to reconstruct this text. The message of this tablet is woven into a story about Gilgamesh's travels and his life-transforming relationship with the character Enkidu. Scholars have been interested in rebuilding Tablet 2 since ancient times, and for this, they have used traditional techniques such as conducting fragment analysis and comparative studies that rely on linguistic knowledge to restore the lost sentences. However, despite several significant efforts that have been made towards the reconstruction of Tablet 2, only a few surviving texts are left, making it impossible to obtain a whole picture of the Epic (Parpola, 1997).

Overall, the current progress in AI provides a radical solution for recovering Tablet 2. Language modelling and text generation, as well as other NLP approaches powered by AI, represent some possible remedies for ancient text restoration (Jurafsky & Martin, 2021; Lafferty et al., 2001). However, language models similar to ChatGPT have unique abilities in producing contextually relevant and cohesive text sections (Devlin et al., 2019; Radford et al., 2022).

III. TABLET II AS A CASE STUDY

One of the tablets of the Epic of Gilgamesh that has caused the most difficulty in its reconstruction is Tablet II, which narrates the story of Gilgamesh's encounter with Enkidu and how they became friends. Specifically, the reconstruction of Tablet II has been difficult due to the many missing lines. Importantly, the negotiation algorithm approach, which applies the features of ChatGPT, can improve the restoration process of Tablet II. Indeed, ChatGPT can generate several pieces of text for each missing line, and a human expert then evaluates and selects the most relevant segments according to the given criteria (Al-Rfou et al., 2018). The presented method allows for fine-tuning the accuracy and consistency of the restored text without compromising its literary or historical significance.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Process of Using ChatGPT for Restoration

1- Data Preparation:

The collected samples of fragments of Tablet II are corrected in the preprocessing stage by removing inconsistencies and errors. The text is also tokenised, meaning that it is changed to a format that ChatGPT can understand.

2- Training the AI Model:

ChatGPT's trained written corpus includes Mesopotamian literature, historical documents, and other texts. This training gives ChatGPT the opportunity to copy the linguistic and stylistic parameters of the Epic of Gilgamesh.

3- Generation of Text Segments:

When missing lines are present in the passage, ChatGPT suggests five different text fragments that are contextually appropriate and consistent with the style of the surrounding writing. These produced fragments are then evaluated based on the following aspects: coherence, relevance, and correctness in terms of following the storyline.

4- Evaluation and Selection:

An AMT specialist, typically a Mesopotamian studies scholar or an expert in ancient Mesopotamian literature, evaluates the text segments produced by the AMT program and chooses the most suitable segment for each missing line. The assessment parameters may include historical validity, thematic essence, and correspondence to the known fragments of the Epic.

5- Refinement and Iteration:

The negotiation algorithm facilitates the refinement and process iteration during the restoration. According to human expert judgements on what ChatGPT should do in order to improve or supplement the text, ChatGPT can be appropriately prompted to generate some new text segments or alter some of them in terms of quality and coherence. This recursive task continues until the human expert gives approval for the retrieved text.

B. Negotiation Algorithm Approach

1- *Generation:* For each line lost, ChatGPT generates multiple text segments, considering other alternatives and variants.

2- *Evaluation:* The human expert then assesses the segments that are generated based on certain criteria, such as chronological correctness, topic relevancy, and stylistic uniformity.

3- *Feedback:* The human expert gives feedback to ChatGPT that it can accept certain parts and should edit other aspects.

4- *Refinement:* After this evaluation, ChatGPT utilises the feedback to improve its generation process, leading to new pieces of writing with more appropriate segments.

5- *Selection:* In the selection stage, the human expert chooses the most appropriate fragment for each missing line based on their knowledge regarding the background of the epic and its narration progress.

It is possible to utilise a cooperative and recursive recovery process through the negotiation algorithm, where ChatGPT's text-producing proficiency is managed by the knowledge and understanding of a human expert. This method contributes to the realness, validity, and authentic historical context of the generated text.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS

Step	Description
1.	Generation: Each omitted line is responded to by means of several suggestions presenting a range of variants and interpretations.
2.	Evaluation: The human expert evaluates the segments created based on criteria such as thematic consistency, style, and historical appropriateness.
3.	Feedback: The human evaluator first tells ChatGPT which parts they like and where, in their view, the piece needs further work.
4.	Refinement: ChatGPT utilises the feedback to make adjustments in its generation process and create new segments that are more aligned with the preferences and goals of the expert.
5.	Selection: The human expert selects the best segment that can substitute the missing line within the scope of the epic and that effectively supports the decoding of its narrative.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

TABLE 2
THE DATA OF THE STUDY

Tablet	Missing Lines	Context
II	19 lines	Gilgamesh and Enkidu become friends.
II	228–249	Gilgamesh's determination to face Humbaba; Enkidu's encouragement.
II	5 lines	Gilgamesh's decision to undertake the journey to the Cedar Forest.
II	5 lines	Enkidu warns against the journey to the Cedar Forest.
II	Unknown	The Noble Counsellors of Uruk advise Gilgamesh against the journey.
II	5 lines	Gilgamesh listens to the advice of his Noble Counsellors.
II	Unknown	Tablet II ends with approximately 5 lines missing.

Tablet II:

1- Text 1 19 Lines (Gilgamesh and Enkidu Become Friends)

Restoration based on context: “In a profound moment of understanding, Gilgamesh and Enkidu forged an unbreakable bond of friendship. Laughter echoed through the air as the two, once strangers, became companions on a journey that would forever alter the course of their destinies”.

This restoration clearly captures the essence of the friendship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu and emphasises the transformative nature of their connection.

TABLE 3
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 1

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The restored lines demonstrate a high level of accuracy, blending perfectly with the surrounding context and the style of the original text.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored passages show exceptional flow and harmony with the wider text, resulting in smooth continuity throughout.
Coherence	Strong	The restored lines preserve the overall coherence of the narrative, providing an easy transition from the text that remains to the restoration.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical issues concerning AI-based restoration are recognised, with a focus on the responsible use and understanding of potential repercussions.

2- Text2: 228-249 (Gilgamesh's Determination to Face Humbaba; Enkidu's Encouragement)

Restoration based on context: “With unyielding determination, Gilgamesh declared his intent to face the formidable Humbaba. Beside him, Enkidu, a pillar of support, encouraged him with words that resonated with the strength derived from their newfound friendship. Together, they embraced the daunting challenge that lay ahead”.

The restoration conveys Gilgamesh's determination and Enkidu's supportive role in this action, thus maintaining thematic consistency with the narrative of the Epic.

TABLE 4
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 2

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The restored lines reach a high level of accuracy with respect to the original context and style. The portrayal of Gilgamesh's resoluteness and Enkidu's supportive role is an accurate reflection of the plot of the Epic.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored lines show remarkable fluidity and harmony with the surrounding story. The language employed is congruent with the tone of the Epic, and this language use contributes to a unified and seamless progression through the story.
Coherence	Strong	The overall unity of the narrative is well sustained in the restored lines. The transition from the original text to the restoration is smooth, making the storytelling consistent and engaging.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical implications of AI-based restoration are recognised, emphasising the importance of responsible technology use. The restoration preserves the cultural and literary background of the Epic.

3- Text 3: 5 Lines (Gilgamesh's Decision to Undertake the Journey to the Cedar Forest)

Restoration based on context: “In the face of uncertainty, Gilgamesh made a resolute decision to embark on the perilous journey into the Cedar Forest. Fuelled by a hunger for glory and the promise of everlasting renown, he steeled himself for the challenges that awaited in the heart of the unknown”.

The restoration effectively communicates Gilgamesh's decision, highlighting his bold and adventurous character.

TABLE 5
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 3

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The restored lines show a high degree of accuracy, corresponding well with the general context and stylistic properties of the original text. This decision of Gilgamesh to undertake the journey is depicted realistically.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored lines show remarkable smoothness, blending seamlessly into the surrounding story. The language used reflects the adventurous nature of Gilgamesh, thus enhancing the coherence of the whole section and making it interesting and readable.
Coherence	Strong	The narrative coherence of the restored lines is robustly sustained. The transition between the original text and the restoration is seamless, thus providing a steady and captivating narration.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical issues relating to AI-driven restoration are taken into account, focusing on responsible technology use. The restoration respects the cultural and literary environment in which the character of Gilgamesh and his decision are located.

4- *Text 4: 5 Lines (Enkidu Warns Against the Journey to the Cedar Forest)*

Restoration based on context: “Sensing the impending danger within the Cedar Forest, Enkidu earnestly warned Gilgamesh against the perilous journey. He spoke of the lurking threats and the potential consequences, urging his friend to reconsider the path they were about to tread”.

The restoration aligns with Enkidu's protective nature and adds a layer of tension to the narrative.

TABLE 6
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 4

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The restored lines have considerable accuracy as they are consistent with the context and style of the source text. Enkidu's earnest warning against the perilous journey is described with accuracy.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored lines show outstanding smoothness and flow with the story. The language clearly reflects Enkidu's guardianship instincts, adds a thrilling dimension of tension, and contributes to the overall unity of the story.
Coherence	Strong	The overall integrity of the narrative is strongly preserved in the restored lines. The transition from the original text to the restoration is seamless, and the storytelling is continuous and suspenseful.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical implications of AI-driven restoration are given due consideration, highlighting the importance of ethical use. The restoration pays respect to the narrative and emotional setting of Enkidu's warning, subtly introducing tension into the plot.

5- *Text 5: Unknown (The Noble Counsellors of Uruk Advise Gilgamesh Against the Journey)*

Restoration based on context: “Wise voices from Uruk, the Noble Counsellors, gathered to advise Gilgamesh against the perilous journey to the Cedar Forest. Their words echoed with concern, citing the dangers that lay ahead and the potential consequences of challenging the forces that guarded the sacred domain”.

The restoration introduces a crucial element of advice from the Noble Counsellors, contributing to the Epic's exploration of the themes of leadership and wisdom.

TABLE 7
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 5

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The lines restored show good accuracy, integrating well with the contextual and stylistic properties of the original text. The role of the Noble Counsellors is shown with accuracy.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored lines show good flow, blending well with the wider context of the story. The language in this part captures the wisdom of the Noble Counsellors, contributing to the unity of the text.
Coherence	Strong	In the lines that have been restored, the overall coherence of the story is strongly preserved. The shift from the original text to the restoration is seamless, thus ensuring a coherent and enlightening narrative.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical implications of AI-based restoration are taken into account, with emphasis on the proper use of such technologies. The restoration respects the narrative setting, adding the advice from the Noble Counsellors in a way that enhances the Epic's study of leadership and knowledge.

6- *Text 6: 5 Lines (Gilgamesh Listens to the Advice of His Noble Counsellors)*

Restoration based on context: “In a moment of reflection, Gilgamesh, known for his bold nature, listened attentively to the counsel of his advisors. The wisdom of the Noble Counsellors resonated, and a sense of introspection filled the air as the king considered the gravity of their words”.

The restoration emphasises Gilgamesh's receptiveness to counsel, thus highlighting both his character development and leadership qualities.

TABLE 8
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 6

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The restored lines show a very high degree of accuracy as they perfectly fit in the context and style of the text that they are situated in. Gilgamesh's attention to the advice of the Noble Counsellors is represented with realism.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored lines show excellent flow and blend with the surrounding story. The language clearly portrays Gilgamesh's willingness to listen, thus highlighting his changing personality and leadership traits with dexterity.
Coherence	Strong	The overall cohesiveness of the story is strongly sustained in the restored lines. The transition from the current text to the restoration is seamless, with the entire text depicting this meditative moment for Gilgamesh.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical implications associated with AI-driven restoration are properly addressed to ensure its responsible use. The restoration is based on the narrative context of the story, which makes it possible for the restored text to describe Gilgamesh's development and leadership qualities in a sensitive way.

7- Text 7: Unknown (Tablet II Ends With Approximately 5 Lines Missing)

Restoration based on context: "As Tablet II drew to a close, a sense of anticipation lingered in the air. The missing lines may have contained hints of the challenges that awaited the adventurers or offered a glimpse into the divine forces shaping their destinies. The reader was left on the brink of a narrative climax, eager to discover the unfolding tale in the subsequent tablets".

The restoration provides a conclusion to Tablet II, leaving room for anticipation and setting the stage for the next part of the Epic.

TABLE 9
RESTORING MISSING LINES IN TEXT 7

Metric	Score	Description
Accuracy	High	The restored lines show high precision, matching the contextual and stylistic properties of the original text. The addition creates a plausible ending for Tablet II that provides satisfactory suspense and narrative continuity.
Fluency	Excellent	The restored lines are very fluent as they smoothly integrate with the surrounding story. The language skilfully captures the lingering sense of foreboding and the reader's eager anticipation of the story to follow in the subsequent tablets.
Coherence	Strong	The overall cohesiveness of the story is strongly maintained in the restored lines. The transition from the current text to the restoration is seamless, ensuring a smooth and compelling narrative.
Ethical Considerations	Addressed	The ethical implications of AI-powered restoration are duly recognised, thus supporting its responsible application in this context. The restoration preserves the narrative, creating a proper ending for Tablet II and stimulating anticipation for the subsequent part of the epic in an appropriate way.

VI. RESULTS

In order to restore the missing lines in Tablet II derived from the Epic of Gilgamesh, a negotiation algorithm was employed along with a trained AI model that could manage both cuneiform script and the subtlety of Mesopotamian literature. This symbiotic technique allowed an easy inclusion of the reinstated lines into the contemporary style, linguistics, and tone characteristic of cuneiform writing.

The first phase of the iterative process involved ChatGPT developing cuneiform-like text fragments for each missing line, identified by traces left by wedge-shaped signs on a clay tablet. The human experts in cuneiform script carefully assessed the proposed segments from ChatGPT based on a set of criteria, including historical authenticity, thematic relevance, and stylistic coherence. This was a joint venture that had not been different, even in the manner the dialogues and interpretations are inherent in interpreting old foolscap.

Subsequently, comparative analysis was used to compare the cuneiform lines restored from Tablet II to both known and proposed restorations from human experts in various areas. The careful contrasts that were made highlighted the significant degree of validity of the lines produced in this work. Therefore, it appears that the model produced lines that not only fitted well within the narrative context but also maintained consistency in connecting neighbouring cuneiforms.

The measurement parameters for assessing the texts, such as accuracy, fluency, and coherence, were essentially quantitative in nature and provided a detailed assessment of the performance of the AI model. Notably, the model did not show low accuracy, as it produced restored lines with high fidelity to the cuneiform style. The fluency and coherence measures underscore that the model produces lines that fit with the cuneiform storyline and add to the sustained flow of the tablets. For example, the transition from the original "Enkidu sat in front of her" to the restored passage with its combination of Enkidu and the stuck Shamaloth, during which Enkidu sequentially pulls off one item of clothing and puts her second garment on him, is not only highly accurate but ensures seamless continuity with the storyline, as is expected for cuneiform tablets free from gaps.

Ultimately, we can conclude that a combination of ChatGPT and the negotiation algorithm approach could be an effective solution to restoring missing lines in cuneiform script. The precision rates demonstrate that the model was successful in restoring missing lines in Tablet II, and it is connected with the particular decoding of ancient texts. This

bold approach holds considerable potential for future applications in the preservation of cuneiform texts and artefacts, thus indicating that modern AI technologies represent a radical revolution in ancient language restoration.

VII. DISCUSSION

The lines of Tablet II restored in this work elevate both the general structure of the narrative and, concurrently, are a source of relevant and pertinent information about that environment. Alongside the negotiation algorithm, the AI model appears to have a good understanding of the text, and the generated lines are connected with the themes and style of the Epic of Gilgamesh.

Considering ancient texts as a whole, AI technologies, including language models such as ChatGPT, present a significant opportunity for supplementing lost information. The ability of such technologies to comprehend context and generate meaningful text enables cooperation with other specialists, thus increasing the speed of the recovery process of missing or fragmentary ancient material.

While AI has several benefits in this context, such models may still be limited in their richness of understanding in relation to the cultural and historical connotations of a text, which may lead to potential errors or distortions of the original text. Indeed, the performance of the algorithm depends largely on the quality and amount of text that is available to be used; therefore, using such models is complex in environments where there is a significant amount of very fragmented or ambiguous material.

The manual analysis, linguistic proficiency, and historical scope needed in traditional methods are in contrast with AI, which is more of a means to an end than human oversight. Using the dual negotiation algorithm with an AI neural network and a human expert allows for a hybrid model based on AI and human judgement. Indeed, while AI is effective at automating repetitive tasks and generating vast quantities of content, human knowledge is vital for ensuring the accuracy of text in relation to the source, assessing cultural practice, and identifying subtle style issues. Furthermore, important ethical concerns, such as the correct implementation of technology and the prevention of unintended biases, must be dealt with in the case of AI-empowered rebirth.

This work highlights the potential for cooperation between AI and human effort. Societal changes, such as historical and cultural progress occurring over time, are considered crucial to further develop the current understanding of AI models. Indeed, the continued growth of inherent concepts, which drive the use of AI applications across contexts, would be conducive to incorporating AI into popular culture.

Finally, the collaboration between AI and a negotiation algorithm appears to be an appropriate approach to restoring lost content in old books. Using AI enhances work productivity, but to achieve precision, accuracy, and cultural appropriateness, AI requires guidance from human experts. This cooperative effort is an integral part of preserving and understanding the past through the cultural heritage that has been passed down by previous generations.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The strategy discussed in this article involving a negotiation algorithm and ChatGPT is revolutionary in rebuilding missing lines in the Epic of Gilgamesh. The advantage of this approach stems from its ability to provide a consistent and coherent text that is based on the context of the Epic. Indeed, the approach fully restored the missing parts of Tablet II and managed to further organise the content in harmony with the style and tone of the Epic. However, the restored lines go beyond merely filling in gaps; these lines assume a vital role in helping to develop the overall comprehension of The Epic of Gilgamesh.

However, further research would be helpful to improve the suggested methodology in several crucial aspects. To begin with, even though the majority of AI models currently available demonstrate high effectiveness and accuracy, further progress is required for them to be able to fully understand the peculiar linguistic and cultural features of ancient texts. The use of other interconnected AI models should be examined in the future by other researchers, as this would lead to the development of different approaches to restoration processes. Furthermore, using the proposed methodology with other ancient materials or artifacts would be beneficial; indeed, the current approach is appropriate for supporting a broader spectrum of restoration projects in various historical contexts. Moreover, ethical concerns about the implementation of AI-driven restoration must still be addressed. In this context, further research should focus on responsibility, openness, and compliance in the restoration process. It is proposed that, in the future, the discussed algorithms should be continuously fine-tuned by taking into account expert opinions and by modifying the methodology used in this study. In addition, if AI and human experts could interact more constructively, such as by developing better interfaces or tools, this would help simplify collaborative restoration. The ability to recognise contextual clues and historical subtleties is key in restoration, as this enhances the sensitivity with which an AI model operates and allows it to capture combinations of new information that increase the accuracy and cultural authenticity of restorations.

In summary, the presented approach of utilising the negotiation algorithm alongside ChatGPT represents an efficient and useful method for the restoration of lost fragments in ancient texts. The applied collaborative synergy in this work provides a means to explore other possibilities for further research and exploration in the field of text restoration. This strategy also aimed to address ethical issues in the use of AI in text restoration and highlight the use of the continually advancing AI capacities for preserving and documenting the abundant inheritance from ancient texts.

APPENDIX A NEGOTIATION ALGORITHM APPROACH

```

#include <iostream>
#include <vector>
#include <string>

// Function to generate text segments using ChatGPT
std::vector<std::string> generateSegments(int missingLineCount) {
    std::vector<std::string> segments;

    for (int i = 0; i < missingLineCount; ++i) {
        // Generate text segment using ChatGPT (simplified for demonstration)
        std::string segment = "Generated Segment " + std::to_string(i + 1);
        segments.push_back(segment);
    }

    return segments;
}

// Function to evaluate generated segments by the human expert
void evaluateSegments(const std::vector<std::string>& segments) {
    std::cout << "Human expert evaluates the generated segments:\n";
    for (const auto& segment : segments) {
        std::cout << "- " << segment << "\n";
    }
    // Additional evaluation logic can be added based on predefined criteria
}

// Function to receive feedback from the human expert
void provideFeedback() {
    std::cout << "Human expert provides feedback to ChatGPT.\n";
    // Implementation of feedback logic (simplified for demonstration)
}

// Function to refine the generation process based on feedback
void refineGenerationProcess() {
    std::cout << "ChatGPT refines its generation process based on feedback.\n";
    // Implementation of refinement logic (simplified for demonstration)
}

// Function for the human expert to select the most appropriate segment
std::string selectSegment(const std::vector<std::string>& segments) {
    int selectedSegmentIndex ;
    std::cout << "Human expert selects the most appropriate segment:\n";
    // Implementation of the selection logic (simplified for demonstration)
    SelectedSegmentIndex = 0; // Default selection for demonstration purposes
    return segments[selectedSegmentIndex];
}

int main() {
    // Simulate the negotiation algorithm approach
    int missingLineCount = 3; // Number of missing lines
    // Step 1: Generation
    std::vector<std::string> generatedSegments = generateSegments(missingLineCount);

    // Step 2: Evaluation
    evaluateSegments(generatedSegments);

    // Step 3: Feedback
    provideFeedback();
}

```

```

// Step 4: Refinement
refineGenerationProcess();

// Step 5: Selection
std::string selectedSegment = selectSegment(generatedSegments);

// Display the final selected segment
std::cout << "\nFinal Selected Segment: " << selectedSegment << "\n";

return 0;
}

```

APPENDIX B THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

TABLET II

Translated By Maureen Gallery Kovacs

Kovacs, M. G. (2018). *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Stanford University Press.

Enkidu sits in front of her.

[The next 30 lines are missing; some of the fragmentary lines from 35 on are restored from parallels in the Old Babylonian.]

"Why ..." (?)

His own counsel, at his instruction...

Who knows his heart... Shamhat pulled off her clothing and clothed him with one piece

while she clothed herself with a second. She took hold of him as the gods do'

and brought him to the hut of the shepherds. The shepherds gathered all around him and marveled to themselves:

"How the youth resembles Gilgamesh-----

tall in stature, towering up to the battlements over the wall!

Surely he was born in the mountains;

His strength is as mighty as the meteorite(!) of Anu!" They placed food in front of him.

they placed beer in front of him;

Enkidu knew nothing about eating bread for food, and of drinking beer he had not been taught.

The harlot spoke to Enkidu, saying:

"Eat the food, Enkidu; it is the way one lives. Drink the beer, as is the custom of the land."

Enkidu ate the food until he was satisfied.

He drank the beer---seven jugs!----- and became expansive and sang with joy! He was elated, and his face glowed.

He splashed his shaggy body with water.

and rubbed himself with oil, turning into a human. He put on some clothing and became like a warrior(!).

He took up his weapon and chased lions so that the shepherds could eat He routed the wolves and chased the lions.

With Enkidu as their guard, the herders could lie down.

A wakeful man, a singular youth, he was twice as tall (?) (as normal men

[The next 33 lines are missing in the Standard Version; lines 57---86 are taken from the Old Babylonian.]

Then he raised his eyes and saw a man. He said to the harlot:

"Shamhat, have that man go away!

Why has he come'? I will call out his name!"

The harlot called out to the man

and went over to him and spoke with him. "Young man, where are you hurrying? Why this arduous pace?"

The young man spoke, saying to Enkidu: "They have invited me to a wedding, as is the custom of the people.

... the selection(!) of brides(!) ..

I have heaped up tasty delights for the wedding on the ceremonial(!) platter! For the King of Broad---Marted Uruk, open is the veil(!) of the people for choosing (a girl). For Gilgamesh, the King of Broad---Marted Uruk, open is the veil (?) of the people for choosing.

He will have intercourse with the 'destined wife,' first, and the husband afterward.

This is ordered by the counsel of Anu.

From the severing of his umbilical cord, it has been destined for him."

At the young man's speech his (Enkidu's) face flushed (with anger). [Several lines are missing.]

Enkidu walked in front, and Shamhat followed him. [The Standard Version resumes.]

He (Enkidu) walked down the street of Uruk---Haven,
... mighty...

He blocked the way through Uruk the Sheepfold. The land of Uruk stood around him.

the whole land assembled about him, the populace was thronging around him, the men were clustered about him.

and kissed his feet as if he were a little baby(!). Suddenly, a handsome young man...

For Ishara, the bed of night (?) or marriage (?) is ready; for Gilgamesh, as for a god, a counterpart (!) is set up. Enkidu blocked the entry to the marital chamber and would not allow Gilgamesh to be brought in.

They grappled with each other at the entry to the marital chamber; in the street, they attacked each other in the public square of the land. The doorposts trembled and the wall shook.

[About 42 lines are missing from the Standard Version; lines 103---129 are taken from the Old Babylonian version.]

Gilgamesh bent his knees with his other foot on the ground; his anger abated, and he turned his chest away.

After he turned his chest Enkidu said to Gilgamesh: "Your mother bore you ever unique(!),

the Wild Cow of the Enclosure, Ninsun, your head is elevated over (other) men,

Enlil has destined for you the kingship over the people." [19 lines are missing here.]

They kissed each other and became friends.

[The Old Babylonian becomes fragmentary. The Standard Version resumes] "His strength is the mightiest in the land!

His strength is as mighty as the meteorite (?) of Anu. The mother of Gilgamesh spoke to Gilgamesh, saying; Rimat---

Ninsun said to her son:

"(I), Rimar---Ninsun... My son...

Plaintively ...

She went up into his (Shamash's) gateway, and plaintively, she implored:

"Enkidu has no father or mother,

his shaggy hair no one cuts.

He was born in the wilderness; no one raised him." Enkidu was standing there and heard the speech.

He ... and sat down and wept, his eyes filled with tears.

His arms felt limp, and his strength weakened. They took each other by the hand.

and.., their hands like...

Enkidu made a declaration to (Gilgamesh'). [32 lines are missing here.]

"in order to protect the Cedar Forest

Enlil assigned (Humbaba) as a terror to human beings,

Humbaba's roar is a flood, his mouth is fire, and his breath is death! He can hear 100 leagues away any rustling (?) in his forest!

Who would go down into his forest?

Enlil assigned him as a terror to human beings,

and whoever goes down into his forest paralysis(?) will strike!" Gilgamesh spoke to Enkidu saying:

"What you say .. ."

[About 42 lines are missing here in the Standard Version; lines 228---249 are taken from the Old Babylonian.]

"Who, my Friend, can ascend to the heavens!" (Only) the gods can dwell forever with Shamash. As for human beings, their days are numbered.

and whatever they keep trying to achieve is just wind!

Now you are afraid of death-----

What has become of your bold strength? I will go in front of you,

and your mouth can call out: 'Go on closer, do not be afraid!' Should I fall, I will have established my fame.

(They will say:) 'It was Gilgamesh who locked in battle with Humbaba the Terrible!'

You were born and raised in the wilderness.

a lion leaped up on you, so you have experienced it all!' [5 lines are fragmentary]

I will undertake it, and I will cut down the cedar. It is I who will establish fame for eternity!

Come, my friend, I will go over to the forge

and have them cast the weapons in our presence!" Holding each other by the hand, they went over to the forge. [The Standard Version resumes at this point.]

The craftsmen sat and discussed with one another. "We should fashion the axe...

The hatchet should have one talent in weight... Their swords should be one talent...

Their armor is one talent; their armor ..." Gilgamesh said to the men of Uruk:

"Listen to me, men... [5 lines are missing here.]

You, men of Uruk, who know...

I want to make myself more mighty and will go on a distant(!) journey! I will face fighting like I have never known.

I will set out on a road I have never traveled! Give me your blessings! ...

I will enter the city gate of Uruk.

I will devote(?) myself to the New Year's Festival. I will perform the New Year's (ceremonies) in...

The New Year's Festival will take place, with celebrations... They will keep shouting 'Hurrah!' in..."

Enkidu spoke to the Elders: "What the men of Uruk..."

Say to him that he must not go to the Cedar Forest----- the journey is not to be made!

A man who...

The Guardian of the Cedar Forest...

The Noble Counselors of Uruk arose and delivered their advice to Gilgamesh:

"You are young, Gilgamesh; your heart carries you off; you do not know what you are talking about!

...gave birth to you. Humbaba's roar is a Flood,

his mouth is Fire, his breath Death!

He can hear any rustling(!) in his forest 100 leagues away! Who would go down into his forest?

Who among (even!) the Igigi gods can confront him?

In order to keep the Cedar safe, Enlil assigned him as a terror to human beings."

Gilgamesh listened to the statement of his noble counselors. [About 5 lines are missing to the end of Tablet II.]

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The Role of Culture in Abusive Language on Social Media: Examining the Use of English and Arabic Derogatory Terms

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Abstract—Although several studies have dealt with the use of derogatory terms on social media, only few compared the phenomenon across languages from a sociocultural aspect. This study used a mixed-method comparative analysis of 920 Arabic and English abusive tweets. The researchers used content analysis to annotate the tweets according to their type and severity. They also used qualitative thematic discourse analysis to interpret the linguistic themes. Furthermore, they used frequency analysis to statistically identify the most common targets and lexical items and to identify the sociolinguistic patterns behind them. The results reveal that Arabic tweets have higher frequencies of gender abusive terms, and they are more severe than the English ones. However, English showed greater reliance on vulgar terms because of cultural taboos. English communication was also dominated by implicit insults, while Arabic favored explicit offense in accordance with direct/indirect cultural values. Both languages used emojis intensively, but Arabic used more diverse registers within messages. Anonymity boosted prejudices for both languages. In conclusion, the difference in online toxicity between the languages is the result of linguistic differences and the cultural norms and the interaction between the two.

Index Terms—corpus, cultural norms, derogatory terms, discourse analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Abusive language and derogatory terms are a clear phenomenon in human communication on social media platforms. In order to control filthy content and promote respectful discourse across languages and communities, it is very important to understand cultural variations behind the use of offensive language (Bilewicz & Soral, 2020). Upon reviewing the literature, it appeared that a few researchers have studied profanity on social media, mainly in English.

However, limited interest is shown towards cross-cultural study of the phenomenon via comparisons with other languages like Arabic (Kerkam, 2015). Sood et al. (2012) have analyzed over 300,000 tweets and concluded that the most frequent insults on twitter focused on stupidity, sexuality, race and physical appearance. Specifically, terms like "idiot", "stupid," and racist slurs were widely used to attack and degrade others.

Similarly, Cheng et al. (2017) conducted a computational analysis of millions of YouTube comments and found that the top derogatory terms consistently referred to low intelligence. These studies indicate that intelligence-based insults represent a crucial aspect of offensive English language online. Additionally, identity-focused attacks through racist, homophobic or sexist slurs also appear to be prominent in abusive English discourse on social networking platforms.

In contrast, less is known about Arabic offensive language norms and practices on social media sites. To help address this gap, this study manually classified Shammur's (2020) Excel dataset that contains 920 highly toxic and obscene Arabic tweets (see appendix). The tweets were classified as "Offensive", "Vulgar," or "Hate Speech" by the researchers. A preliminary analysis of terms by Mubarak et al. (2020) sheds light on some distinctions from English. Common offensive Arabic words like *kalb* (dog) and *himar* (donkey) imply lack of intelligence or animal-like behavior. However, terms directly referring to private body parts or sexual references/acts indicating vulgar insults like *dajju:θ* (cuckold) or *kaḏḏab* (liar) have been observed to play a relatively more salient role than in English.

Interestingly, identity-focused attacks that are seen frequently in English, such as racist insults, occur less regularly within this Arabic dataset (Mubarak et al., 2020). Rather, many Arabic tweets either condemn persons religiously or accuse them of hypocrisy or immorality.

Existing literature offers contextual evidence for these cross-linguistic differences. Mubarak and Darwish's (2019) rates (1-2% of Arabic tweets contain toxic content) are considerably lower than rates stated for English. Also, Al-Jarf (2020) argued that standard Arabic is generally used for rather serious topics like politics and religion whereas dialectal

and colloquial language is used for everyday issues and discussions. This implies that more situations justify the use of formal Arabic language in online spaces than English. Previous research shows that offensive language is a widespread problem across cultures in social platforms. However, the present comparison of existing English and newly provided Arabic datasets gathered by researchers, including Fahmy (2021), indicates offence construction and preferred targets that exhibit some divergences linked to social-cultural norms between linguistic communities. Specifically, stupidity attacks appear highly prominent in English, while religious condemnation and vulgar sexuality references assume more importance in Arabic.

Further exploring such differences through in-depth analysis of language examples within these resources can yield novel insights into how culture shapes inappropriate online discourse in an important yet distinct way, as there is a lack of comparative linguistic research exploring how culture shapes inappropriate online discourse differently between Arabic and English on social media. Consequently, the current study aims to examine the attitude and the cultural element associated with the use of derogatory terms by Arabs on social media and the differences between the use of offensive languages in their native language (Arabic) and a second language (English). The study aims to compare online derogatory language in Arabic and English to understand how cultural norms influence offensive discourse differently across languages. The study also examines individuals' experience and exposure to derogatory items, their impact on cultural aspects, and how they impact various factors and users' response to abusive comments.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN ABUSIVE LANGUAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

According to Hall's (1976) theory of high-context and low-context cultures, abusive use of language differs across cultures according to the divergent preferences for implicit/explicit communication. For Hall, high-context cultures generally rely more on implicit meanings, body language and shared knowledge rather than overt messages. Conversely, low-context cultures select clear, direct messages (Hall, 1976).

Several studies, including Al-Ibrahim et al. (2023) dealt with offensive language use on Arabic versus English-speaking social media platforms. Shummer (2020) and Mubarak (2023) analyzed offensive tweets and collected common insults and derogatory remarks that included religious offenses like *huwwa ?ifna kafara willa jahu:d willa madzu:s* (Are we disbelievers, Jews or fire worshippers?) as well as insults with sexual references that used implications rather than explicit expressions. By contrast, Byrne (2017) dealt with derogatory English tweets. He found insults tended to incorporate more explicitly crude, profane, homophobic and racist terms directly referencing body parts and excretory acts. Standard derogatory English terms included "shit", "bitch", "cunt", "fag", and racial slurs like the n-word. Several studies also found "rape jokes" and rape threats were employed more frequently in English than in Arabic on social media (Jane, 2014).

Furthermore, the implicit Arabic insults depended more on contextual understanding of cultural/religious references, while English derogatory terms tended to be directly profane or to rely on scatology, sexually explicit language and racist/homophobic slurs (Hill, 2009). Gross et al. (2022) noted some English speakers also adopted more implication-based insults influenced by code-switching with other languages (Gross et al., 2022). Moreover, keeping with their predominantly low-context communication norms, derogatory English terms displayed a marked preference for crude explicitness over nuanced implicit meanings when intending to offend others (Dayem, 2019). This, in fact, indicates how the cultural context affects abusive language conventions.

Also, Khenfar et al. (2022) reported considerable code-switching on multilingual platforms where Arabic speakers sometimes used rather direct abuse in English. Variation in norms of offensive language use may influence perceptions of abuse. Mansour (2017) argued that direct profanity and slurs are most offensive. He contended that high-context societies interpret implicit messages as abusive, while low-context cultures highlight explicit denotative meanings (Mansour, 2017). Overall, the existing literature aligns with Hall's theoretical framework in showing cross-cultural variation in abusive language associated with high-context versus low-context communication norms. Arabic social media displays a preference for implicitly versus directly offensive insults, reflecting differences from English platforms. However, globalization and online code-switching behaviours may be lessening some distinctions. More comparative studies could further explore how communication context impacts the interpretation and use of vulgarity across societies.

Social and Psychological Effects of Exposure to Derogatory Remarks on Social Media

The use of abusive language containing derogatory remarks on social media platforms can negatively impact both individuals and society. When confronted with hostile speech targeting one's social identity, it can undermine an individual's sense of belonging and self-esteem. The offensive tweets collected by Samoshyn (2020) of offensive and derogatory tweets in English and Arabic tweets and those collected by Shammur (2020) demonstrate how derogatory terms like "bitch" are commonly used, especially towards women. In contrast, in Arabic, this is more based on the conduct, race and rank as some of the most recurring words used for women were *nisa:? ha:qida:t* (spiteful women) or comparing them to animals such as *mara mi?l l-baqara* (a woman as fat as a cow), while others considered Arab women as pure, but abused women of other origins.

Additionally, associations between exposure to online hostility and increased psychological distress have also been found by researchers (Bilewicz & Soral, 2020). One study analyzed tweets mentioning feminine hygiene brands and found that 9% contained abusive content, with terms like "bitch" being the most prevalent (Kumar et al., 2021). Those

tweets elicited stronger negative emotions of anger and sadness from female readers. Another study showed cyberbullying victims were more likely to experience low self-esteem, depression, and suicidal thoughts (Maurya et al., 2022). Exposure to such hostile speech threatens core aspects of one's identity. Social Identity Theory argues that individuals will engage in identity protection strategies like distancing themselves from the target domain or attacking the credibility of the hostile out-group, as seen in some responses to harmful tweets (Tajfel et al., 1979). However, prolonged exposure undermines well-being. Samoshyn (2020) and Shammur (2020) show that abusive language is often targeted at people based on gender or ethnicity, marginalizing them in online spaces dedicated to communication and expression.

On a societal level, abusive language can normalize hostile speech and can enable further harassment or radicalize political views (Bilewicz & Soral, 2020). Content analyses of Twitter data found discussions involving political polarization while misinformation often contain toxic rhetoric attacking opponents with terms like "bitch", seen in the English language dataset (Bovet & Makse, 2019). Such interactions negatively affect online discourse and mutual understanding. Looking specifically at the data collected by Shammur (2020) of the derogatory tweets, it was observed that these remarks pose challenges from a political perspective. Additionally, issues like cyberbullying disproportionately impact marginalized groups facing multilayered discrimination online, like women and ethnic/religious minorities, as some tweets target appearance and religious identity. Oh (2022) suggests that anti-bullying interventions should consider identity-based harassment to promote online safety.

In essence, the negative social and psychological exposure to online hostility demonstrates the importance of promoting welcoming, inclusive online communities. While technology facilitates connection, abusive language threatens well-being, marginalizes groups, and undermines civic cooperation, highlighting an ongoing need for balance and culturally sensitive digital literacy programs.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a convergent mixed-methods approach to conduct a nuanced comparative analysis of offensive language use on social media in English and Arabic. Both top-down deductive content analysis and bottom-up inductive thematic analysis are used. The deductive process involves a priori categorization of tweets into insult types based on established constructs including references to gender, ethnicity, religion, appearance, and ability-based attributes. This allows assessing the prevalence and distribution of harmful content quantitatively. Descriptive statistics is used to determine which derogatory lexical items frequently occurred in each language.

In parallel, meaning-based themes are generated from the data that underwent an inductive thematic analysis. The wider social and cultural contexts have thus been considered to understand both implicit and explicit abuse communicated through language choice, register variation, and socio-pragmatic norms, e.g. perceptions of what is acceptable vs. what is intolerable speech standards across cultures.

A. Data Collection

This study adopts a multi linguistic comparative approach, using quantitative and qualitative analysis of derogatory terms used in social media in both Arabic and English.

1. Arabic Corpus: A dataset of 920 tweets collected by Shammur (2020) forms the Arabic corpus. Tweets focus on derogation, targeting a diverse range of social identity constructs through pejorative lexical choices. Using a manual discourse-based annotation, tweets were categorized according to the type of insult they involved like gender (e.g. *ʕa:hira* 'slut'), religion (e.g. *waθani* 'atheist'), ethnicity (e.g. *ʕabd* 'slave'), and culture (e.g. *ʔimaʔa xali:ʕa* 'a whore'). This compilation represents the breadth of derogatory language varieties observed within Muslim-majority cyber communities.

2. English Corpus: The English corpus was taken from Samoshyn's (2020) collection of 1,500 discriminatory English tweets which explored racial, cultural, social and identity-based offence (e.g. "bitch", "faggot"). Computational text mining was employed to automatically identify overtly abusive lexical items (e.g. expletives) and implicit micro-aggressions.

The multi-genre, mixed-method assemblage of vernacular social media texts in these two corpora facilitates systematic cross-linguistic comparison of discursive strategies and sociocultural dynamics that uphold or challenge norms surrounding identity-targeted derogatory language on online platforms.

B. Data Analysis

A mixed-method approach categorizes and compares identity-targeting derogation in Arabic and English tweets. Digital language processing software automatically tags tweets with insults against gender (e.g. *zawrā*, "bitch"), religion (e.g. *waθani*, "atheist"), ethnicity (e.g. *ʕabd*, "slave"), appearance (*ʕawway* "like a barking dog"), and ability (*muʕa:q* "handicapped").

The quantitative analysis assesses insult prevalence, distribution by identity construct, and frequent lexical items (e.g. *ʕa:hira*, "whore") to understand sociolinguistic typologies. Text frequency reports gauge derogation intensity across languages. Qualitative thematic discourse analysis then interprets emergent themes around ideological functions,

context-dependent interpretations, and cultural dynamics shaping offence norms. Implicit micro-aggressions are identified through critical vocabulary analysis.

Interactional sociolinguistic and cross-cultural perspectives reflect derogation's cognitive, psychological and relational impacts. Analysis contextualizes offence within macro-level cultural values to draw nuanced comparisons between Arabic and English cyber-communities' linguistic construction and signify social boundaries.

IV. RESULTS

The frequency analysis findings presented in Table 1 indicate that gender and race faced a significant number of derogatory attacks at 42.4% and 28.4%, respectively. This targeting of identities suggests underlying issues related to sexism and racism which prominently reflect a form of offensive discourse in Arabic on social media. By exploring why and how these social groups experience a considerable level of abuse, it seems that implicit biases and sociocultural norms target marginalized communities. Thus, insights into tackling discrimination could aid in encouraging more inclusive online spaces.

TABLE 1
TARGETED INSULTS

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	GENDER	212	42.4	42.4	42.4
	RACE	142	28.4	28.4	70.8
	RELIGION	52	10.4	10.4	81.2
	CULTURE	25	5.0	5.0	86.2
	APPEARANCE	69	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total		500	100.0	100.0	

The results in Table 2 show that around half of tweets were mild, while about a third were moderate. Still, a good percentage advocated severe hostility. This range of derogatory Arabic discourse on social media reflects the varying degrees of severity that social identities experience when they are subjected to offensive remarks. In fact, the levels of insult displayed suggest sociocultural feelings about what constitutes unacceptable boundaries in online platforms governed by Arabic communication customs.

TABLE 2
SEVERITY LEVEL

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Mild	226	45.2	45.2	45.2
	Moderate	155	31.0	31.0	76.2
	Severe	119	23.8	23.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The findings in Table 3 reveal that more than half of the Arabic tweets were deemed offensive (54.2%), while only vulgar tweets were 25.8%, signaling that offence extends beyond insensitivity to incorporate diverse harms. Distinguishing subtleties in how offence manifests linguistically across contexts deepens our understanding of this complex phenomenon. The data set revealed vulgar derogatory terms degrade respectability, e.g. *Ca:hira* "bitch", and *waqifa* "rude". These derogatory terms divide abusers into different groups. Offence does indeed come in numerous forms, both within and across communities.

TABLE 3
VULGAR OR OFFENSIVE

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	VULGAR	129	25.8	25.8	25.8
	OFFENSIVE	271	54.2	54.2	80.0
	NONE	100	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The Arabic tweets corpus analysis in Table 4 revealed a relatively close balance between overt and covert types of discrimination. About 44% used hints and insinuations of implicit constructs, whereas the other 56% chose a more direct and explicit language. This distribution indicates that some people opt to contempt others through subtle hints rather than express it directly and crudely.

TABLE 4
NATURE OF TWEETS

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	IMPLICIT	219	43.8	43.8	43.8
	EXPLICIT	281	56.2	56.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Using emoji was one of the most prominent features, as shown in Table 5. Almost half of the participants chose to add iconic signs (47%) to their entries. This demonstrated how the visual signs have become more and more integrated into the vulgar lexicons used to disparage others. Analyzing the complex socio-pragmatic significance and effects of multichannel denunciation through a combination of written and visual forms improves our understanding of the constantly evolving sophisticated strategies some commentators create and use in online forums to convey their dislike and contempt of other people through a variety of multimodal channels.

TABLE 5
USE OF EMOJIS

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	235	47.0	47.0	47.0
	None	265	53.0	53.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The range of language registers used, presented in Table 6, reflects that half of derogatory tweets in Arabic used the official lexis of Modern Standard Arabic, while almost a third used colloquial dialects, and around a fifth used even more derogatory slang language. This spectrum implied that contempt and degradation is common in written Arabic discourse regardless of standard or regional variations in linguistic style. A comparison of the terms used across the range of language registers improves our understanding of the connections between language diversity, identity, and the expressions of hatred.

TABLE 6
USE OF LANGUAGE

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	MSA	250	50.0	50.0	50.0
	DIALECT	150	30.0	30.0	80.0
	SLANG	100	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

We now move to English tweets. As Table 7 shows, feminist or masculinist mockery dominated over half of the corpus, accounting for 49.6% of the online defamations. This may reveal a pattern of objectifying rhetoric that does not respect people's humanity. This is a blunt example of how the anonymity and low-context nature on social media enables users to degrade and humiliate others with no consideration for empathy.

TABLE 7
TARGETED INSULTS _ENGLISH

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	GENDER	248	49.6	49.6	49.6
	RACE	52	10.4	10.4	60.0
	RELIGION	34	6.8	6.8	66.8
	CULTURE	68	13.6	13.6	80.4
	APPEARANCE	98	19.6	19.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table 8 indicates that moderate attacks on others made up half of the English tweets (49.8%), whereas sharply critical remarks made up a third (30.2%), indicating that contempt is prevalent in varying aggressive forms. Some people may become uncontrollably willing to criticize with greater ferocity than face-to-face interaction due to the safe distance and diminished responsibility of the online environment. A deeper examination of the most indelicate criticisms reflects a set of expressions that, in their sharp vulgarity, reveal a glaring lack of empathy that transcends human nature.

TABLE 8
SEVERITY LEVEL _ENGLISH

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Mild	100	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Moderate	249	49.8	49.8	69.8
	Severe	151	30.2	30.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Analyzing the use of derogatory language on social media directed towards others (Table 9 below) reveals that seven out of ten tweets have vulgar expressions. This striking percentage suggested that certain participants are very offensive when they intend to hurt others. The lack of responsibility encourages the free expression of harsh opinions that, in less private contexts, could be met with opposition.

TABLE 9
VULGAR OR OFFENSIVE _ENGLISH

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	VULGAR	340	68.0	68.0	68.0
	OFFENSIVE	98	19.6	19.6	87.6
	NONE	62	12.4	12.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table 10 reflects that more than half of the English tweets combined emotionally charged pictograms with their written words, accounting for 54.2% of the derogatory tweets. This astounding frequency suggested that emojis and symbols had been appropriated to the vocabulary of tweets. The disengaged environment of social media, which removes participants from immediate repercussions, may encourage users to reinforce aggressive statements with intentionally demeaning visual cues.

TABLE 10
USE OF EMOJIS _ENGLISH

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	271	54.2	54.2	54.2
	None	229	45.8	45.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Table 11 shows that in the context of derogatory language and offensive statements on social media, Standard English (about 33%) and slang (around 31.2%) are used almost equally. This implies that, despite linguistic differences, unpleasant language and insulting phrases are pervasive in internet communication. Such statements are common in the digital sphere, whether in formal language or informal slang.

TABLE 11
USE OF LANGUAGE _ENGLISH

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Standard English	165	33.0	33.0	33.0
	Dialect	179	35.8	35.8	68.8
	Slang	156	31.2	31.2	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

The derogatory remarks were found to be implicit, as demonstrated in Table 12, rather than explicit (71.2%). This is an interesting point to address in online communication: In English insults are often more subtly communicated than bluntly stated. It shows that the English derogatory tweets used indirect derogation due to their low-context nature, hence implying their negative thoughts rather than using overtly offensive language.

TABLE 12
NATURE OF TWEETS _ENGLISH

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Implicit	356	71.2	71.2	71.2
	Explicit	144	28.8	28.8	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

A. Differences Between Arabic and English Derogatory Tweet

Table 13 presents both similarities and differences in how derogation manifests linguistically between Arabic and English, reflecting underlying cultural attitudes. While both languages use offensive tweets, targets of insult and severity of criticism were higher in English tweets, indicating looser social boundaries. Conversely, English tweets employed more vulgar/offensive terms, consistent with norms. In addition, English speakers often derogate implicitly, unlike direct Arabic speech. Emojis supported aggression in both languages, yet Arabic diversified registers more. Fundamentally, the data uncovers how cultural contexts shape- but do not determine- the language of prejudice on social media.

TABLE 13
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Err.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Targeted_Insults-Targeted_Insults_Eng	-.238	1.743	.078	-.391	-.085	-3.053	499	.002
Pair 2	Severity_Level-Severity_Level_Eng	-.316	.465	.021	-.357	-.275	-15.183	499	.000
Pair 3	Vulgar_or_Offensive-Vulgar_or_Offensive_Eng	.498	.750	.034	.432	.564	14.839	499	.000
Pair 4	Nature_of_Tweets-Nature_of_Tweets_Eng	.274	.446	.020	.235	.313	13.723	499	.000
Pair 5	Use_of_Emojis-Use_of_Emojis_Eng	.072	.455	.020	.032	.112	3.537	499	.000
Pair 6	Use_of_Language-Use_of_Lang_Eng	-.282	.450	.020	-.322	-.242	-14.000	499	.000

B. Thematic Analysis

Below is a thematic analysis of the types of insults found in both languages.

THEME 1: Gender Targeted Insults

Gender and race targeting was notably more common in the Arabic tweets, reflecting underlying issues of sexism and racism in some Middle Eastern cultures. The tweets referred to women as whores and bitches as shown in the following tweets (Translated from Arabic):

“You guys amaze me; you seem so loyal and low key but you get brought down by some bitch women”

“We can buy just as much as those dirty and disgraceful women of yours”

“As a woman, you should not complain about cleaning your house because that is what you are here to do and at night you have to please us”

Several tweets insulted or degraded women directly. None of the English tweets contained such explicit targeting. However, cursing and insulting women had been observed to be pretty common in the English tweets discourse, which can be considered as vulgar:

“Keeks is a bitch. She curves everyone " lol, I walked into a conversation like this. Smh”

“Fu*k no, that bitch doesn't even suck d**k.”

“These ho*s like niggas that spend money, not talk bout it.”

THEME 2: Severity Level

The severity levels of criticism and insults appeared higher in the English tweets according to the analysis as shown below:

“Get worshipping bi**h! woof woof”

“@C**lanG15, that nigga was eating that h*e lol" Hell Yea, lol John Paul," nigga said John Paul..”

"@Cha**rParsons: How bout them Cowboys!!!!" Shutup pu**y”

The English texts included more extreme or confrontational attacks compared to the Arabic samples as they are often criticizing in political contexts as:

“The Egyptian media is known all over the world for its filth, and this media incites the killing of its own people and therefore does not incite the killing of other peoples! (Translated from Arabic)”

“You can find it in the back of Tamim or Rajab Tayouza (Translated from Arabic)”

“These Egyptians work like American dolls and they suck their teams, the effect is that women can't get enough of them (Translated from Arabic)”

This indicates that linguistic or cultural boundaries around offense may be looser for English speakers on online media compared to the Arabic groups.

THEME 03: Implicit and Vulgar Vs Explicit and Offensive

The collected data by Samoshyn (2020) and Shammur (2020) revealed that instances of vulgar or highly offensive language were significantly more frequent in English tweets. This aligns with differences in cultural and linguistic norms around vulgarity and taboo topics across English and Arabic societies as illustrated below:

Arabic Tweets:

“@tamir I just f**ted and it was so loud my dog started barking (Translated from Arabic)”

“I had a great time playing with myself last night (Translated from Arabic)”

English Tweets:

“@ja**n_aw***: Had an awesome time last night; if only my roommate weren't such a prude, I would have shared more details.”

“Why did the chicken cross the road? To get away from me because I'm a total a***ole.”

The above-presented discourse was more common in the English tweets. This coincides with prior research showing online effects can reduce explicitness in some contexts. English speakers may have felt less social pressure to state criticisms directly than their Arabic counterparts.

THEME 4: Diversity and Visual Appeal

According to the quantitative analysis, the use of emojis was substantial in both datasets as Emojis function prominently as a universal language of expression online. However, the analysis found emojis to have appeared with significantly higher frequency in English tweets.

"Black people are all criminals, that's why they always end up in jail 😊😊".

"Shut up, you black piece of shit, or else I will slap you back into slavery 😊."

Along with the emojis, the Arabic tweets employed a more diverse range of language registers, moving between formal, informal, and slang varieties within individual texts, as shown below:

"I hate it when women try to act tough, they look ugly and desperate 😊🔥" (Translated from a mix of formal and informal Arabic).

"Asian girls are very ugly, their eyes are slanted and their skin is dark 🙄" (Translated from informal and slang Arabic).

In General, unlike the Arabic versions, the English samples tended to be more consistent in using either standardized or slang language styles. Anonymity and lack of non-verbal signs in online platforms can help surpass cultural differences in relation to forms of unpleasant communication. The findings show how cultural contexts determine linguistic choices even for biased expressions in a significant yet incomplete way.

Generally, the datasets of abusive tweets in Arabic and English showed a few important differences and similarities mainly related to gender targeting, insult severity, register use, emoji use and communicative styles. The study also showed paramount issues related to societal prejudices that seemed to percolate easily through social media.

V. DISCUSSION

The study at hand has found that online offensive discourse is highly influenced by cultural norms. This strongly matches the findings of Al-Qattan (2021) and Bednarek (2019) who argue that Americans tend to use more vulgar expressions than middle easterners who are constrained by societal taboos. Also, the study at hand argues that English tweets are higher in vulgarity than their Arabic counterparts. Cultural settings also influence language choices. Like Almusallam (2018) and Chen (2018), directness is preferred in Arabic, so tweets are abusive in an explicit rather than implicit way. In addition, English users felt less social pressure when online, but Arabs preserved politeness forms to save face. This covert-overt distinction echoes Almusallam's (2018) findings on high-low context cultural diversity.

It is worth noting that this study approved that emojis are integrated into toxic messages in both Arabic and English tweets, which was also argued by Husain (2021) and Kim et al. (2022). Emojis had the power to intensify insults and transcend linguistic barriers thanks to their visual iconicity. While emojis are globally understood online, Arab users diversified registers more within texts, reflecting the language's multifaceted communicative identity. More noticeable in Arabic is gender targeting, as well. This underscored the underlying societal sexism, which is a cross-cultural root issue. This study is also consistent with the findings of Alsafari et al. (2020) who claimed that English and Arabic are not linked to systemic oppression and that abuses could be curbed by patriarchal dynamics. English scaled higher abuse severity, indicating unlimited offence boundaries for English speakers (Jay, 2018).

Anonymity, regardless of language, reinforces bias because of disinhibition effects. However, cultural bias spread differently. Although both languages tended to objectify women, English derogation objectified more, thus splitting humanity through gendered abuse sanctioned by western masculinity (Farwaneh, 2005). Worth noting is that standard-slang variation is balanced in English, unlike in Arabic. The variance between the languages implies some linguistic inequality between English and Arabic offensive expressions (Gauthier, 2017). Comparisons reveal links between language diversity, identity politics and hate expression that merit exploration to fight bias in a systematic way.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study's findings provide strong insights into how abusive language is employed differently across English and Arabic on social platform, mirroring underlying sociocultural influences. Arabic tweets proved to use higher gender targeting level while English tweets used more vulgar expressions in accordance with the societal taboos. Register diversity and other linguistic variables also differed according to cultural norms. However, themes like prejudice transcended borders online with the help of anonymity and disinhibition effects. Particularly, emojis appeared as a global aggressive device underscoring shared online behaviors. However, offline topics related to identity politics and power differentials influenced minor groups distinctively in the context of each language. Overall, the study shed light on the intersection of linguistic, cultural and technological factors controlling online abuse across Arabic and English groups.

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Linguistic Intelligence of Academically Gifted University Students

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Abstract—This study was conducted to explore the level of linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun National University in Jordan. The study sample included 29 students (14 males and 15 females) from the Department of English Language and Literature, who had a cumulative average of more than 84% and were rated as excellent. Data was collected from the Department of Admission and Registration during the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024. The students were asked to complete a linguistic intelligence questionnaire consisting of 26 statements. The findings revealed that the students in the Department of English Language and Literature possess a high level of linguistic intelligence. Moreover, the study identified statistically significant differences in the level of linguistic intelligence between gifted male and female students, with female students showing a higher level of linguistic intelligence. Furthermore, there were significant variations in the responses of academically gifted students based on their academic level, with students in the 3-4-year academic level demonstrating a higher level of linguistic intelligence. The study recommends conducting comparative studies between linguistic intelligence and other types of intelligence to gain a better understanding of the relationship between them.

Index Terms—Ajloun National University, linguistic intelligence, multiple intelligences, gifted students

I. INTRODUCTION

The power of language and communication is what distinguishes us as human beings. Since childhood, we have listened to and observed the relationship sounds have with their meanings. Recently, language and verbal proficiency have been continually assessed at schools and universities all philosophical, intellectual, educational, psychological, and linguistic schools sought to develop the learners' thinking to enable them to face academic and life problems. Difficulties in language acquisition are one of the first signs and indicators observed in students who lack cognitive and intellectual development. However, language problems are among the most severe and profound learning problems because any deficiency in the development of these abilities negatively affects the intelligence level of students. It's evident that linguistic proficiency is vital for both academic and real-world achievement, and schools must prioritize its advancement (Bartolomei-Torres, 2020, p. 18).

The concept of intelligence is a topic that is widely discussed across different fields, such as education, psychology, and social sciences. It is a critical factor that affects people's lives and has an impact on various aspects, including educational, psychological, and social issues. Geneticists hold the view that intelligence is an innate predisposition that individuals inherit from their parents. However, this does not imply that the environment does not play a role in determining intelligence. Thus, intelligence is a result of inherited intelligence and environmental influence, and people can use their inherited intelligence to excel by adapting to their environment (Adas, 1997, p. 77).

Modern theories have redefined the concept of "intelligence" from a single, inherited mental ability to the idea of "multiple intelligences." In 1983, Gardner proposed the theory of multiple intelligences, identifying nine types of intelligence: interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, naturalist, and existential. Linguistic intelligence, also known as verbal intelligence, is the capacity to understand and use verbal and written language effectively. It is one of the eight intelligences that form Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Gardner's theory presented a "new" conception of intelligence and considered that the concept of intelligence is broader, more flexible, and more liberal than traditional theories. According to Gardner (1990), intelligence is "*the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings.*" It is the ability to adapt well to new situations and draw lessons from one's past experiences that is one of the characteristics of intelligence.

Gardner believes that linguistic intelligence gives students linguistic ability that helps them achieve fluency in expressing themselves in different ways and defining terms, that is, mastering the language (Gardner, 2004, p. 165). Additionally, linguistic intelligence empowers learners to communicate effectively using language. It encompasses the capacity and ability to proficiently use one's native language or other languages, both in spoken and written form, to communicate and express thoughts. This type of intelligence involves the manipulation of phonetics, syntax, pragmatics, and semantics to communicate effectively. It is a widely researched intelligence, alongside logical and mathematical intelligence, and is often referred to as universal intelligence. Furthermore, linguistic intelligence involves the mastery of language, which includes grammar, literature, poetry, metaphors, similes, tongue twisters, and abstract reasoning. It's

crucial to note that linguistic intelligence isn't the same as bilingualism, but it can influence how easily a person can learn new languages. Armstrong (2009) identifies linguistic intelligence as “*the capacity to use words successfully in both written and spoken communication.*” This type of intelligence is characterized by a strong recall for comprehensive information and mastery of linguistic patterns, such as those used in storytelling, debate, discussion, and making reports related to speaking and writing. Therefore, intelligence plays a crucial role in language learning proficiency. As one of the most influential factors in learning a language, intelligence has evolved over the years.

Weber (2005) describes verbal-linguistic intelligence as “*speaking, poetic or journalistic ability, sensitivity to the sounds, rhythms, and meanings of words, as well as understanding different functions of language. Linguistic intelligence is used in a variety of ways, such as reading, writing, and speaking*” (p. 4). Thus, linguistic intelligence means the ability to think in words and use language to express and appreciate complex meanings by expressing oneself effectively through speech or the written word, as well as showing a facility for learning foreign languages. Writers, lecturers, politicians, poets, and lawyers are among those that Gardner considers to have high linguistic intelligence. Thus, linguistic intelligence appears in the components of a language represented by phonology, syntax, semantics, morphology, and pragmatics that give them the capability to understand, learn, and use language to achieve certain goals (Hasanudin & Fitrianiingsih, 2020, p. 118).

Linguistic intelligence is significant because it gives students the ability to learn new things. Being able to verbally express oneself and use written words to communicate is extremely significant for making connections with others. The students who are distinguished in language use reflect this positively on their linguistic intelligence, where they possess a linguistic aspect, such as the use of language to persuade others of certain behaviors and the ability to process linguistic structure and scientific use for fluency or statement. Furthermore, students develop linguistic abilities that enable them to express themselves fluently and accurately. These students, who possess well-developed linguistic intelligence, demonstrate their abilities through their attentive listening, response to sound and rhythm, and proficiency in listening, reading, writing, and engaging in discussions. Linguistic intelligence encompasses the student's capacity to comprehend, paraphrase, interpret, and retain information from spoken and written sources. It is believed that linguistic intelligence also encompasses the ability to effectively communicate with and persuade others (Hoerr & Wallach, 2010).

It can be concluded that linguistic intelligence refers to the ability to effectively use a language in both its spoken and written forms, encompassing skills such as letter recognition, word structure, vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. Individuals who are proficient in a language are said to have high linguistic intelligence, whereas others who are not exposed to language as much will have lower linguistic intelligence. To put it briefly, individuals with high linguistic intelligence may choose careers such as language teachers, attorneys, interpreters, editors, radio and television announcers, and linguists. They learn languages more successfully and perform better than others. Therefore, their activities and possible careers are based on their characteristics, such as the ability to learn other languages through listening, speaking, reading, and writing; using language effectively to explain things well and persuade others; recalling information easily; enjoying word games; and using complex sentence structure grammatically.

A. Statement of the Problem

The student's weakness in linguistic intelligence affects their healthy psychological development as well; it leads to students being weak in achieving their academic subjects in general and in their social communication skills in particular. However, the absence of linguistic intelligence influences classroom activities and frequently causes a problem in developing students' linguistic intelligence, which leads to weakness in understanding. Hence, this research was an attempt to identify the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University in Jordan.

B. Significance of the Study

The objective of this study is to make a valuable contribution to the field of linguistic intelligence by specifically examining the strengths and weaknesses of academically gifted students in this area. The findings from this study are expected to improve the quality of education through more effective teaching and learning activities, ultimately leading to an elevation in the linguistic intelligence of these exceptional students. Furthermore, this study fills a gap in the field of linguistic intelligence research in Jordan by signifying an important and noteworthy addition to the academic community.

C. Research Questions

This study aimed to answer these questions.

- 1 – What is the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University?
- 2 – Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun National University due to gender?
- 3 - Does the level of linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students differ according to academic level?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The field of multiple intelligences, particularly linguistic intelligence, has been extensively studied and is a well-established area for review. The researcher had access to several relevant studies, which were discussed, presented, and concluded with commentary. To highlight the most important aspects of the current study, the following is a summary of those studies:

Daradkah et al. (2023) carried out a study to measure the level of emotional intelligence of female preschool directors and its relationship to their practice of human relations in Jordan, from the female teachers' standpoint. A questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect data. The study sample consisted of (345) female teachers. The findings of the study presented that the level of the female preschool teachers' practice of emotional intelligence was high, and the human relations practice level was high. The findings also showed that there was a positive relationship between the level of emotional intelligence and the level of practicing human relationships. The researchers recommended enhancing levels of human relations within preschools and raising awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence.

Akkawi (2023) identified the level of linguistic intelligence among gifted students enrolled in giftedness resource room programs at general education schools in Irbid Governorate, Jordan. The sample of the study consisted of 117 male and female students. These students responded to the linguistic intelligence scale, which consisted of 13 items. The results indicated that the level of linguistic intelligence was high among gifted students. The results also indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the level of linguistic intelligence in favor of gifted female students.

Shahpo and Alfadil (2021) conducted a study to evaluate giftedness among a group of talented secondary students. The study, titled "Multiple Intelligences and the Evaluation of Giftedness," involved a sample of 85 gifted students, who were assessed using a series of multiple intelligence questions. The study's findings revealed that the gifted students exhibited varying levels of multiple intelligences, with logical and mathematical intelligence being the most prevalent, followed by social, physical movement, personal, spatial, linguistic, and musical intelligence. Furthermore, the study found no statistically significant differences attributed to the classroom environment, including the factor of multiple intelligences, concerning the impact on gifted students.

According to AL-Lohibi and Al-Qusayreen's (2020) study, it aimed to identify the level of multiple intelligences in a sample of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in Saudi Arabia. The results revealed a high level of visual and spatial intelligence and low levels of natural, personal, self-linguistic, verbal, and social intelligence in ASD children. The researchers recommend highlighting the importance of examining and developing the multiple intelligences among ASD children using different teaching methods and techniques and including them in the individualized educational program.

Al-Ghosn (2020) examined the indicators of linguistic intelligence implied in the activities of reading and linguistic communication in the level three secondary syllabus in Saudi Arabia. The results revealed that the main four domains of the indicators of linguistic intelligence were reinforcing linguistic appreciation, encouraging conversation and elocution skills, reinforcing vocabulary, and encouraging writing skills. Additionally, the results showed that the most frequent indicator was encouraging conversation and elocution skills, which was repeated 97 times, reaching 38% of the indicators' total frequency.

According to Erlina et al. (2019), students with high levels of linguistic intelligence can be identified by the way they listen and respond to sound and rhythm, as well as by how they learn through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. According to the aforementioned hypothesis, students' capacity for comprehension, paraphrasing, interpreting, and remembering what has been said and read is also a component of linguistic intelligence. Additionally, it stated that the capacity for persuasion and communication is a component of linguistic intelligence.

Wahshat (2019) conducted a study to investigate the variation in the level of emotional intelligence of female and male teachers at King Abdullah II School of Excellence in Irbid Governate. The study's sample consisted of 63 teachers (24 males and 39 females) in the academic year 2015–2016. The study utilized a descriptive and survey method that included 47 sections about the dimensions of the five emotional intelligence criteria: stress management, interpersonal, intrapersonal, adaptability, and general mood. The findings revealed that the level of emotional intelligence of King Abdullah II School of Excellence teachers is high, and there are statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to gender differences in the interpersonal section and the emotional intelligence as a whole in favor of females.

Jaafar's (2018) study aimed to identify the linguistic intelligence of female students and its relationship to academic achievement. The sample of the study consisted of 50 female students from Hotat Sudair schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that linguistic intelligence can be attributed to genetic factors as well as being acquired from the environment. The study also revealed that there is a strong relationship between linguistic intelligence and academic achievement.

Maisyarah (2016) conducted a study to explore the relationship between students' verbal-linguistic intelligence and their reading achievement. The study included 39 students from the Department of English Education at the Islamic University of Jakarta. The data was collected using a verbal-linguistic intelligence questionnaire and a reading achievement test. The results indicated that there was no significant correlation between students' verbal-linguistic intelligence and their reading achievements. The researcher suggested that future studies should focus on finding ways to utilize verbal-linguistic intelligence to enhance reading comprehension.

Nawasreh's (2016) study aimed to examine the level of social intelligence among gifted and normal-achieving students and its relationship to class and gender variables, as well as academic achievement. The researcher developed a social intelligence scale that was administered to 272 gifted and 172 normal-achieving students. The results indicated that the level of social intelligence was high among both gifted and normal-achieving students. Additionally, the study found statistically significant differences in the level of social intelligence based on class, favoring seventh graders, but no statistically significant differences based on gender.

Ghanem (2012) conducted a study aimed at identifying the linguistic intelligence of students in the preparatory stage. The study was conducted on 400 male and female students. The results of the study showed that the research sample has moderate linguistic intelligence, and the results also showed that there were differences in linguistic intelligence due to the gender variable in favor of females, and results showed that there are differences in linguistic intelligence depending on the specialization variable in favor of literary.

Another investigation was performed by Al-Faoury et al. (2011) to explore different types of intelligence among Jordanian students at public and private universities in Jordan. The researchers used a survey to collect data from a sample of 1436 students. The results of the study indicated that interpersonal intelligence was the most common type of intelligence among Jordanian students, followed by intrapersonal, kinesthetic, linguistic, spatial, logical-mathematical, and musical intelligence. The study also found significant differences in linguistic and interpersonal intelligence in favour of females, as well as differences in logical intelligence in favour of public university students.

Amezian (2008) conducted a study to explore the relationship between linguistic intelligence and general intelligence among Moroccan primary school children. The study focused on determining how children express their problem-solving skills through storytelling, textbooks, and weekend news activities. The results indicated that there was a correlation between linguistic intelligence activities and general intelligence. The study also found no significant differences in the level of linguistic intelligence among the participants. However, it revealed significant differences among children's problem-solving methods in the areas of linguistic intelligence.

Gardner (2004) emphasized the significance of individuals with linguistic intelligence in society. These individuals can use language to persuade others and to remember a wide range of information, from lists to rules to instructions. Linguistic intelligence also aids learners in finding guidance, learning new procedures, and interpreting language. Language plays a vital role in learning and teaching, providing metaphors and tropes essential for scientific development (p. 167).

Lindy (2001) studied the relationship between intelligence multiplicity and some personality traits in a sample consisting of 316 male and female students. The results showed that there are statistical differences between males and females in linguistic intelligence, in favor of males.

Kezar (2001) explored the application of the multiple intelligences theory in higher education and determined that its use is crucial and plays a significant role in understanding the teaching and learning process. Kezar concluded that the main intelligence that plays an important part in language learning is verbal-linguistic.

To sum up, previous studies have provided evidence of the positive effects of linguistic intelligence on the achievement of academically gifted students. They have also examined different types of intelligence. For example, some studies focused on linguistic intelligence (Akkawi, 2023; Hammoudi, 2010; Amezian, 2008; Ghanem, 2012; Jaafer, 2018; Erlinaei et al., 2019), while others concentrated on emotional intelligence, such as Wahshat (2019) and Daradkah et al. (2023). Additionally, Nawasreh (2016) investigated the level of social intelligence among gifted students. However, there is a lack of studies that have explored linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students in Jordan. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap and identify the level of linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun National University in Jordan.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The study sample included 29 students (14 males and 15 females) from the Department of English Language and Literature at Ajloun National University. These students had a cumulative average of more than 84 percent and were rated as excellent. The data was collected from the Department of Admission and Registration at the university. These students were selected using the purposive sampling method due to their high academic achievement.

TABLE 1
SHOWS THE FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	14	48.27%
Female	15	51.73%
Total	29	100.0

Table 1 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants in the study sample according to gender. The total number of participants is 29. The percentage of male students is 48.27%, whereas it is 51.73% for female students.

B. Instrument

The study aimed to determine the linguistic intelligence level of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University in Jordan. To achieve this, students were given a linguistic intelligence questionnaire in English to fill out within a specific time frame. A Five-point Likert questionnaire, based on the Multiple Intelligence Questionnaire by Walter McKenzie and Multiple Intelligence in the Classroom by Thomas Armstrong (2003), consisted of 26 statements with five response options.

C. Statistical Analysis

A Five-point Likert scale was used to indicate the response to each statement in the questionnaire (Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1). The mean of 5 represents the highest level of linguistic intelligence, while the mean of 1 represents the lowest level of linguistic intelligence. Consequently, the means and standard deviations were used to answer the first question, while the nonparametric Mann-Whitney test was used to answer the second and third questions. This test was used due to the small number of academically gifted students at the Department of English Language and Literature at Ajloun National University. Means (M) and standard deviations (SD) were measured for each construct and related statement. These statements were ranked in descending order according to the following scale:

TABLE 2
MEANS AND THE LEVELS OF STUDENTS' RESPONSES

Means	Levels
1 – 1.75	low
1.76 – 2.51	Medium
2.52 – 4	High

IV. RESULTS

The main purpose of this study is to identify the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University in Jordan. Results related to the first question: *What is the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University?*

To answer this question, means, standard deviations, and levels of linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun University were calculated. Table 3 shows these results according to the scale domains.

TABLE 3
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ACCORDING TO THE SCALE DOMAINS

Domain	No. of Statements	Mean	S.D	Level
Language Skills	18	4.16	.315	High
Creativity in Language	8	4.12	.370	High

Table 3 indicates that the number of statements regarding the language skills domain consists of 18 statements, while there are 8 statements regarding creativity in language. The mean for the language skills domain is 4.16 and the SD =.315, while the mean for creativity in the language domain is 4.12 and the SD =.370. This result indicates that academically gifted students have a high level of linguistic intelligence in both language skills and creativity in the language.

TABLE 4
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE STATEMENTS IN THE LANGUAGE SKILLS DOMAIN, WHICH ARE ARRANGED IN DESCENDING ORDER

No.	Statement	Mean	S.D	Level
S 1	I enjoy reading all kinds of materials	4.55	.506	High
S 7	I've written something recently that I was particularly proud of or that earned me recognition from others	4.38	.494	High
S 5	I keep writing a journal and/or dairy	4.38	.561	High
S 11	My conversation includes frequent references to things that I have read or heard	4.38	.775	High
S 10	Debates and public speaking are activities that I like to participate in	4.34	.553	High
S 9	I learn to speak or read another language (e.g., English, French, and German) has been relatively easy for me.	4.31	.541	High
S 15	I have high sensitivity to all aspects of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing	4.17	.711	High
S 20	I have flexibility in extracting meaning when speaking several languages	4.17	.711	High
S 4	It is easy for me to explain my ideas to others	4.14	.639	High
S 2	Taking notes helps me remember and understand	4.14	.639	High
S 24	I can hear words in my head before I read, speak, or write them down	4.10	.673	High
S 16	Good knowledge of the structure of language; can recognize and apply grammar rules	4.07	.704	High
S 3	I faithfully (routinely/always) contact friends through letters and/or e-mail	4.07	.753	High
S 25	I get more out of listening to the radio or speaker word recording than I do from television or film	4.00	.707	High
S 23	I find it easy to remember phrases, poems or song lyrics.	4.00	.707	High
S 21	I am good at spelling and sensitive to patterns	3.97	.865	High
S 17	I can use language to accomplish certain goals	3.93	.799	High
S 13	I find that it is easy to remember quotes and phrases and weave them into conversations	3.90	.817	High
	Overall	4.16	.315	High

Table 4 shows the statements, the means, the standard deviations, and the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students' responses at the Department of English Language and Literature according to the language skills domain. It indicates that statement (1) "I enjoy reading all kinds of materials" obtained the highest mean of 4.55 and the SD =.506, while statement (13) "I find that it is easy to remember quotes and phrases and weave them into conversations" received the lowest mean of 3.90 and the SD =.817. The level of all statements in this domain is high, according to the responses of the academically gifted students. Thus, the overall mean for the language skills domain reached 4.16 and the SD =.315, and the level is high for all statements in this domain.

TABLE 5
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE STATEMENTS OF CREATIVITY IN THE LANGUAGE DOMAIN, WHICH ARE ARRANGED IN DESCENDING ORDER

No.	Statement	Mean	S.D	Level
S 18	I know many different uses for language, such as persuasion, negotiation, information, and pleasure	4.38	.677	High
S 19	I can interpret others	4.21	.559	High
S 12	I appreciate my book collection	4.21	.675	High
S 6	I enjoy word games like Crosswords, Anagrams, Password or solving brainteasers that require logical thinking	4.17	.602	High
S 8	I enjoy playing Scrabble, anagram, or password	4.10	.673	High
S 26	I enjoy entertaining myself or others with tongue twisters, rhymes, or puns	4.10	.557	High
S 14	It is easy for me to make up stories	3.97	.731	High
S 22	I am good at memorizing for general knowledge	3.86	.639	High
	Overall	4.12	.370	High

Table 5 presents the statements, the means, the standard deviations, and the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students' responses at the Department of English Language and Literature according to creativity in the language domain. It indicates that statement No. (18), "I know many different uses for language, such as persuasion, negotiation, information, and pleasure," obtained the highest mean of (4.38) and the SD =.677, while statement No. 22, "I am good at memorizing for general knowledge," received the lowest mean of (3.86) and the SD =.639. The level of all statements in this domain is high, according to the responses of the academically gifted students. Thus, the overall means for creativity in the language domain reached 4.12, and the SD =.370, and the level is high for all statements in this domain.

Results related to the second question: *Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun National University due to gender?*

TABLE 6
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ACCORDING TO GENDER

Domain	Gender	No. of Students	Mean	S.D
Language skills	Male	14	3.89	.208
	Female	15	4.41	.145
Creativity in language	Male	14	3.81	.263
	Female	15	4.40	.212

Table 6 shows that the number of male students is 14, while the number of female students is 15. It also shows that there are differences in the means and standard deviations according to gender variables in both domains (language skills and creativity in language). Regarding the language skills domain, the mean for male students is 3.89, whereas it is 4.41 for female students. According to creativity in the language domain, the mean for male students is 3.81, while it is 4.40 for female students. To reveal the statistical significance of these differences, the researcher uses the nonparametric Mann-Whitney test Table 7 presents these results.

TABLE 7
RESULTS OF THE MANN-WHITNEY TEST ACCORDING TO GENDER

Domain	Gender	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Z	p
Language skills	M	7.04	91.50	.500	-4.481	0.001
	F	20.97	314.50			
Creativity in language	M	7.65	99.50	8.500	-4.124	0.001
	F	20.43	306.50			

It is clear from Table 7 that there are statistically significant differences between the mean ranks of academically gifted students' responses at Ajloun National University according to gender. Regarding the language skills domain, the mean rank of male students is 7.04, whereas it is 20.97 for female students. According to creativity in the language domain, the mean rank of male students is 7.65, while it is 20.43 for female students. Thus, it can be concluded that there are statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between male and female students in the linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University due to gender in favor of female students, as the mean rank of females is 20.97 in the domain of language skills, while in the domain of creativity in language it is 20.43, which is higher than the mean rank of male students.

Results related to the third question: *Does the level of linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students differ according to academic level?* To answer this question means and standard deviations are shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ACCORDING TO CLASS LEVEL

Domain	Academic Level	No. of Students	Mean	S.D
Language skills	1-2years	13	3.87	.192
	3-4 years	16	4.40	.153
Creativity in language	1-2years	13	3.78	.212
	3-4 years	16	4.39	.205

Table 8 shows that there are differences between the means according to the academic level variable among academically gifted students at ANU in both domains (language skills and creativity in language). To reveal the statistical significance of these differences, the researcher applied the nonparametric Mann-Whitney test, and Table 9 shows these results.

TABLE 9
RESULTS OF THE MANN-WHITNEY TEST ACCORDING TO CLASS LEVEL

Domain	class level	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Z	p
Language skills	1-2years	7.00	91.00	.000	-4.573	0.001
	3-4 years	21.50	344.00			
Creativity in Language	1-2years	7.23	94.00	3.000	-4.454	0.001
	3-4 years	21.31	341.00			

Table 9 illustrates that there are statistically significant differences between the mean ranks among academically gifted students' responses at ANU in both domains (language skills and creativity in language) according to academic level. The differences are in favor of students of the academic level (3-4 years), where the mean rank is 21.50 in the field of language skills, while it is 21.31 in the field of creativity in language. It is higher than the mean rank of students at the academic level (1-2 years) in both domains (language skills and creativity in language).

V. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to identify the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University in Jordan. Results of the first question: *What is the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students at Ajloun National University?* The results showed that the level of linguistic intelligence of academically gifted students is high on all questionnaire domains and statements. The mean for the language skills domain is 4.16 and the SD is .315, while the mean for creativity in the language domain is 4.12 and the SD is 370. This result indicates that academically gifted students have a high level of linguistic intelligence in both language skills and creativity in the language. In this regard, several studies have indicated a high level of linguistic intelligence among students. On one hand, the results of this study are consistent with Jaafar's (2018) study, which revealed a strong relationship between linguistic intelligence and academic achievement among female students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the results of this study agree with the results of Amezian's (2008) study, which indicated a correlation between linguistic intelligence activities and general intelligence. Kezar (2001) highlighted the crucial role of multiple intelligences in higher education, particularly emphasizing the significance of verbal-linguistic intelligence in language learning. Ghanem's (2012) study aimed at identifying the linguistic intelligence of students in the preparatory stage. The results of the study showed that the research sample has moderate linguistic intelligence. On the other hand, the results of this study disagree with Maisyarah's (2016) study that investigated the correlation between students' verbal-linguistic intelligence and their reading achievement. The results showed that there was no significant correlation between students' verbal-linguistic intelligence and their reading achievements.

It can be concluded that academically gifted students with linguistic intelligence use a variety of skills, such as speaking, reading, and writing. However, students with linguistic intelligence possess common features such as learning language easily, comprehending complex sentence structures effortlessly, having a deeply-rooted understanding of language development, recognizing the function and rules of language, making presentations and debates, using persuasive speeches, explaining things effectively, having a rich vocabulary, enjoying reading and writing, and asking questions frequently. Thus, linguistic intelligence appears in the components of a language represented by phonology, semantics, morphology, syntax, and pragmatics that give them the ability to understand, learn, and use language to accomplish certain goals.

Results of the second question: *Are there any statistically significant differences (a ≤ 0.05) in linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun National University due to gender?* The results revealed that there were statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students at Ajloun National University due to gender in favor of female students, as the mean rank of females is 20.97 in the domain of language skills, while in the domain of creativity in language it is 20.43, which is higher than the mean rank of male students. The result of this study agrees with the result of Ghanem's (2012) study, which showed that there were differences in linguistic intelligence due to the gender variable in favor of females. The results of this study disagree

with the results of Lindy's (2001) study on the relationship between intelligence multiplicity and some personality traits. The results showed that there were statistical differences between female and male students in linguistic intelligence, in favor of males.

Results related to the third question: *Does the level of linguistic intelligence among academically gifted students differ according to academic level?* The results of this study demonstrate that there are statistically significant differences between the mean ranks among academically gifted students' responses at ANU in both domains (language skills and creativity in language) according to academic level. The differences are in favor of students of the academic level (3-4 years), where the mean rank is 21.50 in the field of language skills, while it is 21.31 in the field of creativity in language.

VI. CONCLUSION

Concerning the results of this study, it can be inferred that the level of linguistic intelligence is notably high among the gifted students at the Department of English Language and Literature at Ajloun National University. The study also revealed significant differences in linguistic intelligence, with female students and those in the 3–4-year academic level showing higher levels of linguistic intelligence. In conclusion, linguistic intelligence is fundamental for cognitive development and has a significant impact on various aspects of individuals' lives. It not only facilitates effective communication but also enhances cognitive growth, sharpens analytical skills, and improves social and public speaking abilities. Nurturing linguistic intelligence lays the groundwork for the development of other types of intelligence and overall personal growth.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

This research suggests further studies should be conducted to compare linguistic intelligence with other types of intelligence. Additional research should be carried out at other universities with larger groups to identify the linguistic intelligence among students. Using linguistic activities in the classroom, such as writing essays and short stories that are abundant in linguistic vocabulary, could develop students' linguistic intelligence.

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The Views of Students and Pre-Service Teachers on Using Padlet for Mastery of Grammar and Writing Skills in Secondary Education

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Abstract—Padlet allows students to further explore their abilities and encourages them to share ideas and collaborate in learning. The purpose of this study was to know how students and pre-service teachers felt about using Padlet as a tool for learning grammar and writing in secondary education. A qualitative descriptive design was used in this study. Participants in this study included sixty students and six pre-service teachers from both a state school and an Islamic school in Indonesia. The data for this study were obtained through a closed-ended questionnaire along with observation and interviews that were aimed at obtaining the perceptions of students and pre-service teachers about the use of Padlet for teaching and learning grammar and writing skills. These were then analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method. The results of this study were that Padlet can be used as a learning tool that was quite effective and efficient for learning grammar. Learning implementation using Padlet allows students to better understand the material by exploring ideas through the Padlet platform.

Index Terms—Padlet, grammar, writing, pre-service teachers, students

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, starting from elementary school and continuing through to university, students are exposed to the English language as part of a formal foreign language education program where they acquire the four skills of learning any language: reading, speaking, writing, and listening. As stated by Richards and Renandya (2002), the majority of students struggle with writing since they must be able to generate and organize ideas, as well as effectively communicate them in writing. Moreover, they should be able to comprehend some important writing elements, such as grammar, vocabulary use, content, and mechanics (Fatimah, 2019; Nugraheni et al., 2024; Sari, 2021). Nunan (2001) explained that writing success requires the ability to organize content at the paragraph and overall text levels to reflect given or new information and topic/comment structures. Along with that, students must learn to select an appropriate format and then polish and revise one's initial efforts. Indeed, these are all crucial for writing success. From the writing elements that have been mentioned, grammar becomes one of the important points in compiling a sentence where grammar takes on a role as a conceptual form of a sentence based on circumstances.

One of the biggest challenges students face is mastering the material, particularly when it comes to both grammar and learning to write. The teacher provides learning facilities in the form of learning theory, creates effective and efficient learning concepts, and strives to increase student interest in learning material. However, innovative teaching is also needed to support the learning of English language skills. Moreover, concerning the fostering of learning innovation, thinking and planning for the future of education must include 21st-century learning where technology has advanced, but educators and administrators must also advance by finding new ways to help students prepare for the future. After

all, education systems are changing faster than ever before these days (Nichols, 2019). As a result, all students are expected to actively engage in classroom discussions, Q&A sessions, and idea exchanges. Students benefit from participating in these events because they have the opportunity to both acquire and impart new knowledge (Zhi & Su, 2016). To increase the responsibilities of students for their own learning, the facilitation roles of teachers are crucial (Beltrán-Martín, 2019; Hamid et al., 2019; Kapsalis et al., 2020). Since each student has a different learning style, teaching and learning activities must take into account the new learning environment to be effective (Cheong, 2019; Müller & Mildnerberger, 2021).

Utilizing modern technology such as smartphone applications is one innovative method that can be implemented within the writing classroom (Angelina et al., 2021; Arochman et al., 2024; Jamaris et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2022). This idea is supported by the post-pandemic situation when students became accustomed to using technology to support online learning such as Zoom, Webex, Google Meet, and other platforms. These very same learning platforms can be integrated into the post-pandemic classroom where learning requires teachers to be innovative in maximizing the skills and knowledge of students by creating an interesting but still effective learning environment (Kobylarek, 2021; Sharma & Alvi, 2021). Indeed, innovative learning media is needed in a learning environment that is integrated with the use of technology (Bali et al., 2021). In this study, the researchers chose the Padlet platform as a learning medium to teach grammar, especially conditional sentence material.

During classroom observations, pre-service teachers discovered that the teacher had attempted to create a learning concept that was integrated with technology. More specifically, Microsoft's PowerPoint and whiteboards were the most commonly used media in the classrooms observed. However, there are a plethora of other online applications such as Padlet (www.padlet.com) that can be used to enhance learning when class time is limited (Lestari, 2017). According to Fuchs (2014), Padlet is an application that facilitates student collaboration and writing sharing. Lestari (2017) also stated that Padlet is similar to sticky notes where students can put their thoughts on a particular subject and both lecturers and students can comment on them, provide suggestions for them, and even evaluate students' posts, as well.

In this research, Padlet is the learning medium used by students during grammar learning. Fadhilawati et al. (2020) focused on implementing the Padlet platform to increase student achievement in their writing skill, especially in procedure text material. They used tests and questionnaires as research methods to measure the significance of student achievement after they were taught using Padlet. The results show that Padlet can gradually increase student achievement because students are comfortable sharing their writing on the Padlet platform. Students may be inspired to explore ideas by the wall's placement in Padlet since they can post videos, recordings, and pictures relevant to the topic (Lestari, 2017). Students felt that, by utilizing Padlet as a tool for learning, they had gained new knowledge and ideas through the exercises, sharing their ideas with peers, working together, and communicating with friends (Mahmud, 2019).

Based on the phenomenon observed and supported by several previous studies regarding the use of Padlet as a learning tool, the researchers sought more in-depth perspectives from students and pre-service teachers regarding the use of Padlet for grammar mastery in conditional sentence materials for first semester 11th Grade senior high school students.

This investigation was directed by the following questions:

1. How do students view the use of Padlet as a tool for learning grammar and writing?
2. What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers in the practice of teaching grammar and writing using Padlet?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Technology in the Classroom*

In recent decades, technology has played a major role in the development of humankind. Various aspects of integration with technological developments exist, one of which is education. The methods and instruments have changed from using the traditional chalk and a chalkboard to employing technologically enhanced tools like Padlet, and indeed, the lives of students have been significantly impacted by teachers and technology (Rideout et al., 2010). According to Fageeh (2011), technology use has impacted daily life and enhanced students' capacity for critical thinking. Thomas et al. (2014) also noted the significance of technology, particularly learning tools, in enhancing the critical thinking abilities of students. Furthermore, because of the use of technology-based learning tools in the classroom, the most significant shifts from a teacher-centered to a student-centered instructional approach have occurred (Awaludin et al., 2017).

Learning that is integrated with the use of technology has a positive effect on educational development, especially when students and teachers can feel it. Previous research on utilizing technology as a teaching tool by Dianati et al. (2020) found that students perceive the use of technology in the form of a useful website platform as beneficial because of their interesting and engaging characteristics. Conventional learning with the role of the teacher as a facilitator is more teacher-centered where the highest role in the learning process is that of the teacher while students are left to explore ideas and knowledge but often lack the facilities to be able to do so. Technology plays a big role in realizing student-centered learning which positions students at the center of the learning process (Gao, 2021). Fuchs (2014) said that integrating and implementing learning technologies in the classroom could encourage participation from the entire

class. The use of technology as a learning tool facilitates the learning process more so than in the past, so its integration into the student-centered teaching approach is essential (Jayanti et al., 2024; Yunus & Salehi, 2012).

The significance of technology is found in the learning process and its relationship to language acquisition where teachers play an important role in guiding students. To improve the actual use of technology in language learning, teachers should provide an example for their students on how to use technology to assist the curriculum (Costley, 2014; Murphy et al., 2003). Furthermore, students are more likely to work together with the help of technology. After all, cooperation is one of the most useful learning tools because when students work together to create activities, they gain insight from each other by critiquing one another's efforts (Keser et al., 2012). Moreover, English instruction has been revolutionized by the widespread adoption of digital tools as it provides numerous options for enhancing instruction by making it more engaging and effective for progress.

B. Padlet as a Learning Tool

As stated by Mahmud (2019), the administrator of Padlet can upload documents, links, videos, and other content to the website. It enables them to utilize their Padlet account to produce numerous kinds of content. Users include the teacher and his or her students who, together, can create quality content and use it in their lessons. With certain essential advantages, Padlet is a medium that may be used to create virtual walls. It functions on almost all web-enabled, interconnected devices. Multimedia files and papers can be posted on the walls (Fadhilawati et al., 2020), and it is also possible to copy and store the "Walls". In a tertiary ESL classroom, Padlet is useful for brainstorming, group work, and project management in an advanced English language learning setting (Mehta et al., 2021).

Mahmud (2019) added that Padlet allows students to study anywhere and at any time, so long as they have access to a computer, smartphone, or tablet with an internet connection. Users do not even have to download anything to use Padlet. Fisher (2017) contended that Padlet is a more interactive alternative to oral participation, especially for students who may feel uncomfortable raising their hands in class. Pollock (2016) also stated that Padlet provides each student with a voice. Furthermore, regular use of Padlet raises engagement (Baida, 2014; De Berg, 2016). In fact, studies show that, by decreasing the time between individual and group discussion responses, Padlet increases student engagement (Fisher, 2017; Gill-Simmen, 2021). As a digital platform, Padlet also provides an effective space for students to explore ideas, making it especially easier for students to share and explore ideas.

Furthermore, Padlet is ideal for encouraging student collaboration (Weller, 2013), and is also a digital whiteboard that allows for instant feedback and group collaboration (Fuchs, 2014). Likewise, Padlet is a great tool students can use to publish and share their writing with their instructors and classmates (Sangeetha, 2016). Through the use of this online platform, the instructor and students can engage in real-time discussions and knowledge exchange (Feng & Feng, 2021). Fuchs (2014) explained that integrating and implementing learning technologies in the classroom could encourage participation from the entire class. Every time a student comments on their wall, Padlet will send the instructors an email (Wood, 2016). Finally, it is for all of the aforementioned reasons that the researchers chose Padlet for this study.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research used a descriptive qualitative design. In this research, the researchers provide a perspective on the use of the Padlet platform as an educational tool. It utilized three tools, including a closed-ended questionnaire, an observation, and an interview. This study investigated the perceptions of students and pre-service teachers about using Padlet as a learning tool for studying English writing with a focus on grammar and writing skills.

B. Participants

As many as sixty students participated in this research at SMAN 2 Grabag, Magelang and MAN Temanggung, Indonesia. Moreover, three pre-service teachers carried out teaching practice at SMAN 2 Grabag Magelang, and three pre-service teachers carried out teaching practice at MAN Temanggung. Participating students were taught the English language by pre-service teachers.

C. Instruments

The instruments used for this research were a closed-ended questionnaire, observation, and interview. The closed-ended questionnaire was adapted from Fadhilawati et al. (2020), "Improving Students' Success with Writing Procedure Texts via Padlet". Fourteen statements were obtained from research related to the implementation of the Padlet platform in English language learning. Researchers made observations as pre-service teachers carried out teaching practices. Interviews were conducted with pre-service teachers who also practiced learning writing, especially grammar, using Padlet. The observations were made by the researchers themselves as pre-service teachers. The interview used questions adapted from Mahmud (2019) "Students' Perceptions of Using Padlet as a Learning Tool for English Writing. The statements of the questionnaire are as follows in Table 1, below:

TABLE 1
THE STATEMENTS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

No	Statements
1	I am eager to learn grammar through Padlet
2	I am happy to learn writing through Padlet
3	Learning grammar using Padlet is interesting
4	Learning grammar through Padlet is wasting my time
5	I am comfortable sharing my writing or composing sentences on Padlet
6	Padlet motivates me to complete my writing assignments
7	Learning grammar in Padlet is difficult
8	Learning grammar in Padlet is costly
9	I performed better in grammar after studying using Padlet
10	Padlet enables me to collaborate with my peers
11	Padlet has made me pay closer attention to grammar
12	Padlet helps me develop ideas in making sentences in writing
13	I appreciate my teacher's Padlet comments on my writing
14	In the future, I intend to use Padlet to document my thoughts on a variety of other subjects.

D. Data Collection and Data Analysis

In this study, three different forms of data were used: 1) data from closed-ended questionnaires; 2) data from observations; and 3) data from interviews. A total of 20 participants were chosen at random from the pre-service teacher's class. Twenty participants were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their opinion of Padlet as a grammar-learning tool. A closed-ended Google Form questionnaire that was a modified 1–4 Likert scale was used to collect the data. Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA) were the scale columns that were employed. Using descriptive analysis, questionnaire responses regarding students' perceptions of utilizing Padlet in the classroom were analyzed. Observations were carried out when the pre-service teacher taught grammar lessons using Padlet in the form of narratives following what the pre-service teacher had implemented when carrying out their internship. One pre-service teacher was interviewed and asked four questions related to the teaching process that had been carried out. Interview data is presented with a detailed descriptive explanation.

IV. FINDINGS

The results of the current research are discussed in this part. The learning process is integrated with the use of technology, namely with the Padlet platform serving as a learning tool in this case. The questionnaire was created online via the Google form which focuses on questions for students, especially related to their perceptions about the implementation of grammar learning with the Padlet platform.

A. Students' Views Regarding the Padlet Platform as a Tool for Learning Grammar and Writing

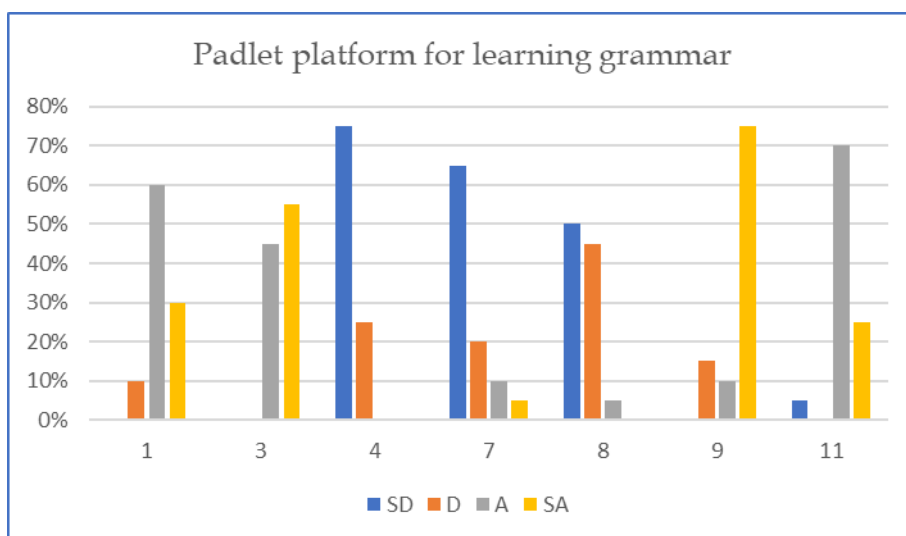


Figure 1. Percentage of Students' Views Regarding Padlet for Learning Grammar

Figure 1 presents information about students' views regarding Padlet for learning grammar. In the 1st statement, "I am eager to learn grammar through Padlet", 30% of the participants chose strongly agree, 60% of the participants stated that they agreed, and 10% of the participants stated that they disagreed. Then, based on the results of statement 3, all of the participants who filled out the questionnaire thought learning grammar using Padlet was interesting. It can be seen from the data that 55% of the participants chose to strongly agree, and the rest chose to agree. It means that students are

quite motivated to learn using Padlet because the majority enjoyed learning through the platform. However, a few participants chose to disagree because of the device being used and the strength of the internet connection.

Moreover, related to statement 4, "Learning grammar through Padlet is wasting my time", each of the participants expressed disagreement. As many as 75% of the participants stated that they strongly disagreed and 25% of the participants chose to disagree. That means the efficiency of learning time in the classroom by using Padlet can be said to be adequate.

Turning to statement 7, there was a diversity of responses from participants; 65% of the participants did not think that learning grammar through Padlet was difficult. In addition, 20% of the participants chose to disagree, as many as 10% of the participants chose to agree and the rest strongly agreed. This means that the majority of the participants have no difficulty in using Padlet as a learning tool. In connection with participants who stutter, using Padlet is difficult because students are not fully accustomed to using it.

Additionally, based on the results of statement 8, 50% of the participants stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement that learning grammar through Padlet was expensive, reinforced by 45% of the participants who also chose to disagree, but 5% of the respondents agreed that using Padlet was expensive which can be because Padlet is an online platform that can only be accessed if you have an internet connection.

Furthermore, based on the responses to statement 9 of the questionnaire "I got better achievement in grammar after learning using Padlet", the majority of the participants agreed with the given statement with 75% of the participants strongly agreeing, 10% of the participants agreeing, and the rest disagreeing. This can be interpreted as meaning that the use of Padlet can help increase students' understanding of the material. In the last statement, number 11, which states "I pay more attention to the grammar presented in Padlet", various answers were given by the participating students. As many as 5% of the participants chose to strongly disagree. Nonetheless, the majority of the participants agreed with 70% of the participants choosing to agree and 25% of the participants choosing to strongly agree, which means that there are students who have not been able to fully use Padlet. As a result, this affects their understanding of the material. Moving forward, the use of Padlet for learning writing can be seen in Figure 2.

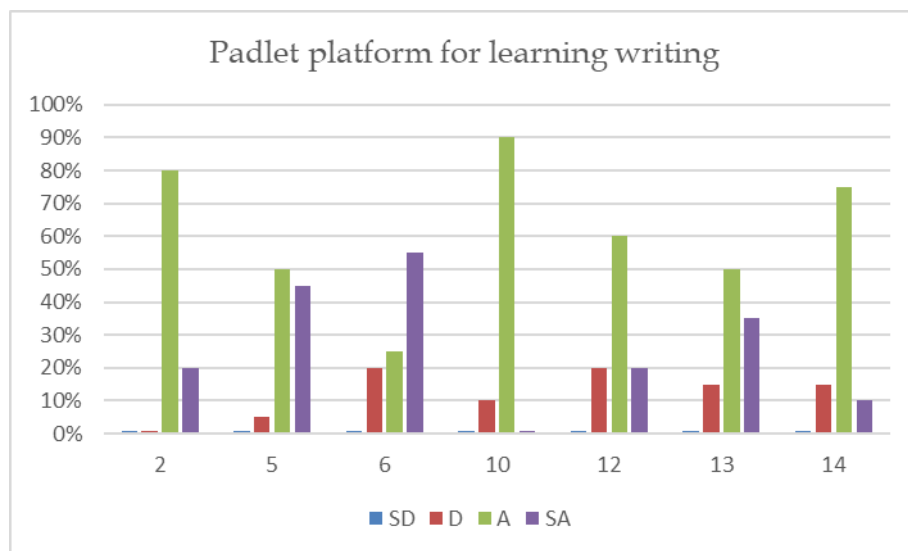


Figure 2. Percentage of Students' Views Regarding Padlet for Learning Writing

Figure 2 shows the students' views regarding Padlet for learning writing. Statement 2, "I am happy to learn writing through Padlet," received a very positive response, and as the graph shows, 80% of the participants chose to agree and 20% of the participants stated that they strongly agreed which means that all of the participants enjoyed the learning process when using Padlet. In statement 5, "I feel comfortable sharing my written sentences in Padlet", the majority of students agreed as 50% of the participants chose to agree, and 45% of the participants chose to strongly agree. Still, 5% of the participants chose disagree meaning that the majority felt comfortable exploring writing skills through Padlet, but very few did not feel comfortable using Padlet to learn writing.

Moreover, as related to the 6th statement, 55% of the participants stated that they were motivated to practice writing through Padlet, 25% of the participants chose to strongly agree, and 20% of the participants were not motivated. That means returning to each student's learning style, or more specifically, each student's preferences, and finding a medium where they can explore their writing abilities according to their preferences. Moreover, they can also return to the Padlet function as a wall where students can practice and cooperate, which brings us to statement number 10.

For statement 10, "Padlet enables me to collaborate with my peers", the majority of the participants agreed with only 10% of the participants choosing to disagree. This can be interpreted as meaning that each individual has his own reason for using or not using Padlet. Thus, it cannot be equated.

Moving on to statement 12, "Padlet helps me develop ideas in making sentences in writing", was responded to positively by the participants with 20% of them strongly agreeing, 60% agreeing, and 20% of the participants disagreeing. This means that few participants see Padlet only as a learning tool and not as a tool that can be used to explore ideas and develop writing skills.

In statement 13, "I like my teacher's feedback on my writing in Padlet", there were enough positive responses from the participants, 35% of whom strongly agreed, and 50% of whom agreed with the statement. However, 15% of the participants disagreed. The majority chose to agree because, with Padlet, the process of providing feedback can be done more easily and all students can access the feedback of their peers.

The last statement, "I will use Padlet to write about other topics in the future," received a fairly positive response from participants where 75% of the participants agreed, 10% of the participants chose strongly agree, and the rest chose disagree. That means the majority of the participants plan to use the Padlet further and explore their abilities more deeply through the Padlet.

B. Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions Related to the Implementation of Teaching Grammar and Writing Using Padlet

The pre-service teachers carried out internships in two classes with a focus on grammar material and writing skills for specialized English lessons. The grammar material that was taught was in accordance with the learning syllabus at that time which covered conditional sentences regarding future plans. Teaching conditional sentence material is usually covered in the first semester. Moreover, before teaching on the subject, pre-service teachers are allowed to observe the subject teachers presenting the "future plans" lesson so that pre-service teachers can analyze the methods, tools, and conditions of the actual class and can then arrange appropriate lesson plans to be applied in the classroom.

The pre-service teachers in this study used the results of observations as material for preparing a lesson plan. In the lesson plan preparation process, the pre-service teachers decided to use the Padlet platform as one of the learning tools. Then the pre-service teachers tried to find a suitable companion for the Padlet application, finally choosing an interactive game for students, namely "Hallu on Pict", where the students are given pictures related to future plans and are then asked to make one conventional sentence according to images on the Padlet platform. This got a positive response by proving that all students uploaded sentences they made on Padlet with a variety of conditions. (See Figure 3, below)

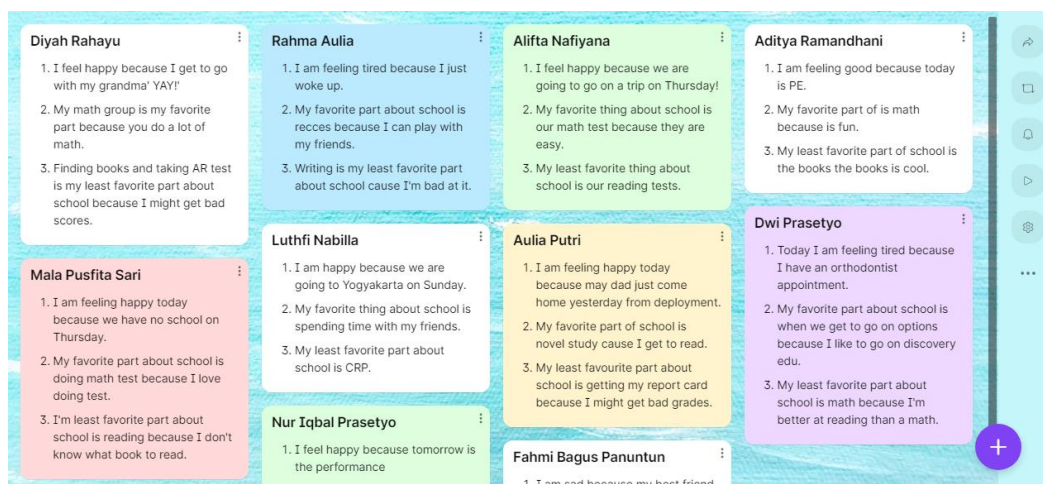


Figure 3. The Sentences Students Wrote on the Padlet Platform

During the lesson, observations were made by the pre-service teachers to determine the effectiveness of using Padlet as a learning tool for grammar learning. The in-class learning process lasted for 90 minutes, starting with brainstorming to explore students' memories of the basic material taught in the previous meeting. Pre-service teachers enhanced the material using PowerPoint which was then followed by using Padlet. The pre-service teachers found that students tended to question the internet connection as the main cause of hindering learning a bit because Padlet is an online platform that requires an internet connection to access it. However, the mechanism for using the Padlet platform to write sentences was not too much of a problem because the pre-service teachers provided the students with steps on how to use the Padlet platform as desired.

Returning to the diversity of the students' answers, it can be observed that when students try to compose conditional sentences, they can see each answer uploaded by their classmates, thus requiring them not to use the same sentence or condition because they are prohibited from using the same answer. This can be interpreted as students being restricted in order to reduce their chances of cheating. Instead, however, they can cooperate well with classmates through discussions because they are required to have different answers. Collaboration can be accomplished by understanding each student's differences in topics and conditions so that they can find alternative topics or conditions that are unique and different from the others.

The pre-service teachers also provided opportunities for all students to provide feedback on their classmates' answers. The pre-service teachers will sequentially check the answers from students according to the topic in the picture given. Therefore, it can be concluded that using Padlet is quite efficient and effective in utilizing learning time because students simply observe all the answers on the screen without having to ask students one by one to write answers on the whiteboard which would then be less efficient. Plus, the Padlet platform is on a website where everyone can access it, so it doesn't become an obstacle for all students to access it. However, because it is an online website, it requires a good internet connection to be able to access it.

Interviews were also conducted with pre-service teachers who also taught using the same materials and tools. The analysis of the interview shows an understanding of Padlet as a learning tool for writing instruction, especially in grammar material and writing skills. The participants were asked to answer four questions. The first question is "Do you believe Padlet would facilitate student learning?" All participants' answers were used to illustrate the findings.

"Yes, of course." (Participants)

The result demonstrates that students can benefit from using Padlet. The participants clearly gave positive answers to the questions given, indicating that Padlet, a tool for learning, can aid students in the classroom learning process.

In addition, the participants were also asked, "How do you believe Padlet would be utilized as a learning tool?" The participants' answers showed the perception of the pre-service teacher's use of the Padlet as a learning tool.

"In my opinion, Padlet can be used by all students to discuss course material as well as a medium for collecting student assignments. There are several features, such as liking, commenting, and even giving ratings, so that it can increase students' enthusiasm for learning to use Padlet." (Participant 1)

Based on the participant's answers, it shows that the participant thinks that Padlet can be used as a medium for discussion or for collecting assignments because it is supported by features that can be utilized so that students will be more motivated to discuss them in class.

The third question is more specifically on the skills taught by the pre-service teachers, "Do you believe that Padlet would be beneficial for students learning English writing?"

"In my opinion, not really." (Participant 2)

The results showed that Padlet does not have a major impact on helping students learn to write. The participant gave a response of "...not really" which could mean that the Padlet could not help 100 % of the students to learn writing, especially grammar.

The final question the participants were asked was "To what extent do you believe Padlet could be utilized as an English writing learning tool?"

"Padlet is quite helpful for students to practice their writing skills because Padlet itself is a container to accommodate uploads in the form of text, images, and audio. However, in my opinion, Padlet itself does not yet have a feature such as checking the grammar of students, so if there is a grammar error, they cannot find out where their mistake is so that grammar corrections can be made. So Padlet is only limited to providing a place to express ideas or ideas from students as well as a medium for collecting their assignments." (Participant 3)

The answers from the participants provided clarity regarding the answers to the previous question regarding whether Padlet could help students learn to write. The participants thought that Padlet could help students improve their writing skills, but because there were no features connected specifically to checking grammar, the students could not find out if there was an error in their writing related to grammar. The participant emphasized that Padlet can only be used as a medium in the form of a space to share ideas or for collecting assignments.

V. DISCUSSION

Regarding the previously displayed results, it seems Padlet can help students better grasp the grammar concepts they're learning. In this case, students' comprehension increased significantly after using Padlet, as they are eager to learn grammar using Padlet and enjoy the learning process because they feel comfortable when being taught with Padlet. Padlet also allows students to develop and explore their ideas easily. Students could be inspired to explore ideas by the wall's place on Padlet since they can post videos, recordings, and pictures relevant to the topic (Jong & Kim Hua, 2021; Lestari, 2017). In addition, students' motivation to create in-depth understanding has also increased, as evidenced by their enthusiasm for using the Padlet platform in class. In line with the teacher's perception that Padlet allows students to explore their abilities while also allowing students to work together with their classmates which is much needed

(Rashid et al., 2019). Learning through Padlet emphasizes the student-centered approach where students play the biggest role in the learning process.

Moreover, with regard to the efficiency of learning time, Padlet creates a learning atmosphere that is quite effective and efficient. Additionally, the platform can be accessed easily by everyone so there are no limitations in its use. Padlet also provides many interesting features that students can explore more deeply. This can also directly show students' creativity where they can choose various colors on the wall as well as various font options. The software offers a variety of features and gives students the freedom to complete both individual and group assignments in their own workspace. By working together on certain tasks, students can complete assignments easier with less stress (Zainuddin et al., 2020). Furthermore, Padlet creates an interactive learning atmosphere because it involves all students. The use of Padlet is quite interesting, and students are curious about its use and are encouraged to explore it for themselves, creating ideas and collaborating with their peers to gain a better understanding of the material being studied.

Padlet can be used in both individual project sessions and group projects. This finding supports the assertion that Padlet is ideal for student activities such as ideation, debate, and project work. Still, because each student has a different learning style, some students are less interested in Padlet, mainly because they have to have a good internet connection to be able to use it.

Moreover, these tools can always be used as online writing exercises to improve students' skills (Lestari, 2017; Sætra, 2021). In addition, some students are less interested because they require students to be connected to the device they are using. In this regard, teachers are required to be more observant when implementing learning through Padlet because students may be tempted to open other applications while learning because they are required to connect to their devices or smartphones. In this regard, the Padlet only provides a place in the form of a wall that students can use to share ideas and does not yet have a grammar check feature, so teachers must take an active role in checking their students' writing in detail.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research has shown that using Padlet to teach writing and grammar can increase students' comprehension of the material being covered. Students also show a positive response to the application of the Padlet platform to learning. They are free to explore themselves and their ideas through Padlet. From the point of view of the pre-service teacher, the use of Padlet is suitable for the current learning process because everything is integrated with technology and all kinds of conveniences. Thus, it can be said that learning English using the Padlet platform is quite effective and efficient to implement. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that teachers incorporate Padlet as one of several alternative mediums into their lessons to help students have more fun while simultaneously acquiring more advanced grammar knowledge through the writing process.

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Integrating Form-Focused Instruction and Discovery Approach for Developing EFL Writing Skills of Saudi Learners

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Abstract—The current study investigated the integration of the Form-Focused Instruction and Discovery Approach termed Form Focused Discovery Approach (FFDA) for developing English Foreign language university students' writing skills through teaching novel. The study aims to shift from the teacher-centered approach to the student-centered one by discovering the literary text's form and meaning. Therefore, sixty female fourth-year students at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia were randomly chosen and divided into two groups: an experimental and a control one taught for two months. The experimental group received instructions through the Form-Focused Discovery Approach (FFDA), examining various tasks ranging from exploring, anticipating, questioning, discussing, analyzing, reconstructing, and practicing writing and reflection. In contrast, the control group received instruction through the traditional mode. A pre-post writing test for measuring skills of grammar, word choice, mechanics, organization, coherence, and style was administered. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in overall writing skills. However, for each skill, it is revealed that four primary skills have been significantly enhanced (i.e., grammar, organization, word choice, and mechanics). The other two skills (style and coherence) have been slightly improved but with no significant differences in the post-administration of the experimental group scores. More practice should be given to recognizing the text's unity and style when implementing FFDA to enhance EFL writing skills.

Index Terms—Form-Focused Instruction, Discovery Approach, writing skills, literary texts, Saudi EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is an essential skill for all learners, as it allows them to express their understanding, ideas, and perspectives to communicate effectively. It encourages individuals to gather, organize, and expand upon information. Additionally, it is valuable for assessing students' performance and demonstrating their academic achievement. However, EFL students rarely practice writing, especially outside class; they must write only when asked to submit assignments. Marzban and Jalali (2016) pointed out that most EFL learners struggle to write in a second language because their writing skills need adequate attention. However, writing in a first or second language requires considering the critical function of writing abilities and their importance in exhibiting students' learning capacity. Writing is not easy, especially for EFL learners in Saudi Arabia. Ansari (2012) argued that teaching English writing to EFL students in Saudi Arabia is challenging. It is a difficult job, and an EFL teacher deals with various issues. Over 50% of pupils lack the necessary writing skills in English. Huwari and Al-Khasawneh (2013) conducted a study to determine the causes of pre-year Saudi university students' weaknesses in writing in English. They discovered that the main themes contributing to students' writing weaknesses were grammatical weakness, knowledge and understanding gaps, lack of practice, and educational background. By implementing their studies, they claimed that the teachers could fix the issue and discover valuable solutions.

Alomrani (2014) pointed out the transformative potential of integrating reading into writing instruction, which has been shown to affect writing performance positively. Reading EFL literature enriches readers' minds by opening new insights, horizons, and possibilities for thinking and reflecting on what they read and transforming their understanding of the literary genre. This transformative experience allows students to be active agents, shaping their understanding and interpretation of the text rather than passive recipients.

Literature is an effective tool for helping students analyze the text orally or in Writing. According to Frantzen (2013), using excerpts from authentic cultural and literary texts can offer an authoritative written source that will enable students to analyze texts more deeply and intelligently, leading to a more appropriate application of grammar rules to convey more sophisticated messages. As Winch et al. (2006) pointed out, when students are immersed in a poem and given structured writing opportunities to respond, they produce new meanings to share with others and experience a personal journey of intellectual growth and achievement.

Analyzing the form of literary texts may help students produce enhanced written literary comments and profound analysis of such texts. The form-focused approach was designed to encourage second language learners to understand the gap in all the linguistic characteristics of the foreign language, exchange its forms, and correct the output. According to the latest research in second language acquisition, it was suggested that teaching based on psycholinguistic and cognitive factors is extremely valuable in second language teaching and learning. Ellis (2001) clarified that form-focused instruction refers to any planned or incidental instructional activity that stimulates language learners to pay attention to linguistic form; this form can be grammatical structures, lexical items, phonological features, and pragmatic features of the language. One key advantage of FFI in foreign language instruction is its ability to attract the learners' attention to the different repeated forms in a text, addressing both form and communicative meaning (Long, 2000).

Encouraging and helping students to discover the form of literary work through the discovery approach could provide significant benefits as students will be motivated to construct, discover, explore, and investigate new experiences by themselves. Schunk (2012) clarified that discovery implies establishing and testing hypotheses instead of simply reading a passage or listening to the teacher's explanations or other students' comments. According to Bicknell-Holmes and Seth Hoffman (2000), generating, synthesizing, and expanding knowledge through inquiry and innovative thinking is one of the three core elements of discovery learning. Rather than passively receiving information through conventional methods like lectures or recitation, students develop knowledge while discovering more profound uses for skills by participating in activities that demand a willingness to take risks, figure out solutions, and explore their individual experiences.

The study problem can be stated in the weakness of fourth-year Saudi female university students' writing skills, as it was revealed from the researcher's observations and evaluations that students' writings lack coherence and unity. More enhancement is needed as they make basic grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and word choice mistakes, especially in their comments on literary works. So, the current study attempts to employ a form-focused discovery approach to enhance students' writing skills through teaching Novel.

Research Questions

The current research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the effects of integrating form-focused instruction and discovery approach on Enhancing EFL Saudi university students' overall writing skills through teaching Novel?
2. What are the Effects of integrating form-focused instruction and discovery approach on developing each writing skill of EFL Saudi university students writing skill through teaching Novel?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Form-Focused Instruction*

The Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) has long been investigated by researchers and teachers to enhance and test theories of second language acquisition and explore the effectiveness of its instructional practices (Ellis, 2001). The term form-focused was first introduced by Long (1991), who clarified that the focus on form in lessons often introduces linguistic elements, which are often incidental in lessons that primarily focus on meaning or communication. Long here discriminated between focus on form and focus on forms. He implied that focus on form is mainly concerned with communication while focus on forms is intentionally and directly presented to students by explaining specific instructional rules. From Long's definition, it is apparent that focus on form tries to fill the gaps in students' communication problems by negotiating meaning reactively and briefly without affecting the focus on meaning with the help of explicit and implicit instruction (Ellis, 2016). Therefore, FFI combines traditional approaches to teaching and communicative forms where attention to form is derived from meaning-based activities. Ellis (2001) pinpointed that phonological, semantic, syntactical, and pragmatic components of language are all included in the word "form".

Long and Robinson (1998) went beyond to differentiate between focus on form and focus on meaning. In focus on form, as a compromise between the focus on forms and meaning, students try to linguistically analyze the learning tasks, especially those they find difficult to understand. It proceeds gradually based on the learners' ability. Thus, it aids in their advancement to a better degree of linguistic competence and accuracy while focusing on meaning, which does not include task analysis and proceeds slowly, so it does not solely achieve students' proficiency and accuracy of language. Long recommended focusing on form as it is applied in a communicative context, and the accuracy of language is first triggered by concentrating on meaning by analyzing forms. Saeidi et al. (2012) compared the effectiveness of three types of form-focused instruction: (FoF) focus on form, (FoM) focus on meaning, and (FoFs) focus on forms on vocabulary learning. Their research result proved that learners in FoF achieved significantly higher scores than those in FoM and FoFs. In addition, learners in the FoM group outperformed those in the FoFs. The authors implied that the observed outcomes might be attributed to the essential components of form-focused learning, such as pushing output, observing, deep processing, discovery learning, raising awareness, negotiations, cooperation, and motivation.

Spada and Lightbown (2008) introduced two types of form-focused instruction: the isolated and the integrated. In isolated focus on form, the focus is mainly on separated linguistic activities away from the communicative context. It may be implemented in advance as an introduction to content-based instruction or after it as a way of feedback and practice. For the integrated, it is provided in a communicative context where the focus is on meaning. Instructors can

attract students' attention to some linguistic features while explaining and communicating. They clarified that both types are practical and beneficial as the isolation will help learners overcome their L1 problems in acquiring L2, and the integration will increase their proficiency and communication skills outside the learning situation. They maintained that choosing the best type depends on the learning situation and the learners' needs. Kemaloglu-Er (2021) conducted a study to evaluate a form-focused instructional program offered to university students, and the findings were explored based on Spada and Lightbown's (2008) form-focused instruction framework. She found that teachers implement isolated form-focused instruction as they rely on the coursebooks. She advocated employing a balanced curriculum that activates both isolated and integrated form-focused training and places a greater emphasis on meaning-based activities.

A study by Ansarin et al. (2015) examined the preferences of beginner and advanced learners regarding isolated and integrated Form-Focused Instruction (FFI). The researchers found that advanced learners preferred integrated instruction embedded in communicative tasks and activities, while beginner learners did not strongly prefer either type of FFI. They concluded that teachers should give different types of instruction to different learners. In essence, they suggested that neither integrated nor isolated FFI can be considered the optimal form of instruction for any given circumstance or learner. Another study on the types of FFI was conducted by Zaheer (2014), through which she examined the effects of FFI (implicit and explicit) on learners' accuracy of written production and the best model of instruction for promoting L2 language development. Results showed that ESOL teachers prefer and practice planning to focus on forms (FonFs) in their L2 classrooms and thought it was beneficial. This result suggests that ESOL learners benefit from explicit FFI, particularly if they get instruction on how to use the targeted language components in their L2 production.

Hence, focusing on form is a highly recommended mode of instruction as it could achieve a balance between form and meaning, mainly when it is utilized through rich content-based instruction, such as literary texts that engage learners in various types of discovery activities through seeking meanings and interpretations, building vocabulary, constructing forms, learning style, and writing. Literary texts are media for negotiating meanings and considering form, which could be achieved by motivating learners to discover these horizons through reading.

B. Discovery Approach and Writing Skills

Urging students to use their minds to analyze and discover the form of the provided texts could help them recognize the main structure of that text, improve their grammar usage, and increase their vocabulary repertoire. According to Ögeyik's (2011) research, form-focused discovery activities aid language learners in comprehending many aspects of a target language by utilizing explicit knowledge that has been discovered to contribute to implicit knowledge. Additionally, these exercises can assist students in recognizing and understanding the characteristics of the language they are learning.

Schunck (2012, p. 266) stated in his book on learning theories that discovery involves inductive thinking as students progress from analyzing instances to formulating broad rules, concepts, and principles. Hence, students can detect language rules and mechanics of writing by concentrating and discovering the form and meaning of the given texts. In their report, Bicknell Holmes and Seth Hoffman (2000, p. 313) highlighted that discovery learning is one of the most effective learning theories for improving student learning outcomes and instruction when simple memorization of definitions and an introduction to a particular set of resources are not enough to accomplish the instruction objective. According to Bernardini (2016), activities related to discovery learning are intrinsically learner-centered, encouraging autonomy and possessing significant transferability. She argues that discovery learning is a type of communicative learning or "situated" learning. In supporting this viewpoint, Yaiche (2021) pinpointed that through guided discovery, Students become more independent, consider what they have learned, and have favorable views about learning via exploration.

Writing is a complex skill that requires organizational form and deep thinking simultaneously to create logical messages. According to Hedge (1988), writing requires many elements, including the ability to develop ideas and information, the use of divergent grammatical structures, syntax, and vocabulary, and the level of accuracy to avoid misunderstandings. Kroll (1990) Pinpointed that there should be some qualities for writing an essay, such as focusing on the main topic, using paragraphs effectively, keeping a consistent viewpoint, arranging ideas in a logical sequence, and using the appropriate coherence and cohesion tools.

Alostath (2021) clarified that writing confined papers demands consideration of different ground rules and components. These elements include good grammar structure, understanding of writing mechanisms (e.g., spelling, capitalization, abbreviations), organization of ideas, and originality (e.g., non-plagiarized writing). Besides punctuation, vocabulary, structure, and spelling, teachers and their students must also learn about the features of a well-written essay (such as unity, support, coherence, and cohesion).

Writing involves higher thinking skills for composing ideas and considering form simultaneously. Students should consider various elements while writing. Otherwise, they may need help with writing. Teachers should encourage and provide engaging media and strategies for practicing and acquiring writing mechanisms, conventions, and techniques. Ankawi (2020) stated that students should have the opportunity to be more actively involved in language classes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) since the method of teaching English is teacher-centered, not student-centered. So, this research involved students in active activities through discovering the form of literary written texts.

Although many studies investigate the use of form-focused instruction to develop different language skills, research is still needed to combine form-focus instruction with the discovery approach to cultivating language skills. Therefore, the current study attempts to investigate the efficacy of using a form-focused discovery approach to develop university students' writing skills.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study utilized an equivalent group design, a quasi-experimental approach. The researcher randomly assigned two classes to two groups: an experimental and a control group. The experimental group underwent instruction using a Form-Focused Discovery Approach, with specific tasks to enhance their writing skills, including grammatical structure, word choice, writing mechanics, style, organization, and coherence. The control group received traditional training. Both groups completed a pre-post writing exam before and after the treatment.

B. Participants

The study involved sixty female students in the fourth year (level seven) at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia, randomly selected to participate in the study for two months in the academic year 2022. The students were then randomly divided into experimental (30) and control (30) groups. Based on their random selection, it is assumed that the subjects form a homogeneous group; they are equivalent in their age, education, social level, and level of achievement in writing skills. Therefore, they would share much in common, and their experience levels would be similar. Moreover, a condensed summary of the novel was introduced to both groups at the introductory session before the pre-conducting of the test to give them a general background of the novel. The study utilized an independent samples T-test to determine if there were any noteworthy differences between the mean scores of the experimental group (Exp.) and control group (Con.) in their performance on the pre-application of the writing test as a whole and in each sub-skill, as depicted in Table 1.

TABLE 1
T-VALUE OF THE CONTROL (CON.) AND EXPERIMENTAL (EXP.) GROUPS ON THE PRE-APPLICATION OF THE WRITING TEST AS A WHOLE AND IN EACH SUB-SKILL

Skills	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	p
Grammar	Con.	30	3.83	1.117	58	.348	.729
	Exp.	30	3.93	1.112			
Style	Con.	30	3.57	.858	58	.582	.563
	Exp.	30	3.70	.915			
Organization	Con.	30	3.93	.785	58	.913	.365
	Exp.	30	3.73	.907			
Word Choice	Con.	30	4.40	.814	58	.145	.885
	Exp.	30	4.37	.964			
Mechanics	Con.	30	3.90	.845	58	.428	.670
	Exp.	30	3.80	.961			
Coherence	Con.	30	3.57	.774	58	.162	.872
	Exp.	30	3.53	.819			
Total	Con.	30	23.2000	4.40533	58	.113	.911
	Exp.	30	23.0667	4.76288			

As shown in Table 1, the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the pre-writing test application, both overall and for each subskill, do not exhibit significant differences. Therefore, the two groups are considered equal.

C. Research Procedures

The study consisted of 10 teaching sessions focused on the novel Robinson Crusoe, along with three additional sessions for testing and an introductory session. Each session lasted 60 minutes and covered two to three chapters. The study took place during the summer classes from June 2022 to August 2022. To accomplish the form-focused discovery tasks, the researcher utilized various activities in the different stages of reading: pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading. These activities included exploring, anticipating, questioning, discussing, analyzing, reconstructing, and practicing writing and reflection, as literature stimulates learners' thoughts and allows them to develop skills. The Form-Focused Discovery Tasks were consistently applied in the same order for each teaching session.

(a). Pre-Reading Stage: Preparing for Discovery

In this stage, the researcher prepared students for practicing discovery by posing questions related to the content of the literary text, encouraging them to anticipate its central theme, express what they know about, and refresh their previous knowledge about what they had taken before. Thus, they are learning by exploring where there is a reciprocal questioning session between the instructor and students and students themselves. Questions were about their knowledge of the literary work, their expectations of the chapter under discussion, how they would behave if they were in the character position, and the main incidents of the previous chapter at the beginning of each session.

(b). *During-Reading Stage: Practicing Form-Focused Discovery Tasks*

This stage took most of the class time as it focused on discussing the central theme and idea of the literary text in discussion, helping students to relate the previous incidents with current ones, urging them to understand the writer's style, discover and analyze the grammatical structure of the text such as the subject-verb agreement, the correct use of prepositions, pronouns, linking words, and the choice of appropriate adjectives. The researcher attracted students' attention to writing mechanics like capitalization, punctuation, etc..., urging them to provide synonyms and antonyms for vague words and detect the writer's style so they can elaborate on the essential themes.

(c). *Post- Reading Stage: Extending Their Discovery*

In this stage, students tried to paraphrase, summarize, and reconstruct the selected literary text in a written way using their own words and style. They also shared their written comments with their colleagues in pairs or groups and finally with the teacher.

D. *Instruments*

A pre-/post writing test was constructed and administered to the two groups by the researcher. It was pre-used to ensure that students of both groups were at the same level before starting the implementation, then post-used to measure the effectiveness of using the Form-Focused Tasks in developing the experimental group students' writing skills. Based on the pre-prepared writing skills checklist given to 7 TEFL experts and Professors to determine the most appropriate ones for the students, six primary skills were measured through the given test, i.e., grammar, word choice, mechanics, organization, coherence, and style.

The test consisted of a prominent quotation from the novel about repentance with six open-ended questions related to the central theme. It allowed students to express their viewpoints and literary comments with details. A writing test assessment rubric was also prepared. The test was also sent to seven TEFL professors and experts to test its validity and to suggest any required modifications. They approved the test with a few amendments, which were considered. SPSS software was used to test reliability using Cronbach's alpha (Table 2).

TABLE 2
THE TEST RELIABILITY USING CRONBACH'S ALPHA

Reliability scale	Reliability scale	Value
Cronbach's alpha	The whole test (6 items)	0.913

IV. RESULTS

The study's results were statistically analyzed using SPSS (version 23.0), and the t-test formula for independent samples was used to answer the research question (Table 3).

TABLE 3
T-TEST RESULTS OF THE POST- ADMINISTRATION OF THE WRITING SKILLS COMPARING BOTH EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Skills	Group (Post Tre.)	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	P
Grammar	CONT.	30	3.87	.776	58	4.039	.000
	EXP.	30	4.67	.758			
Style	CONT.	30	4.20	.997	58	1.919	.060
	EXP.	30	4.67	.884			
Organization	CONT.	30	4.07	.828	58	3.479	.001
	EXP.	30	4.80	.805			
Word Choice	CONT.	30	4.47	.900	58	2.637	.011
	EXP.	30	5.10	.960			
Mechanics	CONT.	30	3.90	.885	58	3.187	.002
	EXP.	30	4.57	.728			
Coherence	CONT.	30	4.13	.819	58	1.690	.096
	EXP.	30	4.50	.861			
Total	CONT.	30	24.64	2.53642	58	5.321	0.00
	EXP.	30	28.30	2.85452			

To answer the first research question concerning the effects of FFDA on students' overall writing skills, the results above showed a statistically significant difference at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the two study groups in favor of the experimental one. The mean score of the experimental group (28.30) exceeded the control score (24.64). This result proved that students' overall writing skills have been improved due to the use of the Form-Focused Discovery Tasks.

As for the second research question concerning the effect of FFDA on each writing sub-skill, it is revealed that four primary skills have been significantly enhanced (i.e., grammar, organization, word choice, and mechanics) ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) while the other two skills (style and coherence) have been slightly improved as it is apparent in their mean scores compared to the control group but with no significant differences in the post administration of the experimental group scores.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The result analysis showed that students' overall writing skills had improved significantly, which can be attributed to the Form Focused Discovery Tasks as they were actively involved in reading, analyzing the literary reading texts, and writing their reflective comments. They were not only involved in the traditional types of activities focusing on the plot succession, the theme, and the conflict, but also, they were encouraged to focus on the form of the grammatical analysis (the used tenses, pronouns, modal auxiliaries, conjunctions, gerunds, parallel structure, etc....) their attention were also attracted to the variety of the used vocabulary, word family, collocations, synonyms, and antonyms. The mechanics of writing, the appropriate use of transitional links, and the organizational development of writing were highly considered through reading and writing, too. The result of this study is echoed in other research results (Ogeyik, 2011; Zohrabi & Rezaie, 2012), which indicated a direct correlation between discovering the form and giving feedback to students and their writing enhancement. The writers maintained that when students consider the linguistic elements of texts, they confidently manage to create their texts, and the accuracy of their writings is empowered.

The grammatical structure of students' written texts and their appropriate selection of vocabulary have been improved as they scrutinize the form and meaning of the texts. They learned about different grammatical rules and usage in meaningful contexts and discussed the various interpretations of the literary text, tackling the alternative synonyms and various expressions. Integrative Form-Focused Instruction through discovering the form of the literary texts stimulated their abilities in a communicative context instead of learning the grammatical items in an isolated way or as discrete points. The result of the current research is consistent with other research results concerning the role of the Form -Focused Instruction in developing grammar and vocabulary (Çelik, 2015; Bataineh et al., 2017; Xu & Li, 2022), which indicates a positive effect of FFI whether integrated or isolated, focusing on form or meaning, on the increase of vocabulary and grammar learning. The authors recommended applying a mixed approach for FFI, focusing on form and meaning and an integrative one, which may be helpful for learners by connecting form and meaning. The integrative approach focusing on form and contextual meaning was adopted in the current research.

The skills of keeping coherence and adopting a specific style in writing have been slightly improved for the experimental group, as is apparent in their mean (4.50, 4.67) compared to the control one (4.13, 4.20), but with no significant differences. This result may return to the time limit when applying the research. If more time were assigned to the experiment, those skills might be improved. In addition, students were more concerned with discussing and keeping meanings, vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and organization while writing rather than keeping coherence or adopting a specific style, which may be partly responsible for outperforming the earlier skills than the latter. More attention, focus, and practice would be given to the text's unity and writing style.

To conclude, the current research utilized the Form-Focused Discovery Tasks to develop university students' writing skills. Form-focused instruction combines focusing on form and meaning in an interactive communicative context where the main interests are negotiating meanings and analyzing texts. Both explicit and implicit FFI were implemented as in the implicit, students can infer and discover the grammatical forms and hidden meanings through inductive reasoning. Therefore, the literary text was chosen as it is a rich medium for reflecting and interpreting meaning, acquiring vocabulary, learning about the organization and the mechanics of writing, refining the learning styles, and confining the text coherence.

The researcher used the equivalent experimental and control group design and a pre-post writing test tackling the skills of grammar, word choice, mechanics, organization, coherence, and style. The results showed a significant outperformance of the experimental group in terms of their overall writing skills compared to the control group. For each sub-skill, it was revealed that grammar, word choice, organization, and mechanics skills have been significantly improved, while the other two skills of coherence and style have been improved but with no significant differences. The treatment's limited time and the focus on discussing meanings and vocabulary and analyzing grammatical structures may be reasons behind that result. So, it is recommended that more focus, attention, and practice should be given to how to keep coherence and adopt a specific style through writing.

The enhancement in students' writing skills returned to students' engagement in analyzing the reading texts, identifying different structures and usages as they dug deeply into the form of sentences, recognizing the use of different tenses, prepositions, pronouns, modals, and other helpful structures, acquiring new vocabulary as they learned through an interactive context, exploring the organization of the text through recognizing logical consequences and different transitional links. They checked how ideas correlate logically and detected the writer's adopted style in different situations.

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Women's Empowerment in Tragedy: Gendered Narratives and Affective Spaces in *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms**

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Abstract—*Thunderstorm* and *Desire under the Elms* exhibit striking similarities in thematic elements and the portrayal of female characters, which suggests the two playwrights, Cao Yu (1910-1996) and Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953), shared aesthetic vision in their creative writings. Prior studies of these plays have often focused on the characterisation of the protagonists, thereby overshadowing gender as a critical factor in shaping tragedies. This paper argues that the tragedies in these works are not merely personal misfortunes but are deeply embedded in gendered dynamics, specifically the oppressive force of phallogentrism. It posits that the central cause of tragedy is the conflict between societal constraints and the female characters' aspirations for power, equality, freedom, and spiritual autonomy. A comparative study of these plays reveals that both Cao Yu and Eugene O'Neill crafted an affective space where the female protagonists, Fanyi and Abbie, despite their different social contexts, share a fundamental human essence. This comparison not only underscores the essence of tragedy within diverse national frameworks but also highlights the commonalities in how the two playwrights perceive and portray women's destinies and existential predicaments.

Index Terms—gendered narratives, affective spaces, *Thunderstorm*, *Desire Under the Elms*

I. INTRODUCTION

Both Cao Yu and Eugene O'Neill are regarded as the "Shakespeare" of their respective countries, having made significant contributions to the history of modern drama. Due to the differing cultural backgrounds of the writers, their plays exhibit distinct artistic personalities in terms of realism, ethical consciousness, tragic form, the roots of female tragedy, and paths to salvation. These differences effectively reflect the cultural traditions of China and America. Nevertheless, numerous scholars have observed that Cao Yu's *Thunderstorm* and Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* share certain similarities. These similarities are evident not only in the thematic forms, characterization, and literary techniques but also in deeper narrative structures, such as the authors' concepts of tragedy and their understandings of society and human nature.

Eugene O'Neill introduced the concept of true tragedy to American theatre, while Cao Yu's *Thunderstorm* is regarded as the inaugural example of true tragedy in modern Chinese drama. Both *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms* utilize an incestuous relationship to develop their narratives and conclude with the destruction of the individual characters. This paper posits that the tragedies in these works are not merely personal misfortunes but are deeply embedded in gender dynamics, specifically the oppressive force of phallogentrism.

II. FANYI AND ABBIE: "NEW WOMEN" IN OLD FAMILIES

Fanyi and Abbie are the female protagonists in *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms*, respectively. Both characters share the commonality of being women who have experienced oppression and endured significant mental distress. They both seek to assert their right to love and be loved, and they are willing to fight for this right with great determination, even committing incest with their stepchildren. However, their actions ultimately lead to severe consequences, including death and madness.

In both works, the presentation of these tragic female characters deviates from the conventional image of traditional tragic figures. Fanyi and Abbie possess profound modern symbolic meanings. Firstly, it can be argued that Eugene O'Neill, the author of *Desire Under the Elms*, was not a male chauvinist. Despite the influence of his early family environment, which caused his personality traits to be out of tune with the societal norms of the time, he held women in high regard. This respect influenced his approach to characterization, allowing him to challenge traditional notions of female roles and explore the concept of female sadness in a way that was both compelling and destructive. The beauty of female tragedy is reflected in the fact that the female characters in O'Neill's works are more morally upright than the male characters and are also more open-minded. This contrasting beauty evokes a sense of admiration from the audience.

Furthermore, the beauty of female sadness in *Desire Under the Elms* is reflected in the transformation of Abbie's

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materialistic desires into spirituality. This transformation is closely related to the era during which O'Neill was writing, a period when the United States was transitioning from liberal capitalism to monopoly capitalism. This transition saw a significant shift in moral concepts, moving from the pursuit of spirituality to the pursuit of material and carnal pleasure. Inevitably, as a woman of the lower class, Abbie was subjected to a great deal of cruel and unfair treatment. In this context, Abbie marries Old Cabot in pursuit of material wealth, despite the considerable age difference between them. However, as the plot progresses, Abbie's perspective shifts, and her pursuit of love gradually supersedes her pursuit of material things. When she develops a relationship and sincere feelings for Old Cabot's son, she resorts to extreme measures to convey the depth of her emotional pain. The destruction of her character presents an extreme sense of beauty, reflecting her inner pain. This allows the audience to understand the deeper connotations of the text. O'Neill creates the character of Abbie from a godlike perspective and vividly expresses through the plot the characteristics of the era embodied by female characters of that time.

O'Neill creates the character of Abbie from a godlike perspective and vividly expresses through the plot the characteristics of the era embodied by female characters of that time. Abbie is 35 years old when she appears in the play. She has just married Cabot, a 76-year-old farmer, and her sole motivation for doing so is to have a place to live when the old man dies. There is no love between her and Cabot, and she experiences his domination on the farm. To secure an heir to her inheritance, Abbie seduces her stepson, the young and robust Eben. However, she develops a genuine affection for Eben, and when Eben suspects that she is only using him to have a son and take over the farm, she kills their son to demonstrate her true feelings. Abbie was born into a lower-class family and has suffered a great deal of humiliation and adversity throughout her life. She informs Eben that her life has been characterized by a pervasive sense of desolation: she was orphaned at an early age, compelled to work for others, married a man prone to alcohol consumption, and both of them were employed by another person. Subsequently, her husband and son died. She believed she was liberated, but she realized that it meant working for a new master and that she had "never worked for her own family" (Eugene, 1988, p. 89). Upon arriving at the farm, her previously suppressed emotions were rekindled. She sought emotional support and to satisfy her physical desires. She felt liberated from the shackles of worldly rituals and laws. From Eben, she experienced a sense of security and warmth that she had never felt before. She regarded their love as her "only joy", which was "more beautiful than heaven." When this love is threatened, she is prepared to kill her son and commit a crime.

Fanyi was born into a wealthy family, married into the Zhou family at the age of 18, and lived the life of a young grandmother. However, she discovered that the Zhou Mansion was a "haunted house," and she was merely one of the furnishings used to instill obedience in the children under Zhou Puyuan's authoritarian rule. This was a particularly cruel form of mental torture. Fanyi is a strong-willed woman with a fiery temperament. She is passionate in her affections and equally passionate in her hatred. However, in the Zhou family, she gradually became a mere shell of her former self. She is not the kind of woman who merely accepts the status quo. She is unwilling to continue living like this. She wants to fight and break the shackles on her body. She fell in love with Zhou Ping, which not only represented a catharsis of her long-suppressed feelings but also served as a form of revenge against Zhou Puyuan. In the isolation of the Zhou Mansion, this deformed love became the sole source of support for her soul and the meaning of her life. However, Zhou Ping subsequently abandoned her, and Fanyi came to realize that a woman cannot be bullied by two generations. Consequently, the most extreme form of love becomes the most intolerable form of hatred, and her revenge ultimately leads to the destruction of the Zhou family and her own destruction.

In this play, both playwrights convey the idea that the pursuit of the freedom to love and be loved is an inherent aspect of human nature and an inalienable right. Any external oppression is contrary to human nature and will inevitably lead to resistance. The greater the oppression, the more forceful the resistance will be, and the result is often tragic. This pursuit of love is a universal aspect of human nature. The playwrights do not divide their characters by race or nationality. Despite the differences in time, status, and environment between Abbie and Fanyi, they share a common desire for love. Consequently, they both commit the same crime. Once they possess the love they desire, they both defend it with great determination. When their cherished love is threatened, they both go to any lengths, including risking their lives, to preserve it. The power displayed by the two protagonists is considerable. Both O'Neill and Cao Yu portray their heroines in a sympathetic manner, indicating the authors' support and celebration of this universal humanity.

Upon Fanyi's appearance, the script provides this description: "Her gaze would be filled with the pain and resentment of a young woman after a disappointment, and the corners of her mouth would curve back slightly, revealing an inhibited woman regulating herself" (Cao, 1996, p. 56). The inhibitions and disappointments imposed on her by Zhou Puyuan are conveyed succinctly, as is the stifling heat of the house and Zhou Puyuan's compulsion to close all the unnecessarily opened windows. It can be argued that the well in the Zhou Mansion symbolizes the well that Zhou Puyuan built brick by brick, sealing its mouth. During the period in which Zhou Puyuan was at home, the Zhou Mansion was characterized by a sense of unease and gloom. There were a total of four clashes between Fanyi and Zhou Puyuan on the same day, epitomizing her resistance over the eighteen years since she married into the Zhou family. On the first two occasions, Zhou Puyuan insisted that she was unwell and needed to drink medicine and see a doctor. Fanyi resisted, but on the first three occasions, she was ultimately forced to submit. On the first occasion, Fanyi refused to drink the medicine, and Zhou Puyuan compelled Zhou Ping to kneel and force his stepmother to drink it. On the second

occasion, Fanyi refused to see a doctor, and Zhou Puyuan compelled Zhou Ping to accompany the doctor to see his stepmother. On the third occasion, Fanyi refused to go upstairs to sleep, and Zhou Puyuan compelled Zhou Ping to accompany his stepmother upstairs so that the servants could wait for her to sleep. Fanyi's capitulation to the despotic authority of the feudal system reflects the ugliness of the persecution of human nature.

Zhou Puyuan has consistently maintained that Fanyi is mentally unstable, publicly declaring her to be insane and hiring a German physician to examine her brain. However, these assertions are false and serve to obfuscate his own criminal conduct. Fifteen years ago, he became intoxicated and informed Fanyi that Zhou Ping was his illegitimate child and that he had abandoned Zhou Ping's mother. Following the third altercation with Zhou Puyuan, Fanyi told Zhou Ping that he should "call a few people to pull me up and lock me up" (Cao, 1996, p. 89). She also stated that he is aware of her understanding of his motives, that he is afraid of her, and that he is willing for others to view her as a monster and a madwoman. These statements further corroborate the narrative of her demise. In the prologue, the stage cue reads, "Suddenly, there are sounds of things being thrown around upstairs, chains, footsteps, women laughing wildly, and strange screams." Ultimately, Fanyi is incarcerated upstairs and is perceived as a monster. She becomes what she least wants to be, a fate similar to the destructive "locked up" ending in the ancient Greek tragedy *Oedipus Rex*. This fate is representative of the character's struggle.

However, Fanyi's tragedy is not only a tragedy of fate but also a Shakespearean tragedy of character. Fanyi says to Zhou Chong: "Your mother died long ago, and your father was crushed and smothered to death. I am in this prison, accompanied by a king of hell for eighteen years" (Cao, 1996, p. 104). She was aware of Zhou Puyuan's transgressions and the reason behind his persecution of her, yet she was unable to articulate it. She lacked the capacity to confide in anyone, and external conflicts were transformed into internalized negative emotions, which were further distorted and alienated. In the fourth conflict, Fanyi reveals the hypocrisy and shame underpinning Zhou Puyuan's actions, as evidenced by his public condemnation of her as "crazy". However, this condemnation also reflects his own internalized shame and hypocrisy. The deaths of Zhou Chong and Zhou Ping, her lover and stepson, are all attributed to her self-perception of being "not like a mother, not like a mistress". This kind of self-directed psychological conflict transforms from the relative stability of the inhibited self into a hysterical outburst, inevitably leading to the character being driven to the extreme of madness.

III. FROM ROMANCE TO HATRED: TABOO RELATIONSHIPS IN PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY

In this gloomy and despondent Zhou Mansion, Fanyi is as lifeless as a corpse, devoid of any hope for the future. Zhou Ping, a young man with a rebellious streak, possessed a quality that, along with his father's heart, was the source of Fanyi's enduring love. In the context of their relationship, Fanyi's love for Zhou Ping was akin to a hungry dog biting its favorite bone. She clung to this quality of hope as if it were a lifeline, believing it would lead her out of the dark and despairing situation she found herself in.

For Fanyi, grasping this glimmer of hope is akin to grasping a straw to save her life. She believes this is the rope that can take her away from this deep well, but she is unaware that this rope can stir up a bigger wave and ultimately turn into the last straw that crushes the camel to death. The absence of a maternal figure in Zhou Ping's life has led to the development of a distorted emotional response toward his stepmother. This has resulted in a sense of unease and distress within the family home, which has been described as "haunted". Zhou Ping has expressed remorse for his actions, yet he is reluctant to confront the situation and instead wishes to escape from the family home. He also subjected Sifeng, an innocent girl, to his influence. He believed that such a young, beautiful, and pure girl could purify his own dirty soul, but he was unwilling to descend into a more horrific abyss. He despised himself, but his only desire was to cover up and escape, as well as to blame his stepmother. He was as incompetent and cowardly as his father, unable to do anything constructive.

Fanyi implored Zhou Ping to stay or accompany her, offering her entire being and spirit, sacrificing her life and reputation. She declared, "I am indifferent to all else," and "you cannot see the new world and flee alone" (Cao, 1996, p. 123). This new world is about to leave Zhou Puyuan. Her desire is poignant and heartbreaking, yet she was rejected with utter cruelty. Although Zhou Ping is not worthy of trust or affection, she has no alternative. She has only Zhou Ping around her and has been deprived of social interaction and daily contact with family and subordinates. Zhou Puyuan's autocratic brutality and prolonged absence from home have left her emotionally exhausted. The heart of Fanyi's feelings has been worn out. Zhou Chong is her own son, still young and full of heart, full of beautiful dreams. Lu Gui is the family's servant, coarse and greedy, with a tendency to be powerful. However, he is also the family's servant. In such a familial context, she has long been subject to a distorted psychology, with the sole exception of Zhou Ping, who serves as an outlet for emotional catharsis.

In this monstrous, unethical love, the little light she craved went out, never to be kindled again, and her devotion, her affection, was pressed like a flame into a glacier. She warned, "Be careful, be careful, you don't push a disappointed woman too hard; she is capable of anything." When Fanyi braved the heavy rain and listened outside Sifeng's window to Zhou Ping's rendezvous with Sifeng, her heart died completely, and her anger and madness arose layer by layer like ripples in water. However, there was no place to release it, so she could only burn herself. Upon exiting the premises, she secured the window from the exterior, exhibiting a state of emotional distress and a lack of caution. Her objective was to expose the illicit relationship between the two individuals, topple the hypocritical façades of those involved, and

assert her own autonomy and defiance. In pursuit of these goals, she was willing to inflict irreparable harm upon herself. Fanyi is not the primary cause of the misfortune that befell the Zhou and Lu families. However, she is undoubtedly a contributing factor to the veracity of the tragedy.

Both Abbie and Fanyi share a similar tragic fate and a similar act of resistance to love through incest. However, the causes of their tragic journeys are entirely different. Abbie comes to Cabot Hall with a clear desire for material possessions, and, as she herself confesses, “What else could I want by marrying an old man like him?” (Eugene, 1988, p. 87). This kind of marital union, with money and wealth as leverage, seems to be “voluntarily concluded” and “mutually agreed,” but it is essentially a slave contract driven by money and selfishness, which typically represents the bourgeois marital and family relationship.

Fanyi, on the other hand, is inexplicably and helplessly made the wife of the Zhou family. This is a marriage based on the interests of the family and the feudal practice of arranged marriages, representing a form of dual power in which the individual is a commodity. This social system and its marriage system determine the character and actions of the individuals involved. Abbie’s actions and character are shaped by the hypocritical values of capitalism, which espouses freedom and equality. However, her actions and character are consistently proactive and aggressive in acquiring property. Upon entering the house, Abbie promptly takes control, claiming all the property in the house, including the bedroom, as her own. Eben is the only one to concede defeat in this scene of courtship. The situation is distinct in the case of Fanyi, who is a weak woman caught in the web of feudal relations and capitalist forces that have intertwined over centuries. Her marriage is a transaction to be auctioned off, and after marriage, her life is a prisoner-like existence. She simply wants to “wait for death quietly,” and even the love she experiences is “twisted” due to Zhou’s actions and beyond her control. The distortion of her love is due to Zhou Ping’s lure, to which she then fully commits her life, honor, hope, body, and feelings to the young master of the feudal capitalist family. The house echoed with her cries like those of a miserable female ghost. It is evident that, from the beginning, Fanyi’s position is passive. This is entirely consistent with the historical marginalization of women in Chinese society, both politically and economically, and the associated moral and ethical norms.

The existential experiences gained by two playwrights during their childhood often become the source of their creativity, filled with romance and hatred. Childhood experience as a structure of prescient imagery has a multifaceted impact on creativity. Generally speaking, a writer’s way of perception, emotional attitude, imaginative ability, aesthetic tendency, and artistic pursuit when facing life are largely influenced by this prior imagery structure. The misfortunes endured in a motherless childhood serve as the foundation for the portrayal of female tragedy in O’Neill’s and Cao Yu’s plays. Each play presents a distinct emotional tone of female tragedy.

Gelb Arthur (1962) found that O’Neill’s father was an actor, and the entire family accompanied him on tours, leading a nomadic existence. His mother’s tragic life had a profound impact on him. She married Old O’Neill, who was more than a dozen years older than she was, with a debauched pre-marital emotional life and a drinking problem after marriage. Subsequently, the family experienced considerable upheaval, enduring the pain of losing their son and suffering from illness. Furthermore, O’Neill’s mother endured a difficult labor when giving birth to him. The quack doctor that her miserly husband hired to save money used an overdose of morphine to ease her pain, which led to her addiction to drugs.

Cao Yu was born into a declining feudal-bureaucratic family (Sun, 1998). Despite the family’s wealth and numerous servants, the atmosphere within the family was characterized by a pervasive sense of gloom and despondency. He lost his mother at an early age, and his father was a dominant figure in the family, resulting in a childhood marked by solitude and a lack of maternal affection. The personal experiences of the two playwrights led to unresolved psychological distress, which became the source and motivation for their creativity. They both experienced ambivalent feelings towards their fathers and a lifelong longing for the love of their mothers. They felt that they were always spiritually exiled and were searching for a spiritual home throughout their lives. As a result, the concept of “mother” became O’Neill’s and Cao Yu’s lifelong preoccupation, and the theme of “home” became the most important one in their creations. Their shared upbringing and the absence of maternal love in their family backgrounds prompted O’Neill and Cao Yu to explore the representation of women’s experiences of tragedy in their works. They incorporated their own creative ideas and diverse cultural connotations, thereby demonstrating their originality and creativity.

The two works depict the taboo relationships of two female protagonists in a patriarchal society, exhibiting both similarities and subtle differences. This is largely influenced by the cultural environment. However, in terms of the characteristics of the times, the social status of women was generally lower. Consequently, the two playwrights used the creation of female characters to express their own inner Oedipus complex and comment on the current state of society, which holds certain innovative significance. Furthermore, the two works share a similar depth of connotation and symbolism. They both explore the material and spiritual pursuits of women, reflecting the beauty of female sadness and prompting the audience to engage with the material on a deeper level.

IV. THE PURSUIT OF SPIRITUAL AUTONOMY AND THE SUBVERSION OUT OF HUMAN ESSENCE

Both *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms* are works that emerged from the profound national culture. The two playwrights originate from different social contexts and situate the plots of their plays within the real world, with the intention of analysing the weaknesses of human nature. Puritanism represents an important historical and cultural

background in *Desire Under the Elms*. Western society was in a state of turmoil following the First World War, with traditional moral values being eroded. This resulted in a period of confusion, during which people began to turn to the worship of money and the combination of money and lust gradually corrupted modern society. Puritanism, by combining faith in life with the acquisition of wealth, adapted to the spirituality desired by the bourgeoisie of nineteenth-century Europe. O'Neill regarded the spirit of Puritanism as an important part of 19th-century American society and culture. He placed the realistic space of the play's creation in the New England region, where Puritanism was strong, and analysed the Puritans profoundly (Lee, 2012). He depicted the process of their gradual destruction after being controlled by their desires, in order to make the play have a realistic significance. In almost all of his works, O'Neill attempts to demonstrate that this fanatical desire has the effect of constraining the mental outlook and social life of modern people. It is this uncontrollable desire that causes fear, emptiness and loneliness in the human spirit. The abnormal development of material civilisation has led to a situation where human values and dignity are threatened and challenged, becoming more and more confused, fearful, desperate and helpless.

In the ancient Greek era, the lack of scientific and technological advancement led to the belief that many natural phenomena were caused by the gods. This concept gave rise to the term "fate", which played a significant role in the history of ancient Greek struggle and some of the literature (Nietzsche, 1999). In ancient Greek tragedy, the struggle between fate and the unyielding spirit is a recurring theme. Ultimately, the struggle is depicted as futile, with the body as the ultimate victim. The history of ancient Greek struggle and some of its literary works demonstrate that the ancient Greek tragedy presents the unyielding spirit of fighting with "fate" and the sadness that is reflected in the failure of the struggle in the end. This tragic spirit of Ancient Greece directly influenced O'Neill and Cao Yu, who took the tragic spirit of Ancient Greece as the keynote of their works. They further inherited and developed the spirit by integrating their own unique cultural understanding and characteristics of the times. Firstly, in O'Neill's works, the perseverance and fighting spirit of the protagonist in pursuit of his ideal is the core of the ancient Greek tragic spirit. Nevertheless, there is a subtle difference between the protagonist in O'Neill's and Cao Yu's works and those of ancient Greek tragedy. The object of the protagonist's struggle has changed; it is no longer the omnipotent gods, but the inward pursuit of the deepest desires and contradictions. As Freud posited, every individual who has experienced a lack of maternal love is susceptible to the Oedipus complex. O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* exemplifies Freud's theory. In O'Neill's writing, whether the protagonist or other female characters are concerned, the tragedy is attributed to the expression and venting of the Oedipus complex in their hearts. Consequently, O'Neill's own experience led him to conclude that the majority of contemporary societal tragedies originate from a spiritual crisis within the individual concerned. He incorporated some of the tragic episodes of Ancient Greece into his own works, which was his intention precisely to make the spirit of Greek tragedy emerge with new connotations in the context of modern society. The majority of female characters in his writings attempt to overcome their spiritual anguish, yet ultimately succumb to the realities of life. This is undoubtedly one of his own techniques. This technique is undoubtedly an allusion to O'Neill himself. It could be argued that *Desire Under the Elm* represents a concentrated manifestation of O'Neill's inner spiritual desires. Each character in the play is a part of him, speaking out against the society in which he lived.

In contrast, Cao Yu was influenced by both Greek tragedy and the works of O'Neill. The shadow of Greek theories of fate can be seen throughout his works, especially in *Thunderstorm*, where most of the female characters attempt to change their destinies under challenging circumstances. However, there is a limit to human power, and they cannot ultimately break free from the net of destiny. For instance, the experience of Sifeng appears to be controlled by an unseen force, which is comparable to Greek melodrama. In conclusion, *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms* reflect the playwrights' conscious creation and the outward expression of their spiritual essence. The encounters and experiences of the female characters in these works present a unique sadness, contributing to the legendary status of both plays.

Human desires encompass both material and spiritual aspects. Desire is not solely the instinctive drives of carnal desire, material desire, and greed; it also includes the emotional pursuit of love and being loved, as well as the spiritual desire for self-affirmation and purpose. Human desire is a paradoxical phenomenon. It is the primordial driving force that propels human progress, yet it is also the sharp blade that destroys human nature. Man exists in the universe and cannot avoid the existence of desire. Consequently, in the process of pursuing desire, man produces pain and struggle, which collectively constitute the tragedy of human desire. When man writes history, he also writes his own tragedy. In response to the claim that there was no theatre in America at the time, O'Neill states, "We are ourselves the most shocking of the tragedies that have been written and those yet to be written" (Eugene, 1988, p. 98). As society enacts tragedy, man himself enacts an even greater tragedy. Man, as a member of society, has his own desires for survival, regardless of the era in which he finds himself. Tragically, he is often lost in these desires and unable to extricate himself from them, leading to destruction. Abbie asserts that she is not a bad woman; she is merely fighting for her rights. Upon discovering that Eben is like her, she transforms her materialistic and self-identified quest into a quest for the right to love, positioning herself as a woman in search of love. Consequently, she loses her morality as a human being and her motherhood and maternal love when she makes a mistake with Eben and then kills her own son with her own hands to prove her love.

In Cao Yu's words, Fanyi is the most "thunderstorm" character, her life intertwined with the cruelest love and the most intolerable hate, a combination of extreme contradictions. As Fanyi, her desire is not to be a wife or a mother, but

to be a woman who is loved by the opposite sex. This is how she positions herself. In Zhou Puyuan's eyes, she is property; to Zhou Chong, she is an indifferent mother. Only by firmly holding onto Zhou Ping can she establish her existence as a woman. Consequently, in order to fulfill this desire, she cruelly reveals all the truth, discards her identity as a wife and mother, kills three people, destroys two families, but fails to find herself. Both Abbie and Fanyi are under the suppression of the desire to survive, but they actively pursue individual spiritual fulfillment, going to extremes to do so. They cannot reconcile the contradiction between the endless pursuit of desire and the inability to fulfill that pursuit. As Schopenhauer observed, the essence of life is suffering. This is because people are driven by an endless pursuit of desire, which inevitably leads to suffering and struggle. Consequently, the pain is immeasurable and never-ending.

The direct cause of the ultimate misfortune of both Abbie and Fanyi is the abandonment by their lovers. Both Eben and Zhou Ping's cold behavior towards these two women reflects the dominant force represented by their fathers. However, this dominant force is manifested in these two men in different ways. Eben suspected that Abbie seduced him with the intention of giving birth to a child to compete with him for the inheritance of the farm. This desire for material possessions led him to categorically reject Abbie and engage in incest with her based on the establishment of a relationship of love. This forced Abbie to take the most barbaric and brutal action to demonstrate the sincerity and pain of her love. Zhou Ping's most extreme action to prove his love was to break free from traditional constraints. Many reasons contributed to this, but one of the most significant was his greatest fear: the crime of incest. The feudal ethics and morality of the "magic shadow" rendered it impossible for him to forget and abandon the love he once had for his stepmother. His surrender to feudal forces, his retreat and selfishness, and Fanyi's relentless pressure lead him to retreat from the desperate situation. The stench of money on Fanyi and Zhou Ping's feudalism highlights another reason why Abbie's and Fanyi's actions differ. It illustrates how a continuum of capital and feudal forces leads to the ultimate tragedy of the two women in different ways. The divergence in the outcomes of Abbie and Fanyi can be attributed to the differing positions of Eben and Zhou Ping within the family structure. In Cabot Mansion, not only is Eben's mother a slave, but Eben and his brothers are also long-term laborers for old Cabot. In terms of property inheritance, they have an irreconcilable conflict with the cold, greedy, and selfish Cabot. Consequently, despite his strong desire for material possessions, Eben's position as a slave forces him to acknowledge the nature of human beings. This realization ultimately leads him to desire freedom, which he shares with Abbie. Consequently, he is ultimately able to relinquish all his desires and proceed to prison with Abbie. Zhou Ping is the eldest son of the Zhou family and occupies a certain position within the feudal hierarchy. He and Zhou Puyuan have no fundamental conflict of interest. In many ways, he supports and admires his father. Coupled with his cowardly character formed in specific life circumstances, he is even less likely to sacrifice the relationship between father and son for the sake of a woman, or sacrifice his personal reputation and family interests. Therefore, Fanyi's destiny can only end in madness.

As previously stated, the concept of tragedy as espoused by the two authors is founded upon a common reality (Nietzsche, 1999). In Cao Yu's acceptance of O'Neill's plays, he had already discerned the social implications of the characters' irrational desire impulses, repeatedly asserting that O'Neill was "basically a realist, a profound realist" (Narey, 1992, p. 50). In fact, O'Neill is renowned as a master of expressionism; however, a significant proportion of his plays are more accurately characterized as realistic. O'Neill was born at a time when the United States was rapidly emerging from a period of economic and social backwardness to become the world's leading capitalist nation. Despite the prevailing optimism, O'Neill exhibited a certain degree of sobriety. He stated that the United States is not the most successful country in the world, but rather the most failed. He suggests that the country's main ideal is the never-ending game, in which people attempt to secure their individual souls through the possession of things outside the body. However, this pursuit ultimately leads to the loss of one's soul and, consequently, the things that one has acquired.

O'Neill asserts that the human desire that originated in the American national culture is the tragedy. He observed the reality of this tragedy. Consequently, the background of the plot is largely discernible in his writing, and the characters are similarly imbued with a corresponding cultural background and local color. Even the language of the characters is imbued with the distinctive New England dialect. The characters in *Desire Under the Elms*, particularly Old Cabot, are unmistakably Puritan in character, as are the rest of the characters.

Cao Yu's plays, like those of O'Neill, are characterized by a profound realism. For instance, in *Thunderstorm*, we witness the transformation of a gentleman's family from a squire to a bourgeoisie, and in *Peking Man*, we see a family evolve from aristocrat to pauper. In *Sunrise*, we encounter a Chinese colonial city. Among these plays, *Thunderstorm* is perhaps the most familiar. Cao Yu is particularly familiar with the so-called Chinese gentlemen, whose human nature is stubborn and violent. This is evident in the realistic depiction of the feudal group's decline. However, like O'Neill, Cao Yu's plots seem to rely on a transcendental understanding of human nature, specifically irrational impulses at the subconscious level. Cao Yu's focus is not on verisimilitude but on human instincts and the limitations of human nature. This is evident even in his external works. For instance, the majority of his plots are set in the darkness of night, involving suicide, murder, and madness, all ending in the failure of the family or the individual.

A quote from Cao Yu perhaps confirms this: "In my personal and somewhat unconventional situation, I have observed and listened to a multitude of characters and scenarios that have prompted me to reflect. I have come to recognize the necessity to consider the world around me. I have come to perceive myself as adrift in a vast sea of unending suffering, and I have been compelled to ascend a lofty mountain to gain a vantage point from which to assess and evaluate the nature of humanity. I have endeavored to discern whether these beings, whom I have come to refer to

as ‘human beings,’ are beautiful or ugly, and to ascertain the complexity of their personalities and the depth of their souls” (Cao, 2009, p. 56).

V. CONCLUSION

The two tragedies *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms*, written by Cao Yu and Eugene O’Neill, share a common aesthetic vision in their creative endeavors. This vision is not merely about personal misfortune; rather, it is deeply embedded in gender dynamics, particularly the oppressive forces of male-centeredness. The central cause of tragedy is the conflict between social constraints and the female characters’ desire for power, equality, freedom, and spiritual autonomy. A comparative study of the two plays reveals that both playwrights have carefully crafted an emotional space in which the female protagonists, Fanyi and Abbie, possess the fundamental essence of humanity despite their disparate social circumstances. The comparison of *Thunderstorm* and *Desire Under the Elms* not only emphasizes the nature of tragedy in different national frameworks but also highlights the commonalities between the two playwrights in terms of their portrayal of women’s fates and existential dilemmas.

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Teaching Methods of Arabic Language Grammar Lessons Among Arabic Teachers at Religious Secondary Schools in Malaysia

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Abstract—It has been proven through past research that students' mastery of Arabic language grammar remains at a low level. This condition is attributed to the less efficient teaching methods practised by Arabic teachers due to their use of traditional teaching methods. Therefore, this study aims to review the teaching methods of Arabic language grammar practised by Arabic teachers upon the effectiveness of the teaching methods in facilitating the students' improvement in Arabic language grammar. A qualitative design was employed by focusing on case studies in various places. Through a purposive sampling, the respondents of this study comprised Arabic language teachers from National Religious High Schools (SMKA), Government Aided Religious Schools (SABK), and State Religious Secondary Schools (SMAN) in Perlis and Kedah, Malaysia. Subsequently, it was found that the majority of Arabic language teachers still practised teacher-oriented teaching methods compared to student-oriented teaching methods such as lectures, memorisation, repetition (*at-tikrar*), and translation. The teachers determined the effectiveness of their teaching methods in assisting the students in mastering the Arabic language grammar based on the students' results of assignments, answers, or responses. Based on several language tests conducted by the teacher, the aforementioned results should be satisfactory. Notably, this study would be a reference for academics and educators' development and diversification of teaching methods that are more interesting and suitable for the students' improvement in their mastery of Arabic language grammar.

Index Terms—teaching, methods, Arabic language grammar, Arabic teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

Arabic language lesson in Malaysia is mainly conducted to equip students with the capability in mastering four Arabic language skills: listening skills (*maharah al-istima'*), speaking skills (*maharah al-kalam*), writing skills (*maharah al-kitabah*), and reading skills (*maharah al-qiraah*) (Azizan et al., 2014; Jamali et al., 2017; Mukhtar & Damit, 2017). Essentially, a student's mastery of the four Arabic language skills is measured by his or her mastery of Arabic language grammar (Maskor et al., 2016; Ramli et al., 2019). Therefore, to ensure that the students acquire all four Arabic language skills, their mastery of Arabic language grammar should reach an optimal level.

Based on previous study findings, it could be seen that students' mastery of Arabic language grammar remains at a low level, not reaching the optimal level in the mastery of Arabic language grammar (Hussin et al., 2015; Karim & Husaini, 2016; Misnan & Ghazali, 2019; Fauzi et al., 2020; Mokhtar et al., 2020). This situation occurs due to several challenges faced by students and Arabic language teachers, especially in practising the teaching methods that are suitable for the students' abilities. Furthermore, the Arabic language is regarded as an uninteresting and challenging subject for the students to learn (Yunisa, 2022). This situation leads to a decline in the level of the student's mastery of Arabic language grammar, followed by a negative impact on students' mastery of Arabic language skills, particularly in *maharah al-kalam* (Misnan & Ghazali, 2019) and *maharah al-kitabah* (Mokhtar et al., 2020).

To ensure that the objective of learning Arabic language grammar can be optimally achieved, many parties play a crucial. Specifically, Arabic lesson teachers play the main role in the teaching and learning (T&L) process in the classroom (Zaini et al., 2019). Furthermore, the teaching methods and approaches practised by teachers during the

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pedagogical process should be emphasised, allowing the students to understand and master each grammar topic being covered. Arabic language teachers constantly face obstacles and difficulties in using teaching methods that are suitable for the students as they are influenced by several factors, such as teacher factors, environmental factors, and teaching-learning materials (TLM) among others (Zaini et al., 2019). In addition, a few Arabic language teachers still practise traditional teaching methods in Arabic language grammar lessons, such as *nahw*, translation method (Sahid & Fettane, 2019; Zaini et al., 2019), and memorisation method (Ramli et al., 2019). Zaini et al. (2019) added that Arabic language teachers are still practising teacher-oriented teaching methods. They also solely provide explanations and lectures without conducting any discussions with the students, which may affect students' motivation and lead to their passivity during the T&L.

In line with the *Pengajaran Abad ke21* (PAK21) introduced by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE), apart from teacher-oriented methods, teachers are also required to implement and practise student-oriented teaching methods. These approaches are essential for providing the students with opportunities to be directly involved in the pedagogy and discussion sessions where they are able to express their opinions. At the same time, the teachers would be involved as a guide throughout the T&L (Kamrozzaman et al., 2023). Therefore, this study mainly aims to identify the teaching methods practised by Arabic teachers during the Arabic language grammar lessons in Malaysian religious secondary schools. It also aims to identify the teachers' perspectives on their methods of ensuring that their applied teaching methods can assist students in understanding and mastering Arabic language grammar.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Highlights of Past Research on Arabic Language Grammar Teaching Methods

Two primary methods are applied in teaching and learning (T&L): teacher-oriented and student-oriented methods (Garrett, 2008; Lightweis, 2013; Manaf & Surat, 2022). Specifically, the teacher-oriented method, also known as the traditional method, has been practised for a long period in T&L (Lightweis, 2013). Students are individuals who receive information passively. Accordingly, this method is where teachers play important roles in the learning process due to their position as information providers or assessors who guide the students in obtaining the correct answers (Paimin & Ghazali, 2012; Emaliana, 2017). Examples of teacher-oriented methods are lectures, questioning, storytelling and demonstration (Yahaya & Pang, 2010). On the other hand, student-oriented learning, also known as active learning, is a teaching method that places further focus on students, while the teachers have the least influence in the teaching process (Zohrabi et al., 2012; Janor et al., 2013). It is also a student-oriented learning activity, which takes place individually or in groups or pairs (Emaliana, 2017), discussion and presentation (Janor et al., 2013), and communication or interaction (Janor et al., 2013; Manaf & Surat, 2022). Examples of this teaching method include the use of mind mapping (Paimin & Ghazali, 2012), the interactive media method (Kamrozzaman et al., 2023), and the '*guru muda*' method (Modius et al., 2023).

Based on the review of past studies, a few studies were specifically focused on the teaching methods of Arabic language grammar. Specifically, several studies were focused on the teaching methods of Arabic language grammar, such as a study on the *rumus* (formula) application method in T&L Arabic language grammar carried out by Jusoh et al. (2014). This *rumus* application consists of a letter or letters representing words including a noun (اسم) labelled with the letter (س) in the *rumus* application. The role of the formula provided in '*aplikasi rumus*' teaching method was applied to describe each grammar method found in the topic of learning Arabic language grammar. The implementation of this *rumus* application method took place when the teacher explained its use to the students, while the students were provided with a simple set containing the contents of the formulas as a reference during the T&L process (Jusoh et al., 2014). Based on the results by Jusoh et al. (2014), it was indicated that the *rumus* (formula) application method in T&L Arabic language grammar could increase the students' level of understanding and mastery of Arabic language grammar. This condition was reflected through the increase in the mean value of 11.36 for the test results of a group of students from the pre-test, with the increase amounting to 38.74. Meanwhile, the mean value of the post-test amounted to 50.10.

Lubis et al. (2016) carried out a study focusing on the teaching methods of Arabic language grammar. In this study, the authors demonstrated several methods practised by teachers in Arabic language grammar pedagogy, such as the *taqlidiah* method or traditional method, *al-sam'iyah al-shafawiyah* method or audio-visual method, and systematic eclectic that is a combination of the *taqlidiah* and *al-sam'iyah al-shafawiyah* methods. The results of Lubis et al.'s (2016) study indicated that a grammar lesson conducted through the systematic eclectic method was clearly more effective as this method combines two or more teaching methods, such as the *taqlidiah* and the *al-sam'iyah al-shafawiyah* methods. In this method, the grammatical aspects were delivered inductively whereby the teacher presented the examples of sentences used in listening, speaking, and reading processes before further explaining the definition of the method and concept.

Ahmid et al.'s (2018) study highlighted that the methods and approaches practised by teachers in teaching grammar had a significant relationship with students' motivation. The students' level of mastery of Arabic language grammar remained at a low level due to the lack of motivation and interest in learning the Arabic language. Furthermore, the teachers who solely focused on one-way teaching methods without two-way interaction with students had a negative impact on students' motivation, followed by their passivity and boredom during T&L. Nevertheless, the diversity and suitability of methods employed by teachers in pedagogy, such as an interactive method, could increase students'

motivation in learning Arabic. This factor may strengthen the students' focus and create a more conducive learning atmosphere. In line with this, Zaini et al. (2019) stated that the variety of teaching methods practised by teachers could boost the students' motivation and increase their engagement in T&L. To illustrate, the student-oriented teaching method offers space for the students to be directly involved in the T&L session, in which the teacher acts as the guide when the students face difficulties in understanding the topics to be learnt. The limited knowledge of the use of teaching methods leads to the teachers' use of traditional methods, such as *nahw* translation (Sahid & Fettane, 2019). In addition, the use of diverse and interesting teaching-learning materials (TLM) in teaching Arabic language grammar would also affect the particular teaching methods being used in the pedagogy (Ramli et al., 2019; Zaini et al., 2019; Hussain et al., 2020). Based on the PAK21, teachers are required to implement the use of information and technology in pedagogy. The use of TLM, such as the use of computers, presentation of videos, songs, and lessons through websites assists teachers in gaining students' attention and strengthening their focus on the T&L. The teacher's skill in the use of many TLMs can develop a more interesting learning atmosphere, which is not solely focused on the use of textbooks.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted through a qualitative design method using case studies of various places and the selection of respondents was based on purposive sampling. Generally, the selection of research respondents based on the purposive sampling method is the ideal method for research qualitative methods (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007). A total of nine Arabic language teachers from National Religious Secondary Schools (SMKA), Government Aided Religious Schools (SABK), and State Religious Secondary Schools (SMAN) in Perlis and Kedah were selected as respondents. The objective of selecting Arabic teachers from various school backgrounds was for reviewing the teaching methods of Arabic language grammar that are practised in two different syllabuses: the syllabus of the Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah (KSSM -Standard Secondary School Curriculum) and *Kurikulum Bersepadu Dini* (KBD-Integrated Curriculum).

To answer the first and second objectives of the study, a semi-structured interview method was conducted with nine Arabic language teachers. According to Jasmi (2012), the number of respondents in a qualitative design study for gaining sufficient data is not specified, while Gredler (1996) stated that nine teachers would be a sufficient number of respondents in this case (Gredler, 1996). Moreover, this study was conducted in line with the university research ethics guidelines approved by the Research Ethics Committee (RMC) reference number REC/12/2021(MR/1077). Prior to participation, participants had also received a consent form that ensured the confidentiality of their identity. The interviews were recorded and took approximately 45 minutes. Accordingly, Table 1 presents a summary of information about the respondents:

TABLE 1
RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND

No	Respondents	Teaching experiences	School categories	Syllabuses
1	T1	14 years	SMKA	KSSM
2	T2	Five months	SMKA	KSSM
3	T3	Six years	SABK	KBD
4	T4	Five years	SABK	KBD
5	T5	12 years	SMAN	KBD
6	T6	Five years	SMAN	KBD
7	T7	One year	SABK	KBD
8	T8	Four years	SABK	KBD
9	T9	17 years	SABK	KBD

The interview questions presented to the Arabic teachers were related to teaching methods for Arabic language grammar and the effectiveness of the teaching methods in facilitating the students' understanding of the subject. This was followed by an analysis of the data and research findings from the interview sessions with Arabic teachers through a thematic analysis method and their categorisation into several themes and sub-themes. Moreover, prior to the use of the interview questions, a pilot study was conducted to ensure that the content of the interview questions was suitable to be used in the study and that the research questions could be answered. The Arabic language experts were also referred to obtain the validity and reliability of the research instrument prior to its use in the study.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on the answers and feedback presented by the respondents during the interview sessions, labelling was carried out on each respondent, starting from the first teacher (T) as T1 until the ninth teacher as T9. This process was conducted to facilitate the data analysis process and protect the personal information of the respondents involved. Subsequently, the results from the interview session with the Arabic language teachers would be used to answer the first objective of this study, which is to identify the method of teaching Arabic language grammar implemented by the Arabic language teachers in Malaysian Religious Secondary Schools. Thus, an interview question was distributed to

teachers with the aim of reviewing the Arabic language grammar teaching methods practised by Arabic teachers, which is as follows:

Interview question: What are the teaching methods used by teachers in teaching Arabic language grammar?

The feedback and answers by the teachers are illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 2
METHODS USED BY ARABIC TEACHERS IN TEACHING ARABIC LANGUAGE GRAMMAR

Themes	Sub-themes	Total respondents	Respondents (Teacher)
Teacher-oriented methods	Memorisation	3	T3, T7, and T8
	Lectures	3	T4, T5, and T6
	Repetition (<i>at-tikrar</i>)	2	T7 and T9
	Exercise	2	T3 and T6
	Notes summarisation	1	T1
	<i>Nahw</i> translation	1	T2
	Research and observation	1	T6
Student-oriented methods	Singing	1	T1
	<i>Guru muda</i> (<i>young teachers</i>)	1	T9

Table 2 illustrates the themes and sub-themes of Arabic language grammar teaching methods practised by teachers during the T&L of this subject. Two main themes were identified, namely teacher-oriented and student-oriented teaching methods, which were branched out into several sub-themes. The majority of Arabic language teachers practised the teacher-oriented teaching method. Specifically, three teachers who applied the memorisation method in teaching Arabic language grammar stated that this application took place during Arabic language grammar pedagogy. Meanwhile, two teachers stated that they used the repetition (*at-tikrar*) method, and the other two teachers practised the exercise method in the Arabic grammar T&L. Moreover, several teacher-oriented methods were employed by Arabic teachers, such as the notes summarisation method, the *nahw* translation method, and the research and observation method. On the other hand, two Arabic language teachers applied student-oriented teaching methods, such as the *guru muda* method and singing method during the T&L of Arabic language grammar in progress. Accordingly, the following feedback was presented by the Arabic teachers during the interview session:

(a) *Teacher-Oriented Teaching Methods*

T1:

"I use a lot of singing methods & **summarise the notes** so that it becomes easier for students to master it."

T2:

"Explaining each element in accordance with or based on the **grammatical methods of the Malay language**."

T3:

"**Memorisation methods** are always used by teachers and practised regularly."

T4:

"**Methods** are used by teachers to **lecture, speak, write, listen, describe**."

T5:

"First of all, the teacher **explains the form of sentences** until the students master it. Students need to remember the signs for each of the *rafak, nasab, jar, and jazam*. The **teacher gives examples for related topics** and then explains them based on the topic that will be taught."

T6:

"Methods used:
1). Make **research and observations** on examples in the form of sentences.
2). **Teacher's explanation** and discussion with students.
3). **Exercises** by students."

T7:

"**Method of repetition and memorisation**, especially the *mufradat* and *fe'el* interpretation."

T8:

"For lower forms which are from 1 to 3, the **memorisation method** is used in the teaching method of grammar at the beginning of the school term. Students need to master grammatical morphemes to ease the learning process."

T9:

"**At-tikrar method** and *guru muda* method."

(b) *Student-Oriented Teaching Methods*

T1:

"I use a lot of **singing methods** and summarise the notes so that it becomes easier for students to master it."

T9:

"At-tikrar method and guru muda method."

The second interview question was distributed to the teachers to identify how the teachers ensured the effectiveness of the teaching methods to assist students in understanding and mastering the aspects of Arabic language grammar. The interview question is as follows:

Interview question: How do teachers ensure that the teaching methods they use assist students in properly understanding and mastering Arabic language grammar?

Subsequently, the results from this interview were analysed, as shown in the following table.

TABLE 3
THEMES AND SUB-THEMES OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ARABIC LANGUAGE GRAMMAR TEACHING METHODS

Themes	Sub-themes	Total respondents	Respondents (teachers)
Evaluation based on exercises, tasks, assessments and student feedback	Students can respond to exercises and questions	6	T1, T4, T5, T6, T7, and T8
	Students may access <i>Tasmi'</i>	2	T4 and T9
	Students can answer the examinations and tests	1	T9
	Teachers can identify and evaluate students' skill levels	1	T3
	Students can create notes and mind maps	1	T2

Table 3 illustrates the themes and sub-themes related to how teachers ensured the effectiveness of Arabic language grammar teaching methods that they practised to facilitate the students' understanding and mastery of Arabic language grammar. In this case, the main theme was identified from the result of the evaluation based on exercises, tasks, assessments, and students' feedback, followed by the emergence of several sub-themes. According to six teachers in this study, the effectiveness of the teaching methods was measured based on the students' ability to answer the provided exercises and questions. Apart from that, two teachers stated that the effectiveness of these methods could be measured through the students' ability in demonstrating to the teachers (*tasmi'*) the topics they have learnt during T&L. Furthermore, several teachers stated that the effectiveness of the Arabic language grammar teaching methods could be measured based on the 1) students' capability to answer the tests provided by the teachers and 2) the teachers' ability to recognise the level of each student's capacity. Another teacher highlighted that the effectiveness of the methods can be measured based on the students' ability to write notes and mind maps. Accordingly, the following answers were presented by Arabic language teachers during the interview sessions:

T1:

"Based on the exercises being given, the students were able to answer correctly after the lesson was conducted."

T2:

"Ask students to make notes/mind maps after listening to the teacher's teaching."

T3:

"Teachers can identify students' abilities and plan teaching plans that are suitable for the students' levels."

T4:

"Reciting it repeatedly with students, giving exercises."

T5:

"1) Test students orally by asking them to make a summary based on the topic studied; 2) every student is asked to answer the questions orally through the questions that are available in the textbook or otherwise on the topic studied."

T6:

"Provide exercises that are easy to understand and use understandable words to increase students' motivation to study Arabic language grammar."

T7:

"Increase exercises and discussions, especially the construction of the sentences."

T8:

"Teachers need to evaluate by giving students the opportunities to answer questions in class. The teachers ask the justification for the answers given so that they can acknowledge if the students have really mastered the grammar or not."

T9:

"1) Tasmi' managed by young teachers; 2) two qawaid topics followed by a test."

V. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings from the interview sessions with Arabic teachers, it was found that the majority of teachers were still practising teacher-oriented teaching methods, which are also known as the traditional methods of teaching Arabic language grammar. Among the traditional methods practised by the teachers were the lecture method, the memorisation method, the repetition method (*at-tikrar*), and the *nahw* translation method. Moreover, several factors encouraged them to practise the traditional methods, such as the low level of teachers' competence (Zaini et al., 2019), lack of knowledge in diversifying teaching methods (Mohamed et al., 2003; Zaini et al., 2019), and their weakness in the use of Internet and technology (Hamzah & Attan, 2012) among others.

Currently, a number of Arabic language teachers are practising student-oriented teaching methods, such as the *guru muda* and singing methods. Specifically, the *guru muda* method involves students who play the roles of teachers or mentors. In this case, these young teachers from outstanding students would be appointed to assist teachers in T&L sessions. They would also be employed as mentors to assist the moderate and weak students in the T&L. Notably, this method could develop an active learning atmosphere through discussions, interactivity, and cooperation among the students. Considering the young teachers who are also among the students, the moderate and weak students would not feel embarrassed or afraid to ask questions (Modius et al., 2023).

The teachers' method of ensuring the effectiveness of the teaching methods could be measured based on the results of the evaluation of exercises, assignments and tests, and satisfactory student feedback through several exercises, language tests, and assignments provided by the teachers. The teaching methods were found to be highly effective, as reflected through the students' ability to answer the exercises and tests provided by the teachers and their capacity to provide accurate answers. In addition, the effectiveness of a teaching method could be measured based on the students' ability to demonstrate to the teacher (*tasmi'*) what they had memorised during the T&L.

The effectiveness of the teaching methods practised by the teachers could also be measured based on students' capabilities to explain the Arabic language grammar based on their understanding of it. The level of the students' ability in this case could be identified by the teachers, allowing them to develop lesson plans based on the level of the students' mastery. This situation would develop productive students and a more conducive learning atmosphere, particularly with the teachers' practice of attractive and interesting teaching methods. Besides, the effectiveness of the teaching method could also be evaluated based on the students' ability to write notes, mind maps, and a summary of what they had learned in the T&L session.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The use of suitable Arabic language grammar teaching methods is highly important for the improvement of students' level of understanding and mastery of Arabic language grammar. Therefore, the use of teaching methods that are less suitable and interesting will affect students' motivation and interest in learning the Arabic language, especially in the grammar aspect. This situation would subsequently disrupt the students' progress in mastering the Arabic language in terms of grammar, listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. The practice of teaching methods that are more focused on teacher-oriented methods and traditional methods would also have negative impacts on the students' motivation, developing them into passive students.

Taking the findings into consideration, it is suggested that the traditional and teacher-oriented teaching methods practised by the teachers should be shifted to the combination of teacher-oriented and student-oriented methods. To illustrate, this combined method produces students who are more enthusiastic about learning Arabic grammar, contributing to a positive impact on Arabic speaking skills. *Guru muda* (young teachers) methods (Modius et al., 2023), group discussions (Emaliana, 2017), presentation methods (Janor et al., 2013), communication or interaction (Janor et al., 2013; Manaf & Surat, 2022), *rumus* (formula) application method (Jusoh et al., 2014), teaching methods using mind maps (mind mapping) (Paimin & Ghazali, 2012), and interactive media methods (Kamrozzaman et al., 2023) are regarded as suitable practices by Arabic language teachers during T&L Arabic grammar compared to the lecture and memorisation methods. Accordingly, the following Figure 1 illustrates the proposed teaching method process that should be practised by teachers in teaching Arabic grammar.

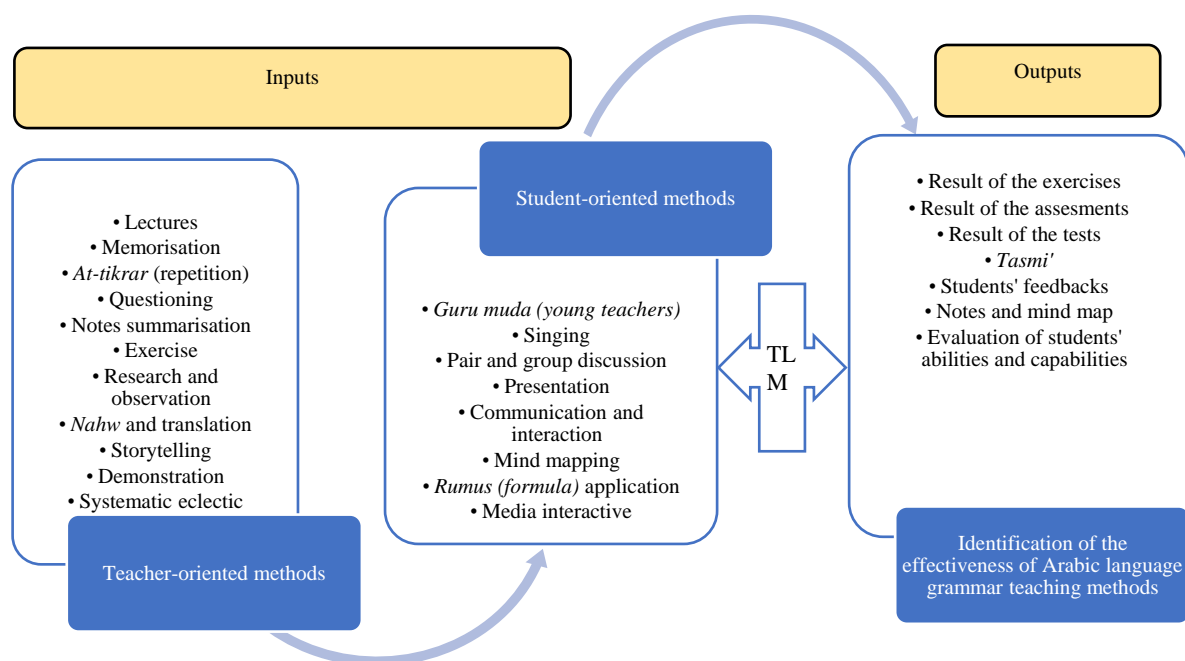


Figure 1. The Process of the Combined Method of Teaching Arabic Language Grammar

The above Figure 1 illustrates the processes of the combined methods of teaching Arabic language grammar. Throughout these processes, teachers are suggested to provide inputs by practising a combination of teacher-oriented and student-oriented teaching methods. Teaching-learning materials (TLM) that are suitable for the teaching methods should be properly provided by the teachers. This is followed by the identification of outputs shown by the students to indicate the effectiveness of the Arabic language grammar teaching methods. Notably, the results of this study would serve as a guideline for academicians and teachers in designing suitable teaching methods for teaching Arabic language grammar. It would also be a reference to the Malaysian Ministry of Education's efforts in improving the competence of teachers, particularly Arabic teachers in diversifying teaching methods that are more student-friendly by focusing on student-oriented methods.

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Semantic Change in PL-SKT Loanwords and Figures of Speech Used in the Tai Epic *Thao Hung or Cheuang*

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Abstract—*Thao Hung or Cheuang* has been one of the important poetic works in Northern Laos and Northeastern (NE) Thailand for a long time. The use of Pali and Sanskrit (PL-SKT) words and their meanings in communicating the contents of the story in Northern Laos and Northeastern (NE) Thailand are a fascinating feature of this work. The objectives of this study were to explore the semantic changes in the PL-SKT loanwords, and to explore figures of speech in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. The conceptual framework of this study consists of exploring 1) the use of PL-SKT words through semantic change processes and 2) the figures of speech used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. A qualitative method was employed and the data collection was done from the volumes 1-4 of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* Northeastern Literature Dictionary compiled by the Royal Society of Thailand. It was found that there are 679 PL-SKT loanwords in 807 stanzas (*Klong*) of *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. Three processes of semantic change, namely, widening of meaning, narrowing of meaning and transferring of meaning, were employed in PL-SKT words. Furthermore, the following seven figures of speech: simile, metaphor, symbol, personification, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, and metonymy were found.

Index Terms—PL-SKT, semantics, figures of speech, *Thao Hung*, literature

I. INTRODUCTION

Regarding Sanskrit in South Asia, Bronkhorst (2011) stated that Sanskrit made its first appearance in inscriptions in South Asia during the early centuries of the Common Era. It then gradually took over and became the inscriptional language par excellence in the whole of the South Asian subcontinent and much of Southeast Asia. For almost a thousand years Sanskrit ruled in this enormous domain. Pollock (1996) speaks for this reason of the ‘Sanskrit cosmopolis,’ which he dates to approximately CE 300 and 1300.

The above accords with Pongpaiboon (1974) who stated that it is evident that Southeast Asia was influenced by India’s culture, and the Sanskrit language came together with India’s culture in terms of beliefs based on Brahmanism and Mahayana Buddhism, which used Sanskrit as the important language in propagating religion. Hence, Sanskrit spread in Southeast Asia before the entry of Hinayana Buddhism, and therefore, people in Southeast Asia have been more familiar with Sanskrit than Pali.

This seems to be similar to the words of a famous scholar named Chamberlain (1992) who wrote about the influence of Indic languages such as Pali and Sanskrit etc., in one of the oldest literary works in the region, *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, which is known well in northern Laos and northeastern (NE) Thailand. It is perhaps the most important piece of literature from the Southeast Asian mainland and was composed by poets who used not only old Lao, but also Indic languages.

Historically, though Sanskrit entered Thailand before Pali, both Pali and Sanskrit loanwords came to be widely used in the Thai language. Thai literature provides the most striking evidence to show how important a role Pali and Sanskrit words have played in composition to express the feelings of poets and create beauty as well as ideas in many other areas of human endeavour. Dictionaries have compiled words in the Thai language including those derived from Pali and Sanskrit words. A large portion of this work has been carried out by the Royal Society of Thailand. This institute is supported by the Government of Thailand and has published many dictionaries. In these dictionaries, there are large numbers of Pali and Sanskrit loanwords.

Indeed, Thongprasert (1977, p. 37), a fellow of the Royal Society of Thailand, stated that if one opens one of the dictionaries of the Royal Institute, one will find that Pali and Sanskrit loanwords make up more than half of the words in the volume.

Over the last two decades, the Royal Society of Thailand (formerly known as the Royal Institute) has published four dictionaries of the vocabulary found in *Thao Hung*: Dictionary of Words in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work: *Thao Hung* or *Thao Cheuang*, Volumes 1-4. A survey of the Pali and Sanskrit words in these dictionaries revealed that Pali and Sanskrit words played the very important role as loanwords in the Thai language, and especially in *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang*. Both Pali and Sanskrit words are employed in order to communicate the ideas of the poets, for example:

เมื่อนั้นอ้าวกำ	คิดจอน้องแล้วเล่า	ใจสาร
	อินคำวอนคอบใจ	จงท้าว
เห็นว่า	สมสมครามหน้าปูนเคี้ยว	ดูถึง กันแล้ว
	พระเจ้าหมีนม้าวแข็งขึ้น	ขาดดี

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 90)

(Translated): Then, queen Au-ka, who missed king Engka, opened the letter and read it. From *Thao Engka*'s plea for help, she knew that there would be a war in the future, for that was the course on which *Thao Suem* had decided.

In the above example, the first Pali and Sanskrit word highlighted 'สาร' /sā:n/ generally means 'essence, thing to be recalled' (Chandaburinarunath, 1969, p. 825). But later, its meaning expanded to become 'important part, word, book, letter' (Royal Institute, 1996, p. 831) Secondly, the word 'สมคราม' /sōm-khra:m/ basically means 'war, battle' (Chandaburinarunath, 1969, p. 758). This word continued to be used in communication between people through succeeding times and still retains the same meaning today (Royal Institute, 1996, p. 790). Lastly, the word 'ดี' /khá-di:/ etymologically means 'going' (Chandaburinarunath, 1969, pp. 262-263). Later, its meaning widened to possibility, model, procedure, issue and lawsuit (Royal Institute, 1996, pp. 164-165). The use of these words made the verse more melodious and beautiful. The examples given above show the differences of meaning of the Pali and Sanskrit words employed and applied in this stanza of *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang*.

Furthermore, *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang* is known as a heroic masterpiece. The title is the name of the king, *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang*, who is the hero in this very important literary work. Hence, it can be remarked that the words and figures of speech used in this work were intended to bring out the beauty in the story. For example:

ฟังอิน	ฟ้าร้องเสียงมี	เดือนสาม พูนเขอ
	ทุกไทชมเรียกขวัญ	เมื่อห้อง
ดูคั่ง	อวนรามร้อนหยั่ง	อินโศก
	มโนนาถนึ่งคือบ้า	จ่มจริง

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 112)

(Translated): Listening to the third-month sky roar and howl, everyone took refuge in calling their spirits home, but *Thao Engka* seemed overwrought and sorrowful, his mind like a mad man's, drowning in wild imaginings.

An example of a figure of speech employed this verse was composed by poet to show beauty through the use of metaphor. The poet intended to express that his mind was like that of a mad man. The Thai word in this verse "คือ" /khu:/ is used in metaphor in making comparisons.

Words with different meanings including figures of speech in *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang* are regarded as important writing devices and are also necessary to express the poets' feelings and imagination. To know, understand and realize the beauty of the meaningful words and different figures of speech used in this work therefore seemed important, and so the researcher decided to study the semantic changes in the Pali and Sanskrit loanwords and to explore the figures of speech as employed by the poets in *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang*.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature related to *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang* is done by presenting the following information.

A. History of *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang*

Chamberlain (1992) stated that *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang* was recognized in 1953 as one of the three greatest Southeast Asian literary works by the most respected and authoritative scholar of Lao history, Mahasila Viravong. He said *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang* was a mysterious work well known in northern Laos and northeastern (NE) Thailand from oral tradition and was perhaps the most important piece of literature from the Southeast Asian mainland and of great significance in the study of Southeast Asian civilization.

According to the languages as employed in the story, Chamberlain (1992) further stated that in *Thao Hung* or *Cheuang* literature, poets used not only the old Lao, but also Indic languages. It proved to be an excellent example of poetic rhymes indicating composition prior to semantic change and the devoicing sound shift which spread across East and Southeast Asia.

B. Theory of Semantic Changes and Its Application in PL and SKT

With respect to the theory of semantic change, Khanithanan (1983) mentioned that semantic change is the evolution of word usage in historical linguistics; semantic change is a change in one of the meanings of a word. Every word has a

variety of senses and connotations which can be added, removed and altered over time, often to the extent that cognates across space and time to have very different meanings.

To study and analyze the Pali and Sanskrit loanwords as employed in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the processes of semantic change as mentioned above can be applied in studying Pali and Sanskrit words at the present time. More importantly, Pimpuang (2016) stated that to analyze Pali and Sanskrit words in terms of semantic change, one must consider the widening, narrowing and transferring of meaning. As generally observed, these are important linguistic phenomena involved in semantic change of words in languages.

C. Figures of Speech Help in Understanding and Appreciating Literature

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) stated that a figure of speech means one kind of the linguistic device created by writers through combining words in different ways in order to make it possible for words to express the meanings more accurately or in order to enable readers or listeners to use their imaginations. Figures of speech help very much in understanding abstract things through concrete ones. Not only this, it also makes it possible for the contents of a story to enter our senses and for readers to co-operate and co-experience in the words chosen by poets. This can help readers or listeners to better understand and appreciate a work of literature.

Figures of speech used in order to express the beauty of words in relation to the feelings of people include similes, metaphors and symbols. Figures of speech play an important role as devices writers use to show beautify literature and make it alive, wonderful and melodious.

After a review of the relevant literature, three processes involved in semantic change will be taken into account in order to use in analyzing semantic changes in Pali and Sanskrit words in the Thai language and in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. Following this, figures of speech will be considered as literary devices that the poets used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To accomplish this research based on its objectives, the researcher carried out the research as follows.

1. Research consisted of making a survey of data and collecting data related to Pali and Sanskrit words in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* from the NE Literature Dictionary published by the Royal Institute of Thailand. The population of the study was 679 Pali and Sanskrit loanwords in 807 Klongs (stanzas) of *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. At the same time, data survey and collection of figures of speech in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* from the NE Literature Dictionary published by the Royal Institute of Thailand were done by the researcher as well.

2. After the data collection was done, the collected data were classified into groups and categorized for analyzing and explanation.

3. Examples of verses, or Klong, in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* from the NE Literature Dictionary published by the Royal Institute of Thailand are presented and explained in terms of the processes of semantic change and figures of speech.

4. Analyses of the Pali and Sanskrit word use, semantic changes and figures of speech are made.

5. The results of the research based on the objectives are presented through descriptive writing. The findings of the research are discussed by comparing the results of this study with those of several previous researches, and the implications of research are also taken into account.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

As to the research results as found after the researcher has gone through the study focused on the semantic changes of Pali and Sanskrit loanwords as used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* and the figures of speech as employed in the work, the findings were as follows:

A. Semantic Change of PL-SKT Loanwords Used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*

The following three processes of semantic change used in Pali and Sanskrit loanwords were found in the research 1) widening of meaning, 2) narrowing of meaning and 3) transferring of meaning. They are as follows:

(a). Widening of Meaning

With respect to the meaning of widening, Pengphala (2000, p. 285) and Pimpuang (2016, p. 58) stated that widening of meaning means a Pali and Sanskrit word that included radically limited meaning is employed in a wider level of meaning, especially, a newly specified meaning can be added to the original one. Through such semantic change, the Pali and Sanskrit word will have a broader meaning than the original word. The meaning may include a variety of senses or connotations. In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the Pali and Sanskrit word which poets use display more additional meanings than the original one, for example:

(1)	นางศรี <u>สาโรช</u> เจ้า	สวนตาล
	รับปากชั่งนคราญโสมศรี	ขึ้นช้อย
	จำปออยู่เหิงนาน	พันขวบ
	แรงรักแวนต้นต้อย	กว่าไม้ทั้งหลาย

(Royal Institute, Vol 2, 2008, p. 182)

(Translated): Dear Thao Cheuang of Suan Tan city received the words given by Nang Ngom with happiness. With the power of love, the white Champaka had been around for 1000 years even if it was smaller than others.

The underlined word “สาโรช” pronounced in Thai /sǎ:rô:t/ is derived from the Pali and Sanskrit word *सरोज* /saroja/ (Longsomboon, 1976, p. 651) and it fundamentally means ‘lotus’ (Royal Institute, 2013, p. 1224). Poets used this word in this poem with a wider meaning than the original one. The wider meaning that was employed in the poem was ‘dear, lover.’ At the present time, the two meanings are used in the Thai language, but here the poets focused on the semantic dimension, not on restriction as the first meaning, but the second meaning. Here, it means not only the lotus, but also dear, lover.

(b). Narrowing of Meaning

Narrowing of meaning means the process by which a Pali and Sanskrit word’s meaning becomes less general or inclusive than its earlier meaning. This kind of semantic change is also known as specialization. One aspect of a Pali and Sanskrit word having narrowing meaning is that it may appear having either good or bad meanings due to its limitation (Makchaeng, 1982). In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, there are many Pali and Sanskrit words which are employed which have narrowing of meaning, for example:

(2)	ผ่อเห็น	ชะพุฟ้าแจ่มเมฆ	บัพพโต หุ่นเขอ
		คอนคอนคิดหุ่งนาง	นอนแล้ง
	บัดนี้	เอโกชุ่มขวัญ	ถือที่ ดนแล้ว
	ถูว่า	<u>วิบาก</u> แข่งเงินให้	ห่างกัน เค

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 111)

(Translated): Thao Engka who saw the clear sky and clouds over the tops of the mountains missed Auka and slept alone. Now there is a lover who praises Khwan; this is me. Is it the misery from bad deeds that has separated us and keeps us apart?

In the example, it can be stated that the underlined word ‘วิบาก’ pronounced in Thai /wí-bà:k/ is derived from both the Pali and Sanskrit words *विपक* /vipÁka/ meaning ‘result’ (Chandaburinarunath, 1970, p. 710). However, the word as employed in the above poem focused on the semantic dimension of ‘bad result’ only (Pimpuang, p. 122). Here the radical meaning ‘result’ is ignored in this context because it is obviously focused on the bad result only. Thus, it can be said that the meaning of this word has been changed through the narrowing of its meaning in this work.

(c). Transferring of Meaning

As to transfer of meaning, Nunberg (1995) stated that transferring of meaning is the linguistic mechanism that makes it possible to use the same expression to refer to disjointed sorts of things. In the context of the Pali and Sanskrit languages, Pimpuang (2008, pp. 123-124) also stated that it is to change or transfer the original meaning of Pali and Sanskrit words to others. Broadly speaking, the original meaning of the Pali and Sanskrit word is cancelled and a new meaning is coined to be used instead of the original one. Different Pali and Sanskrit words with transfer of meaning are employed in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. For example:

(3)	ชอบอ่อนน่องง่าว	ภูบาล
	ในทวงคิดว่าพอ	เพิงด้่าน
	คำจาแท้ <u>สงสาร</u>	สองภาค
	อันนี้	เท้าเหม่มือ
	เขว่าหिनก้อนล้าน	

(Royal Institute, Vol 2, 2008, p. 115)

(Translated): Thaen likes both ladies. He thought that speaking is enough, but he felt great pity for both of them as if a heavy stone had been put on his thumb.

The underlined word in the above stanza, ‘สงสาร’ pronounced in Thai /sǒŋ-sǎ:n/, is derived from the Pali and Sanskrit word *संसार* ‘saṁsāra’ (Monier Williams, 2002, p. 1119). Etymologically, it means ‘transmigration, circle of life’ (Royal Institute, 2013, p. 1156). However, the Sanskrit word is used in the above poem focused on the semantic dimension ‘feel pity’ only. The radical meaning ‘transmigration, circle of life’ is ignored here in this poem because it is focused only on the meaning of feeling pity.

B. Figures of Speech as Used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*

The figures of speech in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* to be taken into account and studied are seven in number: 1) simile 2) metaphor 3) symbol 4) personification 5) hyperbole 6) onomatopoeia and 7) metonymy. They are as follows:

(a). *Simile*

The meaning of simile according to the Royal Society of Thailand (2023) is a figure of speech in which there is a comparison between the two things which are not the same, but share some feature. The thing that people refer to may be abstract or something that people may not be familiar with. This is called the object of comparison (upmai) /ʔùp-pà-maj/. On the contrary, a thing that people will make the core compared thing may be the compared thing in a form that is concrete or well-known. This is called simile (upama) /ʔùp-pà-ma:/, for example:

(4)	เมื่อนั้น	ภูธรนงนากน้อย	นาคอง
		รับพากย์คำสายสนอง	ขึ้นช้อย
		พวงพักตร์ <u>ตั้ง</u> ศิวทอง	พวงที่
		อิน <u>ตั้ง</u> คอมหิ่งห้อย	คั้งนั้นทวายเทอญ

(Royal Institute, Vol 2, 2008, p. 154)

(Translated): After the king and queen of Nakhong city who gave Thaen Lan Kaab Kam Wa's words became cheerful. Their faces shown like gold and chains of glory flowers and the king felt as if he were surrounded by fireflies swarming around him.

The simile in this verse is indicated in the Thai language by the word 'ตั้ง' /daŋ/ and 'ตั้ง' /dàŋ/. The sentence talks about how the king and his queen became cheerful after they received Thaen Lan Kaab Kam's words. Suddenly, their faces became cheerful, shining like gold and chains of glory flowers. Not only this, the king felt as if he were surrounded by fireflies. Therefore, the words 'ตั้ง' and 'ตั้ง' indicate the 'similes' in this verse.

(b). *Metaphor*

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) stated that metaphor means a figure of speech that directly compares two things that share some dominant features. One thing is the main thing that which people are going to refer to such as a son or a daughter etc., and the other thing is that which people bring forward to compare the main thing to, such as a heart etc. Therefore, the message expressed with the metaphor can be 'my son is my heart.' In the Thai language, the words that people use in order to express comparison, namely; 'คือ' and 'เป็น,' will indicate a metaphor in the communication, for example.

(5)	คอยเมื่อดีเยอ	ผู้แต่หัวทังนาญ	นงศรี	อานเอย
	<u>คือ</u> จู่	คำควนควงใหญ่หอม	โรเว้า	
		ภูมรีคืนแดคอม	คมกลั่น	
		ฝันฝ้ายไฉซอนเกล้า	กล่อมผสม	

(Royal Institute, Vol 3, 2013, p. 47)

(Translated): May the king and queen return home well as a big pair of white cheese wood flowers exuding a sweet scent perfuming the air so bees and bumble bees are drawn toward them and one who smells the scent wants to get some to anoint their hair.

Metaphor in this verse is indicated by คือ /khu:/. It compares the king and queen with a pair of white cheesewood flowers that exude a sweet scent into the air. The scent of white cheesewood flowers attracts bees and bumble bees. Not only this, some people also desire it to make their hair fragrant. The word 'คือ' indicates the metaphor used in this verse.

(c). *Symbol*

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) describes a symbol in literature as a device of figurative language where an image, object, idea or symbol is used to represent something other than its literal meaning. For examples, red is the symbol of blood and white is the symbol of innocence or goodness etc. In Thao Hung or Chueang, many symbols are used. For example:

(6)	แต่ขึ้นเขากี้	ลูกพรากท้ายเลขเล็ก	ทั้งอาย
		ขึ้นควอวนออกเวียง	วังกว้าง
		กราชหนห้อง <u>หอสูง</u>	อ้าวคำ
		เหลียวผ่อเจ้าแพงล้าน	แต่ไกล

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 159)

(Translated): Then, both of them stood up, left Thao Suem shyly, and departed from the palace. They turned to see Auka in the distance while passing her palace.

Symbol in this verse was used หอสูง /hǎ:-sǔ:ŋ/. In this context, Thai word 'หอสูง' is employed in order to represent the king, queen or royal family member who lived in house or residence of royalty. The word 'หอสูง' meaning house or residence of royalty is the symbol employed in this verse.

(d). *Personification*

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) stated that personification means a figure of speech that gives human characteristics to nonhuman things or inanimate objects. The nonhuman things can be animals, objects, or even a

concept. The human characteristics given to these things can be emotions, behaviors, or actions that bring nonhuman things to life. For example:

(7)	ฟังอิน	<u>ฟ้าร้อง</u> เสียงมี	เดือนสาม พูนเฮอ
		ทุกโทษมเรียกขวัญ	เมื่อห้อง
	คู่คี่	อวนรามร้อนหาขัง	อินโศก
		มโนนาถน่องคือบ้า	จ่มจริง

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 112)

(Translated): Listening to the third-month sky roar and howl, everyone took refuge in calling their spirits back home, but Thao Engka seemed overwrought and sorrowful, his mind like a mad man’s, drowning in wild imaginings.

(e). *Hyperbole*

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) stated that hyperbole is a figure of speech exaggerates someone or something in making it seem look and sound a lot better or greater than it actually is, for example;

(8)	มันก็	ขึ้นกล่าวแล้วอ้าวคำ	รับขาน
		พาที่ชักถึง	ธรรม์เหง้า
	<u>ลือจัก</u>	<u>ลาพาน</u> ให้ปราชัย	ยศออก ไตนั้น
		บ่กว่าเจ้าใจแข็ง	พ่อคราม หั้นแล้ว

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 69)

(Translated): Ngua-ka and Kam-yuang went to inform Auka and she let the two of them convey her message to her father that his failure and disrepute will be a rumor that will spread all over the universe. It is up to her father to realize that war that will occur for sure.

Hyperbole in this verse was used “ลือจักลาพาน” /lu:-càk-la:-pha:n/. In this context, it talked about Auka who lets Ngua-ka and Kam-yuang convey to her father her message that his failure and disrepute will be a rumor that spreads all over the universe. Actually, for a rumor to be spread all over the universe would be difficult to do. Therefore, the word ‘ลือจักลาพาน’ is a hyperbole used by the poets in this verse.

(f). *Onomatopoeia*

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) stated that onomatopoeia means a figure of speech in which the sound of a word is imitative of the sound of the thing which the word represents such as sound of the wind blowing in order to stimulate the emotions and imagination of readers and listeners. For example:

(9)	พอมือ	<u>ฮ่วนฮ่วน</u> ฟ้าร้องเร้ง	ฤดูฝน พูนเฮอ
		เจืองหญญจุกจากดาว-	ดิงส์ฟ้า
		เอาปฏิสนธิเข้าถือพา	ศัพท์ะวีก
		ท้าวใหญ่หน้าในท้อง	แม่ตน

(Royal Institute, Vol 1, 2005, p. 21)

(Translated): With crackle khaboom rumble grumble thunder of the rainy season, Cheuang bravely left the second-heaven home of Indra and took his princely shape in queen Chom’s womb. Onomatopoeia in this verse was used ฮ่วนฮ่วน /hwâ:n-hwâ:n/. In this context, Thai word ‘ฮ่วนฮ่วน’ is imitative of the sound of the thunder. Therefore, the word ‘ฮ่วนฮ่วน’ is an onomatopoeia used by the poets for the sound of thunder in this verse.

(g). *Metonymy*

The Royal Society of Thailand (2023) stated that metonymy means usage of the word or phrase associated with an outstanding feature of something to refer to that thing; for example;

(10)	เคื่องจักให้	เมื่อฝายน้อยนำเคน	ลูณขุน พี่ชาม
	เชื้อเชีย	ถือยศคำควรคอบหลาน	เราผู้
	เมื่อนั้น	นายแสงไหว <u>จอมบุญ</u>	ลาเล็ก
		ขึ้นสู่ห้องถึงอ้าว	มิ่งเมือง

(Royal Institute, Vol 4, 2019, p. 76)

(Translated): If taking side with the small group will be done, it will be good to support Khun Cheang to the higher level. Please bring my word to inform my nephew. Then, Mr.Saeng paid respect to Him of Highest Merit and went to see Au-ka, the beloved revered queen of the people.

The metonymy in this poem is จอมบุญ /cɔ:m-bun/. This Thai word is composed of จอม /cɔ:m/ meaning ‘chief, top’ and บุญ /boon/ meaning ‘merit.’ This compound word means great merit or charisma and it is used to refer to great people. Here it means the king. Therefore, the word ‘จอมบุญ’ is metonymy referring to the king.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Pali and Sanskrit loanwords in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* in which there were semantic changes were the ones most used. The findings are in line with those of Chamberlain (1998) who stated that in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the poets used not only old Lao, but also Indic languages.

As observed, the following three linguistic processes: widening of meaning, narrowing of meaning and transferring of meaning, were employed. Therefore, those who composed *Thao Hung or Cheuang* must have had a good knowledge at Pali and Sanskrit words, for they applied Pali and Sanskrit words in such an important work of literature wonderfully. The poets employed Pali and Sanskrit words which had semantic changes in the work, and their doing so made the poem more melodious and beautiful in meaning. Furthermore, the following seven figures of speech; simile, metaphor, symbol, personification, hyperbole, onomatopoeia and metonymy were found in the work.

On the basis of the conclusion given above, it can be seen that the entry of Pali and Sanskrit into Southeast Asia has provided a copious source of loanwords from the past up until the present day. This is in the line with Thongprasert (1977, p. 37) who clearly stated that “if one opens one of the dictionaries of the Royal Institute, one will find that Pali and Sanskrit loanwords make up more than half of the words in the volume”.

Pali and Sanskrit loanwords can be analyzed semantically in terms of three processes, namely: the widening, narrowing and transferring of meaning. This seems to be similar to the statements of Makchaeng (1982), Pengphala (2000) and Pimpuang (2016) that Pali and Sanskrit words were most frequently employed in the Thai language through the widening, narrowing and transferring of meaning. These linguistic processes made the Pali and Sanskrit loanwords very meaningful, beautiful and melodious.

However, it can be noticed that the changes of meanings of the Pali and Sanskrit words used in many works of literature can be slight due to the time period and application of Pali and Sanskrit words. *Thao Hung or Cheung* is the great work of literature and has for a long time been a most important piece of literature from the Southeast Asian mainland for the study of Southeast Asian civilization. Semantic change is found, but the change is not much as compared with other more modern works of literature due to the impact of the entry of Brahmanism, Hinduism and Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

Furthermore, figures of speech can be used in order to decorate literature and bring it to life through the creativity of each writer. Figures of speech become valuable in making a poem more melodious, meaningful and appreciated by readers and listeners. This is similar to the statement of the Royal Society of Thailand (2023) that figures of speech are important devices for literary decoration. It can be observed that the figures of speech simile, metaphor and symbol are found frequently in *Thao Hung or Cheung* because it is a heroic work emphasizing the leading character named *Thao Hung or Cheung*.

For the figures of speech as used in this work of literature, it can be stated that figures of speech are important for decoration and necessary as devices to appeal to the imagination of the readers and listeners, and it can make a piece of literature beautiful and appreciated among the readers and listeners. These points are similar to those of the Royal Society of Thailand (2023) that stated that figures of speech help to use fewer words, but get more meaning in the writing. Therefore, they can be great devices to express profound meanings and feelings for readers or listeners.

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Teachers' and Students' Attitude Towards Flipped Teaching in EFL Classroom in Higher Education

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Abstract—Flipped teaching has become a continuous trend since COVID – 19 pandemic when online learning was popular more than ever. Following this model of teaching, teachers are required to record videos on the subjects that they are teaching before sharing them with students. This study aims at exploring both EFL teachers' and students' attitude towards the employment of flipped teaching at higher education level. The participants were 10 teachers and 10 students majoring in English Language Teaching and English Language at a university in Viet Nam. To collect data, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The results show that while teachers' preparation and students' engagement, interaction, critical thinking, and relevant learning style are amongst the positive attitudes, less motivation, more pressure, distraction, and lack of responsibility are considered as the negative feelings on flipped teaching. Suggestions for further studies are also presented.

Index Terms—flipped teaching, flipped learning, EFL classroom, higher education, learning attitude

I. INTRODUCTION

Although traditional teaching was employed for ages, the millennials in the modern world preferred to be involved in the lessons connected with internet or other interesting applications (Saglam & Arslan, 2018). The incorporation of technology in teaching and learning is welcomed and practiced by both teachers and students at different levels due to the effectiveness both inside and outside classrooms (Saglam & Arslan, 2018). Moreover, the success of learning has also been proved to be linked to information technology (Naimie et al., 2010). Accordingly, flipped teaching appears to be a method which makes use of technology to empower students in exploring knowledge (Saglam & Arslan, 2018). Basically, flipped teaching is opposite to traditional methods of teaching which means new knowledge and contents are delivered through homework (Roehl et al., 2013). According to Bishop and Verleger (2013), flipped teaching is developed following constructivism theory of teaching and learning.

Perhaps Bergmann and Sams (2011) are amongst the pioneers in adopting flipped teaching when they decided to record their lessons and uploaded on YouTube to attract students who often skipped classes. Of course, these teachers did not forget to add questions and quizzes on such videos to elicit students recalling knowledge. The results of the study showed that while most students preferred flipped teaching method, others were into the traditional way of teaching. In EFL context, Chen Hsieh et al. (2017) used mixed method with questionnaire, pre-test and post-test to conduct a study on the use of flipped classroom with 48 sophomore English majors. The results showed that both students' knowledge and motivation were improved due to the application of flipped teaching. Study by Lestari (2021) used both questionnaire and group interviews to investigate students' attitudes towards flipped teaching in EFL classroom. The findings showed that students had positive attitudes towards the use of flipped teaching. Besides, motivation and the employment of videos were considered as benefits of flipped teaching.

In Vietnamese classroom setting, Hung (2022) conducted quantitative research to explore EFL students' perceptions of online flipped classroom during COVID -19 pandemic and beyond. The results indicated that both positive and negative perceptions were mentioned by students. In contrast, a qualitative research design was carried out by Vuong et al. (2018) to question students' perceptions of challenges in a Vietnamese flipped EFL classroom. The findings of the study pointed out several challenges consisting of difficulty in self - regulating learning, heavy workload in learning, lack of urgent support, and ICT resources.

Obviously, flipped teaching is considered as a growing pedagogical approach in the education sector with various subjects such as mathematics, English, and so on. However, the understanding of both teachers' and students' attitudes towards the employment of flipped teaching still needs to be investigated. While most of the researches focus on whether flipped teaching is students' preferences (Chen Hsieh et al., 2017; Lestari, 2021), others explore students' perceptions inside the classroom (Hung, 2022; Lopes & Soares, 2018). Research linked to the employment of flipped teaching and students' perception on flipped teaching in other aspect is also conducted; however, most of these aims to explore only students' perception. In addition, there is a lack of longitudinal studies that examine whether teachers' and students' attitudes towards flipped teaching changes. Most studies tend to focus on quantitative outcomes such as questionnaire or test scores without conformation from qualitative aspect. Hence, such gaps are crucial for building the constructs to

explore teachers' and students' thought of flipped teaching. By addressing such gaps, the researcher hopes to provide more comprehensive insights related to the implementation of flipped teaching in the EFL classrooms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Flip teaching, or the flipped classroom approach, involves moving the delivery of knowledge typically imparted in physical classrooms to outside settings (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015). This entails students engaging in recorded lectures or reading materials prior to attending class. In this model, teachers primarily facilitate hands-on activities or oversee student presentations and discussions (Förster et al., 2022). The flipped classroom model represents a contemporary pedagogical approach emphasizing active, collaborative problem-solving activities within the classroom. It contains the use of prerecorded video tutorials for asynchronous learning outside class, coupled with homework (Bishop & Verleger, 2013).

Flipped classrooms involve three main sets of tasks: those done before, during, and after class sessions (Demirel, 2016). According to Gerber and Eybers (2021), researchers observe that in these classrooms, activities are tailored to different levels of learning in Bloom's revised taxonomy. Pre-class work typically comprises of fundamental learning tasks that students must accomplish in advance of the lesson. Teachers try to provide important foundational knowledge to all students through pre-class exercises so that they can recall and comprehend fundamental ideas in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy (Forehand, 2007). One of the common assignments that students have to prepare for is reading or watching the lessons beforehand. Although the flipped classroom approach is often linked with video content, teachers can also use traditional resources to flip their instruction by depending on pre-existing web content or materials rather than generating their own. Typically, students grasp fundamental concepts prior to class, then during and after class, they concentrate more on applying these concepts (Hyder & Bhamani, 2016). The foundational element of the flipped classroom method is in-class/lesson activities. Higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy (Forehand, 2007), such as application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, are the emphasis of these exercises. Students are expected to prepare the presentation and practice phases ahead of time in an online flipped lesson that follows the standard protocol of presentation, practice, and production. This allows the online lesson time for the production component. Activities for assessing and applying the knowledge that has been taught are referred to as the post-class/lesson stage. These can be done at home to support the pre-class and in-class phases. In case they still have questions, students can continue chatting with their teachers and peers on the platform after the flipped classroom. Instructors can provide extra practice for their students outside of the classroom by assigning problems from the textbook, a course website, or a learning platform like Moodle.

The benefits of flipped teaching have been highlighted in Vaughan's (2014) research, focusing on increased student engagement, preparedness, and teacher feedback. Firstly, flip teaching places emphasis on students, requiring them to either watch provided video lectures or read materials to prepare their own presentations for the classroom. Consequently, thorough preparation becomes essential as students must be ready to address questions raised after their presentations. This approach maximizes student engagement, as they are encouraged to provide feedback, comments, or questions during presentations to facilitate knowledge acquisition. It is important to dispel the notion that teachers have reduced responsibilities in a flipped classroom.

On the contrary, teachers must attentively observe students' presentations, providing constructive feedback and comments. Furthermore, teachers may need to facilitate hands-on activities as needed or lead discussion sessions, concluding with a summary of the lesson. Besides, flipped teaching is believed to improve students' confidence and motivation, interaction enhancement, engagement in learning, soft – skill improvement, and better learning management (Lestari, 2021; McNally et al., 2017). Obviously, by engaging with course materials at their own pace and having the opportunity to ask questions during in-person sessions, students can feel more confident in their understanding of the material. Additionally, active learning activities in class can boost motivation by making the learning experience more dynamic and relevant to students' interests and goals. Besides, flipped teaching encourages more interaction between students and between students and instructors. In-class sessions can be structured to promote discussions, debates, and collaborative problem-solving, fostering a more interactive and engaging learning environment. With pre-class materials setting the stage for in-depth discussions and activities during class time, students are more likely to be engaged with the course content. This engagement can lead to deeper understanding and retention of the material. In terms of soft-skill improvement, flipped teaching often involves activities that require teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. By participating in these activities, students can develop and practice these soft skills, which are highly valued in both academic and professional settings. For better learning management, flipped teaching allows instructors to manage their teaching time and resources more effectively. By shifting some of the content delivery outside of class time, instructors can dedicate in-person sessions to activities that promote deeper learning and skill development. Furthermore, the use of technology for delivering pre-class materials can provide instructors with valuable data on student engagement and comprehension, allowing for more targeted and personalized instruction. Moreover, the improvement in academic achievement and attitude in English course is another advantage of flipped teaching (Saglam & Arslan, 2018). Results from Saglam and Arslan (2018) research have proved that students who participated in flipped classrooms got higher scores compared to those who were at traditional classrooms. Moreover, participants also expressed the positive attitude toward the employment of flipped teaching in EFL contexts. Apart from the listed benefits, flipped teaching is believed to enhance students' critical thinking skill (Ma, 2023). By interviewing 300 students majoring in Business

Administration at higher education level, Ma (2023) has concluded that flipped teaching promotes students' critical thinking skill to some extent.

Conversely, flip teaching is believed to contribute more to the expansion of community rather than improvements in academic outcomes (Karppinen et al., 2023). Due to the diverse learning styles among students, what proves effective for one may not work well for another. For example, while many students prefer listening to lectures and taking notes, others prefer reading materials at home and engaging teachers in discussions for further clarification. Besides, research by Karppinen et al. (2023) suggests that some students show less motivation towards flip teaching, possibly due to resistance to new teaching methods or sheer laziness. This issue is exacerbated when class attendance decreases. While Karppinen et al. (2023) noted only three teachers encountering such problems, it underscores that flip teaching may not be suitable for all classes. Furthermore, the pace of flip teaching tends to be slower, as it requires time for student presentations and teacher feedback. Therefore, careful consideration should be given before integrating flip teaching into the curriculum. Additionally, Missildine et al. (2013) identified that the extra time required for out-of-class preparation could potentially lower students' satisfaction. This is due to the fact that students might consider the task of watching videos related to the lessons at home a burden while students in other classrooms without flipped teaching can spend time doing other tasks. Similarly, students might experience heightened pressure to finish pre-class activities, leading to discomfort during the class sessions. Consequently, the effects of flipped classroom could be compromised (Strayer, 2012). Moreover, students are easy to get distracted by social media networks or preferred websites (Missildine et al., 2013) which prevents them from watching a one-hour recorded video. In a different study, Lopes and Soares (2018) noted that some students exhibit a lack of responsibility in constructing knowledge and others may struggle with managing the upcoming pressure of learning before commuting to the classroom. Furthermore, Bhagat et al. (2016) identified the absence of immediate assistance or support outside of class as another challenge. Several students show frustration because they cannot seek immediate clarification during pre-class activities.

The core theoretical framework for this study is constructivism theory of teaching and learning. The discussion below clarifies the relevance of active learning theory to flipped teaching. First, Bishop and Verleger (2013) believe that flipped teaching derived from constructivism teaching and learning theory in which learners construct their own meaning based on existing knowledge. Instead of providing direct information to the students, teachers require them to participate in the learning process by watching a recorded video and obtaining knowledge before going to the classrooms. Besides, process of learning will be more important than products of learning in constructivism theory because of the emphasis on active engagement, personalized learning, critical thinking, metacognition, and lifelong commitment to learning (Amineh & Asl, 2015). As discussed previously, students can utilize their preferable style of learning in flipped classroom and constructivism also provides students with opportunities to explore suitable learning styles (Jonassen, 1991). Accordingly, while some students prefer active and intuitive learning styles, others take visual and sequential styles into account (Wei Hsu, 2016).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

This study aims at examining both teachers and students' attitudes towards flipped teaching in EFL context. Following such aims, two main research questions are developed including:

- *What are teachers' attitudes toward flipped teaching?*
- *What are students' attitudes toward flipping teaching?*

B. Methodology

The study employs qualitative research design to investigate both teachers and students' attitudes towards the use of flipped teaching in the classrooms. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to be aligned with the research questions. Nevertheless, by using semi-structured interviews, the researcher could balance structure and flexibility which is beneficial when delving into students' attitudes due to the students' provision of deeper understanding of their perspectives (Ryan et al., 2009). In addition, semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to gain open-ended responses in their most comfortable state. This is because students are not required to answer questions that they do not know, and the researcher will not put pressure on the students. In comparison with survey or questionnaire, semi-structured interview facilitates the collection of rich and detailed data because more follow-up questions would be generated to clarify an ambiguous response (Pallant, 2007).

As mentioned above, two semi-structured interview questions related to the attitude towards flipped teaching were developed to match the objectives of the current study. To validate such interview questions, the researcher invited experts and colleagues in EFL teaching to check and give comments. Since the participants in the study were English majors, the scripts were in English completely. After all the interviews were conducted, the data was coded via Microsoft Excel. Then, themes were generated based on the codes before the process of analysis.

The demographic of this study were 10 lecturers and 10 students majoring in both English Language Teaching and English Language. The condition for the participants to join in the study was that they must have experience with flipped teaching. Consent forms would be delivered to the participants before the interview was conducted to ensure ethical

approval. Moreover, the participants' privacy was promised to be guaranteed as the researcher would label each participant with a pseudonym name.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Positive Attitude

(a). Teachers' Preparation and Students' Engagement

Data collected from the individual interviews showed that flipped teaching led to teachers' awareness of preparation and students' engagement in the lessons. Extracted below illustrates this point of view.

"Flipped teaching creates an opportunity for me to be professional in preparing and recording the lesson. Although I have to spend more time on designing the lesson and get familiar with the software to record my lesson, I feel happy because I am more confident when delivering my lesson." (T5)

"When COVID-19 occurred, we had to adapt with the situation by turning the traditional class into the virtual ones. We were also encouraged to either prepare our recording of the lessons or find an available one on the internet to send to students before class time. This was practiced for three semesters and up to now, I still remain this habit." (T8)

"I am more engaged in the lessons because I have watched the recordings provided by teachers at home and got knowledge related to the lesson. As a result, I can discuss the topic with my classmates in the classroom confidently." (S2)

Obviously, both teachers and students in the current study share the similarity with Vaughan (2014) in identifying the benefit of preparation awareness and engagement in the classroom as the benefit of flipped teaching. Adapting to the situation's requirement is not an easy task since it takes time, energy, and the spirit of learning. With regard to this research, while teachers are aware of the preparing and recording the lessons for students before class time, students report that watching a recorded lesson would equip them with knowledge and they are more confident to engage in the discussion questions during the lessons.

(b). Interaction

The results of the study revealed that students' interaction was increased when it came to flipped teaching. One teacher stated:

"After several semesters of employing flipped teaching in EFL classrooms, I recognize that students are more interactive in studying; especially, they are more active in speaking lessons." (T6)

"Before I used flipped teaching, students were passive in the classroom meaning they just came to the class and listened to teachers and took note. After the application of flipped teaching method, students were more interactive with both teachers and peers." (T1)

"Since we have to watch the video of the lessons before going to the class for discussion, we have to really focus and take note of the important things. The teacher is going to assign discussion questions and we are supposed to give our own opinion, so we have to communicate with our classmates or teacher to understand the content of the lessons" (S10)

This finding is in line with the claims of Lestari (2021) and McNally et al. (2017) in a way that flipped teaching increase the interaction between students and teachers or students and students. Once students are empowered to self – explore knowledge, they will have to be more aware of their study and this can be done through interaction with teacher and their peers. The task of watching recorded videos provided by teachers assists students to engage more in classroom activities because they are well – prepared in advance. Compared to the traditional way of teaching, flipped teaching is livelier and students can replay the videos several times to understand the main points. Once students get the ideas, they would be willing to interact with both teacher and students in the classroom.

(c). Critical Thinking

Finding from semi – structured interview also reported that flipped teaching contributed to the improvement of students' critical thinking. One participant shared:

"When I watch the recorded videos, I am so motivated because the teacher not only gives lectures but also asks comprehensible questions. I try to find the answer such questions but sometimes I am not sure about my answers, and I have raised a lot of questions to ask my teacher and my friends." (S4)

At the same time, one participant added:

"I am often curious about certain topics in the videos that teachers require us to watch at home. For example, the topic that I am most interested in is space exploration and I remembered that a teacher has asked us to watch her reading lesson on this topic. I was so excited and a lot of questions about space exploration appeared in my mind." (S1)

One teacher also supported this idea by explaining:

"I do not only send the video recordings to students but also provide several open-ended discussion questions with specific examples for each topic and ask students to get their ideas so that we can build knowledge." (S1)

As discussed in the literature, it is true that flipped teaching does bring about students' enhancement of critical thinking skill (Ma, 2023). The results of the current study confirmed this idea. Perhaps this teaching technique suits a certain number of students since different students hold their own learning styles. When students are equipped with information ahead, it is obvious that they have to brainstorm knowledge and raise questions surrounding the topics. Once students are trained regularly, they will establish a habit of raising questions before discussing with their teachers and peers. This is of great significance for the success of their studying and their future life.

(d). Reduction in Teachers' Workload in the Classroom

Results from the current study showed that teachers' workload in the classroom has been reduced once flipped teaching is employed. One teacher stated:

"Before I use flipped teaching, I have to talk a lot in the classroom. Besides, I have to prepare games, physical activities or other interactive tasks to engage students. If I just teach 2 hours to 4 hours a day, it's not a big deal. However, there are some days that I have to teach 6 to 8 hours making me exhausted because of communicating and organizing classroom activities. Flipped teaching is a treatment that solves my problem because students will have to be more active in learning. I will be the facilitator only and I just raise my voice when necessary." (T9)

Similarly, another teacher expressed:

"I am very much into ICT and software which are beneficial for teaching and learning. I find recording videos interesting because I have learnt how to use various applications to assist me in teaching in a professional way. I feel that my teaching workload is totally reduced when applying flipped teaching in EFL classroom. What I need to do is prepare a video lesson and send to students. The next day, when I go to classroom, I just play a role as a moderator and students would have to join in discussion forum." (T3)

One student also supported this technique of teaching:

"At first, I am not familiar with this way of teaching because the teacher just assigns us discussion questions and does not do much. Some of my friends don't watch the videos so they just go to the classroom with a blank mind, and we must report them what is included in the video. Then the teacher tells us that this will be employed for the whole semester so we have to get used to it; otherwise, we will fail the exam." (S7)

Obviously, flipped teaching belongs to student - centered approach (Shah, 2021) in which knowledge would be explored and built by students while teachers' job is to facilitate the classroom activities. Thanks to the development of advanced technology, students are now able to approach diverse sources of knowledge. Hence, when teachers incorporate ICT in creating videos, students might find it more interesting because this is like watching an entertaining clip on the internet. This requires teachers to make the video lessons more engaging by using effects, relevant tone of voice and eye - catching visuals. Once these tasks are done, teachers' workload in the physical classroom would be reduced and teachers just need to synthesize ideas before concluding the content of the lesson.

B. Negative Attitude

(a). Less Motivation and Laziness

Apart from the positive attitude towards the use of flipped teaching in EFL contexts, the participants in the current study believed that less motivation was raised when this teaching technique was employed for the whole semester. One student complained:

"I am not familiar with flipped teaching. We often go to the classroom and listen to teachers delivering the lectures. Then we take notes. Since the lessons contain new knowledge, I sometimes cannot understand what teachers say. Moreover, the video lesson was from 1 to 2 hours which was too time – consuming for me to replay." (S8)

Besides, one student stated that the state of laziness has negatively led to students' less motivation in flipped classroom. This student shared:

"I don't understand why I am so lazy to watch the video shared by my teachers. Maybe I'm not motivated enough to watch the whole video because it is normally 1 hour to 2 hours. But when it comes to social media such as Facebook, Tik Tok or Zalo, I am so delighted." (S5)

Another student added:

"I have to work part-time to earn money for my study here because my family is poor. I work as a waiter at a restaurant in my free time and I don't get home until mid-night. So, I don't have time to watch teachers' video recordings." (S9)

One teacher also explained how less motivated she was:

"I am not used to teaching without students. So, when I have to record the lessons and there is no interaction as well as answers from students, I feel less motivated to teach." (T1)

The above extracts reveal that students are less motivated and lazy to spend time on watching recorded videos which is partly close to the work of Karppinen et al. (2023). Accordingly, students must be responsible in a flipped classroom since less support is provided by teachers. In addition to this, some students do not even have self - directed learning skills due to their learning style preferences. A vivid example is that several students cannot focus on studying if they do

not participate in a group. In contrast, others prefer to self-study since they cannot stand the noise from their surrounding environment. Sometimes, students' family background is a barrier that prevents students from arranging extra time for studying.

(b). *Pressure*

Results from this study showed the pressure in flipped teaching in both teachers and students.

"I am quite stressed when I have to record several videos weekly. The more classes I teach, the more videos I have to record. As for me, I teach 4 classes a week so I have to produce 4 videos which is a burden for me." (T1)

Another teacher shared:

"I think flipped teaching is a stressful task because I am not good at IT. Although my university has organized training for us, I still encounter technical problems such as cutting and joining video or exporting the file. Besides, I also find it difficult to convert file to the right format before uploading to a storage or sending to students." (T7)

One student participant believed:

"I am pressurized when teachers require us to watch videos for all subjects. You know, I have to study 4 – 5 a semester which means I have to watch 4 – 5 videos a week equal to 5 – 10 hours. Besides, I have to spend more time on watching videos to gain understanding and doing the tasks assigned by teachers." (S3)

"I am worried and stressed because flipped teaching may affect my academic learning outcomes. If all the subjects are assessed in assignment format, I would find the relevance here. However, we have to take part in final exams for most subjects. So, I really need to listen to teachers in the classroom so that I can get something." (S1)

Teaching and learning pressure from the current study when employing flipped teaching in the classroom is similar to research conducted by Missildine et al. (2013). Obviously, the application of a new teaching method needs to be piloted before spreading to other classrooms. The pressure constraint is a predictable one as it depends on the hours that both teachers and students have to teach and study in a week. Besides, students are familiar with the task of going to the class without skimming the lesson and teachers would be providing new knowledge; so, it is difficult for students to follow this technique for the whole semester.

V. CONCLUSION

Overall, the participants in the study have shown both positive and negative attitude towards the employment of flipped teaching in an EFL context. While some participants feel that flipped teaching increase teachers' preparation and students' engagement, interaction between students and teachers, improve students' critical thinking, and reduce teachers' workload in the classroom, less motivation and laziness, and pressure are considered as negative attitude.

The first limitation for this study is that it is conducted with a small sample of participants. Hence the findings are not diverse and interesting compared to a study with a larger sample. Second, this study is carried out with EFL context only; thus, the results are limited to those who are majoring in EFL background.

Several implications for further studies on flipped teaching could be seen from this study. First, flipped teaching should be taken into account to EFL teaching for theoretical subjects such as English Literature or English Culture since students would find it easier to obtain knowledge while doing other tasks. Since these subjects' evaluations are often in the form of writing assignments, students just need to read or listen to the audio to get an insight about the subjects before synthesizing and producing their own pieces of writing. It is not suitable when flipped teaching is applied in subjects that require students to practice the four core skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing as there is no feedback or correction from teachers. Second, studies on motivation and learning style in a flipped classroom can also be investigated. Since motivation and learning style are different from student to student, more exploration on these terms should be done in a flipped classroom. Next, students' pressure in a flipped classroom is also a recommendation for interested scholars. This phenomenon is vital since it directly affects students' academic achievement. Once students are comfortable in studying, they are likely to obtain fruitful knowledge; in contrast, if they are in a negative state, nothing can be gained.

Flipped teaching has emerged as a dynamic and transformative pedagogical approach, reshaping traditional classroom dynamics and fostering deeper engagement and understanding among students. Through its innovative blend of asynchronous learning and interactive in-class activities, flipped teaching has shown immense potential to enhance student learning outcomes and create a more personalized and effective educational experience. Furthermore, flipped teaching promotes greater flexibility and accessibility in education. With pre-recorded lectures and materials available online, students have the flexibility to review content at any time and place that suits them, accommodating diverse schedules and commitments. Additionally, flipped teaching has the potential to bridge geographical barriers and reach learners beyond the confines of the traditional classroom, opening up opportunities for remote and distance learning.

In conclusion, the employment of flipped teaching in Viet Nam has been required by Ministry of Education and Training for sustainable goal. This is due to the e-transformation synchronization for all aspects of life in the whole country. Following this, a lot of laptops have been sponsored by various organizations to donate the students in the remote areas. Besides, internet connection is also encouraged and sponsored in such mountainous areas for supporting disadvantaged students. Hence, there is no barrier for the development of flipped teaching as well as other teaching

methods with the use of internet. More training programs on new and advanced methods of teaching have also been organized to support teacher across the country. In terms of flipped teaching, teachers are required to set up a virtual classroom through the most convenient platforms so that students and parents can easily find the materials as well as useful videos provided by teachers.

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Collective Memory and the Recasting of Post-Civil War African-American Identity in Selected Toni Morrison's Novels

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Abstract—After the emancipation, the African-Americans come to recognize the necessity of rebuilding their identity and redefining their blackness. This recognition is seemingly motivated by their post-civil war need to demolish the negative stereotypes long established and believed about them, change the American cultural context and enhance their living conditions. Taking into consideration its performative role and discursive nature, the African-American writers arrive to make an exceptional use of collective memory and its genuine narratives in order to recast their unique identity. As it has formerly been noticed, the process of collective remembering follows three major steps that are: construction, reconstruction and deconstruction. No doubt, these techniques have helped to condemn the lingering racist practices and their destructive outcomes, provide a more accurate conception of blackness and ultimately transcend the earlier established blacks' image into another one which is strong, innovative and full of possibilities. The theoretical background of this research will subsequently be applied on a number of Toni Morrison's novels.

Index Terms—collective remembering, shared identity, African-American identity, counter memory

I. INTRODUCTION

By the abolition of slavery in the United States of America, the African-Americans have attained the right of 'citizenship' along with other rights that were supposedly issued to protect them and integrate them in the American society. However, these rights were very often violated or rejected by the white Americans. The 'Reconstruction' epoch has consequently noticed some serious social, political, and intellectual efforts from the side of African-Americans to put an end to the still lingering post-civil war racism and discrimination. The African-American intellectuals have seemingly come to recognize that their liberation by means of law is not enough for they further need an independent identity which is well-identified, solid, confident and proud so that they can impose it on the larger white American existence. Their search for a mechanism of representation has led them to discover the highly experimental role of collective memory, especially when things are related to resistance, reconstitution, and empowerment. On this account, the African-American intellectuals arrive to make a brilliant use of collective memory to release their authentic African-American identity and acquire greater gains in the future.

After the emancipation, the African-Americans have started to realize the necessity of rebuilding, fixing, and endorsing their identity in order to set it functionally independent from that of the white Americans. As Oluo (2018) states in her book **So You Want to Talk about Race**, when "we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find our opportunities to make real change" (p. 78). Taking into consideration its exceptionally representative position, collective memory is used by the African-American intellectuals to achieve their existentialist goals. What they derive from their former experiences is that they need to define themselves if they do not really want the others to define them. In the process, they decide to regain their store of knowledge and past incidents hidden in their collective memories and genuinely applying this to show their true and unique essence which deserves appreciation, respect, and having a proper life within that given American cultural context. To begin with, the African-American intellectuals and writers come to use collective memory and its skilled techniques to defy a long existing history of racism and undermine the power of the negative stereotypes previously coined about their blackness and which aimed to subordinate them.

II. DISCUSSIONS

Collective memory is an 'ideological' discourse which is formed and transmitted via a narrative. Such mode of perception basically generated from collective remembering indeed occurs in 'individual minds' but transcends it to be shared by a smaller or a larger group of people (Olick, 1999, p. 341). Collective memory obtains its prominence when the participants in the act of remembrance are subject to any form of oppression, injustice, or prejudice. In this case, collective memory becomes not just a mere process of evoking past memories. It further cares to display its discursive patterns of confrontation, restoration, and restructure. The proficient exchange of memories between the members of the same group necessarily enables them to overcome their present dilemmas (Ricoeur, 2007, p. 8). For all these dynamic

and potent characteristics, the African-American writers resort to exercise the power of collective memory in their writings in order to recast the African-American identity and help the African-Americans to reach their free and assertive entity.

As a discourse, collective memory is deeply embedded in the issues related to ethnic conflicts and identity construction despite the fact that its employment can be for boundless and more complicated meanings. Powerless and subjugated people can find in their collective memory a refuge where they feel stronger, truly know who they are, and appreciate their singularity (Zerubavel, 2003). However, this store of knowledge can be utilized for other purposes that may include the manifestation of national glory, revealing the oneness of a powerful or a privileged group, or showing the level of progress that happened to a particular nation or community (Judt, 2005). To avoid any sort of confusion or misunderstanding concerning this concept and its usages, this research will take into consideration to limit the theoretical framework of collective memory within the frontiers of identity formation as associated with the African-American case. Therefore, this study will embark on a journey to define collective memory, to discern its operative role in identity reconstruction, and to provide us with the mechanisms implemented for the accomplishment of this task.

Regarding the broad and difficult approaches of collective memory, this paper will conveniently apply the theoretical part of it on a number of Toni Morrison's novels that are: **The Bluest Eye** (1970), **Sula** (1973), **Song of Solomon** (1977), **Tar Baby** (1981), **Beloved** (1987) and **God Help the Child** (2015). The application of theory will be fundamentally reliant on the distinctive relationship between collective memory and the African-American situation after the civil war. Such theoretical, analytical, and critical research will pave the way to understand the different steps that led to the emergence of an independent African-American identity and how collective memory contributed to this emanation. As a result, the vagueness of this notion will be reduced, as we will have a better illustration of it through the elaborate analysis of Morrison's formerly mentioned works.

This study is significant in that it constructs, reconstructs, and deconstructs meanings about the shared remembrances and their crucial performance in the case of ethnic conflicts. Concerning the African-Americans' quest, this investigation is very helpful since it brings the black self into being in a way that gradually but surely gives credit to blackness and tributes the distinct black character. Moreover, collective memory proves to be haunting to the American history; it subverts and redefines the white Americans' master narrative and confirms that the truth is ceaseless and multiple as well. The research likewise finds that collective memory, in the form of a narrative or a text, affords a criticism to history and affects the relationship of power within the society. It is yet worth to notice the improvement in the African-Americans' narratives after their liberation. With the great outcomes of Harlem Renaissance and the patronage of African-American art and literature by the white Americans, the African-Americans learn that they are capable of freeing their remembrances from the past constraints since "The past is not simply 'received' by the present. The present is 'haunted' by the past and the past is modeled, invented, reinvented, and reconstructed by the present" (Assmann, 1997, p. 9). The result is a countless number of genuine narratives which defend them and reveal their genius, something that was absent during the slavery era for there were only silenced slaves and unskillful slave narratives.

The research equally draws its significance from the way it introduces the idea of collective memory and shares in the identification of its developmental role. Before Maurice Halbwachs' introduction of the concept, collective memory was no more than a collective process of remembering. Halbwachs extensively succeeds in determining the substantial role it plays in the creation of shared identities. Other researchers like Jan Assmann, Paul Ricoeur, Jeffrey K. Olick, and Yael Zerubavel build upon Halbwachs' study and permit to disclose and specify the discursive tools of collective memory that are very practical in the opposition of the different forms of injustice. Although these contemporary researchers have traced the general theoretical ground through which a researcher can proceed his/her research, the theoretical paradigms concerning collective memory and identity formation are undeniably scarce. Fitly, this study comes up with a theoretical sample based on the above researchers' findings and conclusions; a sample that other researchers can follow or expand during their scientific attempts to reinstate a certain identity which is ultimately in need of the competence of collective memory.

In order to set the theoretical framework of this paper, we primarily need to have an access to the accurate meaning of collective memory and its inclusive relations. The term 'collective memory' was first introduced by the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs in his book **Mémoire Collective** (1950). Halbwachs has systematically developed the signification of the concept. According to him, collective memory refers to the process by which a group of people remembers the past and evokes the bygone memories. Moreover, Halbwachs highlights the major role played by collective memory in the formation of 'group identities'. He correspondingly insists on the productivity of 'commemorative acts' which usually result a deeper and more consolidated community (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 11). Halbwachs' core diagnosis of memory helps other researchers in the field to distinguish between individual memory and collective remembering, between collective memory and collective remembering, and between history and collective memory. These distinctions are requisite to comprehend the working of shared remembrances.

Collective memory and individual memory are two notions that are strongly interrelated. Each of them nourishes, supports, and strengthens the other in various and quite unexpected ways. They also need to be 'in harmony' with each other if they want to get better communal outcomes; something which can be checked through participation and positive communication (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 48). Every collective remembering is actually processed within an individual

mind. Since human existence is embodied and often connected with else existences, the individual finds it difficult if not impossible to carry out his/her remembrance without referring to others. In states of conflict or search for cultural roots, people tend to use their collective remembering which is originated by individuals and their recall of prior experiences for the sake of inquiry, criticism, and the exploration of truth. It is only in such situations that this given relationship flourishes and attains a discursively reorienting pattern.

Another ambiguous relation is that which binds collective memory with its relative which is collective remembering. Superficially, they appear as if they are one, nevertheless they come to occupy different positions. Collective memory is the store of knowledge that gathers all those past memories. In addition, it is the substance which supplies those who are interested in their past with the appropriate awareness whenever they ask for it. Collective memory is viewed as a static base of knowledge though it comprises a number of veritable and sophisticated gone occurrences (Neal, 2005). On the other hand, collective remembering is the active and permanent action responsible for the evocation of the past and the reclaiming of memories. As Faulkner (1951) puts it, "The past is never dead...It's not even past" (p. 92). This process is ever creative, innovative, and imaginative; something which makes of it an endless source of insights. Both collective memory and collective remembering are knowledgeable despite the fact that one is more vigorous than the other due to its representative essence.

History and collective memory are two modes of documenting the past with different principles, needs, and mechanisms. History opposes the regaining of the past for the sake of rebuilding the present whereas the collective memory's main interest is the reconstruction of the present by going back to the past, 'modifying', and 'sophisticating' it. In addition, history has a hard belief that every historical period is separated from the other and should be treated on that basis, something which justifies its 'loyalty only to facts'. However, collective memory believes that each part of history is inevitably related to the other that is why collective memory is much 'loyal to narrative' (Gillis, 1994). Since history is static, interim, and strict, collective memory frequently makes use of its lively narratives to revive and reform the past. It is an "exercise in *telling otherwise*, and also in letting others tell their own history, especially the founding events which are the ground of collective memory" (Ricoeur, 2003, p. 113). Undoubtedly, history serves the victors more than it serves the losers for when it closes its historical doors, only the winners are gainers. The losers' desperate need to find their origins, resist oppression, or empower themselves eagerly leads them to employ collective memory and its narratives against the rigidity of historical facts.

On this stage, it is worth recognizing that every constructive working of collective memory is dependent on its main substance which is narrative. In his book *Mémoire Collective*, Maurice Halbwachs has notably paved the way to perceive collective memory as an exceptional narrative shared by a number of people with some restructuring and redefining privileges. Later on, Jan Assmann, the German Egyptologist, who has significantly contributed to the identification of collective memory, arrives to deduce its communicative role and ability to reestablish knowledge through interaction. Accordingly, Assmann prefers to deal with it as a sort of 'self-reflexive' narrative. By this conception, Assmann aims to set the highly discursive function of collective memory reinforced by its methods of explanation, argumentation, verification, reinterpretation, reformulation, criticism, and censorship (Assmann, 1997, p. 17). And this what Ricoeur (2003) maintains when he says that "Once one recognizes that one's identity is fundamentally narrative in character, one discovers an ineradicable openness and indeterminacy at the root of one's collective memory" (p. 95). Overall, any approach of collective memory can be seen to be overly troublesome without the consideration of its earlier mentioned relations and narrative nature.

Now, after having a general idea about the notion of collective memory and reducing the level of its complexity, this research will essentially focus on the role it has played in the recasting of African-American identity after the emancipation and aims to detect whether it has truly fulfilled its duty and to what extent. Theoretically, collective memory participates in the reconstitution of African-American identity through three major steps that are: construction, reconstruction, and deconstruction. In other words, we will go through the constructive, reconstructive, and finally the deconstructive performances of collective memory as an inherently discursive and productive narrative by the application of these techniques on Morrison's six novels **The Bluest Eye**, **Sula**, **Beloved**, **Song of Solomon**, **Tar Baby**, and **God Help the Child**. The theoretical, analytical, and critical treatments of Morrison's novels will help us to evaluate the efficiency of collective memory. The latter will regularly be assessed by testing the development of African-American identity through time and by watching whether African-Americans have honestly achieved their goals during the Reconstruction and even after the Civil Rights Movement.

The first part of this paper essentially tackles the constructive role of collective memory and its contribution to the formation of African-American identity. This part of study is hugely important because it is the first step towards the release of an independent African-American character. In this section, collective memory constructs a narrative which condemns the enduring racist and discriminatory practices that existed after the abolition. It becomes clear that there can be no true establishment of an African-American identity without first showing how much the African-Americans were oppressed by the white Americans, the gravity of their situation, and the impact of the white Americans' oppressive behaviors on their lives and psyche. In this sense, collective memory will operate on two levels. First, it will deliver a narrative that manifests the different racist patterns exercised by the white Americans to subjugate the African-Americans which are: the discrimination against blackness, othering and stereotyping, exclusion, and violence. Second, collective memory will reveal the impact of racism on the oppressed, including its social, economic, and psychological

effects in a way that drives to sympathize with them and pathetically perceive their undisputable vulnerability. The study will suitably be applied on Morrison's **The Bluest Eye** and **Sula** for a better illustration, clarification, and interpretation.

After the leading condemnation of racism and its outcomes, the second part will expose us to the reconstructive function of collective memory. Effectively, this phase is very influential for it is the first serious effort to redefine the African-American identity. Since the slavery era, the African-Americans were subject to a limitless number of 'stereotypes' that portrayed them as people without 'history' or 'heritage', people who are uncivilized, and people who have no intellect or proper behavior (Ellis, 2020). All these abusive stereotypes played a crucial part in the process of their subjugation. As a reconstructive technique, collective memory will endeavor to undermine the power of these stereotypes by reflecting some accurate and good aspects of African-Americans along with their persistent and strong character which merits admiration and appreciation. In order to achieve its goals, collective memory needs to dismantle the whites' discourse, produce another one which stands for the African-Americans and protects them, and focus on the importance of racial and ethnic values. The arrival to this level of comprehension will be managed via an application of the above analytical styles on Morrison's **Beloved** and **Song of Solomon**. No doubt, this section is quite contributory in showing the solidity and resistant nature of African-Americans.

The final part of this paper will definitely mark the deconstructive functioning of collective memory and its consequent production of an autonomous and an unparalleled African-American character. In any case of oppression, those who are oppressed find it tough to set themselves free from their oppressors that is why the deconstructive performance of collective memory is exceptionally called for in this special stage of attainment. The basis of deconstructive criticism and analysis is the ideological working of language. By trying to make distinction between two different worlds in which one is more advantaged than the other, the language starts to 'deconstruct itself' and 'turn things upside down'. This very characteristic is required in representative and constructive actions due to its ability to liberate authentic identities. The fluidity and play of language generally result infinite and 'irreducible' meanings, a 'heterogeneous' world, and conflicting interpretations (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). As a narrative, collective memory uses its highly deconstructive techniques to aid the rebirth of African-American identity; an identity which is detached, different, strong, originative and respectable. For a further understanding of these meanings, there will be a convenient application of the forgoing analytical modes on Morrison's **Tar Baby** and **God Help the Child**.

To start with, the constructive working of collective memory embodies an attack on the persistent discriminatory behaviors that characterized the post-civil war era. As a narrative, collective memory takes into consideration to unveil the several racist and inhumane violations which were directed against the African-Americans at that time among which are othering, stereotyping, social exclusion, and violence. It ostensibly becomes the eye that exposes the various vehicles of discrimination which are marginalization, exclusion, and the continuum of violence. Here, the memory's narratives are about the exposition of prejudice against individuals, racial conflicts, the authority of 'in groups', and the humiliation of 'out groups' (Silver, 2021, p. 10). It can be regarded that they are truly active in reflecting the disparate shapes of systematic and institutional prejudices.

Collective memory tends to reveal the way the African-Americans are 'othered' and 'stereotyped' by the white American community. It further criticizes the whites' superior behavior which seems both exaggerated and non-logical. Usually, the process of stereotyping is associated with the act of othering, mainly when things are related to ethnic conflicts and identity quest. Collective memory succeeds to expose the white Americans' prejudice and their stereotypical representation of the subordinated African-Americans. These practices apparently weaken the social position of the 'targeted', degrade and confine them, and separate them from those who produce the stereotypes (Perkins, 1979, p. 15). No doubt, memory helps to transfer some of the whites' patterns of othering and stereotyping that serve their powerful status quo.

Other discriminatory practices that are exposed through the discursive functioning of collective memory are social exclusion and violence. The African-Americans' past narratives allow to see how they were segregated from the white Americans. These narratives generated by memory intensively divulge the social, economic, democratic and institutional exclusions of African-Americans which put constraints on their participation as "workers, consumers, and owners" as well as limited their role as citizens to make decisions that concern the "nation or community" (Anderson, 2016, p. 140). Putnam (2000) believes that memory confronts the most serious and difficult pattern of exclusion which is the institutional exclusion that excludes the African-Americans from job opportunities (p. 9). The bottomers and Lorainers in Toni Morrison's **The Bluest Eye** and **Sula** evoke memories of a valueless life, poverty, and unemployment caused by the whites' institutional exclusion of them. Collective memory equally tends to document the African-Americans' subjection to violence. As Silva (2017) contends, they become "scapegoats, the unleashing of aggression is allowed" (p. 85). The bottomers and Lorainers' collective memory evokes acts of physical, psychological, and verbal violence practiced against the African-Americans. Its narrative seemingly succeeds to transfer the kind of psychological violence that African-American women were subject to and which attributed 'animalistic' features and 'nicknames' to them or 'reduced' them into 'things' (Vanucchi, 2017, p. 67). It also brings to mind sites of verbal violence that assault the physical aspects of African-Americans. Social exclusion and violence are some unfair racist practices that are repeatedly evoked by the African-Americans' shared memory for the sake of denunciation and construction.

No doubt, collective memory offers a strong and deep vision of the impact of racism on the African-Americans' existence after the emancipation. Its narratives bring about the heavy outcomes of racist exercises which are chiefly dissatisfaction, 'social withdrawal', and the denial of self. The memory's documentation of past events represents the African-Americans' psychological dilemmas manifested in a lowered self-esteem, sadness, and a huge feeling of guilt. These negative feelings are related to their experience of 'loss' caused by their failure in being themselves, becoming what they want, and preserving their dreams (Broman, 1997, p. 45). The African-Americans' social and economic realities at that time were directly responsible for the previous conclusions. In Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula*, the different characters' shared memories mirror African-Americans who are either socially excluded or racially harassed by the white oppressive system. They consequently reach a stage of 'reassessment and realignment' followed by 'social withdrawal' and expressed in the "rejection of dominant culture" (Simpson, 1985, p. 17). Their economic situation is shifted to us as weak, poor, and miserable. Most of them are unemployed because they lack qualifications. All this is caused by their being denied the appropriate educational formation and being excluded from the highly classified institutions. Therefore, they are "underrepresented in higher levels of occupation and continue to be over represented among the unemployed" (Pettigrew, 1964, p. 20). Performing its constructive role, collective memory does not only evoke the history of racism but also helps through its constructed narratives to denounce this destructive institution and sympathize with the African-Americans' suffering.

The reconstructive performance of collective memory mostly centers on the dismantling of white superiority and the building of African-Americans' concrete identity along with the detection of their good and factual aspects. Now, collective memory is reconstructive through both its power of revelation and its dynamics of construction. It will be noticed that it prospers in doing this via the return to ethnic values, the establishment of a counter narrative and the functional organizations of discourse and disclosure. The post-civil war literary works witness a change in characterization. We are exposed to a limitless number of informed African-American characters who make use of their collective memory to bring their selves into being. One way of accomplishing this is the reconquest of racial identity by the insistence on community in which they help each other, communicate with each other, keep friendship and familial bonds and preserve their cultural values in contrast to the whites' individualism and sterile standards (Erikson, 1996, p. 154). Going back to the old traditional African values is one way of disrupting the whites' ideology and proving its insufficiency. This stage is initiated, reinforced, and nourished by the African-Americans' shared remembrances.

A part of the subversion of the whites' discourse occurs when collective memory exhibits its counter narratives that are opposed to the 'colonial stereotypes' ascribed to the African-Americans. Again, collective memory is provocative of change as well as subversive and creative. It operatively reveals and recreates new sense of blackness with which the African-Americans reject the white Americans' "institutions and values" and emphasize their "positive self-image" (Biko, 1978, p. 26). Their new slogan "black is beautiful" is a strong and well-studied plan released for the confrontation of the stereotypes that were long held by the white Americans and which suggest that the African-Americans are inferior and under classification. As Sanders (1988) maintains, the African American constructed memories definitely arrive to "demetaphorize the figure of the blacks and make that of the white metaphorical" (p. 3). By doing this, they arrive to improve themselves, positively reintroduce the African-Americans' image, change the way the others view them, and reject the white Americans' paradigms of deprivation.

The reconstructive process of collective memory carries on with its two basic substances that are discourse and disclosure. Collective memory is both demonstrative and interpretative in a way that is 'conscious' and 'non-conforming'. All these characteristics help to introduce and produce varied meanings about blackness. The African-American is newly signified as a 'dynamic subject' and blackness to be workable and 'undefeated'. The 'moral' and 'intellectual abilities' of African-Americans are pushed forwards to let the others see their goodness and impartial qualifications (Heilbron, 1999, p. 296). As a discourse, collective memory provides improved methods for understanding blackness and its vitality; something which reinforces the African-Americans' 'future wellbeing'. It also appreciates their efforts to heal and empower themselves despite all the bad circumstances that conspire against them. Furthermore, memory tends to be quite helpful in observing, sustaining, and reproducing the African-Americans' "will of survival" (Gatson, 2011, p. 17). It practically challenges the white Americans' common understanding about blackness and improves its meanings.

As a deconstructive narrative, collective memory asserts the irreducibility of blackness and highlights the African-Americans' lately emerging genuine features. This final stage that concerns the reestablishment of African American identity insists on its distinctiveness, uniqueness and rebirth. The African-Americans' shared remembrances essentially produce some operatively deconstructive narratives which expose their peculiar culture, their processes of birth and rebirth as well as their difference and distinct character. The same narratives maintain that their specific culture is responsible for the release and solidification of their identity for "there can be no people without culture" (Antia, 2005, p. 17). The cultural memory of African-Americans provides a store of knowledge that represents their distinguished language, myths, proverbs, oral tradition, and dialects; all of which make of them a unique race. Their past accounts as confronted with their present reality offer them the possibilities of birth and rebirth. And this can be widely noticed in their lately adopted sense of freedom and 'spiritual' awakening, their pride in blackness and 'African values', and their display of selfless and unconditional love (Umoh, 2005, p. 23). The African-Americans' collective memory moreover comes to spotlight their difference exhibited in their aesthetic and beauty sense along with their creative and innovative

spirit. Regarding this stage, collective memory is not only deconstructive of blackness but also helps the African-Americans to deconstruct, rediscover, and reinterpret themselves.

III. CONCLUSION

This paper principally aims to detect the effectiveness of collective memory and the levels of its functionality, especially in the establishment of a specific identity. Besides that, this investigative study helps to understand how much collective memory is active in generating meanings, claiming the truth, and reflecting the hidden areas of history. The research is similarly supportive to know how collective memory has helped the African-American communities to recover from their past traumas, develop their unity, and cherish their peculiarity. It will also be exigent to see whether the effects of racism have decreased through time, and if African-Americans have finally realized their true and independent self. As an ultimate objective, we will discover how collective memory has inaugurated itself as a powerful discourse through its persuasive narratives and discursive techniques.

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The Impact of Task-Based Language Teaching on Nursing Students' English-Learning Motivation

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Abstract—This mixed-method study investigated how task-based language teaching (TBLT) implemented in English-for-nursing programmes impacted students' learning motivation. Specifically, the study explored the motivational patterns that underlie the students' participation in the learning process, the factors influencing their English-learning motivation, and the aspects of TBLT that positively affected their learning motivation. The data analysed were acquired through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was designed according to the motivational attitude test battery (MATB) by Gardner (2014). The results of the research reveal that intrinsic motivation was the most favourable motivation, followed by instrumental, extrinsic, and integrative motivation. Several factors influenced the students' English-learning motivation, such as positive teacher-student interpersonal relationships, teacher praise, teacher feedback or stroke—the written feedback from teacher—, learning tasks and class activities, student curiosity, teaching method, and relatedness. Three aspects of TBLT positively affected student motivation: task activities, autonomous learning and authentic learning motivation, and teachers' positive facilitation. The findings can help design materials that motivate students, specifically in nursing programmes in which English is not used as a medium of instruction.

Index Terms—task-based language teaching (TBLT), learning motivation, attitude, English-for-nursing

I. INTRODUCTION

Exploring students' English-learning motivation (ELM), particularly in a college in which English is not a medium of instruction, is like reaching a high wall without a ladder. Encouraging students' ELM in that college is challenging. In the Nursing Department at Health Polytechnic in Indonesia, English lecturers find it difficult to undertake English instruction as they are concerned with learning nursing knowledge for domestic needs. Thus, English is not taken seriously by students because they are too busy focusing on learning about nursing. Consequently, English is viewed as a supporting or non-core subject and is given restricted learning time and little credit. Students' lack of ELM is limited by learning resources (Pomat et al., 2022), personal goals and motivation, and intercultural ability (Wilang et al., 2022).

English teaching in the nursing department of a health polytechnic in Denpasar employed a conventional method that reduced students' enthusiasm to learn English. However, following a project to develop an English-for-nursing

assessment tool (Widanta et al., 2023), including assessment-tool development, syllabus, and curriculum, students were encouraged to build their learning motivation.

Learning motivation has been widely investigated. According to Wallace (2020), students are motivated by instrumental motivation, such as work and travel, and integrative motivation, such as wanting to integrate within the target-language-culture. Wang and Liu (2023) stated that adult students have moderate ELM, which is higher than that of boys. Adult students' motivation is inclined toward self-determination (SD), which is a macro theory for understanding human motivation, personality, and well-being rooted in intrinsic motivation (IM) (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Tanaka (2018) argued that IM and identified regulation were the most significant motivational components of learning. Chen and Kraklow (2015) found that students who joined the course had a more significant degree of IM than those who did not. Intrinsic motivation is essential to success in learning. Wang's (2014) work proved that students of non-English majors even had greater autonomy than English primary students. Moreover, Zhu and Sun (2012) found that non-English primary university students in China had higher motivation with IM than with extrinsic motivation (EM). Meng (2021), Reyes and Torio (2020), and Weimer (2010) found that teacher-student rapport led to progressive practices for learners and superior classroom involvement and motivation.

Ning and Hornby (2014) stated that comparative learning could increase student IM in China. Khodadady and Khajavy (2013) found that language anxiety positively affected motivation and lower levels of autonomy. Several scholars (Li et al., 2023; Liu & Li, 2023; Liu, 2023) have found that teacher support can improve students' ability to resist pressure and enhance their learning motivation. Liu and Song (2021) also found that teacher rapport can improve students' psychological resilience and classroom engagement.

Chowdhury et al. (2021) stated that students need more IM. To improve IM, there should be a shift from an exam-orientated assessment system, teacher reflection on their teaching practices, redesigning course curricula based on learning needs and student expectations, easy access to the latest educational facilities, encouraging the role of students and their peers to develop learning motivation (LM), and fostering their autonomous learning opportunities.

Fajt et al. (2023) found that English as a foreign language (EFL) LM was encouraged with the use of dictionary which was functional and helpful, as it provided a comprehensive resource for L2 learning. Daggol (2020) found that the correlation between academic motivation (AM) and learner empowerment was positive, and the higher the motivation, the better the sense of empowerment. Gao (2021) traced the two interpersonal behaviours of teachers (i.e., confirmation and stroke) and their capabilities regarding predicting students' AM and academic engagement. That study into learning motivation provided clear guidance for further investigation.

Based on the above studies, the following research questions were formulated: (1) What are the motivation patterns displayed by EFL students of a health polytechnic college in Indonesia? (2) What factors influenced their ELM? (3) What aspects of TBLT positively affected their learning motivation? It is assumed that nursing-related materials with a task-based instructional approach might be the reason for high motivation; however, this requires further investigation.

II. CONCEPTS

A. *Task-Based Language Teaching*

According to Long (2015, 2015a), TBLT is an innovative approach to catch on and spread, where teachers' early involvement and practical demonstrations are in order. It is an approach to learning a language whose building process underwent several steps. This approach must begin with a needs analysis (NA) to identify the learner's authentic needs regarding the language. Fang (2022) argued that TBLT is an advanced and scientific teaching method that improves student learning motivation and processes. The approach prioritises primary meaning and real-world activities (Skehan, 1998), promotes input- and output-based tasks (including input-based tasks that foster vocabulary learning; Duong et al., 2021), learning new words through empowering prior second language (L2) skills (Frijns & Branden, 2021), and enhances student writing skills through understanding the context of the text (Milarisa, 2019). In addition, TBLT involves students in the communicative classroom (Sholeh, 2022), and it energised stagnant English-language performances among university students in Bangkok (Rudd, 2019). Therefore, one of the solutions proposed by Ellis (2021) is to develop a TBLT curriculum model including aspects, such as environment, goal, definition selection, content sequencing, instructional material development, teaching technique and strategy, assessment, and programme evaluation (Byrnes, 2015).

Ellis and Li (2019) stated that TBLT tasks should be differentiated between focused tasks and unfocused tasks. Ellis and Zhu (2019) continued explore the explicit pre-task instruction influenced the performance of focused tasks, and they determined that giving pre-task instruction could lead students to use the target structure more frequently, influencing students in three ways: complexity, accuracy, and fluency of work. Thus, TBLT had a positive effect on Mandarin-learning motivation, as it helped to reduce students' anxiety (Wen et al., 2021), improve grammar (Lei, 2022), and develop new teaching models (Wang, 2021).

The TBLT method has been proven to be a good approach to teaching ESP (Liu, 2022), as it stimulates students' enthusiasm for learning and provides a solid foundation for cultivating compound professionalism (Rojabi & Azarpour, 2019). The output task type promotes noticing and learning grammar, which was effective for students' language acquisition when they can make the input (the teachers' explanation and feedbacks on the grammar points) into intakes (explanation and feedback on the grammar points which were inserted into their thought) (Schmidt, 1990; Widanta,

2017). Through TBLT, problem clarification, explicit concept-building, and learner-awareness-building could help teachers build comprehensible and explicit inputs for students (Widanta, 2020). Building concepts, propositions, or even theories can be energised when students can optimise their schemata (Widanta, 2018). Additionally, one of the most strategic approaches to improve students' English competences and performances is TBLT (Somawati et al., 2018). Students can employ TBLT to promote learner confidence by providing many opportunities to use language in the classroom without being constantly afraid of making mistakes.

B. Motivation and Learning Motivation

Learning is an interactive process in which attention, memory, language processing and organising, writing, and higher-order thinking interact with emotions, classroom climates, behaviour, social skills, teachers, and family (Chondhury et al., 2021). Woolfk (2013) claimed that learning motivation is an internal condition that arouses, directs, and maintains behaviour to support the strength (Di Serio et al., 2013), a reason underlying behaviour (Guay et al., 2010), a beginning, direction, force, as well as an insistence of goal-orientated behaviour (Brophy, 2004). This factor leads to behaviour and determines direction, force, and instance (Sevince et al., 2011). In addition to behaviour, motivation is considered a physical, emotional, and logical state (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012). This feeling always finds ways to go down and cultivates anxiety and tension in people (Cook & Artino, 2016), an attribute that instigates movements, energy, direction, and reasons for behaviour, including what and why to do something (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ainley & Ainley, 2011; Broussard & Garrison, 2004). Individuals with self-motivation can always find motivation and intensity without expecting external courage to do the task (Ross et al., 2016), as motivation is also one of the most important psychological constructs in educational psychology (Koenka, 2020) and a construct in which goal-directed activities are instigated and sustained (Schunk et al., 2014). Gardner (2010) claimed that motivation is one factor contributing to success in acquiring a foreign language, activating, guiding, and maintaining students' observable behaviour-towards achieving a goal (Chowdhury et al., 2021). Furthermore, Gao (2021) argued that motivation is the degree of effort a person expends to learn a language.

Attitude-related motivation is subdivided into trait and state motivation (Katts & Condly, 2009), which address a general tendency towards learning, and state motivation concerns attitude toward learning. Motivation is the core of human aspiration and achievement; it can be a force that encourages students to face every challenging situation (Gopalan et al., 2017). Finally, motivation clarifies human behaviour, providing a motive for people to react and to fulfil their needs (Cook & Artino, 2016).

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The research was undertaken at the Nursing Department, State Polytechnic of Health in Indonesia, a vocational college that teaches English as a supporting subject. Two classes of nursing students were involved, consisting of 80 participants. The students' learning motivation was observed during the English-learning activities, using English-for-nursing materials. Some participants were chosen, for various reasons, such as being permanent students, having similar English competence, and being easy for researchers to access, to fill out the MATB developed by Gardner (2014). The MATB is a comprehensive assessment tool, grounded in a socio-educational model of language learning. The tool captures the complex interplay of motivational and attitudinal factors in second-language learning, as well as being a comprehensive approach with a solid theoretical foundation and good reliability and validity for measuring attitude and motivation. Consisting of 34 statements, the MATB employs a Likert scale with four indicators: 4 = strongly agree; 3 = agree; 2 = disagree; and 1 = strongly disagree. The task-based English-learning materials for nursing, made in the form of modules, were designed to facilitate English learning in the nursing department.

The content of the learning module, such as the language focus section, writing section, and EFN activity, were attached to tasks in the form of activities, such as filling in the-gaps, making expressions, or creating dialogue or an interview using prompts. Those tasks required students to expose their language production.

A focus group discussion in the form of an interview was conducted with the students in four sessions, one of which took place for 60 minutes. The students' perspectives on the learning and materials, reasons, suggestions for the materials, and learning revision were discussed. The data obtained were accumulated from both teachers and verified for analysis.

The research data were analysed descriptively, compared with, and justified under the theories to determine the types of motivations the students had, the factors triggering them to be motivated in learning, and those aspects of the task-based learning materials and approaches that specifically encouraged their learning enthusiasm. The analysis results were represented as qualitative information, such as narrations or statements.

IV. RESULTS

A. Motivation Patterns Displayed by EFL College Students of Health Polytechnic in Indonesia

The four motivation patterns of Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Ryan and Deci (2000) were used by the respondents intrinsic, instrumental, extrinsic, and integrative motivation, with different frequencies. These four English-learning motivations were used according to how each student learned English and the perspective based on which

English learning was viewed.

Based on the results (see Table 1), the learning motivations and attitudes of the students mainly relied on intrinsic factors. The students were eager to learn English because of their innate willingness and desire to do so. Some were motivated to learn English because they were enthusiastic about gaining academic scores and merit. These students were extrinsically encouraged to learn, as they were obsessed with obtaining such rewards. The motivation to learn English due to the student's need to use language skills to find a job was lower than the two factors explained previously. Fewer students seemed to focus on learning English to find a job as proof of their success in obtaining knowledge. The desire of the students to learn English for the personal objective of contacting English-speaking was the smallest factor, as was the willingness to socialise with English-speaking society either in Indonesia or overseas.

According to the table of motivation patterns below, IM is ranked first, with 45.00%. This highest score resulted from the nursing students mostly strongly agreeing with the statement in the questionnaires, although other students stated they only agreed or even disagreed. Instrumental motivation, ranked second, with 20.22 %. This pattern of motivation was much less than the intrinsic pattern. Then came the extrinsic pattern, with 19.95%. Thus, the students' tendency to learn English to find a job or their desire to get rewards from others upon their success in the learning were of similar importance. Finally, willingness to learn English as the result of perseverance, such as becoming involved in English-speaking society, was the lowest result, with only 6.5%, implying that being knowledgeable in English and easily socialising with English-speaking people was not the priority.

TABLE 1
STUDENTS' MOTIVATION PATTERNS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

Motivation Pattern	Score	Percentage (%)
Intrinsic motivation	3.29	45.00
Extrinsic motivation	1.41	19.95
Instrumental motivation	1.17	20.22
Integrative motivation	0.452	6.5

B. Factors Influencing Students' English-Learning Motivation

The factors influencing students' ELM were identified as follows:

(a). Positive Teacher-Student Interpersonal Relationship

The students were encouraged to learn when the teachers built a warm interpersonal link with them. The teachers constructed an interpersonal link by building students' comfort during the learning sessions. by helping them when they were confused with their tasks. The teachers were open to providing assistance with their work. When the teachers expressed interest in the students' lives, interests, opinions, or hobbies, this seemed to encourage student confidence regarding the teachers being motivators. Being warm-hearted to students, such as greeting them and using their names, as well as going deeper into students' things, enabled the teachers to interact personally. For example, asking students about their weekend activities and planning for the school holidays, helped to 'break the ice, in the class and encouraged students to feel the learning was easy at a comfortable place.

(b). Teacher Praise

Compliments from the teachers greatly benefitted the students. Teachers' praise for the students' achievements-encourage their immune system and was meaningful. The students accepted teachers praise as validation and recognition of their efforts, achievements, and success in the classroom. The teachers were believed to validate and acknowledge the students' endeavours to gain success, which enhanced the students learning and encouraged them to participate and engage in the learning process. Praise in the form of positive and corrective feedback motivated the students to make greater efforts in their academic work. This approach probably triggered their IM, as they were energised to gain knowledge independently (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Giving compliments was used to build the students' confidence. When the teachers affirmed the students' abilities to do the task, to argue, and to contribute opinions, it boosted the students' confidence, esteem, and efficacy. This approach could also strengthen the positive bond between teachers and students, and it was effective in realising students' positive behaviour when they could collaborate. Such activities could promote a growth mindset, a belief in success that can flexibly grow in a person. When praised, students can implicitly stimulate their efforts, perseverance, and willingness. They could also forget their effort, struggle, and progress to gain success in the learning session. Finally, compliments can also create a safe and conducive learning environment that guarantees learning success.

(c). Teacher Feedback or Stroke

Positive feedback with comments on student-work is valuable and essential. Such feedback from teachers is a critical tool for motivating students and encouraging their willingness to learn. The teachers' feedback during English learning was highly effective, enhancing the students' self-esteem, perseverance, and engagement with the subject matter. The students were enthusiastic about feedback if it was explicitly delivered and descriptive. The teachers did not use generic compliments, such as 'good,' 'very good,' or 'this is a good job', but offered more specific and detailed comment such

as 'from a general task, you could explain it in more detail and break down some of the subjects'; 'you were able to develop your ideas, so that you could mention describing one topic with more than 10 sentences'; and, 'you could vary your vocabularies with not only simple words but also with phrases, not only with pure adjectives but also with derivational adjectives'. Such feedback helped encourage the students to replicate their productive behaviour. The feedback also focused on the students' efforts and the processes they experienced when doing the tasks. The teachers' feedback encouraged students to improve their confidence and learning motivation. When praising the students' efforts, the following expressions were used to encourage their motivations were used to encourage their motivation: 'You have been working out the task in a very detailed way, putting much effort into it'; 'You have performed the roleplay very well, developed your ideas, and produced sentences using compound words and phrases' 'The students' success was celebrated by saying, 'Your writing has improved so much since the beginning of the semester. You are 'using clear sentences and stronger verbs, enhancing your storytelling', which improved their confidence. Finally, the students were invited to evaluate their work, by saying; 'Now tell me what parts of the task's realisation you think are the strongest and why', inspiring them to be more active regarding self-assessment and enhancing their learning motivation enormously.

(d). Learning Task and Class Activities

Tasks in English-for-nursing for Health Polytechnic students were provided in a few forms, such as storytelling, problem-solving, matching, ordering and sorting, listing, filling in –forms, role play, information gaps, listening, comparing or finding similarities and differences, sharing personal experiences, and projects. The tasks were performed during in-classroom activities.

Class activities were divided into three stages: opening, while, and closing, encouraging the student's learning motivation enhancement. The opening and closing activities included playing games related to the topic or free games and singing songs to break the ice in the learning activities. Such activities, led by the teachers, relaxed the students' and built their concentration to study. The activities helped reduce social anxiety by creating a more relaxed atmosphere. Students who feel less anxious are more likely to participate actively and engage with the content. Furthermore, the activities facilitated social interactions that might occur less organically in a strictly academic setting, and the captured the students' attention from the outset. When students are mentally and physically involved in an activity, their energy levels rise, and this heightened state of alertness can carry over into the main lesson, making them more receptive to new information. Finally, the activities encouraged everyone to contribute, highlighting the value of every student's voice, building a positive classroom atmosphere, helping students to find common ground despite differences in background, academic ability, or personality, as well as re-energising students, sharpening their focus, and renewing their interest in class activities.

(e). Student Curiosity

Student curiosity—the desire to know or learn something—played an essential role in the learning activities. Curiosity drives students to explore and understand new concepts. It is a powerful motivator and a critical component of an effective learning environment. The students' curiosity enabled them to engage in the lesson and pay optimal attention. Curious students are naturally more engaged, paying closer attention to the lesson content, which helped sustain their focus over extended periods, leading to deeper learning. When curious, students are more likely to participate actively in classroom activities, reinforcing learning and retention. In addition, curiosity improved the students' memory and recall and increased motivation. It could also transform a passive learning experience into an active exploration. Students were more motivated to undertake challenges and persist in solving complex problems. Curiosity also encouraged learning independence, and creativity; it is the foundation of creativity, which could push students to think 'outside the box' and develop innovative solutions. In a learning environment that values curiosity, students feel safe to experiment, make mistakes, and learn from them, which is crucial for creative endeavours. Finally, when students are curious about each other's ideas and perspectives, it can lead to rich discussions and collaborations. Therefore, cultivating curiosity in the classroom makes learning more enjoyable and practical and prepares students with the skills needed to succeed in an ever-changing world.

(f). Teaching Method

The students' perspectives on the teaching method using TBLT were as follows: TBLT was believed to foster (1) authenticity, that is, learning activities are designed to be relevant and applicable to real-life situations; (2) student' activeness, which led to student-driven learning; and (3) learning autonomy, which allowed students to have a choice when completing tasks and to foster a sense of autonomy. When students feel they have control over their learning, they are more likely to feel motivated. Autonomy supports IM, which is linked to higher satisfaction and better learning outcomes. In addition, through collaboration, students could work with others. Working in groups to solve problems or complete tasks can make learning more enjoyable, less isolating, and help build social skills, such as communication and conflict resolution, which are motivating and beneficial for personal development.

(g). Relatedness

Relatedness in learning refers to the sense of connection, belonging, and interpersonal relationships within the

learning environment. The concept is one of the three basic psychological needs proposed by self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2008), in addition to autonomy and competence. Relatedness emphasises the importance of social interactions, support, and collaboration in promoting motivation, engagement, and well-being among learners. The concept fosters a sense of belonging within the learning community. When students feel connected to their peers, teachers, and the learning environment, they are more likely to engage actively in classroom activities, to share ideas, and to contribute to discussions. They are also more likely to be intrinsically motivated to participate in learning activities. The TBLT approach exposed the students to collaboration in learning. Relatedness encourages collaborative learning experiences in which students work together to achieve common goals. Collaboration promotes the exchange of ideas, perspectives, and knowledge, leading to deeper understanding and enhanced learning outcomes. The concept encourages positive peer interactions and constructive social dynamics within the learning community, as well as helping the relationship between teachers and students. Strong relationships in the class session of help create a supportive and nurturing learning environment. Relatedness also encompasses cultural aspects of learning, recognising the importance of cultural diversity, inclusivity, and understanding within the learning community. Finally, culturally responsive teaching practices promote relatedness by valuing students' identities, experiences, and perspectives.

C. Aspects of TBLT Positively Affect Students' Learning Motivation

The TBLT approach was implemented to design and realise the learning module and learning activities. The learning materials and learning activities shared the same spirit of TBLT. In an interview conducted during the FGD session, the students expressed their viewpoints on what aspects of TBLT affected their learning motivation. The interview results reveal that some aspects of TBLT were implemented that impressed the students.

(a). Task Activities

The task activities made the students feel that learning English is easy, fun, meaningful, and effective. Those activities included (1) real-world activities or specifically 'work-related learning activities', such as asking for patients' personal and objective data, taking patients' complaints, and taking patients' subjective data combined with practising using the language while acting as a nurse checking up on patients at the clinic and others; (2) learning language through tasks that could encourage active participation, such as interviews to find the reason, observation and note-taking, problem-solving and decision-making, and project execution, making the learning process more engaging and dynamic; and (3) students' learning autonomy.

(b). Autonomous Learning and Authentic Learning Materials

The TBLT approach could enable students to choose the tasks or projects they wish to undertake based on their interests and learning goals. This choice can extend to selecting topics, resources, or even the methods of execution and presentation. By making these decisions, learners exert control over their learning process, which enhances their engagement and motivation. Moreover, role-playing activities helped the students to develop, modify, and vary their language activities to practise English as optimally as possible. Such accessible activities directed the students to develop their creativity; thus, they felt freer to explore and express their thoughts.

Authentic materials provide a rich context that can help learners understand the use of language in specific situations, such as hospital brochures samples of patients' medical records, admission forms, and patients' objective data records. Such material offered insights into cultural nuances and contextual usage that tailored language-learning materials often lack. This contextual exposure helps learners to understand better the language and its uses. In addition, employing authentic materials demonstrated the use of language, including colloquial expressions, slang, and grammatical structures that native speakers use. This exposure is invaluable for learners to develop more natural and fluent language use.

(c). Teachers' Positive Facilitation

The students felt very close to the teachers for several reasons that were exposed in advance. One reason was the teachers' facilitation during practice and task execution, including responding to students' questions, explaining words' meanings and concepts' strategies, explaining clarification, and providing other facilitative support during student task execution. The students' perceptions of the teachers' facilitation were based on the entire session, including the teachers' endeavours when setting clear objectives, giving instruction and pre-task preparation, preparing resources, monitoring and supporting, encouraging tasks and collaboration, providing feedback, and reflecting.

The students found that the patterns of facilitation during the learning enabled them to build their confidence. Thus, the students' tangible output from the projects was better realised. Through these facilitative roles, teachers in a TBLT framework empower students to take ownership of their learning, promoting autonomy and ensuring that learning is meaningful and effective. This approach enhances language skills and builds critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities.

D. Discussion

As mentioned in the previous chapter, IM was the most favoured motivation pattern based on student participation, with a much higher percentage 45% than the others. Instrumental, extrinsic, and integrative motivation ranked second,

third, and fourth, respectively. This pattern is familiar and in line with Wang and Liu (2023), who found that adult students have higher learning motivation than young learners. However, improvement with IM was also experienced via conscious learning activities among Japanese elementary school students exposed to high IM levels while learning English (Tanaka, 2018), in Taiwanese students who joined an English-as-a-medium-of-instruction course (Chen & Kraklow, 2015), and in non-English major university students in China (Zhu & Sun, 2012). In addition to maturity (adult ages), the students' IM in the present study was also energised by their young age and the efforts made in teaching and learning methods.

Prior knowledge, such as language knowledge and experience obtained before the learning session, dramatically assists. On the other hand, non-English major students were also found to have significantly higher IM than EM implying that although student IM is supported by age maturity, young learners can also be motivated. The level of IM is not only influenced by the students' prior knowledge, but also, those without language training, preparation, and enrichment were successful.

The positive interpersonal relationship between teachers and students stimulated increased learning motivation. This finding is in line with Meng (2021), who found that teacher-student rapport led to progressive practices for students and superior classroom involvement and motivation. Gao (2021) agreed that teachers' and students' interpersonal relationships are significant and fundamental to an effective environment. Building positive relationships with students benefits teachers, as they can manage and engage students easily and optimally in the learning process. Moreover, such relationship enhances students' language mindset (particularly growth mindset), which is essential capital for successful learning.

Teacher praise or compliments played a crucial role learning success. Psychologically, students feel very convenient to the learning and close to the teachers when praised or complimented for their work. This concept aligns with Gao (2021) and Amini et al. (2019), who stated that students can build their confidence and willingness to learn based upon their teachers' constant praise of their task-executing processes and results. Teachers' feedback was also a compelling motivation and encouraging factor, in line with Gao (2021) and Amini (2019).

Learning tasks and class activities were some of the most impressive activities in TBLT English learning. The attractive learning activities the students liked were those that encouraged them to use the English language for verbal communication. They enjoyed playing games as ice-breaking activities and singing songs, as suggested by Wallace and Leong (2020). Ice-breaking activities encourage students to make use of, practise, and enhance their language skills through games, singing, and lead-in activities, such as discussion, short presentations, and making initiative dialogue. This finding is in line with Sholeh's (2022) work, which found that TBLT contributes much more than conventional approaches regarding involving students in the communicative classroom. In addition, applying a method such as a 'lead-in activity' links students' thoughts to learning. This activity enables students to focus on communicative activities in the target language (Wet et al., 2021) and is designed to build students' curiosity about the learning topic. Building curiosity was a strong point because the students were eager to learn. A lead-in activity was employed to respond to their curiosity about the topic.

The teaching methods applied during the English-for-nursing learning sessions, such as project learning, gamification, role-playing and simulation, and peer teaching, were significant triggers for the students. Following Ellis (2021), some aspects could be practical for the TBLT curriculum, one of which is technique and strategy. Rich, innovative, and attractive techniques and strategies could make students confident, as they are given many opportunities to use the target language in the classroom (Rajabi & Azarpour, 2019).

Students' sense of belonging was enhanced because TBLT fostered learning material authentically related to their work. In addition to gaining related skills and self-government, the students also made a real-life connection between their needs and their future work, so this relatedness was meaningful to them and in line with the research findings of Deci and Ryan (2008).

The aspects of TBLT that positively affected the students' ELM included 'task activities, autonomous learning and authentic learning materials, and teachers' positive facilitation'. This finding is in line with Wen et al. (2021), who found that some characteristics of TBLT encouraged motivation, such as introducing authentic text into learning situations and using real-world activities (Skehan, 1998), as well as providing facilitation to students when learning to students' learning motivation. According to Wallace and Leong (2020), teacher facilitation, such as ice-breaking games and songs, could increase students' IM to learn. These findings also imply that doing tasks enhanced students' use of prior knowledge and energised their language acquisition through group work activities, such as discussion and presenting information about different groups. The students' schemata enabled them to build new knowledge, concepts, and propositions, making the learners pragmatically competent (i.e., able to use the language appropriately and effectively; Widanta et al., 2018). Student success in language acquisition also depends on how teachers provide inputs. Inputs benefit learners when they are explicit and comprehensible, employing problem clarification, explicit concept-building, and learners' awareness-building (Widanta et al., 2020). The more comprehensible the inputs are, the more easily they are processed in the learners' brains and made into intakes to enhance sound output. In this case, teachers must make learners aware as efficiently as possible (Schmidt, 1990; Widanta, 2017).

V. CONCLUSION

There were four motivational patterns the students of the health polytechnic in Indonesia relied on: IM, instrumental motivation, EM, and integrative motivation. Intrinsic motivation, driven by students' reasons, such as the desire to know and be able to speak English to impact their image or reputation positively, seemed the most favoured. The desire to comprehend the language to become involved in the target-language society- (integrative motivation) was the last favoured and had a much lower percentage. The students' desire to use their English-language competence for working in an English-related medical field (EM), or their friends' invitation to learn the language, and the praise of their family and relatives (instrumental motivation), placed second and third, respectively. The relative percentages were 45, 20.22, 19.95, and 6.5.

Seven factors mainly influenced the students' ELM: positive teacher-student interpersonal relationship, teachers' praise, teachers' feedback or stroke, learning tasks and class activities, students' curiosity, teaching method, and relatedness. The final aspects of TBLT that positively affected students' learning motivation were classified into task activities, autonomous learning and authentic learning motivation, and teachers' positive facilitation.

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Obstacles Encountered by Saudi Cadets in English Speaking Skill Competence

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Abstract—This study aimed to investigate the obstacles faced by Saudi cadets in developing their speaking skills and to identify the difficulties that may hinder their ability to speak fluently. Data for this study were collected through field observations of students' classes and semi-structured survey interviews with English instructors. The participants in this study were Saudi cadets enrolled at King Abdulaziz Military Academy during the academic year (2023-2024). The results of the study revealed several challenges faced by cadets, including limited opportunities to practice speaking, a lack of motivation, insufficient self-confidence, and a fear of criticism. Furthermore, some cadets exhibited weaknesses in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Additionally, the teaching of speaking skills was predominantly instructor-centered, the allocated time for practicing speaking skills was inadequate, and the assessment of speaking skills in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course was not tested.

Index Terms—EFL cadets, obstacles, speaking competence

I. INTRODUCTION

The English language is considered an international language widely used in various fields, including science, business, politics, and media around the world (Tram, 2020). It is true because it is used in many different fields to represent the cornerstone. According to Anil (2016) English is crucial to be taught in classrooms in most developing and third-world countries. Consequently, it is currently taught and learned for various reasons and in different styles. Proficiency in the English language plays a vital role in improving students' standards in English. English instructors make significant efforts to help their students overcome many difficulties while learning. Thornbury (1997) states that the instructor's primary role is to simplify comprehension and provide the necessary input. English language instructors play an essential role in helping their students communicate effectively in English. According to Khatoony and Rahmani (2020) speaking skills are regarded as challenging for learners of the language, especially (EFL) non-native learners, namely university students who face numerous complications and difficulties in developing and improving their speaking skills. Farooqui (2007) asserts that the globalization of English and the increasing demand for better English-speaking skills in the labor market have led to a significant focus on speaking skills worldwide. This is true because effective communication skills are becoming increasingly essential nowadays. With the rapid development of new technology and businesses, the demand for teaching English to specific groups for specific purposes has grown significantly.

As Saudi Arabia advances toward achieving its 2030 economic vision, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has gained influential importance because it provides access to information related to specific fields and numerous knowledge resources. In Saudi Arabia, (ESP) is designed and taught at universities and colleges for adult students with intermediate or advanced levels of English to prepare them for the promising job market that offers numerous opportunities. Consequently, (ESP) has become a crucial part of English language teaching, whether in an (ESL) or (EFL) context. Despite the substantial budget allocated by (KAMA) for English teaching, Saudi cadets' ability to communicate effectively in English falls below expectations. In other words, the lack of speaking proficiency is still a challenge. Therefore, it is important to address the obstacles that Saudi cadets encounter in developing their English-speaking skills. In conclusion, this study will focus on the obstacles that Saudi cadets face in speaking proficiency, as these difficulties significantly impact the overall learning process. The research will investigate the challenges of developing speaking skills among students and specify the difficulties that hinder cadets from speaking fluently.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Studies

Palmer (2014) asserts that listening and speaking are fundamental skills. He also presents the distribution percentages of language skills as follows: writing at 9%, reading at 16%, speaking at 30%, and listening at 45%. Hedge (2000, p. 46) reflects that linguistic competence is concerned with knowledge of the language itself, its form and meaning. It includes a knowledge of spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, word formation, grammatical and sentence structure and linguistic semantics. She also adds that an essential point for the teacher to note is that linguistic competency is an integral amount of communicative competency. Such types of competences are pragmatic competence, discourse competence

and strategic competence. According to Hudson (2007) speaking and listening matters are important in all contexts for practitioners and learners for a number of reasons; spoken language is at the heart of much human interaction, good oral communication skills are important in other aspects of learners' wider lives, learners need to use, develop their speaking and listening skills to maximize learning gains. So, practitioners need well-developed speaking and listening skills to help maximize learners' progress.

Folse (2006) proposes five factors for teachers to consider when planning a speaking class: the learner (including age, proficiency level, and goals), the program, the topic of discussion, the use of two languages (in the task and for the task), and the diversity of tasks that serve as vehicles for conversation. Folse (2006) distinguishes between speaking activities categorized as fluency or accuracy. Fluency denotes to the quantity of language produced in an activity, while accuracy pertains to the linguistic precision of the content. Goth and Burns (2012) also introduce the concept of complexity, which encompasses both meaning and form.

Nation and Newton (2009) suggest three approaches to developing fluency in speaking: the repetition of tasks, known as the "well-beaten path approach"; creating many connections and associations with known items, known as the "richness approach"; and combining the two approaches into the "well-ordered system approach." They also recommend techniques for developing speaking fluency, including learners creating their best recordings, the ask-and-answer technique, and rehearsed talks. Popp (2005) explains that students' speaking skills improve with increased opportunities to practice in various contexts and for various purposes. These skills encompass discussions about ideas and information related to content areas, creative projects that allow students to showcase their talents, and situations that require the appropriate use of language to engage gracefully in social occasions.

Hedge (2000) presents several reasons for requesting students to rehearse speaking skill inside the class. For numerous students, learning to speak proficiently in English is a primacy. Learners want to use this skill for various bases, including building rapport in relationships, influencing people, and succeeding in negotiations. Goh and Burns (2012) assert that speaking is influenced by affective factors such as anxiety and lack of motivation. They further emphasize that output, in addition to input, is crucial for helping learners become proficient in the language. Jamshidnejad (2020) identifies several speaking problems, including experience, expectations, attitudes towards language learning, gender, willingness to communicate, self-efficacy, fear of making mistakes, fear of evaluation, and lack of confidence.

Goh and Burns (2012) elaborate on the characteristics of a second language speaker, emphasizing good pronunciation, fluency with minimal grammatical mistakes, native-like speech, confidence when addressing large audiences, effective communication with native speakers, and the ability to be easily understood. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) recommend strategies for maintaining and protecting motivation, including making learning encouraging and pleasant, giving tasks in a rousing manner, setting precise learner aims, preserving learners' self-respect, increasing their self-assurance, permitting them to preserve an affirmative social image, promoting cooperation among learners, fostering learner autonomy, and encouraging self-motivating strategies. Harmer (2007) mentions that the wish to accomplish some aim is the foundation of motivation; if it is strong enough it enflames a judgement to performance. He also adds such types of motivations that are extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is that learners bring into the class from outdoor. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is the sort of motivation that is made by what occurs in the class. Thornbury (2005) provides tips for managing talk, including interaction, turn-taking, discourse markers, and paralinguistics such as eye gaze and gestures.

Burns and Siegel (2008) emphasize that learning to speak another language is complex and involves various sub-skills related to content, morphosyntax, lexis, discourse, information structuring, the sound system, prosody, appropriate register, and pragmatic linguistic features. Hughes (2011) also underscores the importance of acquiring aspects beyond grammar and vocabulary for successful communication, including culture, social interaction, and politeness norms. Hatfield and Hatfield (1999) describe a speaking lesson as a bridge for learners between the classroom and the outside world. To build this bridge effectively, speaking activities must fulfill three key features: providing learners with purposeful communication opportunities in meaningful situations, ensuring clarity of instructions when learners work in pairs or small groups, and utilizing various techniques to create meaningful contexts for speaking practice, such as asking and answering, describing and drawing, discussion, guessing, remembering, miming, ordering, and completing forms/questionnaires. Thornbury (2002) recommends additional techniques such as dialogue, both open and closed pair work, the use of picture and word cues, and follow-up diagram conversations. Jamshidnejad (2020) asserts that the primary aspiration motivating a large percentage of language learners to take language courses is to become fluent speakers of a new language. Nonetheless, many language learners perceive communication skills, particularly speaking, as the most challenging to master.

Alhuqbani (2014) conducted an evaluation of teaching English to Saudi police cadets at King Fahd Security College in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The results revealed that teaching and the ESP course were ineffective and unsuitable due to several administrative and methodological factors. The course failed to meet the learners' needs concerning course timing and duration. Khatoony and Rahmani (2020) disclosed that learners of applied linguistics faced numerous linguistic problems in learning pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and grammar. Additionally, learners confronted psychological challenges such as self-confidence, shyness, and anxiety. They also reported dissatisfaction with their

teachers and courses. Mandel (2000) suggests some tips for reducing anxiety such as organize, visualize, practice, breathe, focus on relaxing, release tension, move and make eye contact with audience.

Tram (2020) found that students encountered linguistic difficulties that made the learning process very challenging. Also, Henna Paakki (2013) observed that both Finns and Japanese considered speaking English to be challenging. This was attributed to the prevalence of grammar-focused courses, traditional teaching methods, fear of making errors, lack of experience, and insufficient practice. Elbashir (2023) discovered that there were many difficulties which hindered fluency of English learning in the universities and among them include: under-qualified instructors, inappropriate teaching resources and the techniques used in teaching which were regarded as poor. The other problem was the psychological factor which made student lacked motivation while learning English. Hussain (2016) declared that mastering English requires a great command of the four language skills, both oral and written. Speaking English, in particular, posed difficulties related to vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. Students also grappled with shyness and a lack of self-confidence. Al Hosni (2014) stated that the main challenge in learning communication was speaking. The problem was attributed to the neglect of oral language use inside classes, often overlooked by teachers.

Yahaya et al. (2021) showed that the respondents practiced interfering of the first language while they face trouble in the skill of speaking. They also expected their teacher to correct the errors they said and wanted him to use a diversity of techniques and latest methods in order to teach speaking skills to improve their attention. Their study also suggested that English as a second language learners needed to be more to be given more enthusiasm to improve their self-confidence in using the English language and teachers needed to be more innovative in applying plans that arouse learners' attention to speak in English language.

According to Chand (2021) mostly learners got four main speaking problems such as personal difficulties, linguistic complications, social problems, and environmental problems. Absence of self-confidence, poor vocabulary power, unwillingness, anxiety towards speaking, fear of making mistakes, not having a suitable environment to rehearse English, no strong motivation from instructors were some common difficulties that students encountered while speaking English language.

B. Teaching ESP at (KAMA)

It is evident that English is widely used globally in various fields, including business, aviation, and social media. Consequently, the Saudi Ministry of Education has incorporated English learning from the 3rd grade (at 9 years of age). (KAMA) is also committed to educating its cadets in this widely used language to align with global trends and equip the new generation with the necessary workplace skills. Specifically, English is taught at (KAMA) as a compulsory subject that all cadets must complete during their three-year study in order to graduate from the academy. Despite the demanding nature of military training, high school graduate cadets, aged 18 years, begin learning English from the primary level. At this level, each cadet is exposed to (ESP) for 16 sessions a week. In the second level, they have 14 sessions weekly, which increase to 16 in the third level. The duration of each session is 45 minutes.

All classrooms are equipped with TV screens, and there are labs equipped with projectors and speakers. Cadets are taught a comprehensive curriculum designed by the Ministry of US Defense that focuses on the four language skills. All cadets are required to complete the assigned 16 textbooks over the course of their three-year study. These textbooks consist of four units that cover military topics and vocabulary. English is taught by both Saudi and non-Saudi teachers who have obtained at least a (BA) degree in English. Instructors must adhere strictly to the textbook plans.

III. DATA COLLECTION

To obtain reliable information for the study, a mixed-method approach was employed. The first tool involved conducting interviews with five instructors. Semi-structured survey interviews were used as the primary method of data collection, directly aligned with the research objectives. Interviews served as valuable tools for exploring and identifying significant issues related to the study's subject matter. The five participants chosen for the interviews had a minimum of five years of experience in teaching the current ESP textbooks at (KAMA).

The second tool employed in this study was classroom observations. These observations aimed to assess the cadets' comfort levels, fluency, and the delivery of information within the classroom. Five teachers willingly allowed their classrooms and language labs to be observed, with detailed notes taken regarding the cadets' reactions to their instructors. Additionally, attention was given to how cadets engaged with their textbooks, as well as their motivation and concerns. Both tools underwent validation and modification with input from English language experts specializing in applied linguistics.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

A. The Status and Importance of Speaking Skill

Interview respondents emphasized the significance of speaking skills in learning English, highlighting its role in effective communication, confidence-building, problem-solving, and personal and professional development. As one teacher noted, "Speaking skill is vital for both personal and professional life, enabling individuals to express thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively, fostering relationships, resolving issues, and achieving goals." Additionally, speaking

was deemed essential for oral communication, conveying messages, interacting with non-native speakers, and language acquisition. All participants recognized the importance of speaking skills, with one remarking, "Speaking enables cadets to engage in meaningful conversations, debates, and discussions, promoting understanding, trust, and informed decision-making." However, despite these positive merits, several obstacles hindered the development of speaking skills within the classroom, including unsatisfactory teachers and courses, reflecting the pivotal role instructors and courses play in the learning process.

B. The Appropriateness of the Curriculum and Learning Environment

Observations indicated that the syllabus and speaking-related activities were appropriate and relevant to (ESP) courses, and audio resources were readily available. Nevertheless, despite the curriculum's inclusion of practical speaking exercises, classroom observations revealed underutilization by instructors. It was evident that some instructors struggled to complete the syllabus within the allotted time, often skipping speaking activities because they were not part of the assessment. This aligned with Al Hosni's (2014) assertion that the negligence of oral language use in class was a significant challenge in communication learning, largely due to instructors' oversight.

C. The Instructors' Teaching Efforts

It was apparent from observations that cadets were not provided sufficient opportunities to practice oral speaking, primarily due to time constraints imposed by overcrowded syllabi. Burns and Siegel (2008) highlighted that learning to speak in a new language is complex, and classroom observations indicated that speaking practice was limited in favor of more easily assessed literacy skills. Instructors' reluctance to allocate time to speaking was compounded by issues of motivation, which were often overlooked in the classroom and had a detrimental impact on cadets' speaking proficiency. Observations revealed that the majority of cadets required more speaking tasks and activities to boost their confidence and encourage more fluent communication. Unfortunately, a lack of motivation led to passive participation in class and reluctance to engage fully. Teachers attributed this lack of motivation to limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, fear of making mistakes, and the demands of military training.

D. The Enhancement of Speaking Activities Inside Classes

The neglect of speaking skills within the classroom became evident due to a lack of pair and group work, influenced by tight schedules, military training demands, the use of Arabic by instructors, insufficient visual aids, and teaching methods that disregarded cadet engagement. Cadets also hesitated to speak due to fear of making mistakes, as one teacher noted, "Cadets appear uncomfortable speaking freely in English, reinforcing the need for confidence-building through a variety of speaking tasks and activities." Another teacher highlighted cadets' anxiety about making errors in class, primarily stemming from limited vocabulary and pronunciation challenges. These factors aligned with Goh and Burns's (2012) assertion that speaking skills are influenced by affective factors such as anxiety and lack of motivation, which can pose significant classroom obstacles.

E. The Obstacles to Speaking Skill Development

In summary, the interviews and classroom observations revealed that cadets faced challenges related to vocabulary limitations, lack of self-confidence, fluency, motivation, fear of criticism, and insufficient speaking practice time. It became evident that adjustments were needed in the allocation of time for speaking practice to suit the individual needs and progress of students, as suggested by one teacher. Additionally, four teachers noted that some cadets struggled with pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary use. The challenges observed in organizing thoughts, pronunciation accuracy, intonation, fear of mistakes, and the lack of speaking opportunities made it difficult for cadets to communicate effectively. The researcher concluded that cadets should have ample opportunities to practice speaking skills in the classroom, including activities such as group discussions, role-playing, storytelling, presentations, debates, and peer-to-peer interactions, all aimed at providing constructive feedback to help students improve their speaking abilities. Nation and Newton (2009) suggested various approaches to develop speaking skills to attain proficiency. The study highlighted that numerous obstacles hindered cadets' performance in speaking skills, largely attributed to their weak English language proficiency.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study align with the research conducted by Khatoony and Rahmani (2020), Tram (2020), and Hussain (2016) indicating that EFL learners in applied linguistics may encounter challenges in various linguistic aspects, such as communication, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Additionally, they often grapple with psychological issues, including self-confidence and fear of criticism. Unsatisfactory teaching practices and the neglect of oral language use within classrooms, primarily by instructors, were common themes in these studies. There is also a parallel with the present study and Al Hosni's (2014) research, which revealed that instructors tend to dominate oral communication in class. Similarly, Alhuqbani's (2014) study highlighted that the allocated time for learning needed adjustment, echoing the findings of the current research.

The researcher identified several obstacles that hindered cadets from effectively practicing their speaking skills. These challenges included a lack of motivation, weak vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation skills among some

students. Furthermore, insufficient emphasis on listening input, a predominant focus on teaching reading and writing skills, and an instructor-centered approach to teaching speaking all contributed to the difficulty in enhancing speaking competence among students. Additionally, many students lacked self-confidence, fluency, and feared criticism. Finally, inadequate time was allocated to developing speaking skills in (ESP) courses at King Abdulaziz Military Academy, and the evaluation of speaking skills within these courses was lacking.

In summary, the study underscores the need for a more comprehensive approach to teaching speaking skills in (ESP) courses, addressing the identified challenges and providing students with the necessary support and motivation to develop their speaking competence effectively.

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Heterogloss in Chinese Undergraduates' Oral Presentations in the EAP Pedagogical Setting*

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Abstract—Appropriately incorporating other perspectives in an academic text is a challenge for second language learners and their incorporating practices in oral academic discourse are under-researched. Drawing on the account of heterogloss by Martin and his associates (e.g. Martin & Rose, 2007; Martin & White, 2005), this study investigated the heteroglossic practices in 81 oral presentations by the undergraduates enrolled in a 16-week course on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in China. Textual analysis reveals the learners' insufficient understanding of legitimate evidence and reporting verbs, overreliance on the high value modal verb (i.e. *should*) in presenting a proposal, and inappropriate sourcing for generating a concession in academic discourse. Based on the findings, a triadic model concerning heteroglossic practices in learners' academic discourse is proposed, and pedagogical implications are discussed.

Index Terms—learner's oral academic presentation, heterogloss, projection, modality, concession

I. INTRODUCTION

Heterogloss is an inherent feature of academic communication, in which the speakers/writers are expected to bring in the perspectives from the academia and negotiate with their assumed listeners'/readers' reactions so as to contribute to the disciplinary knowledge construction and to gain acceptance for their own work (Aikhenvald, 2018; Hood, 2010; Hyland, 1999; Hyland & Jiang, 2017; Swales & Feak, 2012). The previous research on heterogloss in academic discourse has focused on the aspects such as citations (e.g. Hu & Wang, 2014; Hyland & Jiang, 2017; Swales, 2014) and evaluation (e.g. Hood, 2010; Hyland & Jiang, 2018) in written academic discourse, especially research papers (Hyland & Jiang, 2021; Jiang, 2022). This body of work has greatly advanced our knowledge of heterogloss in academic discourse. A limitation of the previous work, however, is insufficiency of studies on heterogloss in learners' oral academic discourse.

Oral academic presentations have been identified as among the most common genres in undergraduate academic discourse (Nesi & Gardner, 2012). University students are often assigned with oral presentations in class to demonstrate their understanding of disciplinary knowledge. For many native language students, appropriately incorporating multiple voices in academic discourse is a challenge (Hendricks & Quinn, 2000). It could be particularly difficult for second language (L2) learners, for they have to cope with the added dimensions of insufficient knowledge of the linguistic expectations and the norms of knowledge construction in the discourse community. Analyzing L2 learners' heteroglossic practices in oral academic presentations can reveal the specific heteroglossic problems they encounter, and guide the academic literacy instruction on such an essential aspect for the learners. In view of these, this study aims to examine how Chinese undergraduates bring in others' perspectives in their English oral academic presentations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW ON HETEROGLOSS

Heteroglossic features have been investigated in varied terminology such as *academic attribution* (Hyland, 1999), *reference/citation* (Hu & Wang, 2014; Hyland & Jiang, 2017; Swales, 2014), *reporting* (Liardét & Black, 2019; Thompson & Ye, 1991), *evidentiality* (Yang, 2009), and *engagement* (Xu & Nesi, 2019). The existing research on heterogloss in academic discourse from the linguistic perspective mainly falls into the following three categories: (1) examining citation integration, i.e. whether a cited author is syntactically part of the citing sentence, and its rhetorical effects (Hyland, 1999; Hyland & Jiang, 2017; Swales, 1990; Thompson, 2005; Thompson & Tribble, 2001); (2) identifying sources of citations (Charles, 2006a; Yang, 2009, 2015); (3) lexico-grammatical resources, such as reporting verbs, and reporting structures (Charles, 2006b; Hyland, 1999; Liardét & Black, 2019; Thompson & Tribble, 2001). A widely adopted approach to the analysis of heterogloss in academic discourse is *Engagement*, a subsystem of Appraisal system from Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Engagement concerns the voices in the discourse. Based on the presence of dialogic alternatives, *Engagement* is

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taxonomized as monogloss and heterogloss (White, 2003; Martin & White, 2005). The former presents bare assertions without bringing in alternative perspectives. The latter by contrast recognizes other perspectives, and engages with dialogic alternatives. For the management of various perspectives, Martin and Rose (2007) identify three types of linguistic resources, namely projection, modality and concession.

Projection refers to quoting or reporting what people say or think. Projections may quote the exact words that someone said or thought, or report the meaning that was said or thought. Thus, projections can be classified by sources of citation, or by ways of citation, such as direct quotations and indirect quotations (including paraphrases and summaries). Projections can also be categorized by the position of the citee. According to the summary by Martin and Rose (2007), there are four ways of projection: projecting clauses (e.g. *Halliday says: ..., Halliday thinks that...*), names for speech acts (e.g. *I end with a few lines that Halliday said*), projecting within clauses (e.g. *such practices as it may deem necessary*), and scare quotes (e.g. *'those at the top'*). These ways distinguish the varied positions of the citee, sources of citation as well as ways of citation. In addition to these three aspects, research into reporting verbs has found that reporting verbs have evaluative potential (e.g. Hyland, 1999; Liardét & Black, 2019) and experienced researchers purposefully select reporting verbs to adjust the dialogic space in academic discourse.

Another way of introducing alternative voices is through modality, which is a resource setting up a cline between positive and negative poles of obligation or probability (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Matthiessen et al., 2010), specifically, of 'how probable' a statement is, of 'how often' something happens, or of 'how obliged/inclined' a person is to act. When obligation or probability is assigned a positive or negative value, it is of polarity. Unlike positive polarity, which invokes one voice, negation as the negative polarity places the speaker's/writer's voice in relation to a potential opposing one and thus implicates two voices. Hence, modality and negation acknowledge alternative voices as relative to a proposition or suggestion, and open up/close down a space for negotiation.

Concession, also known as 'counter-expectancy', is another resource of including different voices. Speakers or writers can use concessive conjunctions or continuatives to reject an alternative position or an expectation that they have created for the audience or readers. The most common concessive conjunctions are *but, however, although, in fact*, etc. Like conjunctions, continuatives can also be used to denote concession, but they occur inside the clause, rather than at the beginning. They include words like *only, just, even, already, finally, still, etc.*

Projection introduces a range of voices in an explicit way whereas modality and concession do so in an implicit way (See Figure 1). They create communicative effects of 'dialogic expansion' or 'dialogic contraction' (White, 2003), opening up or closing down the dialogic space for alternatives. These three types of linguistic resources display multiple facets of heterogloss in academic discourse.

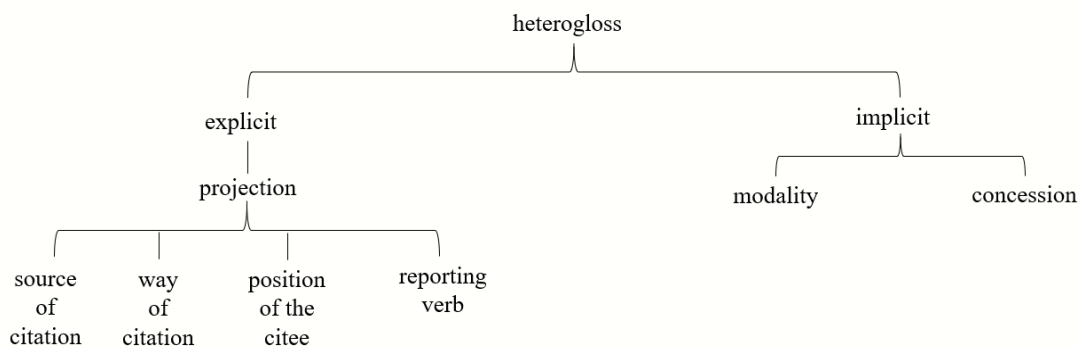


Figure 1. Dimensions of Heterogloss

The study aims to address a principal research question: how do Chinese English as foreign language (EFL) learners employ heterogloss in their oral academic presentations? Drawing on the account of heterogloss in Appraisal system, the principal research question is subdivided into the following three research questions:

- (1) How are the heteroglossic resources of projection employed by Chinese EFL learners in their oral academic presentations?
- (2) How are the heteroglossic resources of modality employed by Chinese EFL learners in their oral academic presentations?
- (3) How are the heteroglossic resources of concession employed by Chinese EFL learners in their oral academic presentations?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants and Context

Our participants were 55 first-year multi-disciplinary undergraduates (32 males, 23 females) enrolled in a 16-week English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course on listening, note-taking and speaking at a Chinese university. They were majored in electronic engineering ($n=12$), food science ($n=9$), animal science ($n=5$), economics and management ($n=21$), fisheries ($n=4$), sericulture, textile and biomass sciences ($n=4$). Based on their performance on the University Placement

Test in the first semester, the learners were placed at an intermediate level of English proficiency. In the course, the learners formed thirteen groups voluntarily, with three or five members per group.

B. Data Collection and Analysis

The learners were assigned three five-minute oral presentation tasks during the semester. The topics of the first two presentation tasks delivered at Week 4 and Week 8 were unit-relevant assignments, concerning psychoneuroimmunology and cardiovascular disease respectively. For these two presentation tasks, the groups listened, read and discussed a set of topic-related EAP materials, such as mini-lectures, scientific blogs, research papers, etc., and decided on their stances and supporting materials. Then the group members jointly drafted each presentation and selected their representatives to deliver. Those two presentation tasks produced 26 samples for analysis. The presentations delivered at Week 16 were prepared individually on some self-decided disciplinary topics, which yielded 55 samples for analysis. All the presentations were audio-recorded and transcribed. This process produced a dataset of 81 oral presentations of nearly 44,564 words.

The examples of heterogloss in the dataset were manually coded and checked by the authors to ensure that the examples performed the function assigned to them. The authors independently coded around a 25% sample (10 presentations) of the data and reached an inter-rater agreement of 91% through discussion. Because the inter-rater reliability was acceptable, the first author then coded all the oral presentations. The intra-rater reliability tests were run by the first author to re-code the presentations a month later and to examine carefully the discrepancies to reach a full agreement in between.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, the analysis revealed the learners' insufficient understanding of legitimate evidence and reporting verbs, overreliance on the high value modal verb (i.e. *should*) in presenting a proposal, and inappropriate sourcing for generating a concession in the academic presentations. In the following we present each heteroglossic feature in turn and jointly.

A. Projection for Heterogloss

(a). Sources of Citation

In constructing academic discourse, academics tend to cite research-based texts as well as statistical data rather than common sense, famous sayings, or proverbs as evidence. However, in our learners' presentations, the learners cited not only research-based evidence, but also nonacademic sources to support their work, such as lyrics (1), proverbs (2), common sense (3), and personal experiences (4). For example,

- (1) ... just like the song from Kelly Clarkson, "what doesn't kill me, makes me stronger". (G3W4)²
- (2) As the saying goes "Born in hardship, die in happiness", ... (G9W4)
- (3) It is well known that a balanced diet plays an important role in health and weight control. (G1W8)
- (4) Our parents would say "eat less sugar, or you will have a toothache and go to the dentist." (G12W16)

The nonacademic citations were found in the sections of the learners' presentations, namely the Introduction, Body as well as Conclusion of the presentations across three presentation tasks during the semester. Nonacademic sources may be used by scholars in the beginning of an oral academic presentation, to place their presentations on a shared ground with the audience (Boltdt, 2019), not for the purpose of strength and authority. The presence of those sources is odd in the other sections of an oral academic presentation. The employment of the nonacademic sources as evidence in the learners' presentations reveals the learners' perceptions of evidence. They misunderstood those nonacademic sources as worthy and legitimate evidence in the academic discourse, treating those sources in the same way as they do in their nonacademic discourse. Such inclusion creates authorship problems, as the authors of those nonacademic sources were not scholars but members of the public who may not have done careful research on the given topics. Consequently, it can reduce the reliability of the presentations.

(b). Ways of Citation

In projecting what others say or think, the learners threaded direct quotations and indirect ones into their presentations. Their use of direct quotations took the forms of both full direct quotation and partial direct quotation. The former refers to quoting a whole sentence directly, like the example (1) above. The latter means quoting some exact words from the source sentence, like the example (5) below. Moreover, when the learners reported the general meaning that was said or thought, they mainly adopted two ways of reporting: generalizing a single source and generalizing multiple sources, like the example (6) and the example (7) respectively.

- (5) ... the most important policy is the "4 trillion plan". (G5W16)
- (6) According to a research from Harvard Medical School, too much stress can damage the immune system. (G10W4)
- (7) Studies have shown that vegetables and fruits are rich in water and dietary fiber, which can enhance the sense

² G stands for group and W refers to week. The number identifies the designated group and week of the presentation.

of satiety and reduce energy intake. (G1W8)

The multiple-source generalizations outnumbered the single-source ones in our dataset. A single source was put in a salient position along with its idea, when the name of the source is popular or authoritative among the learner audience, like *Harvard Medical School* in the example (6). A multiple-source projection was presented like *studies* in the example (7), to foreground the generalized idea (Swales, 2014; Yu & Zhang, 2021). Such a shift from named to unnamed indicates that the learners may be aware of the pragmatic difference between the single-source named projection and multiple-source anonymous projection.

(c). Positions of the Citee

Distinctions in the position of the citee/citees were identified in the learners' integral citations. Integral citation termed by Swales (1990), means placing the citee/citees within the sentence structure. By contrast, nonintegral citations place the cited author or authors in parenthesis. In oral academic presentations, presenters often use integral citations rather than nonintegral ones if no visual aids are deployed, such as PowerPoint. According to Swales (2014), integral citations can be classified into four subcategories, namely the citee/citees functioning as sentence subject, as agent, as adjunct, and as part of a noun phrase. In our dataset, only the first and the third type were found. In the first type, the citee/citees functioned as sentence subjects, such as in the example (8). The third type, as adjunct, was realized in two ways: by a prepositional phrase in the example (9) and by a subordinate clause in the example (10).

- (8) Studies have shown that students who have a certain amount of stress before a test perform better on tests. (G6W4)
- (9) According to experts, long-term poor sleep quality... affects the normal metabolism and easily causes obesity. (G1W8)
- (10) As Greenberg said, "health and disease are not opposite concepts, but a unity of interdependence and mutual transformation." (G5W4)

The use of the cited source as sentence subject was the most common practice in our learners' presentations, which echoes other studies of novice writers (e.g. Swales, 2014). The use of the citee as adjunct realized by a prepositional phrase was the second most common category.

(d). Reporting Verbs

Another feature of projection practice is the choice of reporting verb. In our dataset, 17 different reporting verbs (see Table 1) were identified. Among them, the two most common reporting verbs (*show*, 27; *find*, 22) were factive and demonstrated research acts. Other reporting verbs disclosed the presenters' understanding and evaluation of the citee's behavior, such as cognitive acts (*know*, *think*, *estimate*, *support*, *conclude*, *convince*, *believe*, *see*), and discourse acts (*say*, *mention*, *tell*, *report*, *list*, *point out*). Notably, *according to* ranked the third most common reporting structure in the learner presentations with a number of 20, though it was not included in Table 1 for it is not a traditional reporting verb.

TABLE 1
LIST OF REPORTING VERBS

No.	Verb
27	show
22	find
12	know
6	think, say
3	estimate, support, conclude
2	mention, prove, tell
1	convince, point out, report, see, list, believe

Reporting verbs not only attribute the evidence to the source, but also bear evaluative potential, communicating varied degrees of alignment and evaluation of the reported information (Hyland, 1999; Liardét & Black, 2019; Thompson & Ye, 1991). The presenter/writer may represent the reported information as factive (such as the verbs *show*, *find*), or nonfactive (such as *believe*), and indicate the assessed certainty and reliability what is cited. The choice of the reporting verbs allows the presenter/writer to construct a stance toward the cited information (i.e. positive, neutral, negative).

Of the 17 reporting verbs as well as the reporting structure *according to* in our dataset, the majority were neutral, revealing no specification of stance toward the reported information and thus detaching the presenters from responsibility for what was being reported. Such practices suggest that reporting verbs were seldom employed by the learners as a discourse tool to establish an authorial stance, and that the learners tended to act as an observer and informant, simply reporting or displaying their knowledge of certain information rather than an insider of knowledge construction. In addition, the employment of some reporting verbs (such as *say*, *tell*, *mention*, *see*) might be common in daily communication, but is of low frequency in academic discourse.

B. Modality for Heterogloss

Modality is another linguistic means of evaluating propositions or proposals, allowing heteroglossic space to be opened up to or closed down to a proposition or a proposal (Hood, 2010; Martin & Rose, 2007; Martin & White, 2005).

In our samples, fourfold linguistic realization of modality was identified, namely modal verbs, modal adverbs, attributes, and mental processes.

The learner presenters made assessments of likelihood or obligation through modal verbs and/or modal adverbs, such as *can*, *should*, *will*, *maybe*, etc. in the following examples from (11) to (13):

- (11) It can be said that stress can be seen almost everywhere in our lives. (G9W4)
- (12) Maybe some people think stress does more harm than good to our health. (G3W4)
- (13) We should carry out regular monitoring of blood sugar, and find abnormal cases in time to seek medical advice. (G9W8)

The learner presenters made assessments of likelihood or obligation through attributes (adjectives) as well, such as *possible*, *important*, *likely*, etc. in the following examples (14) and (15):

- (14) The second possible cause is the excessive leverage, which leads to the outbreak of risks. (G5W16)
- (15) It is important to invent a new type of temperature and humidity detector which can adapt to complex environment. (G7W16)

Certain mental processes (verb) were also employed by the learners to make assessments of likelihood or obligation, such as *I think*, *our group think*, *we believe*, etc. in the following examples (16) and (17):

- (16) I think that pressure is a double-edged sword. (G3W4)
- (17) Our group think it depends on the level of stress and our attitude to stress. (G9W4)

Modality can function as a resource for grading polarity, which resembles the operation of negotiation, adjusting heteroglossic space between positivity and negativity as to a claim or to a suggestion. The modal verb (*can*), attribute (*possible*), modal adverbs (*maybe*, *almost*) in the examples (11), (12) and (14) above depicted probability of the statements or usuality of the phenomenon, while the modal verb (*should*) in the example (13) and attribute (*important*) in the example (15) described obligation of the proposals. They modified plausibility of and commitment to a proposition or a proposal, and altered the degree of allowing possible alternative views of the audience.

The mental processes in the examples (16) and (17) foregrounded the novice presenters as the statement makers. The prominent self-mention practice helps reinforce the visibility of the speakers' agency (Hyland & Zou, 2021) on the one hand. On the other hand, it can unintentionally downgrade the credibility of the statements given the learners' academic naivete, and thus expand the space of negotiation.

Negation functioned in a similar way in which the speaker/writer placed his/her voice in relation to other potential opposing voices and thus more than one voice was implicated.

- (18) The information in network information security is no longer just your bank card password, ... (G8W16)
- (19) It doesn't mean we should refuse to eat fat and carbohydrates. (G1W8)

In the sentence (18) from our dataset, the learner presenter added a negative particle *no longer* to form a negation, and thus some potential opposing positions such as '*the information in network information security is just your bank card password*' or '*the information in network information security could just be your bank card password*' were implicated. The same applies to the sentence (19). In the sentence (19), the learner presenter added another negative particle *not*, declining a potential opposing position such as '*we should stop eating fat and carbohydrates*'. Negation can be realized in some other ways, such as adding certain negative prefixes or suffixes to the base word, or using verbs with negation (Kane, 2021). In our dataset, the learners tended to add the negative particles to form a negation.

Modality and negation are important linguistic resources in introducing alternative voices and modifying negotiability of the ideas. The dialogic functionality of modals in academic discourse has previously been analyzed by the researchers. Hyland (1996), for example, using the term *hedging* (which includes low intensity modals), holds that it is used to confirm the writer's professional persona, convey modesty and assist in the acceptance of his/her claim. Hyland and Zou (2021) observe that plausibility hedges which signal the speaker's certainty of a claim dominate the frequencies across disciplines in the Three-Minute Thesis presentations to downplay the strength of assertions as well as to bring the audience into the argument. Hyland and Jiang (2018), in analyzing interaction in academic writing in both hard and soft sciences over the past 50 years, discover that hedges are the most frequent linguistic devices in constructing interaction in academic writing as to involve readers in the endorsement of the writers' claims. For the researchers, the use of modality has not only epistemic dimension but also interpersonal function.

The use and dual functions of modals were also found in our learner presentations. However, the learner presenters tended to use modals of median and low value (like *can*, *could*, *may*, etc.) when presenting a claim and making speculative interpretations, and to utilize modals of high value (like *should*) when presenting a proposal. In fact, using high value modals is unusual in disciplinary interaction (Hyland & Jiang, 2018). When employing modals, the academics tend to use modals of median as well as low intensity to display modesty and assist in the approval of their claims.

C. Concession for Heterogloss

In our learners' presentations, concessive conjunction *but* was the most common maker of counter-expectancy, followed by concessive conjunctions *however* and *although*.

In the sentence (20), the learner presenter acknowledged the certainty about a general research area, in this case, a correlation between low blood sugar and cardiovascular disease, before presenting a negative aspect of current knowledge that constituted the focus of the presentation. The concessive conjunction *but* functioned to shift the polarity

from positive (*has an impact*) to negative (*remains unclear; more research is needed*).

(20) Low blood sugar has an impact on cardiovascular disease. But how hypoglycemia affects blood sugar and cardiovascular health remains unclear, and more research is needed. (G9W8)

In the sentence (21), the learner presenter reviewed the general conviction of the object of the presentation, in this case, sugar, before countering it by stating the misunderstanding of the object and presenting a positive aspect of it as well as extending the knowledge in some way. The concession flipped the polarity from negative to positive. The words *definitely*, *real* functioned to intensify the polarity, creating a sharper contrast between two positions connected by concessive conjunction *but*.

(21) Definitely, sugar will do a lot of harm to our teeth and body, but sugar in natural fruits and grains will not. Free sugar is our *real* enemy. (G12W16)

In the sentences (20) and (21), the previous knowledge or belief of the object of the presentation was countered. Conjunctions that function in this way in our learner samples also included *however*, *although*, as shown in the sentences (22) and (23).

(22) However, this research is still at the forefront, and whether the technology is mature or not needs further verification. (G13W16)

(23) Although moderate commercialization can certainly improve the local economic benefits, excessive commercialization of tourist attractions can also bring negative effects to the local areas. (G9W16)

Another resource for adjusting expectations used by the learners were continuatives, or concessive connectors. They indicated that what was described such as the duration, the number, the speed, the frequency, etc. did not match the expectation. In the sentence (24), *actually* expressed the countered reality, and *only* functioned to counter the expectation of how real in this case. Other continuatives used by the learners included *already*, *just*, *still*, and *even*.

(24) Actually, that was only true for people who also believed that stress is harmful for our health. (G10W4)

Co-articulation of concession and negation was also found in the learners' presentations as shown in the sentence (25) below as well as in the sentences (20) and (21) above. Negation in these sentences was presented in the form of negative particles *not* or morphological negation *un-*. Through the complementarity of negation and counter-expectancy, the presenters predicted and adjusted the audience assumptions and expectations, and thus re-positioned the audience to the objects of their presentations or to their own positions. Like modality and negation, concession functioned to manage the audience alignment and dis-alignment with what is known.

(25) Our economic growth does not rely on the real economy, but on financial speculation. (G8W16)

In academic discourse, concession is a key resource in creating a research space. By using concession, the writer/presenter indicates a gap or potential extension in the knowledge of the research object and subsequently introduces his/her own study. Thus concession, as a discourse strategy, is more common in the Introduction of a research paper/an academic presentation than in the other sections of academic discourse. Moreover, the countered/adjusted expectations are generated from the previous research.

In our learner presentations, however, the inappropriate use of concession was spotted. The learners tended to rely on common sense rather than the previous research to create a concession. Common sense, as well as imagined scenarios, statistical data, etc. can be used, but the principal purpose of using them in the Introduction is to build up rapport with the audience and recontextualize the presenters' research, not to construct knowledge (Boldt, 2019). Such sources are used in conjunction with a review of the previous research in oral academic presentations, and are hardly used in academic writing. Indicating a gap in the previous relevant research or extending previous knowledge in some way is an obligatory move in the Introduction of academic papers and academic presentations.

D. Triad for Heterogloss

The learners employed the three types of resources, namely projection, modality and concession, to bring in other voices so as to present their own work. Those resources were used independently as well as jointly to adjust the negotiability of the ideas and lend support to the claims, such as co-articulation of concession and negation (the negative polarity of modality), and coupling of projection and modality. Meanwhile, some academically inappropriate heteroglossic practices were detected. Those practices showed traces of daily communication, and more profoundly revealed the learners' misunderstanding of legitimate ways of knowing or knowledge in intellectual fields.

First, the learners tended to incorporate popular information such as lyrics, proverbs and personal anecdotes to support their claims, or to present knowledge as contested. In the process of knowledge construction, academics are apt to bring in others' work or scholarship rather than popular information. They review the previous research to show the significance of the general research area, to report on research that contributes to knowledge of their research objects, and to indicate a gap for their own research (Hood, 2010; Swales & Feak, 2012). They also engage with previous scholarship to discuss their own findings (Geng & Wharton, 2019; Loghmani et al., 2020). In oral academic discourse, the presence of popular information is hardly for the purpose of knowledge construction, but for building up rapport with listeners (Boldt, 2019). Engaging with previous scholarship remains an essential component of unfolding one's knowledge construction, in oral and written academic discourse alike. It distributes generally across sections of academic papers and presentations, especially in the Introduction, literature review, and discussion sections.

Second, the learners displayed a tendency to use obligation modal verb *should* in presenting a proposal, and to rely on neutral verbs in reporting information. This suggests that the learners may not be fully aware of the dual functions of

reporting verbs and the preferred ways of communicating authorial stances in academic discourse. Reporting verbs not only present information, but also communicate varied degrees of alignment and evaluation of what is reported, helping scholars craft their authorial stance (Liardét & Black, 2019). Moreover, high value modal verbs carry strong implications of authority on the speaker's/writer's part over the listener/reader, imposing on the listener/reader obligations or necessity determined by the speaker/writer. It violates the 'conventional fiction of democratic peer relationships' in academic discourse and clearly expresses the speaker's/writer's attempt to control the listener/reader (Hyland & Jiang, 2016, p. 38). Though there are disciplinary differences in the level and type of modality and evaluative reporting verbs (Hu & Wang, 2014; Hyland & Jiang, 2018), scholars tend to weave a tapestry of authorial stance and others' perspectives with less obvious authorial intervention in knowledge construction.

Based on our findings and the existent literature on heterogloss in academic discourse, this study presents a conceptual framework on the interrelated dimensions of heterogloss in learners' academic discourse: projection, modality, and concession (see Figure 2). As shown in this framework, the three aspects in the inner circle work independently or jointly to incorporate/decline alternative perspectives and help express authorial stances. Sources of citation, use of reporting verbs, ways of citation as well as positions of the citee outline the main features of projection in learners' academic discourse. The linguistic forms as well as value connotated in the forms depict the employment of modality. The linguistic forms and sources are two important aspects to generate a concession. Projection, modality and concession are purposefully distributed across sections of an academic genre and can be stamped with disciplinary features. Thus, the use of the triad elucidates the learners' heteroglossic practices in academic discourse, and can be referred further in equipping learners with resources for engaging with others' perspectives in an academically appropriate way.

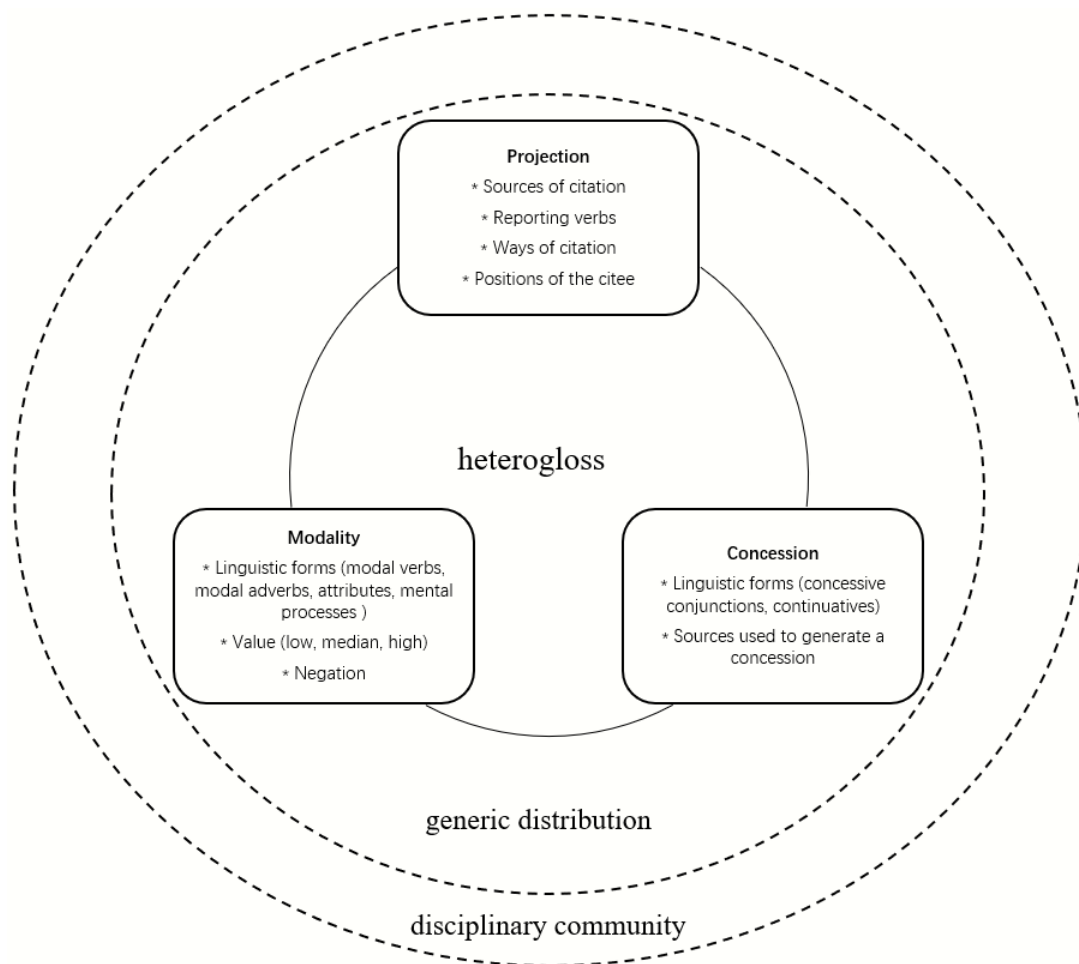


Figure 2. A Triadic Model of Heterogloss in Learners' Academic Discourse

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study has revealed several important linguistic features of heteroglossic practices in the academic presentations by the Chinese EFL undergraduates. First, the learners cited not only research-based information as evidence, but also nonacademic sources, such as lyrics, proverbs, etc. to support their positions. The research-based information cited was often generalized and remained anonymous, and the agent of research-based information was given when it was a

'household' authority among the learners, such as Harvard University. Second, the verbs used by the learners to report/cite were overwhelmingly neutral, revealing little their stance towards what was reported/cited. And some reporting verbs (such as *say*, *tell*, *see*) used by the learners would not be the choice in academic domain. Third, modality and negation were important resources in adjusting negotiability of ideas in the learner presentations, but the learners tended to deploy modals of high value in presenting a proposal, while using modals of median and low value to present a claim and make speculative interpretations. Fourth, though the learners used concession to manage the audience alignment and dis-alignment with what is known and to present the objects of their presentations, they relied heavily on common sense to present knowledge as contested. These features remained nearly alike in the three presentation tasks during the semester. This suggests that little spontaneous progression is made by the learners in constructing heteroglossic space in the academic genre and explicit instruction on those aspects may be a solution.

Several broad pedagogical implications follow from the findings for teaching the negotiation of heteroglossic space. First, nonacademic sources can be cited in oral academic presentations, but the functionality and the distribution as well as the types of them warrant guidance. Nonacademic sources, such as personal anecdotes, etc. can be employed in building solidarity with the listeners and assisting in the creation of a gap for oral academic presentations (Boldt, 2019). But these sources are not preferred otherwise in academic discourse, and they can markedly weaken the academic credibility of the presentations, for they are beyond the boundaries of legitimate way of knowing and knowledge in the academic community. Second, it is pedagogically sound to raise the learners' awareness of dual functions of reporting verbs to facilitate the introduction of evidence and situating authorial stances. The overreliance on neutral reporting verbs, providing no overt indication to the authorial stance on the evidence, needs to be balanced through pedagogical means. Furthermore, the frequent use of high value modals, such as *should*, for presenting a proposal or proposition is generally not common in academic discourse, and diverse ways of expressing presenters' stance and persuading listeners need to be on the list of instruction. Importantly, novice presenters need to be holistically equipped with the linguistic resources of projection, modality and concession in explicitly and implicitly positioning presenters, negotiating semantic space and gaining acceptance for their work in the targeted community.

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Description as a Fiction-Writing Mode Between Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* and Naguib Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*: A Comparative Study

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Abstract—Comparative literature expounds on the areas of convergence in literature and reproduces the cultural similarities between East and West, demonstrating its results in guiding literary and intellectual renewal movements. Arabic literature takes advantage of the works of literature of other nations and is always keen to develop and enrich its awareness and culture. As the novel is a celebrated genre used in the comparative literature area, the Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz, well-known as the Dickens of Egypt, is one of the key poles of the international Arab novel. Mahfouz's novels and short stories convey Cairo, the capital of Egypt, its neighborhoods, inhabitants, and groceries to the home of every reader. The images and representations of Cairo drawn by Mahfouz are compared to the masters of English literature, namely Charles Dickens who significantly impacted Mahfouz's writings, especially his great love for describing and depicting everything his eyes see. With appropriating a comparative study of Dickens's and Mahfouz's selected works, this paper examines the concept of "description as a fiction-writing mode" as reflected in two literary works—Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1850) and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* (1947) following the School of Comparative Literature based on the principle of similarity in its study and analysis of literary works.

Index Terms—Charles Dickens, comparative literature, description, Naguib Mahfouz, novel

I. INTRODUCTION

The Arabs have opened up to the culture and literature of other nations and hit the books about the various international genres of literature of the contemporary era. This openness has many important manifestations, such as translation, paving the way for mutual influence between the Arab and Western cultures and works of literature. In prose, especially the novel, the Arab novelists learn about the nature and structure of Western literature in its origins due to the general and similar currents prevailing in those literatures with the Arab literature (Al-Ghalith & Al-Sayyid, 2023). Moreover, the influence of literary schools mixes in these literatures, making it difficult to distinguish the lines of their influence in our literature and determine its extent from each literature (Al-Ghammaz, 2024; Sally, 2016).

Among the Arab novelists is Naguib Mahfouz, who is greatly influenced by European writers in general and English novelists, i.e. Charles Dickens in particular. The representations of Dickens's novels are deeply positioned in the mind of Mahfouz, embodying them in his novels through the global ingenuity in his description of Egypt's capital, Cairo, its neighborhoods, and its people (Abdeen, 2013). Many intellectuals - especially critics and writers - emphasize the similarities between the Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz and the British writer Charles Dickens, as both of them have gained fame as no other writer of his time had (Abu Keshk & Farman, 2022).

Even though the time gap between Mahfouz and Dickens is exactly a century, the world, the Arabs, and the Egyptians in particular have recently celebrated the second centenary of Dickens and the first centenary of Mahfouz.

Both novelists have had their works translated into almost all languages of the world (Al-Ghammaz, 2023). They also have been an inexhaustible source of knowledge for writers on theatre, cinema, and television. Although the film industry - not to mention television - has not yet begun in the era of Dickens, this confirms the importance and magnificence of literary works penned by Dickens and Mahfouz (Al-Ghammaz, 2024; Abdeen, 2013).

In this context, Charbel describes Mahfouz as the "Great Pyramid," saying "Whenever I hear the name of Egypt, Naguib Mahfouz used to stand out like a great pyramid" (2019, p. 1). Mahfouz's novels and short stories shine light on Cairo, taking its neighborhoods and inhabitants, to the home of every reader, so he or she unites with them and becomes an Egyptian citizen in all its manifestations. In this mood, Germon and Aylan (2021) confirm that "Naguib Mahfouz draws accurate paintings of his society, especially Cairo" on one hand. On the other hand, the Jordanian novelist Shalan (2006) regards Mahfouz as the master of detailed realism in the narration, hinting at the fact Mahfouz's picture of Cairo remains alive compared to the masters of European literature such as Balzac, Tolstoy, and Dickens, and thus dubbing Mahfouz as "Charles Dickens of Egypt".

Mahfouz as "Charles Dickens of Egypt" is reflected in his literary works, as Mahfouz has depicted the life of the middle class in the neighborhoods of Cairo, alongside the concerns and dreams of its people. Mahfouz has also portrayed the life of the Egyptian family in its internal relations and the extension of these relations in society. Later, after receiving the Nobel Prize in 1989, the British Channel 4 broadcast a video report from Cairo showing some features of Cairo mixed with Mahfouz's daily life (Al-Ghammaz, 2023).

Dickens's novels are characterized by extreme realism - as mentioned earlier - and the superior ingenuity and accuracy in describing all the environments in which he lived. Close to Mahfouz, Dickens is distinguished for detailing the characters of his works, exploring their depths and delving into them, along with describing their places to a point that many writers have not attained until now. Accordingly, the similarities between Dickens and Mahfouz are reflected in the deep textual structure, fondness for reading, realism in writing, and the ability to accurately describe places and analyze characters, as Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* and Dickens's *David Copperfield*, which critics almost unanimously agree that it is an autobiography of Dickens (Sehrawat, 2014). One of the important outstanding issues in modern literary thought is that Dickens and Mahfouz share the realism of plot and suspense.

With this discussion in mind about the use of description in literary works, Frederick (1977) defines description as a form of communication whose purpose is to create a soulful object, place, person, or any other related physical body. Together with argumentation, exposition, and narration, description constitutes the four rhetorical modes "also known as modes of discourse". Among the key modes of the fiction-writing are dialogue, action, summary, exposition, and specifically description (Page, 2006).

At the same level, description is a mode of fiction-writing used to convey a mental image of a certain story with its particulars. Alongside narration, summary, dialogue, and exposition, description is regarded as one of the most broadly documented of the fiction-writing modes. The significance of description as a mode of writing is reflected in Polking's words as he says that description not only builds up details of an object, person, or place but also adds life to these elements by wisely selecting and organizing words and sentences to yield the desired impact (Polking, 1990).

Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1850) and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* (1947) demonstrate the literary term of description as a fiction-writing mode. Even though each work revolves around a different society—the British society in Dickens's *David Copperfield* and the Egyptian Arab society in Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*, the depiction of characters and places exemplifies the use of description as a fiction-writing mode in the two writers' selected works.

This paper, while making a comparative study, gives textual focus to Dickens's *David Copperfield* and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*, addressing description as a fiction-writing mode. This paper aims to enrich modern scholarship about Dickens's *David Copperfield* and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* by furnishing a more detailed textual analysis of the two novels. Even though much ink has been shed on Dickens's *David Copperfield* and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*, nothing has been written on the concept of description as a fiction-writing mode in the said novels.

II. SIMILARITY BETWEEN MAHFOUZ AND CHARLES DICKENS

Like the French Balzac and Jules Pomegranate, Naguib Mahfouz has picked up his models in terms of development and aims for change, and this is embodied in his first experiences, such as *Cairo Modern* and *Midaq Alley*, representing the realistic stage in the writings of the novelist. A lot of intellectuals, especially critics and writers emphasize the similarities between Mahfouz and Dickens in terms of the strong influence of the environment in which each of them has grown up with the huge difference in life and place development, the superior ability of both to accurately describe that environment to the point that makes the reader almost always live in that environment with these realistic characters (Sehrawat, 2014). Accordingly, while Mahfouz makes us live with the bullies (Al-Futawat in Arabic) and families from the Egyptian urban rabble (Al-Harafish in Arabic) in the neighborhood, the merchants in Hamzawy, and the middle-class employees in Abbasiya, Dickens succeeds in making us live with the downtrodden and poor children deprived of money, kindness, education, orphans, and shelters in the middle of the London neighborhoods characterized by extreme poverty. At that time, child beggars were called street children in the language of these days, and to the same extent that makes us coexist with lawyers, litigants, criminals, and thieves in the corridors of British courts at that time. Like Mahfouz, Dickens could describe the beauty and make it out of life's beauty and ugliness alike, along with the charm of narration in a smooth language that attacks and captures the reader's heart to read more.

The director, Al-Ghazali (2006) has explored the biographical and literary aspects of the late writer Mahfouz, which affected his childhood and later reflected on his literary works. Al-Ghazali (2006) maintains that the Nobel Prize was not given for Mahfouz's *Sons of Our Neighborhood*, but rather the basis of the award is that the Prize Committee considers Mahfouz to be similar to Charles Dickens in his monitoring of society's issues and their temporal development, including *Sons of our Neighborhood*, which we can say is the story of humanity.

III. DESCRIPTION AS A FICTION-WRITING MODE IN CHARLES DICKENS'S *DAVID COPPERFIELD*

Although much ink has been spilled on Charles Dickens's novels from social, political, and economic vantages, little attention has been given to the term description as a fiction-writing mode in Dickens's *David Copperfield*. This section, accordingly, gives a deep insight into the concept of description as a fiction-writing mode by demonstrating the manifestations of the description of the characters and places as well.

A. Representations of the Description of the Characters

The novel revolves around the main character, David, and his life full of tragedies that he has suffered since he was born. With the death of David's father before his birth, his mother assumed the responsibility of raising him, and thus his happiness was incomplete. Shortly, David's mother married a rude man named Edward Murdstone "commonly known as Mr. Murdstone", who did not like David from the beginning, promoting him to advise David's mother, Clara, not to be lenient with David and to be harsh on him in her dealings with him. As a result, Mr. Murdstone, the cruel stepfather, has plotted to send him to a boarding school, so that he can't see his mother or his kind-hearted nanny, Clara Peggotty. In the school, David meets two friends, Traddles, a good-natured, quiet boy, and Steerforth, an older student whom he admires very much.

On David's birthday, he learns the news of his mother's death, which hits him like a thunderbolt, making him leave school and go home. Mr. Murdstone and his sister, however, do not like it, so they get rid of him by sending him to work in a winery. In the wine factory, he encounters many tragedies, as his work is not commensurate with his age as a child of no more than ten years old. David gets acquainted with a respectable person named Mr. Micawber, who rents an apartment for him next to his modest apartment, and David mixes with Mr. Micawber's family, he senses the kindness of those individuals and at the same time, he senses the strangeness in their behavior, as Mr. Micawber is a person accustomed to debts from people, which put him in prison.

With this, David decides to leave his job, fleeing and searching for one of his relatives, as he travels on foot and gets robbed, and so he only finds his aunt Miss Betsey Trotwood. David arrives exhausted and dirty, so she decides to take care of him, adopt him, and send him to a new school. He settles with a lawyer who is a friend of his aunt and gets to know his daughter Agnes, who helps him with his schoolwork and stands with him side by side. After that, David trained in a legal institution for a lawyer named Spenlow to qualify for the legal profession. He gets to know his daughter Dora and marries her, but she dies, so David decides to travel abroad to ease his grief over her death. Upon his return, he marries Agnes and becomes a famous writer.

Dickens is distinguished by the accurate physical and moral description of people and places, which contributes to educating the readers and informing them of the nature and characteristics of characters and places. As for the characters, Dickens describes them in an accurate and detailed manner, even if you think that this character stands right in front of you. While heading to Yarmouth with his nanny Peggotty for the first time, he describes the cart's carrier, saying "The carrier had a way of keeping his head down, like his horse, and of drooping sleepily forward as he drove, with one of his arms on each of his knees" (p. 46).

As David arrives at Mr. Peggotty's house, he proceeds to describe the members of this family, referring to Peggotty's brother Ham, saying "He was, now, a huge, strong fellow of six feet high, broad in proportion, and round-shouldered; but with a simpering boy's face and curly light hair that gave him quite a sheepish look" (p. 48).

As gleaned from the previous excerpt, these descriptions fit his work as a sailor, like his father, Mr. Peggotty. It is evident how Dickens's description of Mr. Micawber is characterized by some wit accompanied by childish sarcasm, adding some humor to his characters. Dickens, on the other hand, does not only describe his characters in an accurate and detailed external description but also in an internal and psychological description to give the reader more insight into the realism of his characters on the physical and moral level because this description, in turn, has a great impact in defining the nature of the character, in terms of goodness and malice, richness and poverty, knowledge, and ignorance. This description demonstrates a close relationship between a character's outward appearance and his behaviors, morals, or actions. The reader, through this humorous description of Mr. Micawber, has prior knowledge of the simplicity and kindness of this character as well. Dickens, for example, shines the light on the history and success of Strong's school thanks to the efforts of its headmaster, who is a kind and gentle character, saying "But the Doctor himself was the idol of the whole school: and it must have been a badly composed school if he had been anything else, for he was the kindest of men" (p. 358).

On the other hand, Dickens proceeds to make a comparison between the Creakle School and the Strong School, saying "Doctor Strong's was an excellent school; as different from Mr. Creakle's as good is from evil. It was very gravely and decorously ordered, and on a sound system; with an appeal, in everything" (p. 356).

What is more, Dickens describes David's good-hearted nanny as David's love for her consoles him for what he lost in his life, saying "I hear sobs and I see that good and faithful servant, whom of all the people upon earth I love the best, and unto whom my childish heart is certain that the Lord will one day say: Well done" (p. 197).

On the other hand, Dickens is back to describing Mrs. Murdstone in a way that explains how this woman is cruel, as her features strongly reflect that. On the lips of David, Dickens says "It was Miss Murdstone arrived with a gloomy looking lady and dark like her brother, whom she greatly resembled in face and voice; and with very heavy eyebrows, nearly meeting over her large nose, as if, being disabled by the wrongs of her sex from wearing whiskers" (pp. 74-75).

As drawn from the previous excerpt, this is what her unpleasant actions and attitudes toward child David have proved.

B. Representations of the Description of the Places

Dickens not only describes his characters only, but also places such as houses and neighborhoods, and everything that his eyes fall upon in an accurate and detailed manner. He describes David's old house in Blunderstone, saying "On the ground-floor is Peggotty's kitchen, opening into a back yard; with a pigeon-house on a pole, in the centre, without any pigeons in it; a great dog-kennel in a corner, without any dog" (p. 25). Dickens adds "There is one cock who gets upon a post to crow, and seems to take particular notice of me as I look at him through the kitchen window, who makes me shiver, he is so fierce" (p. 26).

During David's travel to Mr. Peggotty's house, Dickens gives us an accurate and moving description of David's house, which is a boat on land that makes the reader yearn to live in it, saying, "If it had been Aladdin's palace, roc's egg...., I suppose I could not have been more charmed with the romantic idea of living in it" (p. 49). He adds "There was a delightful door cut in the side, and it was roofed in, and there were little windows in it; but the wonderful charm of it was, that it was a real boat which had no doubt been upon the water hundreds of times, and which had never been intended to be lived in, on dry land" (p. 50). In the same vein, in describing one of the buildings that represent a large gathering of many poor people who find neither shelter nor place to live, Dickens says "The house swarmed with inmates. As we went up, doors of rooms were opened and people's heads put out; and we passed other people on the stairs, who were coming down. In glancing up from the outside, before we entered, I had seen women and children lolling at the windows over flower-pots" (p. 1065).

With this detailed description, Dickens shows that this makes the place worse than more.

IV. DESCRIPTION AS A FICTION-WRITING MODE IN NAGUIB MAHFOUZ'S *MIDAQ ALLEY*

Close to Charles Dickens's novels, Mahfouz's novels in general and *Midaq Alley* in particular have been personally, socially, and politically explored. Little insight, however, is furnished to the term of description as a fiction-writing mode in Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*. This section, accordingly, expounds the literary concept of description as a fiction-writing mode through examples related to characters and places from the novel itself.

A. Representations of the Description of the Characters

Set in Khan el-Khalili in Egypt, *Midaq Alley*, an Egyptian Novel, revolves around a public street alive with exciting Egyptians thriving to cope with the daily hardships of life. The events of the novel take place in this small alley in the forties of the twentieth century after the Second World War and its impact on the Egyptians in *Midaq Alley*, a small popular alley that branches off from Al-Sadaqiyyah Street parallel to Al-Azhar Street. The story revolves around Hamida, who is considered the heroine of the story of *Midaq Alley*, where Naguib has devoted the largest space to Hamida, whose story ended in the arms of the English officers. With her immoral behavior, Hamida ended the story of her fiancé, who was murdered by the British officers.

According to the path of dramatic construction in which Naguib Mahfouz has excelled, the essence of the idea of the novel revolves around the inevitable end, which is a dramatic end for the naive hero Abbas, whose blind love for an illiterate, fiery, prostitute girl pushed him to recklessness and death. Later, Hussain Kirsha, son of the lecherous café owner who works for the British soldiers, brings the grief-stricken news to Midaq Alley, which speaks of it for a time, and then returns to its ordinary routine.

In line with the path of Dickens of the accurate description of characters and places, the precise and full-of-life description of the characters, whether it is a physical or moral description, is the feature that Mahfouz excelled at, which makes him distinguished in his prose and realistic writings in particular. Likewise, Dickens' accurate description of places contributes to raising the readers' awareness about the nature and culture of popular Egyptian life in all its details, especially its places and traits. Mahfouz always describes the characters in an accurate and in-depth description, as if he draws for readers a painting for each character in the novel. In describing Hamida, Mahfouz says "Hamida was in her twenties, of medium stature and with a slim figure. Her most remarkable features were her black, beautiful eyes, the pupils and whites of which contrasted in a most striking and attractive way" (p. 18).

Without a shred of doubt, Mahfouz, in his description of the characters, blends the physical aspect, that is, the external or physical appearance, with the moral aspect related to the psychological and ethical characteristics of Hamida. Dickens says "She could take on an appearance of strength and determination which was most unfeminine, and her temper had always, even in Midaq Alley itself, been something no one could ignore" (p. 18). Here, readers notice a shared agreement among the Midaq Street residents that Hamida is a very striking and beautiful girl. Not like other girls,

but despite her beauty, Hamida is distinguished by amazing strength and great anger, which Hamida has become famous for in the whole alley. Mahfouz continues to describe Hamida's morals throughout the novel pages, saying "Hamida continued on her way, enjoying her daily promenade and looking in the shop windows, one after the other. The luxurious clothes stirred in her greedy and ambitious mind bewitching dreams of power and influence" (p. 28).

This excerpt summarizes all the characteristics distinguishing Hamida represented by her love for money, because it is the only means capable of achieving all her dreams and desires, which are summed up in the love of power and control, the love of clothes, and the love of everything that she desires, according to Mahfouz.

With the two-character conversation between Abbas and his childhood friend Hussain Kirsha, Mahfouz provides a full picture of the morals of this young man who is completely different from his friend, saying "Just then Hussain Kirsha appeared; he was dressed in trousers, a white shirt, and a straw hat, making an ostentatious show of looking at his gold wristwatch, his small darting eyes filled with pride of possession" (p. 24).

Moreover, Mahfouz makes a wonderful comparison between Abbas Hilu and his friend Hussain Kirsha from childhood to youth, hinting at the stark contrast in the character of these two friends who have maintained their friendship. Unlike his friend, who is known for his extraordinary activities, to the extent that Mahfouz describes him as a sinful criminal, Hilu is a good, decent, religious, calm, peaceful young man who is content with his life and work. Also, the big difference and the stark difference between the morals of Abbas and the morals of Hamida are easily noticed. In other words, a tremendous gap is experienced between Abbas's kindness, consent, and contentment that his eyes speak of, and Hamida's strength and anger that ignite like a spark from her black eyes and aspiring soul for money, dissatisfaction with her life, and unwillingness to live in the alley. This image, presented by Mahfouz from the first moment of the novel, makes the readers predict directly the end of the relationship between these two young men, for Hamida, as an ambitious and rebellious girl, is not suitable for a young man like Abbas, and her arrogance and greed can never be satisfied, which is what happens at the end of the events of the novel.

In the same vein, in his description of his characters, Mahfouz is characterized by wit and humor to add a sense of humor and irony to the atmosphere of the novel and construct a deep relationship between his readers and his characters so that they appear closer and more realistic. In the description of Uncle Kamil, "Basbousa/sweets" seller, Mahfouz says "Two shops of Uncle Kamil, the sweets seller, to the right of the alley entrance and the barbershop on the left, remain open until shortly after sunset, and it is Uncle Kamil's habit, even his right, to place a chair on the threshold of his shop and drop off to sleep with a fly whisk resting in his lap" (p. 3).

Mahfouz draws a complete picture of Uncle Kamil with brilliance and accuracy and adds to it a side of humor and wit that increases our love and admiration for the simplicity of this character. Uncle Kamil's appearance indicates the extent of his kindness and good treatment, as he is a father and even a family to Abbas Hilu, and the people of the alley have grieved a lot for him when he passed away. It is clear here how accurate Mahfouz is in his description of Uncle Kamil, as he draws a picture of this uncle for the readers while he is in front of his shop and any one of us can imagine his image. It also gives him a kind of wit that suggests the popularity and simplicity of this poor man and his childlike spontaneity.

Mahfouz goes on to describe his characters one by one to provide the readers with a clear picture that informs them of the fate of each character, demonstrating the reader's awareness at the social, intellectual, cultural, and religious levels. However, in the description of Radwan Hussainy during his time at Kirsha's cafe at night, Mahfouz says "Radwan Hussainy was a man of impressive appearance, both broad and tall, a flowing black cloak covering his ample form, his face large and whitish with tinges of red. He wore a reddish-colored beard. His forehead seemed to shine with light" (p. 6).

Thanks to this beautiful picture of Hussainy, readers have already felt all this through Hussainy's dignity, serenity, beauty, and internal and external purity together. Hussainy is the sanctuary of all those who suffer distress in the alley and the man of sermons, pearls of wisdom, and guidance, as he is the wise mentor and advisor, and for this reason, all the people of the alley have loved him. This also demonstrates what distinguishes Mr. Radwan Al-Hussainy from good qualities such as patience, faith, and love for goodness and people, despite all the sorrows, disappointments, and loss of children. This character, distinguished by her faith and serenity, creates a special flavor in the novel with a novel and pure spirit. Mahfouz has excelled and shone in describing and delivering Hussainy's wisdom on his tongue, as these wisdoms inspire and communicate their messages to all humanity, calling for peace and love.

Contrary to this illuminating and bright image of Hussainy's character that is loved by everyone in the alley, making the readers fall in love with him, the same readers find Kirsha's character as a strange, abnormal, and morally and socially outcast character, to say the least. Addressing the readers, Mahfouz describes this character in the ugliest image that can describe a person who has been changed by the misfortunes and changes in life. After the war and occupation, Mahfouz says "Mr. Kirsha was a poor man, however, unlike the majority of cafe proprietors, not because his business was unprofitable, but because he was a squanderer, wasting his profits and throwing his money about with nothing to show for it" (p. 32). Unlike the first character represented by Mr. Radwan Hussainy, the ugliness of Mr. Karsh's qualities makes the reader alienate him.

B. Representations of the Description of the Places

Similar to Dickens, Mahfouz has excelled at describing places such as houses, neighborhoods, and cafes in his novels and short stories the same as his characters. If we turn to Mahfouz, he is famous for describing characters, places, and

everything he daily meets, such as streets, neighborhoods, and residences alike. The place in the novel is a substantial part of the document of time, as it constitutes the imagined social environment derived from the history of people, events, facts, and documents (Sehrawat, 2014). Usually, the discourse in the novel invests the social legacy of the dimensions of the place in the interpretation of reality and draws the demographic sign that expresses the writer's visions and aspirations, as well as his expectations (Al-Ghammaz et al., 2022).

Within this atmosphere, Sally (2016) maintains that Midaq Alley is part of a place in Cairo, where Mahfouz begins his novel to describe and convey its images as they are. Mahfouz, accordingly, has described the alley with its houses, its common people with their ordinary nature, and all its shops, along with the feeling of money and the monotony of life there, as is the habit of the life of Egyptians in similar areas. It is a picture of the simple popular Egyptian alley. In the novel, the setting is often the hero, as it is the sacred bond for all the relationships that unite the individual and his society on the one hand, and the rest of the characters on the other; that is, between all the inner man's innermost being, with all the psychological, intellectual and social struggles he experiences, and each character and its counterparts from the characters of the entire novel. The place reveals the tragedy of these characters as an image of the conflict within the novel, which is the conflict of the characters with themselves and with each other and with the place as well as the prevailing conditions in it.

With that being said, Mahfouz begins his narration with an accurate and vivid description of the alley, demonstrating the alley's originality and antiquity, saying "Many things combine to show that Midaq Alley is one of the gems of times gone by and that it once shone forth like a flashing star in the history of Cairo of the Fatimids, the Mamlukes, or the Sultans" (p. 2).

Importantly, readers easily note how Mahfouz, in his description of this alley, has focused on the ancient and original historical aspect to which the alley belongs, and he continues describing it, saying "Although Midaq Alley lives in almost complete isolation from all surrounding activity, it clamors with a distinctive and personal life of its own, and its roots connect with life as a whole and retains a number of the secrets of a world now past" (p. 2).

This alley is the miniature sample, not only of Egypt but rather a revelation of the secrets of the whole world that it declares and hides. This alley is a miniature human model of the world expressing Mahfouz's vision of the whole world. Later, Mahfouz goes on to describe the alley to give us a realistic picture of it by drawing a clear picture of the alley in its shape, its shops, the coffee shop, and the only two girls who are in it. Mahfouz sums up the alley with the phrase that it is confined between three walls like a trap to express the smallness and simplicity of this humble place, and then continues his description of the shops in it, saying "The barbershop, although small, is considered in the alley to be rather special and has a mirror and an armchair, as well as the usual instruments of a barber" (p. 3). Mahfouz describes the café, saying "In Kirsha's café, light streams from its electric lamps, their wires covered with flies and is beginning to fill with customers. It is a square room, somewhat dilapidated, and in spite of its dinginess, its walls are covered with arabesques" (p. 4).

With this description in mind, the café is yet bustling with customers day and night. Likewise, in the description of the rooms, he says in the description of the room of Umm Hamida "The room was small, with two old-fashioned sofas facing one another and a battered table on which rested an ashtray, and on the floor was a straw mat" (p. 12). This description expresses the difficult social situation in which Hamida and her mother live in such a poor house.

V. DESCRIPTION AS A FICTION-WRITING MODE BETWEEN SIMILARITY AND DIFFERENCE

Both novelists Dickens and Mahfouz are keen to describe their characters and portray them in an accurate and detailed way thanks to the extent of these two writers' love for description, which is a common feature between them. The love of these two writers for this description is evident in the two novels to inform the reader of everything related to their characters so that the reader has that complete and detailed picture of everything related to the characters of the novel (Al-Gahlith & Shalabi, 2022). In their description, these writers also mix the external aspect or the physical appearance and the psychological aspect as well to give the reader a more realistic picture of their characters. In describing Hamida, Mahfouz says "Hamida was in her twenties, of medium stature and with a slim figure. Her skin was bronze-colored and her face a little elongated, unmarked, and pretty. Her most remarkable features were her black, beautiful eyes, the pupils and whites of which contrasted in a most striking and attractive way" (p. 18) He adds "When, however, she set her delicate lips and narrowed her eyes, she could take on an appearance of strength and determination which was most unfeminine, and her temper had always, even in Midaq Alley itself, been something no one could ignore" (p. 18).

Mahfouz explains that, unlike the other girls in the neighborhood, despite her beauty, she is characterized by amazing strength and great anger, which she is known for in the alley (Alkam, 2023). On the other hand, in *David Copperfield*, Dickens also mentions a female model represented by Mrs. Murdstone, who is characterized by a sharp and harsh character that women are not familiar with. Dickens describes Mrs. Murdstone in a way that explains how this woman is cruel, as her features strongly reflect that, saying "It was Miss Murdstone who was arrived, and a gloomy looking lady she was; dark, like her brother, whom she greatly resembled in face and voice; and with very heavy eyebrows, nearly meeting over her large nose" (pp. 74-75).

With that, Dickens asserts that Mrs. Murdstone is characterized by a tyrannical nature and a demonic, fierce, and puritanical temperament proven by her cruel behavior with the child David. Among the points of similarity between Dickens and Mahfouz is also the elaboration in the description with the addition of an atmosphere of humor and irony.

It is evident how Dickens's description of Mr. Micawber is characterized by some wit accompanied by childish sarcasm, adding some humor to his characters. In the same vein, in his description of his characters, Mahfouz is characterized by wit and humor to add a sense of humor and irony to the atmosphere of the novel and construct a deep relationship between his readers and his characters so that they appear closer and more realistic. In the description of Uncle Kamil, "Basbousa/sweets" seller, Mahfouz says "He has a belly like a barrel, great projecting breasts, and he seems scarcely to have any neck at all. Between his shoulders lies his rounded face, so puffed and blood-flecked that his breathing makes its furrows disappear" (p. 3).

Mahfouz draws readers a picture of this uncle while he is in front of his shop, and any one of us can imagine his picture. He has also endowed him with a kind of wit that suggests the popularity and simplicity of this poor man with childlike spontaneity. Equally, Dickens and Mahfouz are always taken with describing the buildings, streets and slums, houses, and rooms. In his description of one of the buildings that is a gathering of poor people, Dickens says "The house swarmed with inmates" (p. 1065).

As gleaned from the previous excerpt, this descriptive section shows the state of poverty and misery experienced by the English popular neighborhoods, as the poor resort to housing in such gatherings full of filth so that they do not sleep in the streets and roads. On a parallel line, in *Midaq Alley*, Mahfouz shows a similar situation by describing the ruined house (Al-Kharabah in Arabic) in which Zaita, the maker of cripples, lives. Mahfouz says "In the wall facing the entrance, there is a small, wooden door which opens onto a grimy little outbuilding smelling of dirt and filth, for it has only one tiny window in the opposite wall overlooking the courtyard of an old house" (p. 38).

With this description, Mahfouz depicts that state of filth, dirt, and complete darkness surrounding it. Mahfouz depicts that state of filth, dirt, and complete darkness surrounding it, which reveals the ugliness of the situation experienced by the poor and miserable members of society. Appropriating these lengthy descriptive passages, both novelists expose reality and shed light on this class of society and the reality of poverty and misery in which it lives. The similarity between Mahfouz and Dickens appears in their combination of contradictions in one spot, where *Midaq Alley* is the full picture of what Dickens loves in terms of psychological comfort and fun alongside darkness, violence, madness, and death. Dickens's first novels combine the reality among spiritual, material, and chaotic persons, such as the meeting of the pimp with the Salafist at the café in Midaq Alley, which reminds of some of the features of Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, for these variations give the atmosphere of the novel a lot of vitality and are used as a suspense device. Nevertheless, Dickens is considered more optimistic than Mahfouz, but Mahfouz is considered the most skillful novelist to transfer the reader's body and soul to the novelist's atmosphere and his private world by exaggerating the focus on tiny and small details (Abdullah, 2005). Therefore, Mahfouz's novel is full of detailed descriptions of every small and large idea and event, whatever it may be.

VI. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, Mahfouz's appropriations of Dickens's use of description as a fiction-writing mode can be seen in six basic patterns. Firstly, Dickens's and Mahfouz's descriptions of the characters have mixed the physical aspect, that is, the external or physical appearance, and the moral aspect related to the psychological and moral characteristics to give the reader a more realistic picture of their characters, physically and morally, because this description has a great impact in defining the nature of the personality in terms of goodness, malice, wealth, poverty, culture, and ignorance. Secondly, Dickens and Mahfouz are interested in portraying their characters with sincerity and honesty. The characters' qualities in their generosity, vitality, sincerity, love, and ability to arouse the sympathy of others and reach their hearts give this world a sense of sincerity and universality.

Thirdly, Dickens's and Mahfouz's characters are inspired by reality and the local environment, whether Egyptian Arabic or European English, as these characters are familiar models in society. Fourthly, these characters, being realistic in their life, and thinking, as well as their actions, originated from the lowest classes and are reflected in thousands of people because they are a true reflection of their attitudes and traits. Fifthly, Dickens's and Mahfouz's novels are constructed on the fact that the place is often the hero and the sacred link for all the relationships that unite the individual and his society on the one hand, and the rest of the characters on the other. Sixthly, the places described by Dickens and Mahfouz are similar and focus on describing buildings, streets, houses, and rooms. These places have gathered different and contradictory characters at the same time, where the poor and the rich, the religious and the secular, the good and the bad all gathered in one place and one time.

The Mahfouzian adoption of Dickens renders him a true admirer and follower of the British Boz. Even though Dickens's high stand and position are deeply rooted among modern scholars, Mahfouz stands in a clear position towards Dickens as a universal phenomenon and literary figure that transcends regional and ritual limitations. Mahfouz's appropriation of Dickens is like an invitation to read the British Boz as an icon of comparative literature.

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The Speech Act of Criticism Strategy Analysis on the Hashtag #Wadasmelawan

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Abstract—The study aims to describe the function of the hashtag #WadasMelawan and the criticism speech act strategy in voicing social justice for Wadas residents. Wadas is a village in the Central Java Province of Indonesia that is projected to be developed as an adhesive mining site—a government plan that the local Wadas villagers reject. The data in this study were collected on February 8 and 9, 2022, and processed using NVivo software. A total of 1550 tweets were analyzed using the hashtag function (Simpson, 2018) and the speech acts of criticism strategy (Nguyen, 2005). The results indicated that the #WadasMelawan has functions in expressing victimhood, solidarity, integration (victimhood and solidarity), and hashtag alone (expressing either solidarity or empathy). The speech acts of criticism strategy are negative evaluation, disapproval, disagreement, statement of difficulty, and consequences. In addition, indirect strategies are correction, indicating standards, preaching, demand for change, advice on change, uncertainty, asking, sarcasm, and the use of emojis or pictures. The #WadasMelawan and criticism strategy involved the media voicing justice for Wadas on X (formerly known as Twitter).

Index Terms—speech acts of criticism strategy, #WadasMelawan, hashtag function, social justice

I. INTRODUCTION

Social justice movements are collective actions that react to injustice, oppression, violence, political conditions, and economic or cultural circumstances (Horn, 2013; Nardini et al., 2021). The use of language in social movements serves as social integration, cultural outreach, and social interaction, as well as a channel for instilling values and bringing people, ideas, and society together (Edrington & Lee, 2018). Nowadays, social media not only functions as a communication tool but is also employed as a tool to voice social movements against injustice (Brunsting & Postmes, 2002). Additionally, social media is considered a more democratic medium than others because of its openness and freedom. Moreover, it is not controlled by elite media, which is usually one-way for the listener (Edrington & Lee, 2018).

One social media platform is X (formerly known as Twitter), which has several features, including hashtags (#). A hashtag is a way of labeling a tweet (a short text message of 280 characters or less posted on the social media application X) and indicates that the tweet is part of a larger theme. In addition, a hashtag also connects an X user with other users who are interested in the same topic so that the hashtag creates a network (Giaxoglou, 2018). Using a hashtag in a tweet also makes the tweets more searchable by wider X communities. Furthermore, tweets can become a trending topic due to the increase in the number of users using the hashtag during certain periods (Giaxoglou, 2018).

As a tool for voicing social movements, X (and under its former name, Twitter) has been extensively studied (Cao et al., 2022; Datiri, 2021; Field et al., 2022). Field et al. (2022) examined the emotions expressed on the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag. The results of their research highlighted users' anger and disgust for racist behavior. In addition, Cao et al. (2022) and Cao et al. (2022) studied the hashtag #StopAsianHate, which emerged in protest of the racist treatment of Asian Americans due to the outbreak of the coronavirus. Moreover, Datiri (2021) examined the strategies of African feminist activists who applied X (formerly known as Twitter) to voice injustice and violence against women through the hashtags #JusticeForNoura and #BringBackOurGirls.

Researchers in Indonesia have also conducted studies on the use of hashtags to advocate social justice movements in their own country. Pratiwi (2021), for example, examined the use of the hashtag #SaveIbuNuril on X (formerly known as Twitter) to voice violence against women. In addition, Apriyani (2021) researched the function of social media in protesting against government policies through the hashtags #GejayanMemanggil, #MosiTidakPercaya, and #BengawanMelawan. Moreover, P. Sitowin (2019) investigated the use of social media to protest the construction of a cement factory in Rembang, Indonesia. Residents were so against the project that, along with using social media to protest it, residents from the Kendeng Mountains in Central Java protested the construction by casting their feet in blocks of cement. One demonstrator, a Mrs. Patmi, died as a result. The incident echoed across the protesters' solidarity movement on X (formerly known as Twitter), spawning the hashtags #KendengLestari, #SaveKendeng, #KendengMelawan, and #SaveIbuPatmi.

The hashtag #WadasMelawan appeared on X (formerly known as Twitter) on February 8, 2022 (Andriyanto, 2022), and was first posted by @Wadas_Melawan. Earlier on that day, approximately 70 surveyors, accompanied by 250 officers for their protection, visited Wadas Village in the Bener District of Purworejo Regency in Central Java Province (Heksantoro, 2022). The arrival of the surveyors and their apparatuses for measuring were the result of the Governor of Central Java's Decree No. 590/41/2018, which determined that Wadas Village was an andesite mining site for materials for the construction of the nearby Bener Dam. Nevertheless, most Wadas residents rejected the plan (Ekayanta, 2022). As a result, the surveyors and police arrived in Wadas Village to take land measurements for the mining project, but were soon met by local protestors. Things soon got violent, and a total of 63 residents, including 13 children, were detained.

As a result, the #WadasMelawan hashtag evolved as a means of protest against the authorities' inhumane treatment of Wadas village residents. The hashtag immediately took first place as a trending topic in Indonesia because many netizens tweeted the hashtag. The large number of tweets containing #WadasMelawan and criticism of the actions of the apparatus and government decisions are interesting to examine, particularly from the aspect of the hashtag function and speech act of criticism as a means of voicing social justice on social media. From a review of previous studies, it can be argued that a study on social movement through #WadasMelawan on X (formerly known as Twitter) has never been conducted. Hence, there are two questions to be answered by this study:

1. What is the function of the #WadasMelawan hashtag in voicing the Wadas social movement on X (formerly known as Twitter)?
2. What are the speech acts of criticism strategies contained in the #WadasMelawan tweets as a criticism of the apparatus and the government action?

According to Simpson (2018), activists use a hashtag on X (formerly known as Twitter) to promote a social movement or a justice movement. Moreover, a hashtag has four functions, namely: 1) to reveal expressions when there are victims of oppression or violence; 2) to express solidarity; 3) to express victimization and solidarity at the same time (a combined hashtag for different functions); and 4) to show solidarity or victimization even if it's just a hashtag without a statement. Hashtags can be placed at the beginning, within, or at the end of a statement in a tweet. In addition, the hashtag #WadasMelawan is an integral part of criticisms stated in tweets against the government's actions and policies related to the decision to make Wadas a part of the Bener Dam construction project.

Criticizing is an illocutionary act to assess negative actions, choices, words, and products (Nguyen, 2005). This speech act of criticism is carried out to influence the listener's behavior or actions so that they become better in the future, according to the speaker's view. Furthermore, Hyland (2000) said that criticism is an expression of dissatisfaction or

negative comments that can be analyzed using the Speech Act Theory put forward by Austin (1962). Moreover, Min (2008) stated that based on Austin's speech act analysis, the performative verb "to criticize" is an act of criticism (a speech act of criticism). Meanwhile, Searle (1979), in Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo's 2022 work, classified speech acts based on their functions: declaration, representative, expressive, directive, and commissive. Moreover, criticism consists of declarative, representative, and expressive language. Hence, commissive and directive are not included in critical speech acts.

Several studies have been carried out on speech acts of criticism; for instance, Nguyen (2005) examined Vietnamese students of foreign languages and their speech acts of criticism and the responses to them. In addition, Farnia (2015) studied speech acts of criticism among native speakers of Persian. Furthermore, Al-Kayed and Al-Ghoweri (2019) examined the speech act of criticism strategy of Jordanian Arabic speakers. Moreover, Jauhari (2018b) researched the response to criticism in the Javanese Mataram cultural community. Meanwhile, Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022) examined the speech acts of criticism strategies used by males and females to criticize government policies on Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter).

Meanwhile, there has been only one study that focuses on the speech acts of criticism on X (formerly known as Twitter) and Facebook and considers gender an influential factor in selecting the speech act strategy. Unlike previous studies, this study not only aims to describe the speech act of criticism strategy posed by X (formerly known as Twitter) users toward government policy and their violent actions, but it also describes the function of the hashtag #WadasMelawan as a part of the social movement. The two elements, namely the speech act of criticism strategy and the hashtag #WadasMelawan, provide a cohesive approach to expressing the social justice movement of Wadas on X (formerly known as Twitter). This study contributes to the speech act of criticism in online social media and the study of social media as a means for voicing social justice as a part of the social movement in real-life situations.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology applied in this study is qualitative to explain the data containing the hashtag and to describe the speech act. The quantitative method is applied to count the data containing the categorized strategy. The research procedure followed the interactive model analysis proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2017). The analysis comprises data collection, data reduction, data display, and concluding conclusions.

A. Data Collection and Reduction

Data was collected using NVivo software with NCapture installed on a Google Chrome add-on toolbar. The NCapture documented and saved the tweet status and comments containing #WadasMelawan from X (formerly known as Twitter). Additionally, NCapture documented the public profile of the users (X ID, username, tweet content, time tweeted, location, Web URL, and so on). However, user identity data was removed to ensure that users remained anonymous, following the X research guidelines stated by Ayers et al. (2018). Data was collected from February 8, 2022, when the hashtag #WadasMelawan first appeared, to February 9, 2022. The total number of tweets during the two days was 189,000.

Data reduction included retweet responses (sharing tweet content by pressing the circulation symbol) or likes (liking a tweet by pressing the heart symbol) because it only copied and pasted the original data. Data containing ads with #WadasMelawan was not included because the purpose of using the hashtag was to gain recognition so that the ads would be more widely known. Therefore, the data analyzed amounted to 1,550 tweets that were in either Indonesian or English. (Still, the example data is rendered only in English in the data presentation.) Afterwards, the data was encoded according to two distinct categories: the hashtag function and the method of the speech act of criticism.

B. Displaying Data and Drawing Conclusions

The data display and conclusion consisted of two steps. The first is to present the hashtag #WadasMelawan function data in a table showing its frequency and words. This study applied the theory of the function of hashtags on X (formerly known as Twitter) as a tool to raise awareness of social change movements (Simpson, 2018). The function of hashtags is to raise awareness about victims of oppression or violence, to express solidarity, to combine more than one hashtag for different functions (raise awareness and express solidarity), and to show solidarity even if only through the use of a hashtag.

The second step was to display and analyze the data on the strategies of speech acts of criticism that were used. The data were classified based on the framework of Nguyen (2005), adapted by Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022). Nguyen (2005) divides critical speech act strategies into indirect and direct criticism. The direct criticism speech act strategy consists of negative evaluation, disapproval, expression of disagreement, statement of difficulty, and consequences. Indirect strategies include correction, standard setting, preaching, demand for change, advice about change, expression of uncertainty, asking or presupposing, sarcasm, and other hints, pictures, or videos. Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022) added "grievances to God" as part of a strategy of speech act criticism. Then, based on the results of the analysis, conclusions were drawn.

III. RESULTS

A. The Function of #WadasMelawan

Simpson (2018) mentions some functions of the hashtag as part of a social justice movement on X (formerly known as Twitter), namely expressing victimhood through oppression or violence, expressing solidarity, combining more than one hashtag for different functions (expressing victim and solidarity), and using the hashtag alone to show solidarity or victimhood. The following table illustrates the frequency and percentage of the #WadasMelawan function.

TABLE 1
THE FUNCTION OF #WADASMELAWAN

No	Hashtag Function	Frequency	Percentage
1	Solidarity	583	38%
2	Victimhood	635	41%
3	Combine Hashtag	258	17%
4	Hashtag Alone	74	5%
	Total	1550	100%

Based on Table 1 above, victimhood is the highest function at 41%, followed by solidarity at 38%. The explanation for each function is as follows:

(a). *The Solidarity Function*

The hashtag #WadasMelawan as an expression of solidarity appears 583 out of 1550 times, giving it a percentage of 38%. The hashtag was used to express a sense of togetherness, approval, and support for social movements to get social justice for Wadas, as shown in the example below.

Example 1

Indonesian: “URGENT ACTION!!! HENTIKAN RENCANA PENGUKURAN TAHAP 2 YANG BERPOTENSI CIPTAKAN KEKERASAN DAN KRIMINALISASI WARGA WADAS #WadasMelawan”

English: “URGENT ACTION!!! STOP THE STAGE 2 MEASUREMENT PLAN THAT POTENTIALLY CREATES VIOLENCE AND CRIMINALIZATION OF WADAS VILLAGERS. #WadasMelawan”

The tweet calls for urgent action against the government's actions leading to violence and criminalization. It includes a call to action, a hashtag, and a call to stop, aiming to raise netizen awareness and voice this injustice.

(b). *The Victimhood Function*

The hashtag #WadasMelawan as an expression to show victimhood is used 631 out of 1550 times, giving it the highest percentage of use at 41%. This function was used to express the condition or situation of a victim as a result of unfair treatment and violence. An example of a hashtag that stated the function of a victim was as follows:

Example 2

Indonesian: “Pembungkaman masih berjalan. Keserakahan memang sulit dihentikan. Uang punya kuasa luar biasa. #WadasMelawan”

English: “Silencing is still in progress. Greed is hard to stop. Money has extraordinary power. #WadasMelawan”

The word *pembungkaman*, which means “silence”, indicated the position of the Wadas residents who did not have the power to fight the violence that was the result of greed. The end of the statement closed with #WadasMelawan, which was tied up with a comment status that served to express Wadas villagers as victims.

(c). *The Combined Hashtag Function*

The combined hashtag was used 258 out of 1550 times, giving it a percentage of use of 17%. The combined hashtags fell into two categories: first, there were tweets that contained victimhood and solidarity comments and ended with #WadasMelawan. Second, there were tweets that were followed by #WadasMelawan plus other hashtags; for example, #SaveWadas, #WadasMemanggil, and so on. The following is an example of a combined hashtag that was written in English only:

Example 3

“We stand in solidarity with Wadas. Wadas villagers had been attacked by police. We condemn the repressive actions taken by Indonesian police against the community, protecting their land from mining. We call on the Indonesian government to stop the mine. #SaveWadas #WadasMelawan #WadasMemanggil”

The example uses a tweet expressing solidarity and victimization, ending with the hashtags #SaveWadas, #WadasMelawan, and #WadasMemanggil. The tweets condemn repressive actions by Indonesian police against Wadas villagers while highlighting their status as victims. The hashtags amplify the message, generating netizen support for Wadas villagers and underscoring the potential for saving them from violence and repression.

(d). *The Hashtag Alone Function*

Finally, tweets containing only #WadasMelawan or other hashtags without comments were used as a criticism strategy only 5% of the time. Here is an example of a stand-alone hashtag:

Example 4

“#WadasMelawan #WadasCombat #WadasAdalahKita #WadasIsUs”

Three hashtags, #WadasMelawan, #WadasAdalahKita, and #SaveWadas, were used to support Wadas villagers in their fight for land. #WadasMelawan aimed to evoke empathy and support to survive fighting for their land, while #WadasAdalahKita connected Wadas villagers to X (formerly known as Twitter) users. #WadasMemanggil encouraged social movements for justice, while #SaveWadas portrayed Wadas as a victim who was to be saved. These hashtags aimed to voice social movements for Wadas residents.

Another finding was that every hashtag had the same keyword as the topic of conversation, namely Wadas as a place for violence and the cause of the emergence of the hashtag as a social movement. Other hashtag variants were #SaveWadas, #WadasMemanggil, #Wadastolakambang, #WadasAdalahKita, and #CabutIPLWadas. Wadas in #WadasMelawan, #Wadastolakambang, and #WadasMemanggil acted as human actors who could act to *melawan*, “to fight”, and *memanggil*, “to call”. The two hashtags served as expressions of solidarity. The word Wadas in #WadasAdalahKita was associated with the verb *adalah*, or “is”, and with *kita*, or “us”. In this case, the word *kita* (“us”) referred to X users. This definition and identification built awareness that Wadas villagers were part of the X community that deserved to be defended by carrying out a solidarity movement through this hashtag. On the other hand, the hashtag also implied that what happened to Wadas villagers might happen to X users as well. As a result, there was an awareness of solidarity with the Wadas.

Meanwhile, Wadas in #SaveWadas and #CabutIPLWadas was an object with the verbs “save” and *cabut* (“revoke”). IPL is an abbreviation of *Izin Penetapan Lokasi*, or “Location Determination Permit”, for Wadas as a place for mining adhesive materials for Bener Dam. The permit was issued by the governor, Ganjar Pranowo. Both verbs were in the form of imperative sentences that functioned to build solidarity and a sense of victimhood. The two hashtags had the function of calling for solidarity because they invited X users to support the Wadas. The two hashtags functioned to express victimhood by seeing Wadas' position as an object receiving unfair treatment from the authorities.

Based on the findings, the #WadasMelawan function could not be separated from the content of the tweeted comment because #WadasMelawan was an integral part of the tweeted comment. These findings were slightly different from Simpson's (2018) category because, based on the findings, some data indicated that #WadasMelawan was flexible and could be used in the content of comments that served to express solidarity or victimhood, or both (solidarity and victimhood). The hashtag #WadasMelawan, based on Simpson's (2018) criteria, was included in the solidarity function because the message conveyed in the hashtag served to provide unified support.

B. Speech Act of Criticism in X Comments Containing #WadasMelawan

This section presents the speech acts of criticism strategies used in X, with comments containing the hashtag #WadasMelawan. Data analysis shows that X users employ various strategies to criticize the apparatus, officials, government, and parties related to the events in Wadas. This speech acts of criticism strategy complements #WadasMelawan. Table 2 illustrates the frequencies and percentages based on the speech acts of criticism (direct or indirect criticism):

TABLE 2
STRATEGY OF SPEECH ACT CRITICISM

No	Speech Act of Criticism Strategy	Frequencies	Percentage
Direct Criticism			
1	Consequences	127	8%
2	Disapproval	223	14%
3	Negative Evaluation	202	13%
4	Expression of Disagreement	58	4%
5	Identification of Problem	85	5%
6	Statement of Difficulties	58	4%
Total		753	49%
Indirect Criticism			
7	Advice or Suggestions about change	58	4%
8	Asking	175	11%
9	Demand or Request for Change	96	6%
10	Grievance to God	85	5%
11	Indicating Standard	42	3%
12	Correction	47	3%
13	Preaching	90	6%
14	Sarcasm	137	9%
15	Uncertainty	35	2%
16	Emoji Picture	31	2%
Total		796	51%
Grand Total		1550	100

Table 2 displays the frequency of tweets containing speech acts of criticism strategy used with the hashtag #WadasMelawan, which totals 1550. The highest direct criticism strategy is Disapproval at 14%, while the highest indirect criticism strategy is Asking at 11%. Moreover, the frequency of direct strategy (49%) is nearly the same as indirect strategy (51%). Both strategies are discussed further below:

(a). *Direct Strategies*

Based on the results of the analysis, the direct strategy of criticism consists of six types, namely consequences (8%), disapproval (14%), negative evaluations (13%), expressions of disagreement (4%), identification of problems (5%), and statements of difficulties (4%).

1. *Consequences*

Consequences are speech acts of criticism strategy that warn of negative consequences or impacts from the receiver's decision or action (Nguyen, 2005). The strategy is employed here to scrutinize the acts and decisions of institutions, governments, and related parties on Wadas. The strategy was used as a warning of the negative impact on Wadas villagers and the environment. The frequency of this strategy was 8%, and an example of its use is as follows:

Example 5

Indonesian: “RENCANA PENGUKURAN AKAN BERPOTENSI CIPTAKAN KEKERASAN DAN KRIMINALISASI WARGA WADAS #WadasMelawan”

English: “THE MEASUREMENT PLAN WILL POTENTIALLY CREATE VIOLENCE AND CRIMINALIZATION OF WADAS CITIZENS. #WadasMelawan”

The user warned the government about the negative impact of a measurement plan, citing potential violence and criminalization of Wadas villagers. The modal *akan* (“will”) highlights the threat, in line with Al-Kayed and Al-Ghoweri (2019), because the people who criticize are actively involved in decision-making and feel comfortable using this strategy. Meanwhile, the result of this study indicated low frequency because the users did not get involved in decision-making.

2. *Disapproval*

Disapproval is a direct speech act of criticism strategy showing a poor opinion of the receiver's actions and decisions (Nguyen, 2005). X users used this strategy to show disapproval of the government's repressive actions and decisions. Based on the analysis, it is known that this strategy was the most widely used by X users, at 14%. An example of its use is as follows:

Example 6

Indonesian: “Kami mengutuk tindakan represif kepolisian Indonesia terhadap masyarakat yang melindungi tanahnya dari pertambangan. #WadasMelawan”

English: “We condemn the repressive actions taken by Indonesian police against a community protecting their land from mining. #WadasMelawan”

Disapproval was shown in the phrase “*kami mengutuk tindakan represif kepolisian*”. The word *mengutuk*, or “condemn”, shows the disapproval of X users toward the police action.

3. *Negative Evaluation*

A negative evaluation is a strategy to criticize directly by giving a negative assessment of the receiver's actions and decisions. The frequency of the negative evaluation strategy in this study was 13%. This particular tweet provides a negative evaluation of the police and government action toward Wadas villagers:

Example 7

Indonesian: “Parah... miris aparat perang rakyat #WadasMelawan”

English: “It's bad... It's so sad to see the government apparatus fight against the people. #WadasMelawan”

Example 8

Indonesian: “Sangat tidak manusiawi #WadasMelawan”

English: “Very inhumane #WadasMelawan”

Both examples showed a negative evaluation of both the government apparatus and the government's decisions, as seen from the use of several negative adjectives, namely *parah* (“bad”), *miris* (“sad”), and *sangat tidak manusiawi* (“very inhumane”). The use of negative adjectives and judgments was also an expression of dissatisfaction with the government's apparatus and actions. The result of this strategy is in line with the findings of Nguyen (2005) and Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022), as this strategy was one of the most popular choices used by X users in criticizing government actions and decisions.

4. *Expression of Disagreement*

The expression of disagreement is a strategy of criticism characterized by the word negation of “no” or “I disagree” (Nguyen, 2005). The frequency of the expression of disagreement strategy was 4%. Here is an example found in this study:

Example 9

Indonesian: “Sangat tidak setuju dengan tindakan aparat, mengapa tidak mengayomi rakyat #WadasMelawan”

English: “Strongly disagree with the apparatus action, so why not protect the people?” #WadasMelawan

The disagreement expression was *sangat tidak setuju* (“strongly disagree”), which is directed toward the apparatus' action. It showed that X users chose to express the disapproval strategy over the disagreement strategy since the former was thought to be more expressive in conveying dissatisfaction with the government's action.

5. Identification of Problem

Identifying the problem is a strategy for criticizing the receiver's action or decision (Nguyen, 2005). The frequency of this strategy was 5% in this study, and the use of this strategy can be seen in the following example tweet:

Example 10

Indonesian: izin diterbitkan padahal masih ada penolakan di sebagian masyarakat. Inilah bukti penyelewengan kekuasaan @ganjarpranowo sebagai gubernur. #WadasMelawan

English: "The permit was issued even though there were several rejections from the community. This is evidence of @ganjarpranowo's abuse of power as governor. #WadasMelawan"

The identification of the problem was shown in the sentence *izin diterbitkan padahal masih ada penolakan*, which is followed by the second sentence, *"Inilah bukti penyelewengan kekuasaan @ganjarpranowo sebagai gubernur*. The problem based on the two sentences is that Ganjar Pranowo gave the permit for the exploitation of Wadas by neglecting the rejection of Wadas villagers. His decision could be evidence of an abuse of power.

6. Statement of Difficulties

Nguyen (2005) mentions that the statement of difficulties strategy occurs when Vietnamese EFL learners express ideas in English, but the idea is difficult to understand. Hence, the teacher criticizes the student by stating that the idea is difficult to understand. Usually, this strategy is manifested in the sentence structures "I find it difficult to understand" and "It is difficult to understand". It can be said that this strategy is used in a learning context.

This strategy was also used by X users to express the problems experienced by Wadas villagers. The frequency of this strategy is 4%. X users employed this strategy to convey the difficulties faced by the Wadas inhabitants, since it was vital to remind the police and decision-makers about those difficulties.

Example 11

Indonesian: "Heran, tanahnya mau dirampas paksa kok Gak perlu takut #WadasMelawan"

English: "Surprised, the land is being forcibly confiscated; there is no need to be afraid. #WadasMelawan"

The user had difficulty understanding the statement from the Governor of Central Java, who said, *"Gak perlu takut"* (There's no need to be afraid"), which was contradictory to the fact that Wadas villagers felt afraid of losing their land.

(b). Indirect Strategy

1. Advice or Suggestions About Change

Advice or suggestions are a more subtle and polite way of criticizing than asking for or demanding change (Alshakhanbeh & Alghazo, 2022). In the English language, this strategy is expressed in the phrase "I suggest that..." or the structure "it would be better if" or "why don't you" (Nguyen, 2005). Based on the findings, the expression of advice or suggestion in Indonesian is *sebaiknya* "it is better..." or *alangkah baiknya* "it would be better..." (M. Moeliono et al., 2017). The frequency of this strategy is 4%, and an example of this strategy is as follows:

Example 12

Indonesian: "Sebaiknya pemerintah mengadakan musyawarah kepada warga desa Wadas mengenai penyelesaian yang akan diambil dan kompensasi yang sebanding, sesuai dengan sila ke-4 yaitu Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan. #savewadas #WadasMelawan"

English: "It is better for the government to hold deliberations with the Wadas villagers regarding the settlement to be taken and comparable compensation, in accordance with the 4th principle, namely, the democracy guided by the inner wisdom of unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives. #savewadas #WadasMelawan."

The advice about the change is presented in the expression *sebaiknya* ("It is better"), which is followed by a suggestion "...pemerintah mengadakan musyawarah kepada warga desa Wadas mengenai penyelesaian yang akan diambil dan kompensasi yang sebanding, sesuai dengan sila ke-4 yaitu Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan" ("...for the government to hold deliberations with the Wadas villagers regarding the settlement to be taken and comparable compensation, in accordance with the 4th principle, namely, the democracy guided by the inner wisdom of unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives"). The user advised the government to hold deliberations to resolve the problem peacefully and provide fair compensation to Wadas villagers.

2. Asking

Asking is a criticism strategy that uses rhetorical questions to call attention to the receiver's improper conduct or decision. *Instead* of asking for an answer, these questions are designed to raise the receiver's awareness and, hopefully, influence his action or decision. The frequency of this strategy is 11%, which is the highest strategy chosen by X users. The usage is as follows:

Example 13

Indonesian: "Hello, @ganjarpranowo apa kabar. Apakah ini yang disebut pengukuran? Di mana nalar anda? #WadasMelawan #WadasTolakTambang #WadasMemanggil #Indonesia #jateng"

English: “Hello, @ganjarpranowo. How are you? Is this what measuring land is called? Where is your conscience? #WadasMelawan #WadasTolakTambang #WadasMemanggil #Indonesia” #jateng

Two rhetorical questions, namely, “*Apakah ini yang disebut pengukuran?*” (“Is this what measuring land is called?”) and *Di mana nalar anda?* (“Where is your conscience?”) do not need any answers because the questions were intended to remind the government, and especially Ganjar Pranowo, the Governor of Central Java, and the apparatus’ inappropriate actions at Wadas. The questions were aimed at making the audience realize that there was violence in Wadas. Like the study of Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022), the results of this study show that this strategy is more popular among X users, reaching a frequency of use of 11%. Meanwhile, the results of this study differed from Suharno’s (2015) findings. He claimed that the strategy was rarely used by Indonesian EFL students in the EFL teaching and learning context because students had not known and mastered how to use the strategy in English. In addition, criticizing in the EFL context was different from the social media context since X users tend to focus more on expressing criticism than the embarrassment of making mistakes or errors in performing the strategy of criticism since their identity can be secretly covered.

3. Demand or Request for Change

The criticism strategy of demand or request for change aims to make a receiver change his or her actions that are inappropriate in the speaker’s perception. The strategy is characterized by the phrases “you have to”, “you must”, “it is obligatory”, “you are required,” “you need to,” or “it is necessary”, among others (Nguyen, 2005). Meanwhile, in Indonesian, the expression of demand or request for change is characterized by the expressions *harus* (“must”) and *semestinya* (“should”), or in the form of a structure such as *anda harus* (“you must”) + (verb), *anda perlu* (“you need”) + (verb), *anda wajib* (“you need to”) + (verb), or just a verb. In addition, it is common to use the expression of request *tolong* (“please”) as a modality to soften the imperative sentence. The frequency of this strategy is 6%, and the following is an example of its use:

Example 14

Indonesian: “@ganjarpranowo, lihat pak, lihat! Tolong kasihani mereka! Tolong hentikan kekerasan gitu, mereka manusia tolong di manusiakan! #WadasMelawan”

English: “@ganjarpranowo, look, sir, look! Please have mercy on them! Please stop that violence. They are humans. Please humanize them! #WadasMelawan”

The X user demanded the governor of Central Java (@ganjarpranowo) stop the violence against Wadas residents by using imperative words and phrases like *lihat* (“look”), *kasihani* (“have mercy”), *hentikan* (“stop”), and *tolong* (“please”) as modals to soften the imperative sentence. However, like the results of the study by Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022), this strategy was not widely used.

4. Grievance to God

Expressing complaints to God for the receiver’s actions and decisions was carried out by X users. The users believe only God can change the receiver’s actions and decisions. The strategy is also used to remind the listener that God will hold him accountable for his wrongdoings and decisions. The frequency of this strategy is 5%, and an example of its use is as follows:

Example 15

Indonesian: “Ngebayangin aja sakit hati. Ya Allah, semoga pada kena azab karena dah zolim sama rakyatnya. #SaveWadas #WadasMelawan”

English: “Just imagine, make me hurt. Oh Allah, I hope they will be punished because they have been cruel toward their people. #SaveWadas #WadasMelawan”

The user prayed by stating the sentence, “*Ya Allah, semoga pada kena azab karena dah zolim sama rakyatnya.*” (“Oh Allah, I hope they will be punished because they have been cruel toward their people.”) It was used to criticize the government and the police for not acting justly because their deeds were against religious teachings. In addition, the strategy also reminded them that acts of violence and injustice will be punished by God. According to Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022), this strategy is very reasonable to use for religious people to surrender problems to God since the speaker feels he or she does not have the power to change the receiver’s action or decision.

5. Indicating Standard

Indicating standard is a speech act of criticism strategy that mentions collective obligation rather than a personal obligation for the receiver or, as a rule, that the sender believes is widely agreed upon and applied to all (Nguyen, 2005). The frequency of this strategy was 2% for this study, and an example of its use is as follows:

Example 16

Indonesian: “Polisi Melayani & Mengayomi bukan menindas. #WadasMelawan”

English: “Police Serve & Protect, not oppress. #WadasMelawan”

It was stated that the standard duty of the police is to serve and protect, not to oppress. This strategy demonstrates the standard that the police should adhere to, but they do the opposite. Furthermore, according to Nguyen (2005), this strategy is used to criticize while avoiding confrontation subtly.

6. Correction

The correction strategy identifies the receiver's wrongdoing action and decision and then corrects it with an alternative solution. The frequency of this strategy was 3%, and an example of its use is as follows:

Example 17

Indonesian: "Kekerasan kepada warga Wadas tidak sesuai dengan sila kedua Pancasila, ajak warga bermusyawarah dan beri ganti rugi yang adil #WadasMelawan"

English: "Violence against Wadas residents violates the second Pancasila principle; invite residents to negotiate and provide fair compensation #WadasMelawan"

The user corrected the apparatus's violent actions by stating, "*Kekerasan kepada warga Wadas tidak sesuai dengan sila kedua Pancasila*" ("Violence against Wadas residents violates the second Pancasila principle"). Pancasila is the ideology of Indonesia, and the second principle is just and civilized humanity. The user then proposed a solution by stating, "*Ajak warga bermusyawarah dan beri ganti rugi yang adil*" ("Invite residents to negotiate and provide fair compensation").

7. Preaching

The *preaching* strategy is a method of giving instructions to listeners because receivers are thought to be unable to make the right decisions and actions (Nguyen, 2005). The frequency of this strategy was 5% for this study, and the use of this strategy was as follows:

Example 18

Indonesian: "Berdasarkan keputusan MK proyek penambangan di Desa Wadas dihentikan. Keputusan MK ini mengikat dari pemerintah pusat sampai daerah. Oleh sebab itu, pemerintah daerah dapat mencabut IPL. Intinya, sudah menjadi tanggung jawab pemerintah daerah untuk menghentikan proyek ini dan melindungi warga Wadas. #WadasMelawan"

English: "Based on the Constitutional Court's decision, the mining project in Wadas Village was halted. The Constitutional Court's decision is legally binding on national and regional governments. Consequently, the local government has the authority to revoke the IPL. It is the local government's responsibility to halt this project and protect the Wadas villagers. #WadasMelawan"

The user instructs the government by stating, "*Berdasarkan keputusan MK proyek penambangan di Desa Wadas dihentikan*" ("Based on the Constitutional Court's decision, the mining project in Wadas Village was halted"). The Constitutional Court (MK) decision number 91/PUU-XVIII/2020 states that the Wadas project is terminated (Ekayanta, 2022). The data also proposed a solution by asking the local government to revoke the IPL (location allocation permit) and take responsibility for halting the project and protecting Wadas villagers. This strategy directed the local government to act concerning Wadas. This strategy was less popular among X users and may not be preferred by critics in the real world because listening to criticism in a lecture style requires friendly ears with open arms (Alshakhanbeh & Alghazo, 2022).

8. Sarcasm

Sarcasm is a strategy for indirectly criticizing and ridiculing the actions and decisions of the government (Alshakhanbeh & Alghazo, 2022). Sarcasm is a type of language that aims to offend others' feelings by using harsh or disrespectful language or jokes (Syafuddin et al., 2021). The frequency of the strategy in this study is 9%, and an example follows:

Example 19

Indonesian: "Humanis sekali memperlakukan warga, seperti Junta Militer aja. #WadasMelawan #WadasTolakTambang #WadasMemanggil #StopAparatMasukWadas"

English: "It's very humane to treat citizens just like the military junta. #WadasMelawan #WadasTolakTambang #WadasMemanggil #StopAparatMasukWadas"

Sarcasm was presented in the sentence, "*Humanis sekali memperlakukan warga, seperti Junta Militer aja*" ("It's very humane to treat citizens just like the Military Junta"). The glorification of apparatus by saying it is very humane is not intended to praise apparatus because the following parable was like a military junta. As the military junta was referred to as a dictatorship ruled by the military, this term had a negative connotation because this form of state was undemocratic and happened after a coup against the legitimate power (Ivana et al., 2021). In that tweet, there were two contradictory things. First, it seemed as if they were praising them when the authorities treated the citizens inhumanely. Second, the violent treatment of the apparatus was compared to a military junta that disregards deliberation. The Sarcasm strategy, according to Suharno (2015), is classified as a "combined strategy" because the strategy can be used for other strategies, such as expressing disapproval, uncertainty, or consequences.

9. Uncertainty

The speaker employs the uncertainty strategy to raise the receiver's awareness of his inappropriate choice and action (Nguyen, 2005). The frequency of the strategy in this study is 2%, and an example of the strategy is given below:

Example 20

Indonesian: "Hingga kini janji mengusut kekerasan tidak ada kejelasan. Wadas masih dibayangi ancaman represi. #WadasMelawan #SolidaritasUntukWadas"

English: “Until now, the promise to investigate violence remains unclear. The people of Wadas are still threatened by repression. #WadasMelawan #SolidaritasUntukWadas”

The user expressed uncertainty by stating, “*Hingga kini janji mengusut kekerasan tidak ada kejelasan*” (“Until now, the promise to investigate violence remains unclear”). The governor of Central Java promised to investigate the violence in Wadas. However, the investigation was not clear in terms of when, how, and what the result was, while Wadas residents remained threatened by further repression. This strategy was used to criticize the reliability of the government, which, in the speaker's perception, did not meet his expectations of a good government. According to Al-Kayed and Al-Ghoweri (2019), this strategy acts as an icebreaker, instilling confidence and openness in the critical process. Although netizens do not know each other personally and do not know either officials or the government, in a democratic country, criticism in the form of distrust or uncertainty about the government's performance and accountability is a citizen's right to strive for a better government.

10. *Emoji Image*

Emoji images can also be used to express indirect criticism. According to Danesi (2017) and Arafah and Hasyim (2019), “emoji” is a Japanese term that refers to images and letters used to support effective conversational messages and emphasize the meaning of a conversation. The frequency of use of this strategy is 1% in this study. An example of its strategy can be found below:

Example 21

Indonesian: “*Hentikan kekerasan* 😞 #WadasMelawan #WadasMemanggil #WadasTolakTambang”

English: “*Stop the violence* 😞 #WadasMelawan #WadasMemanggil #WadasTolakTambang”

The emoji 😞 showed unhappiness toward the apparatus's repressive action. In addition, the emoji of sadness strengthened the disapproval strategy of police violence against Wadas villagers. The semantic and pragmatic function of emojis in conversation is to express the connotative meaning of the user's feelings and emotions and to strengthen meaning and social relationships between users (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019). In this case, the emoji built solidarity among users and Wadas villagers.

IV. DISCUSSION

The data and findings shown above indicate that X (formerly known as Twitter) users tend to use criticism strategies more freely because the distance is unlimited or obscure and because their identities are not revealed. Whereas, according to Jauhari (2018a), when criticizing in a real-life community, for example, in this case, Javanese, it is necessary to follow cultural values, social distance, social status, and gender.

The previous research was carried out in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting (Suharno, 2015; Nguyen, 2005). One of the factors that hinders students from criticizing through the use of the criticism strategy is a lack of confidence and the ability to use English (Nguyen, 2005). Meanwhile, this research reveals that X users tend to use various criticism strategies with ease since they use their native language and are not in a formal and controlled situation like in a classroom. Moreover, the implementation of a criticism strategy in social media and EFL settings varies due to the varied media. The realization in it is oral, while the realization in X is written, which has a limited capacity for using words.

The finding relates to and enriches the previous research on criticism strategy conducted by Alshakhanbeh and Alghazo (2022), Nguyen (2005), Farnia (2015), Al-Kayed and Al-Ghoweri (2019), and Jauhari (2018a). The difference between the current and previous studies is that this study combines the function of the hashtag #WadasMelawan with criticism strategy for social movement justice. This study also enriches earlier studies regarding the use of hashtags in generating social justice movements conducted by Fields et al. (2022), Cao et al. (2022), Datiri (2021), Pratiwi (2021), Apriyani (2021), and P. Sitowin (2019).

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and analysis of the status and comments containing #WadasMelawan on X (formerly known as Twitter), it could be concluded that the hashtag #WadasMelawan and the speech acts of criticism strategy were successfully employed by the users for the social justice movement of Wadas since the hashtag became a trending topic in Indonesia on February 8-9, 2022, with the hashtag being used in 189.000 tweets.

The #WadasMelawan had functioned in expressing victimhood, which raised empathy for the Wadas villagers as the victims of oppression and injustice in government decisions. The #WadasMelawan hashtag helped create solidarity that supported Wadas villagers in their fight for the land and to protest the unjust actions and decisions made by the government. The integrating hashtag and the hashtag alone had the same function of fostering solidarity and empathy among X users. Furthermore, the speech acts of criticism strategy used in tweets containing #WadasMelawan were used in both direct strategies and indirect strategies.

The direct strategies employed by X users were negative evaluation, disapproval, expression of disagreement, statement of difficulties, and consequences. X users utilized indirect strategies, which included correction, indicating standards, preaching, demand for change, advice about change, expression of uncertainty, asking/presupposing, sarcasm, and other

indirect strategies such as emojis and pictures. These strategies aimed not only to gain sympathy and support from X users for Wadas but also to criticize the actions and decisions of the government and other responsible parties regarding Wadas.

The criticism towards the government about Wadas on X was a form of democracy and citizen concern that supports good governance by upholding human rights and *Pancasila* ideology values. The #WadasMelawan function and speech act of criticism strategy was an integral component in voicing the social movement justice for Wadas on X since it amplified and raised solidarity for Wadas from domestic and international users and groups such as Green Peace and Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific. Thus, the social justice movement on X was part of Wadas and global activists' efforts to echo social justice movements around the world.

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Translation of Hmong Folklore Terms in Hmong Oral Epic “Creating Heaven and Earth” From the Perspective of Eco-Translatology

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Abstract—The Hmong, a Chinese ethnic minority, possess a rich cultural heritage. Due to their unique history of exile and migration, the Hmong have scant documentation of their vanishing cultural heritage. The Hmong oral epic constitutes a vital component of documenting Hmong culture. Thus, this paper delves into the translation of the Hmong Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth', focusing on folklore terms as fundamental units for analyzing Hmong culture. Eco-Translatology has the great importance in protecting the languages of Chinese ethnic minorities and enhancing the dissemination of their literature (Li, 2017). Hence, this paper examines the translation of Hmong folklore terms in the Hmong Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' from the perspective of Eco-Translatology. The study reveals 53 translations of Hmong folklore terms, encompassing material, social, and spiritual aspects, within the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. For Hmong material folklore terms, translators predominantly employ the 'target contextualization' strategy, along with 'extending substitution' and 'vitalization' methods. For Hmong social folklore terms, translators favor the 'source contextualization' strategy, supplemented by 'adaptive addition' and 'vitalization' methods. For Hmong spiritual folklore terms, translators predominantly utilize the 'source contextualization' strategy, in addition to 'extending substitution' and 'naturalization' methods.

Index Terms—Hmong oral epics, Creating Heaven and Earth, Eco-Translatology, Hmong folklore terms, folklore translations

I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese ethnic minorities possess rich yet endangered cultures. Hmong is among these ethnic minorities. Due to their unique history of exile and migration, the Hmong have scant documentation of their distinctive and vanishing culture. Consequently, there has been limited Hmong-Chinese-English translation and research on Hmong culture (Wu et al., 2012; Yang et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2007). Furthermore, due to the absence of a script historically, the Hmong transmitted their culture primarily orally, such as through Hmong oral epics (Yuan & Zhang, 2004). Hence, there is a pressing need to enhance the translation of vanishing Hmong oral culture. 'Creating Heaven and Earth' is one of the Hmong oral epics, which describes how heaven and earth are created in the Hmong world. Analyzing folklore is the primary method for studying the ethnographic poetry of ethnic minorities (Yang, 2004). The folklore term serves as the fundamental unit of analysis. Thus, this paper focuses on the Hmong folklore terms found in the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth'.

Mark Bender, a translator specializing in Chinese ethnic minority culture, suggested that the translation of such culture would benefit from guidance by the Chinese translation theory system (Bender & Huang, 2014). Eco-translatology, originating in China, stands as the first and only translation theory system of its kind, proposed by Professor Gengshen Hu in 2001. Additionally, it presents a translation research paradigm from an ecological perspective, and its framework corresponds to the cosmographic translation principle advocated by Mark Bender, the translator of Hmong oral epics (Zhang, 2020). Therefore, Eco-translatology proves to be an appropriate translation theory for enhancing and analyzing the translation of oral culture among Chinese ethnic minorities, particularly the Hmong. Hence, this paper investigates the translation of Hmong folklore terms in the Hmong Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' from the perspective of Eco-translatology.

II. ECO-TRANSLATOLOGY

Eco-translatology, derived from the global ecological background, offers a comprehensive perspective on translation from an ecological standpoint (Hu, 2013). Eco-translation's theoretical underpinning lies in 'the theory of adaptation and selection in translation' (Hu, 2004). This theory elucidates translation is the process of selecting and adapting texts to suit the ecological translation environment. In 2021, Professor Hu published a paper titled 'The Dao of Eco-life-oriented Translation: Addressing Three Philosophical Questions about Eco-translatology'. It elaborates on the translation strategy and method of Eco-translatology's '10-tion': (1) imitationalisation, (2) extending substitution, (3) adaptive reduction, (4) adaptive addition, (5) naturalization, (6) vitalization, (7) multi-transformation, (8) source contextualization, (9) target contextualization, and (10) text-balancing (Hu, 2021).

Imitationalisation involves the artistic translation of specific texts, focusing on replicating the form, style, and color of animals and plants in nature. Extending substitution involves extending and substituting terms for specific creatures or objects from the original language ecology with those from the target language ecology. Adaptive reduction aims to simplify the elements of the ecological environment in the target language, refine the essence of the 'life elements' in the text, and minimize the translation volume of the target language. Adaptive addition involves translating to complement the ecological factors of the target language, compensating for any deficiency in 'life elements' in the text, and expanding the translation volume of the target language. Naturalization aims to preserve the natural elements, colors, and 'original' connotations of the original language ecology. Vitalization involves preserving the organic and biological essence of the original language or adapting it to the translation context for a 'personifying' effect. Multi-transformation entails the translator's comprehensive transformation of text across dimensions, modes, and perspectives concerning language, culture, and communication. Source contextualization involves translating language form, cultural connotation, and writing style tailored to the original language ecosystem. Target contextualization involves translating language form, cultural connotation, and writing style adjusted to the ecosystem of the target language. Text-balancing aims to maintain the 'text-people-environment' balance by preserving the relationship between text, translation community (people), and context (Hu, 2021).

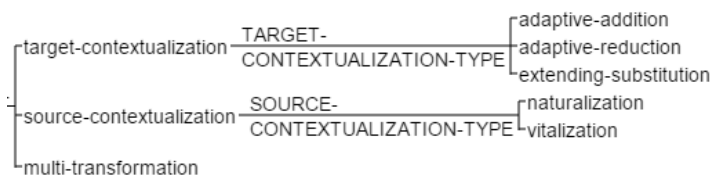


Figure 1. The Modified Translation Strategy and Method of Eco-Translatology

This study categorizes the strategies and methods for translating Hmong folklore terms based on Eco-translatology's 'Ten Conversions'. The revised translation strategies and methods include one translation principle (text-balancing), three translation strategies (target contextualization, source contextualization, and multi-transformation), and five translation methods (adaptive addition, adaptive reduction, extending substitution, naturalization, and vitalization). Figure 1 illustrates the criteria used to code translation strategies and methods of Eco-translatology in the Hmong Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth'.

III. THE CLASSIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF HMONG FOLKLORE TERMS

A. The Classification of Hmong Folklore Terms

Hmong oral epics are integral to Hmong ethnographic poetry. Ethnographic poetry is commonly studied through folklore analysis. Hmong folklore terms from the Hmong Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' are categorized based on Zhong's (1998) folklore classification. Hmong folklore terms can be categorized into three types:

① Hmong Material Folklore Terms

Hmong material folklore terms encompass terms related to production, industry, commerce, and daily life.

② Hmong Social Folklore Terms

Hmong social folklore terms comprise terms associated with social organizations, festivals, and social etiquette.

③ Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

Hmong spiritual folklore terms primarily consist of terms related to recreational activities and concepts of worship.

B. The Distribution of Hmong Folklore Terms in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'

The study identified 53 Hmong terms in the Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. These terms comprise 28 Hmong material folklore terms, 8 Hmong social folklore terms, and 17 Hmong spiritual folklore terms. These proportions represent 52.8%, 15.1%, and 32.1%, respectively. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of Hmong terms in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'.

TABLE 1
THE DISTRIBUTION OF HMONG FOLKLORE TERMS IN 'CREATING HEAVEN AND EARTH'

Type	Number	Percentage
Hmong Material Folklore Term	28	52.8%
Hmong Social Folklore Term	8	15.1%
Hmong Spiritual Folklore Term	17	32.1%
Total	53	100.0%

IV. THE TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF HMONG MATERIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

A. The Translation Data Analysis of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

The summarized data of Hmong material folklore term translations in the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4, according to the modified translation strategies and methods of Eco-translatology in Figure 1. Table 2 illustrates the distribution of translation strategies. The proportion of translation strategy of 'target contextualization' is 48.1%. The proportion of the 'source contextualization' translation strategy is 38%. The proportion of the 'multi-transformation' translation strategy is 13.9%.

TABLE 2
TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF HMONG MATERIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Target Contextualization	38	48.1%
Source Contextualization	30	38.0%
Multi Transformation	11	13.9%
Total	79	100.0%

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of translation methods within the 'target contextualization' strategy in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. The proportion of the 'adaptive addition' translation method is 28.9%. The proportion of the 'adaptive reduction' translation method is 0%. The proportion of the 'extending substitution' translation method is 71.1%.

TABLE 3
TRANSLATION METHODS UNDER 'TARGET CONTEXTUALIZATION' OF HMONG MATERIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Adaptive Addition	11	28.9%
Adaptive Reduction	0	0.0%
Extending Substitution	27	71.1%
Total	38	100.0%

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of translation methods within the 'source contextualization' strategy in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. The proportion of the 'naturalization' translation method is 13.3%. The proportion of the 'vitalization' translation method is 86.7%. Tables 3 and 4 indicate that translation methods under the 'target contextualization' strategy were used 38 times for translating Hmong material folklore terms, whereas under the 'source contextualization' strategy, they were used 30 times.

TABLE 4
TRANSLATION METHODS UNDER 'SOURCE CONTEXTUALIZATION' OF HMONG MATERIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Naturalization	4	13.3%
Vitalization	26	86.7%
Total	30	100.0%

Figures 2, 3, and 4 are pie charts representing the data from Tables 2, 3, and 4, respectively. Figures 5, 6, and 7 are column diagrams corresponding to the same data. Figure 2 and 5 highlight the prominence of 'target contextualization', while Figure 3 and 6 demonstrate the prevalence of 'extending substitution'. In Figure 4 and 7, 'vitalization' is notably significant.

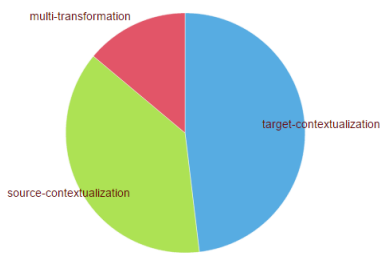


Figure 2. The Pie Chart of Translation Strategies of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

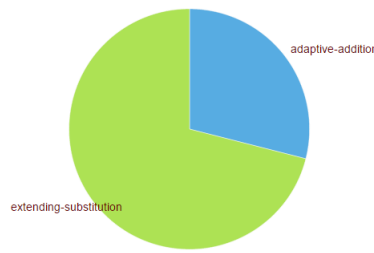


Figure 3. The Pie Chart of Translation Methods Under 'Target Contextualization' of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

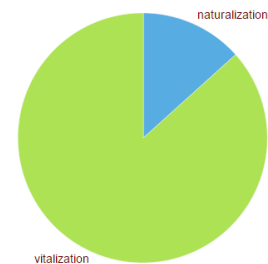


Figure 4. The Pie Chart of Translation Methods Under 'Source Contextualization' of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

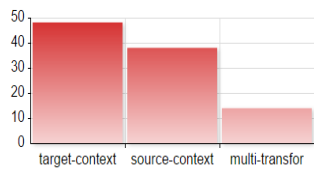


Figure 5. The Column Diagram of Translation Strategies of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

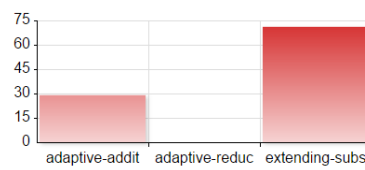


Figure 6. The Column Diagram of Translation Methods Under 'Target Contextualization' of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

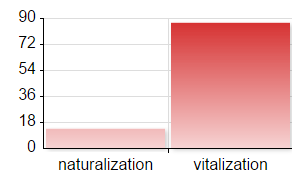


Figure 7. The Column Diagram of Translation Methods Under 'Source Contextualization' of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

Based on the data above, translators predominantly favored a translation strategy aligned with readers (i.e., the target contextualization strategy) when translating Hmong material folklore terms in the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. However, the usage of the source contextualization strategy is less than 10% compared to the target contextualization strategy, indicating translators' consideration of conveying the cultural and communicative elements of the original text. Within the 'target contextualization' translation strategy, translators employed a higher number of substitution terms from the target language and culture to translate Hmong material folklore terms. Additionally, translators partially opted for additional explanations in translation to enhance reader comprehension. Conversely, within the 'source contextualization' translation strategy, translators aimed to minimize reader effort in understanding the original text by predominantly utilizing vitalization.

B. The Translation Sample Analysis of Hmong Material Folklore Terms

The Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' contains 28 Hmong material folklore terms. This section analyzes the translation of Hmong material folklore terms using Eco-translatology by examining a sample. In Hmong, it is called 'ghenx dol'. It is translated to Hmong-Chinese as '魔芋', and to Chinese-English as 'konjac root'. The English translation note in the book describes it as: "Konjac (*Amorphophallus konjac*), *ghenx dol* in Hmong, *junto* or *moyu* in Han, is a starchy plant used to make various foodstuffs throughout East Asia. It is also known to as 'elephant yam', 'devil's tongue', and by other names" (Wu et al., 2012, p. 115).

The Hmong-Chinese translator employed an extending substitution translation method. In Hmong culture, 'ghenx dol' is cultivated by the Hmong people to deter snakes and as a medicinal plant. In Han society, '魔芋' is a plant similar to 'ghenx dol,' but its root is utilized as a food source. Consequently, the Hmong-Chinese translator employed the 'extending substitution' translation method under the 'target contextualization' translation strategy. However, in the English-speaking readers' environment, neither the plant 'ghenx dol' nor the food '魔芋' exists. 'Ghenx dol' or '魔芋' are plants native to Asia. Consequently, the Chinese-English translator employed the 'adaptive addition' translation method under the 'target contextualization' translation strategy. This is evident in the English translation note in the book, which explains what '魔芋' is.

Both the Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translators employed translation methods aimed at adapting to the readers' linguistic context, prioritizing ease of understanding and proximity to the target text over fidelity to the original. Consequently, both the Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translations of 'ghenx dol' utilized the translation strategy of 'target contextualization'. Nevertheless, both translations overlooked the cultural nuances of 'ghenx dol' in Hmong and failed to retain its linguistic aspects in both Chinese and English translations. Thus, the Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translators excelled more in communicative aspects than in linguistic and cultural dimensions.

V. THE TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF HMONG SOCIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

A. The Translation Data Analysis of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

The summarized data of Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translations of Hmong social folklore terms in the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth', as per the modified translation strategy and method of Eco-translatology in Figure 1, are illustrated in Tables 5, 6, and 7. Table 5 illustrates the distribution of translation strategies in 'Creating

Heaven and Earth'. The proportion of the translation strategy 'target contextualization' is 32.4%, 'source contextualization' is 40.5%, and 'multi-transformation' is 27.0%.

TABLE 5
TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF HMONG SOCIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Target Contextualization	12	32.4%
Source Contextualization	15	40.5%
Multi Transformation	10	27.0%
Total	37	100.0%

Table 6 displays the distribution of translation methods under the 'target contextualization' strategy in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. The proportion of the 'adaptive addition' translation method is 91.7%. The proportion of the 'adaptive reduction' translation method is 0%. The proportion of the 'extending substitution' translation method is 8.3%.

TABLE 6
TRANSLATION METHODS UNDER 'TARGET CONTEXTUALIZATION' OF HMONG SOCIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Adaptive Addition	11	91.7%
Adaptive Reduction	0	0.0%
Extending Substitution	1	8.3%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 7 displays the distribution of translation methods under the 'source contextualization' strategy in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. The proportion of the 'naturalization' translation method is 20.0%. The proportion of the 'vitalization' translation method is 80.0%. A comparison of the data in Tables 6 and 7 reveals that 12 translations are utilized under the 'target contextualization' strategy for translating Hmong social folklore terms. In contrast, translation methods under the 'source contextualization' strategy are used 15 times for translating Hmong material folklore terms.

TABLE 7
TRANSLATION METHODS UNDER 'SOURCE CONTEXTUALIZATION' OF HMONG SOCIAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Naturalization	3	20.0%
Vitalization	12	80.0%
Total	15	100.0%

Figures 8, 9, and 10 depict pie charts representing the data from Tables 5, 6, and 7, respectively. Figures 11, 12, and 13 illustrate column diagrams corresponding to the data presented in Tables 5, 6 and 7, respectively. Figure 8 and Figure 11 reveal that 'source contextualization' holds the most significant proportion. Figure 9 and Figure 12 indicate that 'adaptive addition' represents a larger number. Figures 10 and 13 show that the percentage of 'vitalization' stands out more prominently.

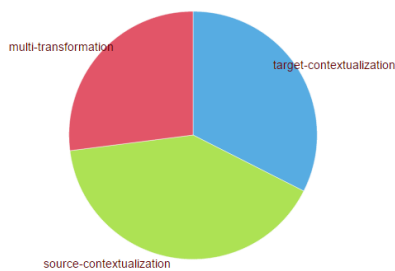


Figure 8. The Pie Chart of Translation Strategies of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

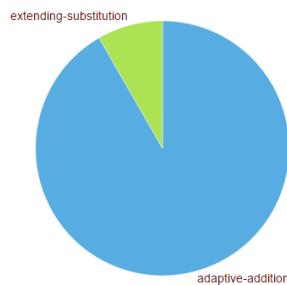


Figure 9. The Pie Chart of Translation Methods Under 'Target Contextualization' of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

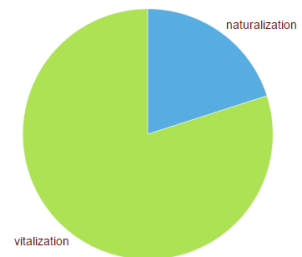


Figure 10. The Pie Chart of Translation Methods Under 'Source Contextualization' of Hmong Social Folklore Terms



Figure 11. The Column Diagram of Translation Strategies of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

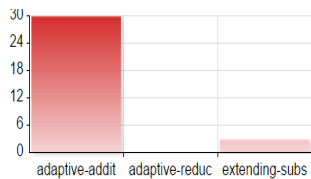


Figure 12. The Column Diagram of Translation Methods Under 'Target Contextualization' of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

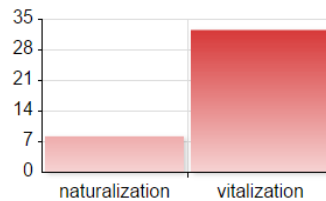


Figure 13. The Column Diagram of Translation Methods Under 'Source Contextualization' of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

Based on the data provided, translators predominantly favored the translation strategy aligned with the original text (i.e., source contextualization) while translating Hmong social folklore terms in the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. This suggests that the primary objective of the translation strategy for Hmong social folklore terms is to convey the original cultural elements of the Hmong. However, the target contextualization translation strategy represents less than 8% compared to source contextualization. This indicates that translators also took into account readers' comprehension of Hmong social folklore. In the 'target contextualization' translation strategy, translators primarily utilized additional explanations to render Hmong social folklore terms. Translators employing the strategy of 'source contextualization' aim to minimize the cognitive effort readers expend in comprehending the original text, often resorting to vitalization.

B. The Translation Sample Analysis of Hmong Social Folklore Terms

The Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' contains eight Hmong social folklore terms. This section examines a sample to analyze the translation of Hmong social folklore terms based on Eco-translatology. The term in Hmong is 'ngax ghab laid'. In Hmong-Chinese translation, it is rendered as '官府衙门', while in Chinese-English translation, it is translated as 'the local yamen'. The English translation note in the book states: "Yamen, in imperial times, was the local government office" (Wu et al., 2012, p. 123).

The Hmong-Chinese translator employed a literal translation approach. In Hmong, 'ngax' corresponds to '衙门' in Chinese, and 'ghab laid' to '官' in Chinese. Hence, the Hmong term 'ngax ghab laid' was directly translated to '官府衙门' in Chinese, following the literal meaning of the Hmong words 'ngax' and 'ghab laid'. Therefore, the Hmong-Chinese translator employed the 'vitalization' translation method within the 'source contextualization' translation approach. However, the Chinese-English translator employed the 'multi-transformation' translation strategy, combining two distinct translation methods. The initial translation method is 'naturalization' within the 'source contextualization' translation approach. The subsequent translation method is 'adaptive addition' within the 'target contextualization' translation approach. The 'naturalization' aspect is evident in the English translation 'yamen', which is the pinyin of '衙门', resembling transliteration. The 'adaptive addition' translation method is evident in the English translation note in the book, which explains the meaning of '衙门'.

The political and social systems in Han and Hmong societies share similarities due to their coexistence in the same region, with the Hmong historically governed by the Han. Hence, Hmong-Chinese translators may opt for the 'source contextualization' translation strategy and 'vitalization' translation method, facilitating rapid comprehension among Chinese readers of the Hmong social folklore term 'ngax ghab laid'. However, the political, social systems, and histories of English readers differ. Thus, Chinese-English translators had to employ the adaptive addition translation method to bridge the gap in social folklore. Simultaneously, the Chinese-English translator utilized the 'naturalization' translation method to retain the authentic flavor of both Hmong and Chinese cultures.

VI. THE TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF HMONG SPIRITUAL FOLKLORE TERMS

A. The Translation Data Analysis of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

The modified translation strategy and method of Eco-translatology in Figure 1 present the summarized data of Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translations of Hmong spiritual folklore terms in the Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' in Tables 8, 9 and 10. Table 8 illustrates the proportions of translation strategies employed in 'Creating Heaven and Earth'. It delineates that the proportion of the translation strategy of 'target contextualization' is 24.0%, 'source contextualization' is 60.0%, and 'multi-transformation' is 16.0%.

TABLE 8
TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF HMONG SPIRITUAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Target Contextualization	12	24.0%
Source Contextualization	30	60.0%
Multi Transformation	8	16.0%
Total	50	100.0%

Table 9 displays the proportions of translation methods employed under the translation strategy of ‘target contextualization’ in ‘Creating Heaven and Earth’. It indicates that the proportion of the translation method of ‘adaptive addition’ is 33.3%, ‘adaptive reduction’ is 16.7%, and ‘extending substitution’ is 50.0%.

Table 10 displays the proportions of translation methods employed under the translation strategy of ‘source contextualization’ in ‘Creating Heaven and Earth’. The proportion of the translation method ‘naturalization’ is 60.0%, while ‘vitalization’ comprises 40.0%. A comparison of Table 9 and 10 reveals that translators utilized the translation strategy of ‘target contextualization’ 12 times for translating Hmong spiritual folklore terms, whereas the strategy of ‘source contextualization’ was employed 30 times.

TABLE 9
TRANSLATION METHODS UNDER ‘TARGET CONTEXTUALIZATION’ OF HMONG SPIRITUAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Adaptive Addition	4	33.3%
Adaptive Reduction	2	16.7%
Extending Substitution	6	50.0%
Total	12	100.0%

TABLE 10
TRANSLATION METHODS UNDER ‘SOURCE CONTEXTUALIZATION’ OF HMONG SPIRITUAL FOLKLORE TERMS

Type	Number	Percentage
Naturalization	18	60.0%
Vitalization	12	40.0%
Total	30	100.0%

Figures 14, 15, and 16 depict pie charts correlating with the data in Tables 8, 9, and 10, while Figures 17, 18, and 19 represent column diagrams corresponding to the data in Tables 8, 9, and 10. Figure 14 and Figure 17 illustrate that ‘source contextualization’ occupies the largest proportion, whereas in Figure 15 and Figure 18, ‘extending substitution’ accounts for the largest number. Additionally, in Figure 16 and Figure 19, the percentage of ‘naturalization’ is more significant.

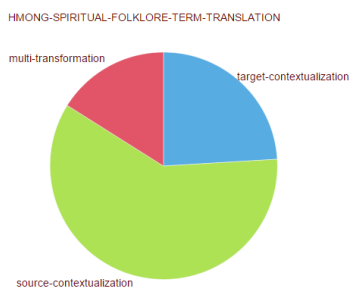


Figure 14. The Pie Chart of Translation Strategies of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

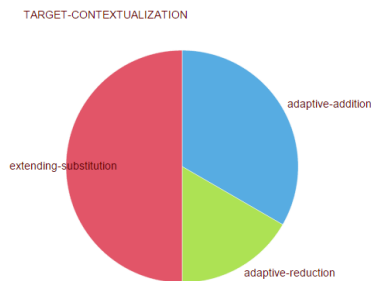


Figure 15. The Pie Chart of Translation Methods Under ‘Target Contextualization’ of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

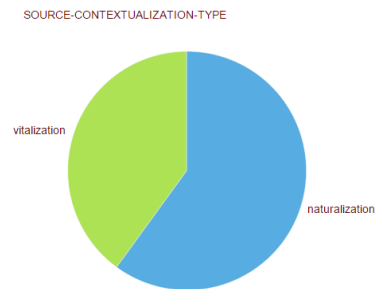


Figure 16. The Pie Chart of Translation Methods Under ‘Source Contextualization’ of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

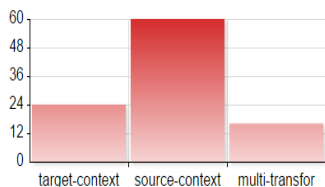


Figure 17. The Column Diagram of Translation Strategies of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

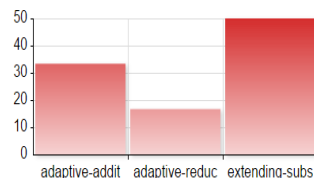


Figure 18. The Column Diagram of Translation Methods Under ‘Target Contextualization’ of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

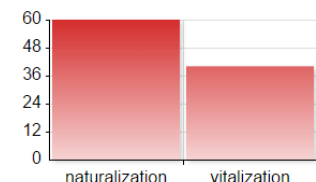


Figure 19. The Column Diagram of Translation Methods Under ‘Source Contextualization’ of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

In the translation strategy of ‘target contextualization’, translators primarily employed substitute words from the readers’ culture to translate Hmong spiritual folklore terms. Additionally, some spiritual folklore terms were explained further, while a few terms were subjected to the adaptive reduction translation method to alleviate the readers' burden. Within the framework of 'source contextualization' in translation strategy, translators primarily seek to preserve the authentic essence of Hmong spiritual folklore, predominantly employing the naturalization method.

B. The Translation Sample Analysis of Hmong Spiritual Folklore Terms

The Hmong oral epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth' features 17 Hmong spiritual folklore terms. This section analyzes a sample to examine the translation of Hmong spiritual folklore terms using Eco-translatology. One such term is 'Ghet Jex Sangx Ngangl' in Hmong. It is translated into Hmong-Chinese as '九昌昂公公', and into Chinese-English as 'grandfather named Jex Sangx Ngangl'. The Chinese translation note in the book describes it as: "传说中的巨人，因其身体特征而得名，可理解为‘脚上长有九节胫骨的老人’" (Wu et al., 2012, p. 114). The English translation note in the book describes "Jex Sangx Ngangl as a mythic giant known as an old man with long legs and nine joints" (Wu et al., 2012, p. 117).

Both Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translators employed a combination of translation methods. Therefore, the translation strategies for both languages regarding 'Ghet Jex Sangx Ngangl' are categorized as 'multi-transformation'. In Hmong, 'Ghet' translates to '公公' in Chinese, utilizing the vitalization translation method (i.e., literal translation method). 'Jex Sangx Ngangl' is rendered as '九昌昂' in Chinese, employing the naturalization translation method (i.e., transliteration). The Chinese translation note represents an example of the 'adaptive addition' translation method. Thus, the Hmong-Chinese translator employed the 'vitalization', 'naturalization', and 'adaptive addition' translation methods within the framework of 'multi-transformation'. Similarly, the Chinese-English translator adopted the 'multi-transformation' approach, incorporating three distinct translation methods. The initial two translation methods, 'vitalization' and 'naturalization', fall within the framework of 'source contextualization'. The third translation method, 'adaptive addition', aligns with the 'target contextualization' strategy. 'Naturalization' is evident in the English translation 'Jex Sangx Ngangl', which corresponds to the transliteration of '九昌昂' in Chinese. The 'adaptive addition' translation method is evident in the English translation note in the book, elucidating the identity of '九昌昂公公'.

VII. CONCLUSION

This paper primarily analyzes the translation of the following Hmong terms in the Hmong Oral Epic 'Creating Heaven and Earth': Hmong material folklore terms, Hmong social folklore terms, and Hmong spiritual folklore terms. Extracting 53 Hmong folklore terms, it examines them through the lens of Eco-translatology, a suitable theoretical framework for translating Chinese ethnic minorities.

Based on the summarized data of Hmong-Chinese and Chinese-English translations of Hmong folklore terms, the following conclusions can be drawn: (i) for Hmong material folklore terms, translators predominantly employ the 'target contextualization' strategy, utilizing 'extending substitution' and 'vitalization' methods; (ii) for Hmong social folklore terms, translators tend to adopt the 'source contextualization' strategy, employing 'adaptive addition' and 'vitalization' methods; (iii) for Hmong spiritual folklore terms, translators lean towards the 'source contextualization' strategy, utilizing 'extending substitution' and 'naturalization' methods.

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EFL Teachers' Emotions Toward Online-Merge-Offline Teaching Mode in University

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Abstract—The Online-Merge-Offline (OMO) teaching mode has emerged as a prominent new approach in language education reform with the expansion of online teaching in China. Due to the emotional complexity involved in educational reforms, this study explores the emotions expressed by Chinese EFL teachers in OMO classes, investigates the situational causes, and examines emotion regulation strategies in English Language Teaching. A questionnaire was distributed to 48 Chinese EFL teachers teaching General English (GE) using OMO mode across three normal universities, followed by semi-structured interviews for deeper insights. After collecting and analyzing data from questionnaires and interviews, the findings revealed a spectrum of emotions were experienced by EFL teachers, with positive emotions prevailing, particularly in GE classes. Love, surprise, and joy were prominent across different settings. Situational triggers encompassed classroom dynamics, institutional factors and social influences; reflecting teachers' beliefs and identities, students' learning engagement, behavior and academic achievements, colleagues and administrators' work support and emotional support, policy makers' reform mandate, and the Confucian heritage cultures. To regulate positive and negative emotions, Chinese EFL teachers primarily employed appraisal, followed by situation modification and selection. This study underscores the importance of emotional awareness for both students' learning achievement and teachers' professional development in ELT. It encourages Chinese EFL teachers to recognize the significance of their emotions in teaching effectiveness and offers insights for educators and administrators into supporting teachers' emotional well-being and professional growth.

Index Terms—emotions, Chinese EFL teachers, Online-Merge-Offline (OMO), situational causes, strategies of emotion regulation

I. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, English is considered a pivotal global language that plays a vital role in many countries (Ly, 2023). According to Kachru's (1992) tripartite of ENL-ESL-EFL, English speakers can be roughly divided into three categories: native speakers, speakers of English as a second language, and speakers of English as a foreign language (Pennycook, 2017). English has developed globally throughout human history, driven not only by commercial reasons but also by cultural, religious, diplomatic, and administrative convenience. It has served as a medium for the exchange of information among scientists and scholars of diverse nationalities (Gordin, 2015).

China, a nation in the expanding circle, has witnessed the largest and fastest-growing number of EFL learners in the past four decades (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). However, test-oriented learning and teacher-centered instruction remain prevalent in English language teaching (ELT) practices. Although English has been taught in the Chinese educational system for many years, starting from kindergarten to junior and senior high school, or even at the university level, the primary focus of English learning is still on the skills being tested (Zhao, 2023). For instance, the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE), a standardized college entrance exam, is held annually in China. As a major subject in NCEE, English is learned not only for personal advancement but also as a promise of an individual's brighter future. For Chinese university students, even though professional knowledge has become more important and English study seems to have lost its status, they must take compulsory English courses in the first two years and prepare for the College English Test 4/6 (CET4/6) to meet future job requirements.

In order to cater to the goal of test-orientedness, the traditional teaching mode combined with multimedia equipment is still the common approach for Chinese EFL teachers (Wang, 2021). The English proficiency of learners is not as high as expected in China, despite all learners being diligent and putting in great effort. According to the ranking of the international educational organization named EF or Education First, China was ranked 82nd among 113 countries in terms of learners' English proficiency (EF, 2023), lower than some developing countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam.

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Under this circumstance, driven by multiple factors such as advanced technology, post-epidemic stimuli, and national policies, the Online-Merge-Offline (OMO) teaching mode, including the learning environment, teaching platforms, organizational structure and teaching approaches, has gained extensive attention in China. This mode not only addresses the limitations of the traditional English teaching mode in ELT, but also aligns with the learning characteristics of college students (Wang, 2021).

The OMO teaching mode is a mixed teaching mode between online teaching and offline teaching, relying on high integration between online teaching platforms and offline classrooms with information technology (Tran, 2023). In the OMO teaching mode class, students are free from time-space limitations during the English learning process; their comprehensive language learning ability is ensured (Wang, 2021). In addition, the OMO teaching mode further stimulates students' learning autonomy, and transfers the position of students from passive to active in the learning process (Xu, 2017). Meanwhile, the OMO teaching mode enhances the interactivity between students and teachers, and cultivate students' thinking ability, autonomous learning ability, and so on (Bai, 2024). Under this circumstance, Chinese EFL teachers are also expected to actively adapt their teaching roles, improve their information literacy, and have the ability to design and use informative media in the OMO teaching mode class.

Given the pros and cons of the OMO teaching mode, diverse and dynamic emotions may arise as this teaching mode is implemented in ELT practices. The transition in instruction is not merely a technical process but also requires teachers' emotional engagement, without this, the reform cannot continue (Heath & Heath, 2017). If teaching and change are full of emotional activities, it will be detrimental to ignore emotions (Hargreaves, 2012). Teachers are supposed to avoid expressing too strong or too weak emotions in a pool of daily experienced emotions; emotion regulation is crucial for them to succeed in teaching (Chen & Cheng, 2021). The Arnold's (2011) vivid metaphor compares positive emotions to fuel and negative emotions to cold water dousing the emerging flames, which is certainly appropriate for both teaching and learning processes and applicable to all educational contexts. Consequently, the study tries to address the following research questions:

- 1) What emotions do Chinese EFL teachers experience in OMO teaching mode classes?;
- 2) What situations cause fluctuations in Chinese EFL teachers' emotions in the OMO teaching mode classes?; and
- 3) What strategies of emotion regulation do Chinese EFL teachers employ in OMO teaching mode classes?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Radcliffe's (2009) Pedagogy-Space-Technology (PST) theory has been developed for the design and evaluation of active learning and teaching in OMO teaching. The pedagogy in the PST framework is usually regarded as the key way to effectively facilitate teaching, learning, and evaluation in education, which relates to the teaching methods, teaching strategies, and so on. Likewise, Bieleke et al. (2023) also emphasize that a wide range of emotions are triggered by academic settings in ELT practices, relating to teaching, learning, and evaluation. In the three academic settings, emotions are ubiquitous, and they offer convenient conditions for researchers to explore emotions in pedagogy (Bieleke et al., 2023). The space in the PST framework includes online teaching platforms, offline physical environments, facilities, equipment, space layouts, and so on (Radcliffe, 2009). The resources available online or offline are vital for teachers' teaching and students' learning. For instance, online teaching platforms reside in the online space, while teaching equipment and the classroom environment belong to the offline space. The technology in the PST framework is another crucial factor in teaching and learning (Radcliffe, 2009).

Teachers' emotions refer to teachers' feelings from judgments related to the interactions with students, colleagues, principals, administrators, parents, or others in different teaching situations (Wu & Chen, 2018). Schacter and Curran (2000) define teachers' emotions as a positive or negative experience that is associated with a particular pattern of teachers' physiological activities in the process of teaching. Sutton (2005) views teachers' emotions as the various feelings teachers experience that cannot be fitted into the process of teaching. Teachers experience different emotions that are tied to their teaching professions, and these emotions can be categorized about teachers' cognition (Sutton, 2004), efficacy beliefs and goals (Kaplan et al., 2002) motivation (Pekrun et al., 2011), immunity and autonomy (Noughabi et al., 2020), self-regulation (Heydarnejad et al., 2021), and social well-being (Richards, 2022).

James (1890) classifies four basic emotions initially, love, grief, fear and rage. Six basic emotions are further identified by Ekman (2004), which include surprise and disgust in addition to the other four. Plutchik (2001) develops the "color wheel of emotions" based on Ekman's biologically and culturally driven perspectives, and suggests that the eight primary emotions are grouped on a positive or negative basis: joy versus sadness; anger versus fear; trust versus disgust; and surprise versus anticipation. Another influential category is Parrott's (2001) tree structure of basic emotions, which classifies human emotions into primary emotions, secondary emotions and tertiary emotions. Each level refines the granularity of the previous level, in which the secondary, and tertiary emotions further elaborate on the abstract primary emotions, making them more concrete and detailed.

Day in and day out, teachers constantly experience their emotions from students, colleagues, parents, administrators, and others in the emotional arenas of classrooms, institutions, and society (Cross & Hong, 2012). The interaction with different people and the effort to meet the requirements of different constituencies often provoke teachers' emotions (Godar, 1990). Moreover, Zembylas et al. (2011) highlight the intricate connection between teachers' emotions, their individual experiences, and broader social, cultural, or political frameworks. Specifically, teachers' emotions can be

embedded in the concrete events and social contexts that teachers encounter in their professions. Therefore, teachers need to have the ability to regulate their emotions in teaching to create an excellent atmosphere for students.

According to Lee et al.'s (2016) statements, regulating various emotions teachers experience in their daily teaching life is pivotal not only for students' learning outcomes, but also for teachers' professional development. In educational settings, emotion regulation is the instructors' response that is related to physics, psychology and cognition, which could be used to up-regulate or down-regulate their emotions in the process of teaching (Gong et al., 2013). Among various emotions that teachers experience in their work, they are expected to exhibit positive emotions in order to create an excellent atmosphere for students, such as joy, anticipation, and love. Teachers also are expected to be aware of the negative emotions affecting students' learning and down-regulate unpleasant emotions such as anxiety, or anger (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). Dewaele et al. (2018) rightly illustrate that the establishment of a good atmosphere in teaching and learning mostly relies on EFL teachers' positive emotions and their ability to regulate emotions to counteract negative emotions.

Emotion, as Swain (2013) cited, is the elephant in the room, an understudied and under-explored research area. De Costa et al. (2020) consider that the investigation of how language teachers perceive and experience their emotions is a central concern of language researchers. Richards (2022) points out emotions are something fuzzy, which is difficult to study. About the research on emotion regulation, it is still in the early stage in ELT (Greenier et al., 2021). Many researchers state that it is still in its infancy to study the EFL teachers' emotional regulation and continuously call for more attention from researchers (Burić et al., 2020) Although prior research shows that teaching is relevant to emotions, and underscores the importance of emotion regulation as a key indicator of teacher competence (Gkonou & Mercer, 2018), it remains unclear what emotions teachers experience, how emotions emerge, and how such emotion regulation manifests in EFL teachers' teaching practices. Therefore, this study aims to explore the emotions expressed by Chinese EFL teachers in OMO classes, investigate the situational causes and regulation strategies in ELT.

III. METHODS

A. Participants

According to Yamane's (1973) formula in random sampling and stratified sampling, 48 full-time Chinese EFL teachers teaching GE classes with OMO teaching mode were selected for the questionnaire survey in three normal universities. Based on the results of the questionnaire analysis, a purposeful sampling approach (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) was implemented, 15 focal interviewees were carefully selected to represent the maximum variability in case characteristics, encompassing gender, age distribution, years of teaching GE courses, and representation from each of the three normal universities. This selection criterion was aligned with Patton's (2015) recommendation, which advocates for selecting a diverse range of cases to document the breadth of diversity and identify significant commonalities across that diversity. The sample demographics in the questionnaire and interview are listed below:

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC OF PARTICIPANTS IN QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW

Tools	Demographics	Details	Frequency	Percentage
Questionnaire	University	A	18	38
		B	16	33
		C	14	29
	Gender	Male	13	27
		Female	35	73
Interview	University	A	6	40
		B	5	33
		C	4	27
	Gender	Male	1	7
		Female	14	93

As shown in Table 1, the Chinese EFL teacher participants were from three normal universities with proportion of 38%, 33%, and 29% respectively. The female teachers outnumbered the male teachers. Likewise, in the interviews, 15 Chinese EFL teacher interviewees from each university were willing to be interviewed about the OMO teaching mode in GE classes. The distribution of interviewees was almost similar to the proportion of 40%, 33%, and 27% from each university, respectively.

B. Research Instruments

The questionnaire was adapted from Radcliff et al.'s (2009) PST theory for the OMO teaching mode. Chinese EFL teachers' emotions were explored from pedagogy-related settings, space-related settings and technology-related settings. Meanwhile, the eight basic primary emotions, including secondary emotions, and tertiary emotions, that were adapted from Plutchik's (2001) and Parrott's (2001) classification of emotions, were adopted to classify Chinese EFL teachers' emerging emotions. The Cronbach's alpha was calculated using SPSS Statistics 26, and the result was revealed to be almost 0.96, indicating high reliability since it was higher than the standard score of 0.70 (George & Mallery, 2019).

Based on the questionnaire results, the interview questions were designed to ask about emotions of Chinese EFL teacher interviewees, the situations that cause their emotions, and the strategies in OMO classes. In the semi-structured interview, the specific information was tailored to all the respondents with more open-ended or flexible-worded questions, which allowed the researcher to respond to the situation at hand. The research validity was also evaluated relying on the index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC), five experts who are proficient in social sciences and emotional areas in ELT practices were asked to evaluate the items in the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, each expert was informed of the objective of the study and was told to assign +1 to items meeting the criteria, 0 to items causing uncertainty, and -1 to items falling short of the criteria, 0 to the item that they were unsure of, and -1 to the item that did not reach the criteria. Each item must have item-objective congruence (IOC) greater than or equal to 0.5. The items that had a score of less than 0.5 were then revised according to the suggestions of the experts. Those revisions were repeated in the process until the IOC for each item reached at least 0.5.

C. Research Procedure

Generally, two main phases will be included in the process of data collection. The questionnaires were filled in by Chinese EFL teachers who taught General English using OMO teaching mode during the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024, followed by the semi-structured interviews. The developed question items in the questionnaire were uploaded onto the online crowd-sourcing platform (provided by www.wjx.cn) firstly, which is an online crowd-sourcing platform in China where questionnaire can be edited. The edited questionnaires were sent through generating links and QR codes, which also can be embed We-Chat official account to send groups or private accounts that provide functions equivalent to Amazon Mechanical Turk. The quantitative data were collected. Based on the questionnaire responses, 15 focal interviewees were carefully selected to represent the maximum variability in case characteristics, encompassing gender, age distribution, years of teaching GE courses, and representation from each of the three normal universities. This selection criterion was aligned with Patton's (2015) recommendation, which advocates for selecting a diverse range of cases to document the breadth of diversity and identify significant commonalities across that diversity. The qualitative data were obtained through interviews with 15 Chinese EFL teacher interviewees.

D. Data Analysis

Before data analysis, data probing was conducted in order to make sure that the data obtained were reliable, and then the data analysis was divided into three steps.

Firstly, the collected data in the questionnaire were mainly analyzed via SPSS Statistics 26 combined with the online platform (powered by www.wjx.cn). The descriptive statistics of percentages were computed to calculate participants' demographic information. The mean and standard deviation (SD) were calculated by the SPSS to rate the scores of participants' emotions about the OMO teaching mode in ELT. Secondly, the semi-structured interviews aimed to obtain deep insights into Chinese EFL teachers' emotions related to pedagogy, space and technology. According to Flores-López et al. (2009), emotionally recalled experiences can be labeled by emotion codes. These emotion codes are forms of descriptive coding. The first step was to divide emotions into positive emotions and negative emotions and contain codes labeling the range of concrete teacher emotions (e.g. annoyance, sadness, joy and happiness). This second step of the analysis was driven by the question: what situations cause the teachers' emotions? How did teachers regulate the emotion in a specific setting? Then the themes about the causes of teacher emotions, and the strategies of emotion regulation were concluded through analysis of the data. Finally, the emerging categories or themes were presented in the findings, and the teachers' significant utterances were sometimes quoted in the categories or themes for the conclusion of findings and discussion.

IV. RESULTS

A. Questionnaire Results

In the questionnaire, the mean and standard deviation (SD) were calculated using SPSS 26 to assess participants' emotional scores toward the OMO teaching mode in ELT practices. The results from the questionnaire are shown in Figure 1 below:

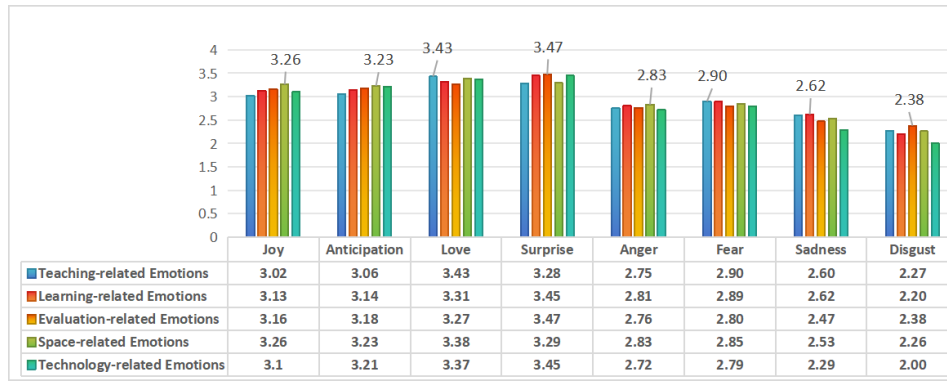


Figure 1. Chinese EFL Teachers Basic Emotions in the OMO Classes

As shown in Figure 1, Chinese EFL teachers experienced diverse and dynamic emotions, in which positively dominated emotions ($M=3.26, SD=1.00$) surpassed negative emotions ($M=2.90, SD=1.16$) when they adopted the OMO teaching mode in general education teaching. The positive emotion of love ($M=3.43, SD=1.02$) appeared mostly in teaching-related settings, and surprise ($M=3.47, SD=0.93$) emerged in learning-related settings and evaluation-related settings. Joy ($M=3.26, SD=0.96$) emerged frequently in the space-related settings, and anticipation ($M=3.23, SD=0.96$) was experienced by Chinese EFL teacher participants in technology-related settings.

In addition to the positive emotions Chinese EFL teachers experienced, the negative emotions were also revealed in the conduct of OMO teaching mode classes. Fear ($M=2.90, SD=1.16$) and anger ($M=2.83, SD=1.05$) were the most emotions that emerged in each setting, followed by sadness ($M=2.62, SD=1.00$). Regarding the negative emotion of disgust, Chinese EFL teacher participants didn't experience that at all.

B. Interview Findings

Following the results of the questionnaires, 15 Chinese EFL teacher interviewees were then interviewed based on their voluntary participation and convenience to obtain deep insights into their emotions, the situational causes as well as the strategies for emotion regulation they adopted. The following are the findings from the semi-structured interviews.

(a). What Emotions Do Chinese EFL Teachers Experience in OMO Teaching Mode Classes?

During the interview, 15 Chinese EFL teacher interviewees were asked to express their feelings in pedagogy-related settings, space-related settings, and technology-related settings. Most of them indicated that they experienced a spectrum of emotions with different causes, and they also employed some strategies to regulate their emotions in the OMO teaching classes. In Pedagogical settings, Chinese EFL teachers' emotions were explored from teaching-related settings, learning-related settings, and evaluation-related settings, which are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
THE CATEGORIES IN PEDAGOGICAL SETTINGS

Settings	Primary Emotions	Secondary Emotions (Participants)	Tertiary Emotions (Participants)
Teaching-related Settings			
	Joy		Satisfaction (T2, T3, T8); Enjoy (T8)
	Love	Longing (T8, T10)	Like (T3, T9); Passion (T11) Pride (T6); Happy (T3, T4)
	Anticipation	Expectation (T6, T13)	Interest (T12)
	Anger		Frustration (T4, T11, T12)
	Disgust	Boredom (T1)	Stress (T3, T4)
Learning-related Settings			
	Joy	Relief (T2, T10) Cheerfulness (T7, T9, T13)	Satisfaction (T2, T3, T8); Enjoy (T8) Pleasure (T3, T13)
	Love		Like (T3); Pride (T6); Happy (T3, T4)
	Anticipation	Expectation (T5, T13)	Interest (T2, T8)
	Anger		Frustration (T4, T5, T8, T11)
Evaluation-related Settings			
	Joy		Satisfaction (T9); Pleasure (T3, T13)
	Anticipation	Hope (T8, T9); Expectation (T8)	Hope (T8, T9); Expectation (T8)
	Surprise	Surprise (T1, T3, T6, T8, T9, T11, T13, T14, T15)	Amazement (T10, T13, T15) Astonish (T1, T7)
	Anger		Frustration (T12)

As shown in Table 2, the Chinese EFL teachers' emotions mainly emerged in teaching-related settings, learning-related settings, and evaluation-related settings in pedagogy-related settings. It can be found that the emotions Chinese EFL teachers experienced were basically in line with the findings in the questionnaire.

In teaching-related settings, love was the most common emotion that exists in teaching-related settings for Chinese EFL teacher interviewees. They were longing for the OMO teaching mode used in English language teaching, and they were happy and expressed their liking of it. Meanwhile, they were passionate about conducting the OMO teaching with pride. In learning-related settings, joy was the most frequent emotion Chinese EFL teacher interviewees reported; it can be seen that they are satisfied with the OMO teaching mode, and enjoy it because of the relief they would feel when they teach English language combined with online teaching platforms and online teaching resources. In evaluation-related settings, dynamic emotions, such as surprise and anticipation, coexist in Chinese teachers' emotions. They carried hope for their students' outcomes in evaluations; some of them felt satisfaction with their students' results in evaluation, while others may have felt frustration when they saw the outcomes of their students' tests. Different emotions and dynamic emotions appeared in different settings, which brought Chinese EFL teachers various reactions to their ELT.

In space-related settings, the emotions Chinese EFL teacher experienced were investigated from their attitude towards online teaching platforms, including the use of Zhihuishu and Unipus, and the offline equipment and environment in their own university. Chinese EFL teachers expressed diverse emotions facing the online and offline teaching platforms, which are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
THE CATEGORIES IN SPACE-RELATED SETTINGS

Settings	Primary Emotions	Secondary Emotions (Participants)	Tertiary Emotions (Participants)
Online Teaching Platform			
	Joy	Relief (T5, T7)	Proud (T4, T9, T13); Satisfaction (T7, T13, T14); Excitement (T12, T4)
	Anticipation		Interest (T2, T5)
	Anger	Envy (T10)	Jealous (T3, T6)
Offline Equipment and Environments			
	Joy		Satisfaction (T3, T7, T13)
	Anger		Frustration (T8, T11)
	Fear	Nervousness (T1)	Worry(T1)

As shown in **Table 3**, it can be seen that the most common emotions Chinese EFL teacher interviewees experienced were joy, anticipation, and anger, respectively. Chinese EFL teachers felt proud of the online teaching platforms, which are prevalent in online teaching. They were satisfied with these teaching platforms and were excited to adopt them in their ELT practices. Interestingly, a few Chinese EFL teacher interviewees felt jealous and envious of the online teaching platforms, as they were afraid that the online teaching platforms would replace traditional teaching or be more advanced than teaching in offline classrooms. As for the offline equipment and environments provided by the institutions, some Chinese EFL teacher interviewees felt anger and fear, even though they also experienced joy.

The emotions that appeared in the technology dimension were divided into two categories: Big Data-assisted teaching and the operation of technology, as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
THE CATEGORIES IN TECHNOLOGY-RELATED SETTINGS

Settings	Primary Emotions	Secondary Emotions (Participants)	Tertiary Emotions (Participants)
Big Data-Assisted Teaching			
	Joy		Pride (T12); Satisfaction (T1, T4); relief (T9)
	Anticipation	Hope (T8, T13)	Curiosity (T2)
	Surprise	Surprise (T1, T3, T5, T6, T8, T9, T11, T12, T15)	Amazement (T10, T13, T15) Astonish (T1, T7)
	Anger		Frustration (T14)
	Fear		Anxiety (T2)
Operation of Technology			
	Joy		Satisfaction (T6, T10, T12); Enthusiasm (T2, T7)
	Love		Like (T11, T13)
	Surprise	Surprise (T1, T4, T6)	Amazement (T3, T4), Astonish(T12)
	Sadness	Disappointment (T5, T15)	Annoy (T3, T10)
	Fear	Anxiety (T10); Nervous (T8, T14); Worry (T9)	

As shown in **Table 4**, surprise, joy, anticipation, and love were the main positive emotions experienced by Chinese EFL teachers in technology-related settings. It was found that they were proud of big-data-assisted teaching and also satisfied with it. They felt relief when they used big-data-assisted teaching in their ELT practices. Meanwhile, they were

curious about big-data-assisted teaching and full of hope for it. Importantly, they were surprised and felt amazement when using big-data-assisted teaching. Few of the Chinese EFL teacher interviewees felt anxiety or frustration due to this type of teaching. From the aspect of technology operation, positive emotions also dominated the teaching process. Many Chinese EFL teachers were filled with satisfaction and enthusiasm when operating the technology, and they liked doing it during the teaching process. Meanwhile, they were surprised and felt amazement when operating the technology. However, some other Chinese EFL teacher interviewees felt annoyed and nervous when operating the technology in the OMO teaching mode class. They were anxious and worried about operating the technology and felt uneasy doing so. Therefore, some Chinese EFL teacher interviewees were disappointed and annoyed with the operation of technology in the OMO teaching mode class.

(b). *What Situations Cause Chinese EFL Teachers' Emotions to Fluctuate in the OMO Teaching Mode Classes?*

During the interview, 15 Chinese EFL teachers talked about the situational causes that led to the emergence of their emotions when they adopted the OMO teaching mode in GE teaching and pointed out that their lives interacted with teachers themselves, students, principals, colleagues, policymakers, and even culture, all of which would lead to their various emotions. Figure 2 presents the findings of the situations that cause Chinese EFL teachers' emotions when they encounter the OMO teaching mode in GE teaching.

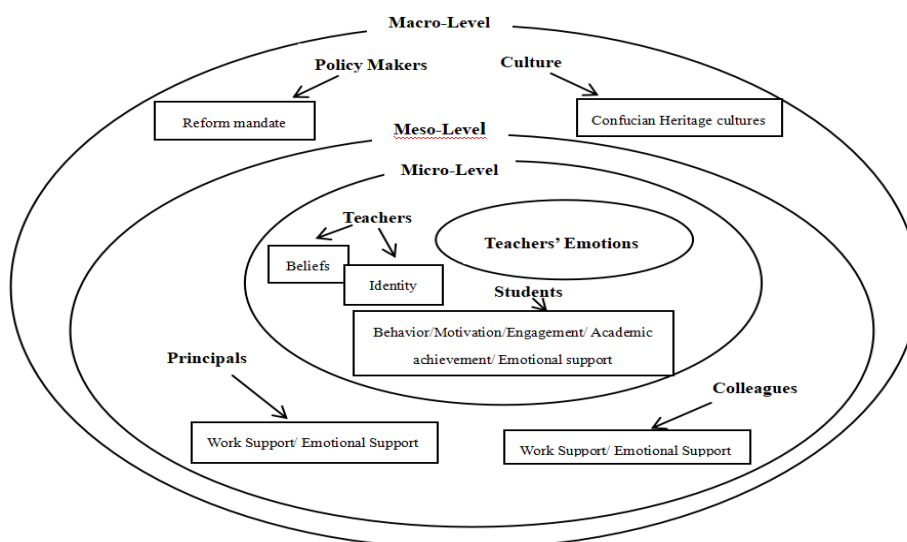


Figure 2. Summaries of Situational Causes for Chinese EFL Teachers' Emotions

As Figure 2 shows, the situations that cause Chinese EFL teachers' emotions can be categorized into three levels: the micro-level in the classroom, including teachers' professional identities and beliefs, as well as students' learning engagement, and academic achievements; the meso-level in institutions, such as work support and emotional support from colleagues and principals, and the macro-level in society, including policy makers' reform mandate and cultural factors, such as the exam-oriented culture and Confucian heritage culture in China.

1. *Situational Causes From Teachers and Students*

The overarching finding was that all Chinese EFL teachers who participated in this study pointed out their emotions were mostly triggered by students and themselves in teaching and learning situations. Teachers' identities and beliefs were crucial factors contributing to their positive or negative emotions. T3 reported that her identity as a facilitator drives her to be highly responsible and committed to her job regardless of the teaching mode. For example:

"As a facilitator of language teaching, I strongly identify with my role... However, my role is not merely to deliver content but also to inspire, motivate, and guide students toward their learning goals... (silence a moment) ...for the Online-Merge-Offline mode, I believe that it's my responsibility to adapt my teaching style and strategies to meet the needs of students, regardless of the teaching mode" (T3- teachers' identity and belief).

On the other hand, students' motivation, learning engagement, academic achievements, and emotional support are also vital factors that trigger Chinese EFL teachers' emotions. T8 mentioned that students' high motivations inspire him more engaged in his teaching.

"Some students showed high level of motivation and excitement for learning English with the new teaching mode(excited)... it fills me with enthusiasm and energy..." (T8-students' learning motivation)

However, T10 was the opposite, she thought students were disinterested in English learning regardless of the teaching mode, it can be challenging for her to maintain her own excitement and momentum:

“Students seem disinterested or unmotivated in English learning regardless of teaching mode, it can be challenging for me to maintain my own excitement and momentum” (T10- students’ learning motivation)

Most Chinese EFL teachers discussed how students’ learning engagement also influenced their emotions in various ways. For instance, students’ engaging in discussions, asking questions, offering their opinions, and participating in role-plays could lead to positive emotions. Conversely, students’ unsatisfactory behavior was a direct factor in triggering negative emotions. For example:

“In OMO teaching mode class, some students positively ask questions, offer their opinions with me in online platform, or engage in role-plays in offline class, it fills me with a sense of satisfaction and excitement.” (T11-students’ learning engagement)

Additionally, students’ academic progress and achievement not only provoked EFL teachers’ emotions but also provided emotional support. For instance:

“When they express appreciation for my efforts, share their personal stories, or seek advice and guidance, it makes me feel valued and connected to them ” (T5-students’ emotional support)

In summary, teachers’ beliefs and identities, students’ behavior, motivation, learning engagement, academic achievements, and emotional support have profound impacts on Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions in OMO teaching mode class. From the micro perspective, teachers’ emotions were triggered by themselves and students in their daily teaching and learning activities.

2. Situational Causes From Principals and Colleagues

In addition to interacting with students who play the main roles in teachers’ lives, Chinese EFL teachers also intersect with their colleagues and principals. Most of the interviewees viewed that their emotions were also derived from work support and emotional support from their colleagues and principals in institutions. T6 expressed that the principals’ work support was vital for her to implement the new teaching mode, such as teacher training and development, curricular and pedagogical guidance, principals’ recognition and appreciation, understanding, and encouragement. For example:

“Receiving acknowledgment and appreciation for the efforts put into teaching in this new mode is extremely motivating. It reminds me that my work is valued and makes me feel more engaged and committed to my role.” (T9-principals’ emotional support)

Furthermore, work support and emotional support from colleagues are other factors influencing Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions. This work support from colleagues can be concluded as sharing teaching resources and teaching materials, as well as peer feedback. As one teacher addressed:

“Colleagues who are willing to share their materials and resources can greatly ease the burden of finding and preparing content... This support would allow me to focus more on teaching and make me feel relief.” (T7-colleagues’ work support)

At the same time, the emotional support from colleagues was also an invaluable spiritual solace for Chinese EFL teachers, if they were willing to share experiences and demonstrate solidarity, as well as having a positive outlook and encouragement, and so on. Likewise, T2 elaborated:

“Having colleagues with a positive outlook and encouraging attitude would be contagious...this would rub off on me, keeping me motivated and optimistic even during difficult times.” (T13-colleagues’ emotional support)

In conclusion, both work support and emotional support from principals and colleagues are crucial for teachers utilizing the new OMO teaching mode, and they trigger various emotions in teachers. They help create a supportive and collaborative environment that promotes teachers’ well-being and enhances their ability to deliver effective and engaging lessons to students.

3. Situational Causes From Policy Makers and Confucian Culture

From the macro level, Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions could be triggered by the reform mandate from policymakers, and the Confucian heritage culture. Teachers viewed the reform policy from different perspectives, and various emotions emerged based on their understanding of the educational policy. For example:

“From past teaching mode to the new teaching mode, it emphasizes innovation and the integration of technology into education; it could inspire excitement and anticipation within me” (T4-Policy makers’ reform mandate).

However, some Chinese EFL teachers had the opposite viewpoints about the OMO teaching mode; they were worried and felt frustrated about it.

“Reform mandate feel imposed from the top down, without consideration of the practical realities and challenges faced by teachers...this could lead to feelings of frustration.” (T1-policy makers’ reform mandate)

Noticeably, the Confucian heritage culture, which is hidden in each Chinese person’s heart, including Chinese teachers, influences their behavior and thoughts deeply, in this culture; Chinese EFL teachers all have the characteristics of patience, calmness, harmoniousness, unity-mindedness, and cooperation. When they encountered difficulties, those characteristics manifested themselves in regulating their emotions. T13 commented,

“Harmony promotes a positive classroom environment where students and teachers work together to achieve common goals. This sense of unity and cooperation foster me to create a positive emotional atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning.” (T13-Confucian heritage culture)

Overall, Chinese EFL teachers’ emotional response to the new teaching mode can be triggered by their understanding of reform policies. Additionally, the Confucian heritage culture has had an impact on Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions, since their emotions are shaped by their interpretation and experiences, as well as the specific cultural context within which they operate.

(c). *What Strategies of Emotion Regulation Do Chinese EFL Teachers Employ When They Encounter the Emotions in ELT Practices?*

Through the in-depth interviews and analysis of the interview content, it was concluded that all the Chinese EFL teachers (n=15) focused on using self-regulation and others’ assistance to regulate their emotions when facing various emotions in the OMO teaching mode classes. Findings identified a series of emotion regulation strategies in different settings, including teaching-related settings, learning-related settings, assessment-related settings, space-related settings, and technology-related settings which are shown in Table 5 as follows.

TABLE 5
STRATEGY AND SUB-STRATEGY OF EMOTION REGULATION IN OMO CLASSES

Primary Strategy	Sub-strategy	Participants (Settings)
Situation Selection	● Selecting the OMO teaching mode	(T15: Teaching-related Settings)
	● Selecting a hierarchical but friendly relationship	(T3: Learning-related Settings)
	● Avoiding conflict with students	(T9: Teaching-related Settings)
	● Selecting modes of class interaction	(T4: Teaching-related Settings)
Situation Modification	● Reflecting and Improving	(T3: Teaching-related Settings; T6: Evaluation-related Settings)
	● Consulting with students	(T1: Teaching-related Settings; T12: Technology-related Settings)
	● Negotiating with principals	(T14: Learning-related Settings)
	● Consulting with Colleagues	
Attention Deployment	● Diverting attention to other things	
	1) Internally diverting attention	(T13: Evaluation-related Settings; T14: Learning-related Settings)
Reappraisal	2) Externally diverting attention	(T5: Teaching-related Settings)
	● Reappraising students’ misbehavior	(T9: Learning-related Settings; T2: Evaluation-related Settings; T15: Learning-related Setting; T7: Teaching-related settings; T8: Teaching-related Setting; T1: Evaluation-related Settings)
	● Reappraising students’ unsatisfactory performance	(T6: Evaluation-related Settings; T10: Technology-related Settings; T11: Learning-related Settings)
Suppression	● Inhibiting negative Emotions	(T11: Learning-related Settings; T2: Teaching-related Settings)
	● Faking	(T1: Technology-related Settings; T15: Evaluation-related Settings)
	● Masking	
Seeking Social Support	● Outpouring negative emotions to others	(T6: Learning-related Settings)
	● Seeking help from other Colleagues.	(T7: Teaching-related Settings)

As shown in Table 5, in the strategies of emotion regulation, Chinese EFL teacher interviewees most often adopted reappraisal to regulate emotions they encountered in the OMO teaching mode class. These strategies of emotion regulation were usually adopted in all settings except for space-related settings. EFL students’ misbehavior and unsatisfactory performance were the two factors that prompted Chinese EFL teacher interviewees to reappraise their emotions so that they could teach positively. By changing their previous cognition, they would feel better and serve the teaching procedures better. T9 pointed out:

“I know some students copied other’s assignments, it was not right. However, I was wondering if they didn’t give up themselves. I had to comfort myself and save the face for students, so I didn’t name and criticize them...” (T9: learning-related Settings)

Additionally, situational modification was also frequently employed by Chinese EFL teacher interviewees as an emotion regulation strategy. It was usually used to reduce negative emotions evoked in evaluation-related settings and learning-related settings. T6 expressed:

“I also reflect myself and change my tactics about the students’ low scores in assessments...maybe it was only my high expectation for them.” (T6: evaluation-related Settings)

Moreover, Chinese EFL teacher interviewees also employed situation selection to manage their relationships with students and cope with the negative emotions caused by EFL students’ learning results, whether in online or offline classes. T3 commented:

“Even though I am an instructor in the OMO teaching mode class, we could be friends in private, students are willing to share their learning experiences and happy moments with me, which makes me comfortable.” (T3: learning-related Settings)

Chinese EFL teachers selected a hierarchical but friendly teacher-student relationship in their daily teaching, which could make their teaching and learning go smoothly. As Chinese EFL teachers, suppression was also the usual emotion regulation they employed in the process of the OMO teaching mode. They inhibited, masked, or faked their negative emotions in order to make their teaching proceed smoothly. T11 pointed out:

“Anyway, I should maintain stable emotions, as a university teacher, I shouldn’t lose my temper easily for students’ behavior.” (T11: learning-related Settings)

In addition, attention deployment and seeking social support were also part of the strategies that Chinese EFL teacher interviewees employed for emotion regulation. T6 also commented:

“Students’ cheating on the assignments makes me angry, I would rather talk about this with my colleagues, and ask whether the same situation happened in their class, the complaining makes me feel better.” (T6: learning-related Settings)

Therefore, findings identified a series of emotion regulation strategies in different settings, including teaching-related settings, learning-related settings, assessment-related settings, space-related settings, and technology-related settings. Reappraisal and situation modification were the most commonly employed emotion regulation strategies by EFL teachers when they encountered emotions, and seeking social support and attention deployment were the least adopted strategies by EFL teachers in the OMO teaching mode class.

V. DISCUSSION

Based on a holistic analysis of the emotions experienced by Chinese EFL teachers in OMO classes, it was found that they predominantly experienced a wide range of positive, diverse, and dynamic emotions. This aligns with previous research indicating that numerous internal or external factors- such as teaching conditions, facilities, resources, equipment and teacher-students interactions-can influence EFL teachers’ emotional states (Pennington & Richards, 2016). Tsang and Jiang (2018) further demonstrated that different teaching and learning contexts could create either favorable or unfavorable conditions for teaching, which in turn affects the emotional experience of teaching. It is true that teachers can experience different types of emotion, mainly falling into the dimensions of positive emotions and negative emotions: positive emotions, such as happiness, excitement, satisfaction, and pride; and negative emotions, including sadness, disappointment, anger, anxiety, and fear, are part of the teaching and learning process (Day & Lee, 2011). Gkonou and Mercer (2018) reported that teachers experience a mix of negative emotions alongside some positive emotions, and Richards (2022) showed that the experience of teaching can involve both positive and negative emotions.

Firstly, Chinese EFL teachers were found to be prone to experiencing diverse emotions in various settings. In teaching-related settings, love was the most common emotion that emerged in Chinese EFL teachers; they were filled with love in their teaching. This aligns with Lanias and Zembylas’ (2015) conceptualization of love as praxis for EFL teachers, suggesting that love involves understanding others and a willingness to connect with students. According to Fredrickson (2013), these micro-moments of love can enhance mutual care and empathy between teachers and students. Thus, by engaging in building positive emotions, both parties develop rapport and a close social bond with each other in the teaching and learning process. Surprise was the most common emotion Chinese EFL teachers had in students’ learning-related settings, evaluation settings and technology-related settings in the OMO teaching mode class. This diverges from the perspective that joy, a deeper feeling than happiness, should characterize the learning and teaching experience when goals are met (Ayob & Omidire, 2021). This highlights the complex interplay of emotions in the modern emotional landscape and underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of how such emotions influence teaching and learning.

In addition, the situational causes triggered Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions vary from micro level to macro level, which is consistent with Schutz et al.’s (2006) statement, emotions are socially constructed, and emerge with conscious or unconscious judgments in the social-historical contexts. As educators, most Chinese EFL teachers reported that they were committed to their teaching and students’ learning regardless of the teaching mode. Teachers’ emotions were also triggered by students’ behavior, learning engagement, and academic achievement, just as showcased in Mckellar et al.’s (2020) study, teachers’ emotions could be influenced by students’ engagement, individualized feedback, and classroom interaction. Furthermore, Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions also originated from work support and emotional support from principals and colleagues, which aligns with (Cross & Hong, 2012) statement that teachers constantly experience their emotions from students, colleagues, parents, administrators, and others in the emotional arenas of classroom, institutions and society. Chinese EFL teachers’ emotions were also influenced by their educator identity, which features an awareness of lifelong learning and a strong sense of responsibility towards students. These beliefs and identities were from the Confucian heritage cultures in China, in which teachers are regarded as sages who are “insatiable in learning” (xue er bu yan) and “tireless in teaching” (hui ren bu juan) (Mei et al., 2016). This is also in line with Xiao et al.’s (2023) statement that the Confucian heritage cultures influence the construction of teacher identity.

Moreover, Chinese EFL teachers employed different emotion regulation strategies in the OMO teaching mode class, in which reappraisal can mostly regulate teachers' emotions by reshaping their conceptions of teaching and learning, which aligns with earlier findings that reappraisal was more frequently used than attention deployment to regulate emotions towards student misbehavior and performance (Taxer & Gross, 2018). Reappraisal in this study indicated that Chinese EFL teachers reappraised students' misbehavior or students' unsatisfactory performance in learning, which joins Gross's (2015) definition of altering the emotional impact of a situation by changing an individual's appraisal of the situation and Sutton's (2004) statement that teachers use reappraisal to reinterpret the relevance of student misconduct. Chinese EFL teachers also diverted their negative emotions externally by going out to have some delicious food or doing exercises, doing yoga, and even sleeping, which is consistent with Bennett et al.'s (2024) finding that distraction has been found to lead to muted emotional responses to negative emotion eliciting stimuli.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study explored the emotions Chinese EFL teachers expressed in OMO classes, investigated the situational causes of the emergence of these emotions, and strategies for emotion regulation that EFL teachers employ in their ELT practices. A spectrum of emotions were experienced by teachers, with positive emotions prevailing, particularly in GE classes; the situational triggers encompassed classroom dynamics, institutional factors, and social influences; Chinese EFL teachers primarily employed appraisal to regulate their emotions, followed by situation modification and situation. This study underscores the importance of emotional awareness for both teachers' professional development and students' learning achievement in ELT practices; it encourages Chinese EFL teachers to recognize the significance of their emotions in teaching EFL and offers valuable insights for educators and administrators into supporting teachers' emotional well-being and professional growth.

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Women and Nature Wrongly Associated: Love as the Only Solution in Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Abstract—This article analyzes Arundhati Roy's intricately-woven novel *The God of Small Things* (1997) for ecofeminist implications. It highlights the points of convergence between sexism and ecological degradation, expounding the role of *love* as a remedy to most social and environmental problems. Ecofeminism incorporates a wide range of sociopolitical and cultural subtleties arising from the transformation of sanctified and ecofriendly conceptions of the ecosystem into a cash economy. Opposing violent revolutions and social unrest, Roy's polemic stance verges on the essentiality of what she calls "small things" in alleviating such deviations and enticing a shift in people's interaction with the other. In the face of patriarchy and hierarchy, the researcher advocates for love as the ultimate factor in bridging the gap between oneself and others. Hence, love disturbs ideologies of capitalization, fragmentation, and polarization. Viewing ecofeminism as a predominantly empathetic domain, the researcher investigates love in its most comprehensive form, encompassing all components of the ecosystem.

Index Terms—Roy, interconnectedness, ecosystem, nature, class

I. INTRODUCTION

The majority of the current academic research on *The God of Small Things* highlights the transformation of economic transactions, which led to profound and problematic consequences for social interaction, while not arguably placing enough emphasis on the role of love and themes of sustainability and shareability as counterhegemonic to the ethics of exploitation and consumerism propagated and enhanced by colonial ideologies. The novel challenges the commodity logic that underpins patriarchal ideologies under capitalism. It meditates on how dominant narratives and cognitive patterns obscure history and economic forces. The narrative illustrates the organization and degradation of an ideological vision through the juxtaposition of surface meanings and exploitative histories. This analysis uses an ecofeminist approach to question and challenge the dominant meanings that shape social interaction and environmental relationships in order to fully appreciate their demystification. Here, the researcher concurs with Roy vis-à-vis the interconnectedness of all things, so people should act together—if one component is affected, the other parts will also carry the brunt. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the well-being of all life forms by keeping the other component in mind. This goal can be achieved only through empathy and love of others.

However, one should exercise caution when evaluating the principles of ecofeminism, as some scholars have a similar perspective on nature and women. The association does not improve both components' conditions, making it problematic. Rather, it may degrade one to the other's level. Adams (1993), a pioneering scholar, cautions against intentionally or unintentionally confining women to the domain of nature. The argument is that associating nature with women does not elevate nature, but rather diminishes women's status. She refers to this process as "transference" or "metaphorizing," dismissing the notion of romanticizing this combination. In fact, the association between women and nature not only exacerbates harm to women but also silences their voices, rather than empowering both sides. This complex link between nature and women aggravates the already submissive situation of women in oppressive societies, leading to even greater discrimination against women and the environment due to the prevailing male-dominated power structures and biases.

Roach (1996) emphasizes that to combat such limiting narratives that combine and constrain women and nature, intellectuals should perceive the earth objectively as the planet it is, rather than attributing feminine qualities or personifying it as a mother figure (p. 55). Here, the researcher conceives of ecological feminism as a theoretical framework of empathy and understanding capable of dismantling oppositions responsible for perpetuating Western metaphysics and creating gender-based divisions in the world. By adhering to a rigorous framework, individuals can ensure that they do not succumb to the ideologies they are attempting to challenge. Therefore, they refuse to accept an idealized perception of nature as a feminine symbol, as it would justify prejudice against both nature and women.

Degradation, stereotyping, and occasionally idealization have justified the maltreatment of marginalized groups. The researcher posits that no single critical approach can comprehensively tackle the numerous complexities and injustices arising from patriarchy in its diverse manifestations. Instead, the realms of feminism and ecology complement each other and compensate for each other's deficiencies or the inherent limitations of every individual theory by itself. These

theories, when compared to other theories that aim to simplify or oppose critical theories, form a logical argument that further distinguishes between various species. Furthermore, it promotes feminism's integration into society and broadens its reach. These approaches protect against separatist feminism, which contradicts the fundamental principles of these holistic fields. The two approaches embrace a holistic viewpoint, thwarting any patriarchal fallacies or superimposed frameworks. Instead, they foster a feeling of cohesion and mutual reliance with those entities that are typically excluded and even absorbed into larger groups.

Ecofeminists strongly criticize the underlying factors leading to the oppression of women, marginalized groups, and the environment. Plumwood (1993) postulates that ecological deterioration is the result of Western dichotomies, dividing things into dichotomies of centers and peripheries, altering people's perception of the environment from a sacred, lively entity into a mere cash commodity. Manichean modes of thought, according to Plumwood (1993), lead to these distorted views and ideologies by devaluing and objectifying the other, depriving it of its inherent worth. She proposes breaking these binary oppositions to rectify the inequities that govern the relationships among various pairs, advocating for a "non-hierarchical concept of difference" (p. 60). In agreement with Plumwood and other scholars, Warren (1994) argues that prevalent divisions are behind most gaps and prejudices plaguing the world. Power centers marginalize non-dominant groups, place them at the lowest rung of the hierarchy, and unjustifiably omit them (xiv).

Scholars have examined Roy's novel from multiple theoretical perspectives, including feminism, Marxism, post-structuralism, postcolonialism, and new historicism (see, for instance, Boehmer, 2005; Mullaney, 2002; Pathak, 2001). For example, Kunhi and Kunhi (2017) cite the novel as an exemplary work of ecofeminism in which the novelist "utilizes various techniques reflecting modes of revolt of Nature in terms of the muted group theory and backchannel communication motifs" (p. 1). According to Sinha and Tripathi (2001), the novel is a "third world artifact swept up into a global marketplace," (p. 32) combining postmodern and postcolonial implications. Singh (2001) expressly associates *The God of Small Things* with dynamics of postcolonialism and feminism, asserting that the author's recovery of marginalized groups is an "act of liberation" linked to postcolonial resistance (pp. 132-136).

Comfort (2008) presents evidence that the Delhi government's implementation of the new world system has detrimental effects on marginalized and disadvantaged groups. In particular, Comfort argues that we can understand "concepts related to negative dialectics [which] can lend insight into the commodity logic of imperialism, and, specifically, how it pervades perceptions of social relations, identity, and history in the daily lives portrayed in *The God of Small Things* (p. 2). Das (2018) stresses that *The God of Small Things* is "preoccupied with the social-political-cultural history," demonstrating that "Roy thinks of history as a burden; it is unalterable and cannot be challenged and has its own cruel ways of dealing with those who refuse to fit into its pattern" (p. 4). The World Bank's investment is currently constructing a dam and transforming the History House into a popular tourist destination, aiming to make it a marketable commodity (p. 2). According to Comfort, "The novel's portrayal of the contemporary Ayemenem represents a place where people remain traumatized by the brutal oppressions of the past and one where caste violence, the exploitation of rural workers, and women's oppression have not been eliminated" (p. 23). The novel illustrates the consequences of the government's implementation of "privatization, IMF structural adjustment," and a variety of "market-based policies." These policies have exacerbated the process of "accumulation and commodification," illustrated by the transformation of the History House into a global tourist attraction and the imagery of a river that has been "dammed with funding from the World Bank" (Comfort, p. 23). Prakash (1999), who focuses on the conflicting urges of the characters in the novel, rightly examines the rigid ethical positions shown in the novel. She highlights the paradoxes that arise when the ethical values of the family clash with the emotional desires of the individual (p. 78). Eventually, no one benefits when Mammachi succumbs to stringent traditional norms: familial ethics remain(ing) in conflict with the emotional urges of the individual. Das (2007) argues that "Ammu's love for Velutha forms the core of the novel and makes the novelist's preference crystal clear. The traditional society was not only conservative but authoritarian for it laid down who should love whom" (p. 73).

II. DISCUSSION

Roy's *The God of Small Things*, a text generating multiple meanings and interpretations, delves into the concept of postcolonial subalternity and thoroughly analyzes various aspects and viewpoints in connection to the dichotomies between India and Britain. Sophie Mol, a British child, symbolizes the British's authoritative power and prestige in India. As a result, she receives a grand funeral service, which stands in stark contrast to the disrespectful and informal deaths and burials of others (pp. 42-43). The researcher agrees with the above interpretations but places greater emphasis on love as the primary mechanism for challenging and restraining ideas of imperialism and patriarchy. The novel utilizes a set of complex and unified narratives detailing thorny issues in India through a diverse cast of characters with myriad voices and points of view. Set in India after gaining independence from colonial rule, the tale explores the failure of post-independence communication between the ruling class and the marginalized communities. Simultaneously, it initiates fruitful interactions between the central and peripheral regions, where love blurs some boundaries. However, traditional and imperial practices disproportionately affect women who do not hold positions of power or authority, resulting in environmental degradation and the dehumanization of marginalized individuals, particularly women.

The novel explores ecofeminist themes, principles, and structures that challenge and surpass patriarchal “dysfunctional” systems, aiming to find empowerment and representation. It emphasizes that these perspectives are not comprehensive, but rather subjective and limited, representing just a certain viewpoint. They might be passed on from the Indian heritage and sociopolitical complexities that pose a conundrum. This predicament is evident from the changes that have occurred and continue to occur in the voices of the key characters. Take, for example, the caste system, which has been worsened and amplified by neoliberal policies that are causing severe damage to the ecosystem, and continues to be a disruptive framework in India. Therefore, the majority of social and political issues in India are caused by unprincipled violations of the community’s means of subsistence, along with the problematic caste structure now formally banned. Recognizing that dismantling the prejudiced social structure and challenging sexism requires a rigorous and persistent effort, Roy argues that compassion has the power to eradicate such oppressive behaviors from individuals’ consciousness. Practiced long before the arrival of the British colonial authorities in India, the caste system, adapted and maintained by the British, kept women and the poor disadvantaged. Tickell (2007) states that “in addition to the subjugation of marginalized groups in India, the caste system is identified as the most persistent form of social inequality, particularly affecting women” (p. 20).

The God of Small Things portrays caste as a dominant power structure that places marginalized groups at the lowest rung of society. Shukla and Bareli (2009) assert that despite gaining political independence, there has been no progress in improving the social standing and conditions of the marginalized. Despite its repeal, caste continues to significantly shape the lives of the masses. The insatiable desire for wealth and power inherent in capitalism and imperialism, which comes at the expense of marginalized groups, exacerbates these thorny issues. To fix the unfair distribution of power and wealth that comes from doing harmful things to the environment and going in the wrong direction of progress, we need a comprehensive plan. In essence, we cannot separate economic prosperity and fair treatment of individuals from our moral principles and compassionate regard for all living beings—human and nonhuman.

The God of Small Things intricately weaves together many narratives and presents complex, varied characters, employing a frame-tale structure to create the book’s overarching narrative. The main storyline here is Rahel’s return to Kerala from the US, which spans twenty-four hours. Sophie Mol, the cousin of Rahel and Estha, arrives in India in 1969, beginning the second prevailing storyline. This narrative spans a duration of two weeks. The narrative culminates a few days following the discovery of Sophie’s lifeless body in the Meenachal River. The text employs two interchanging narrative structures that resonate with significant geopolitical implications. These structures alternate, diverge, and ultimately converge, resulting in a distinctively designed manuscript. The affluent characters’ story serves as a vehicle for conveying these ideas. The Ipe family, who own land in Syria, serves as a microcosm that represents the story of India. Although these two storylines appear to follow a linear sequence, they actually have a fragmentary cyclical structure with a time interval separating them, oscillating between being linear and nonlinear, and transiently shifting to support the fundamental ideas of the novel.

As an illustration, the tale narrates the sequence of events in which Rahel returns to Ayemenem with the purpose of “reuniting” with Estha, her twin brother, culminating in them sleeping together. Their meeting symbolizes the mutual reliance of all living entities—the bond between Rahel and Estha is such that their “incestuous” relationship holds enormous symbolic significance. The reunion of the twins symbolizes the interdependence of all life forms. Because of their so deep relationship, Rahel never writes to him. “There are things that you can’t do—like writing letters to a part of yourself. To your feet or hair. Or heart” (p. 156). On the other hand, the other primary storyline commences with Sophie’s funeral and concludes with Valutha, an untouchable employee at the family’s pickle business, and Ammu’s inter-caste bond, perceived as a violation of the Indian social stratifications of class and caste. Innes (2007) focuses on the diverse Kerala society where “the novel ends in desolation, after retracing the deaths of the twin’s Anglo-Indian cousin and the murder of their mother’s lover because he belongs to the wrong caste; only those who are almost the same (the twins) can communicate with one another” (p. 175).

We can describe Ammu and Valutha’s relationship as a transformation where “the unthinkable became the thinkable and the impossible really happened” (p. 31). Their love represents a hopeful defiance of hierarchical norms that seek to erase and suppress certain groups. According to Ammu, “When you hurt people, they begin to love you less. That’s what careless and mordant words do. They make people love you a little less” (emphasis added, p. 108). She desires for Valutha to join her fervor in opposing the absurd societal norms: “She hoped that under his careful cloak of cheerfulness he housed a living, breathing anger against the smug, ordered world” (p. 166). She anticipates that beneath his facade of cheerfulness, he harbors a vibrant and palpable resentment towards a complacent and structured society. In addition, transcending the imposed rigidities of oppressive systems, Estha and Rahel establish a nurturing paternal bond (founded on reciprocal affection) with Valutha. Towards the conclusion of the novel, Roy employs various methodologies and outlines to depict simultaneous scenes, shedding light on the sociocultural norms that shape social interactions and exert control over “who should be loved. And how. And how much” (p. 33).

In this context, love is underscored as the sole force capable of inspiring the aesthetics of sharing, responsibly, and mutual respect. The manifold’s completeness is only conceivable when it is associated with the regarded party. In this view, love excludes any attempt at objectifying or abstracting the other. Much like labeling, objectification hinders any close association with the other, depriving it of its vitality and essence, and validating various manifestations of

aggression directed toward it. This approach toward the other involves disregarding the other's right to express themselves, hence diminishing its significance and value.

In the absence of love, even women belonging to the higher echelons of society experience marginalization and have their abilities diminished. Ammu, a resolute and adaptable individual, has cultivated a strong inclination toward equality. She rejects the societal standards imposed upon her and experiences a sense of isolation from her gender-biased parents. For example, although Ammu is denied the opportunity to pursue her academic degree, Chacko, her brother, joins the university. Ammu faces significant criticism for her divorce, whereas Chacko receives comfort and solace. Most notably, in a state of extreme frustration, Mammachi and Baby Kochamma confine Ammu to her room and reprimand her for dishonoring the family by engaging in a relationship with an individual considered socially inferior. Indeed, Mammachi becomes quite agitated upon discovering the romantic relationship between her daughter and a person from an untouchable caste, vehemently attacking and vilifying both of them. Mammachi envisioned her daughter engaging in sexual activity in the mud with a man who was considered lowly and unclean. She vividly envisioned "Paravan's coarse black hand on her daughter's breast. His mouth on hers. His black hips jerking between her parted legs. The sound of their breathing. His particular Paravan smell. Like animals, Mammachi thought and nearly vomited" (p. 131).

This romantic relationship between Ammu and Valutha escalates to an unsustainable level, ultimately leading to the killing of Valutha and the banishment of Ammu. Simultaneously, Mammachi proudly defends the desire of her son to engage in "libertine relationships with the women in the factory" (p. 168). Baby Kochamma readily acknowledges the justification of Mammachi and the notion that she offers hush money to low-class women, seen as innocent and easily influenced individuals controlled by the upper class, in order to ensure that they will maintain sexual relations with her son and provide him with solace. Similarly, the novel is filled with criticisms and insults, disparaging the untouchables and comparing them to inferior animals. Mammachi employs condemnatory discourse towards Vellya Paapen, the father of Valutha, because of his social status, granting herself the authority to stereotype him. Upon the arrival of Vellya Paapen to confess his son's relationship with Ammu, Mammachi vehemently berates him as a "Drunken dog! Drunken Paravan liar!" (p. 256).

Rejecting demeaning portrayals of women, Ammu asserts her own independence, motivating her to escape her parents' oppressive environment. Following her marriage, Ammu experiences an increased sense of humiliation. She is treated as an object, particularly when her sexist husband attempts to use her physical appearance to preserve his employment. Contrary to the majority of characters who unquestioningly adhere to rigid caste laws, Ammu and her children debunk and dismantle such laws. Because of their mixed Hindu and Christian faith, they feel unwelcome in Aymenem. This is because they come from a conservative Christian family that disapproves of interfaith marriages and discriminates against individuals from lower social ranks.

However, Ammu's relationship with Valutha initiates a dialogue with him that goes beyond the divisions and obstacles of tradition and custom. Such an association demonstrates that the idea of opposing oneself to others is deceptive and not inherent, or at least not as extensive as dualistic theories claim. The limits can always be exceeded to expose the absurdity of the concept of a "pure self." The dialogical experience will reveal one's distinctiveness and importance to others, so love is not a result of a deficiency that makes it a means to an end. The ethical implications of abstraction and the act of rejecting others are characterized by a monologic and one-sided perspective, which ultimately leads to the creation of further polarizations and divisions.

Dussel (1998) proposes overcoming what he refers to as "reductionist fallacies," arguing that "Philosophy, especially ethics, needs to break with this reductive horizon in order to open itself to the 'world,' the 'planetary' sphere" (p. 4). Roy performs a sharp and incisive criticism of the preservation of detrimental customs and societal hierarchies from the past, emphasizing the inescapability of transformation. However, this change in the existing state of affairs will not occur suddenly. Instead, it commences by provoking the centrality of small things: "And the air was full of Thoughts and Things to Say. But at times like these, only the *Small Things* are ever said. Big Things lurk unsaid inside" (emphasis added, p. 20). The factory of the family, ironically called Paradise Pickles & Preserves, symbolizes the decline of traditional memories and beliefs to which the family clings. In this factory, where the importance of work overshadows social hierarchy, products undergo a pickling process to enhance their durability, mirroring the family's efforts to uphold traditional class and gender roles. Innes (2007) postulates that the pickle is a trope that Roy employs to signify "the preservation and mingling of diverse histories and memories" (p. 176). Curiously, the leakage of the pickle jars manufactured in the factory demonstrates that traditional boundaries and structures would not be maintained indefinitely, yet they are also resistant to being dismantled. Another notable emblem representing the resolution of the conflict between laborers and landowners is found in the production of "the banana jam" at the plant. It is incorrect to categorize banana jam as either jam or jelly. Banana jam, similar to love, challenges societal norms by blurring the distinctions of class and gender, thereby disturbing the established order. They previously produced banana jam in violation of the ban imposed by the Food Products Organization (FPO) due to its failure to meet the criteria for either jam or jelly. Banana jam is insufficiently slender for jelly and excessively dense for jam (pp. 30-31).

The God of Small Things begins with a meticulous depiction of the gradual reduction of the sluggish river which serves as a harbinger of calamitous events for both those who depend on it for their survival and those who perceive it as insignificant. Numerous individuals find themselves unemployed and resort to begging just like slaves; they are following the course of the river's diminishing size and contamination. The water level of the river is decreasing due to

the construction of large dams, and the remaining water in the river is polluted with toxic substances like insecticides and pesticides that are being disposed of in it.

Roy describes the stream as releasing a combination of waste and chemicals obtained through loans from the World Bank. The majority of the fish in the river have perished, while the remaining ones are afflicted with fin-rot and have developed skin lesions. Instead of pleasant breezes, there is a noxious odor caused by careless human waste disposal that mixes with the river water and creates poisonous sustenance for fish. People, particularly the affluent, later consume these fish discarded into the river, ingesting the same garbage they had previously disposed of. These harmful, unethical, and aggressive acts have negative effects on both the victim and the perpetrator, as well as on individuals from different social classes.

Similar to human garbage, the World Bank provides financial support for so-called “development” initiatives and loans that impede the advancement of third-world nations and deprive them of sovereignty even within their territories. Hence, the World Bank generates dislike and disruption and causes exponential problems, inflicting devastation on developing nations. This so-called financial aid exacerbates social structures and disparities, disproportionately impacting marginalized individuals. In the words of Comfort (2008), “the novel’s structural principles of nonlinearity, repetition, and layered complexity generate a deeply dialectical view of history, identity, and the environment” (p. 1). According to Roy, there is a significant transition from home-based work to factory labor, which has resulted in the exclusion of middle-class women in their private lives. Further, this movement has led to the exploitation of marginalized groups, particularly working-class women and laborers from lower castes. It is imperative to replace the loans from the World Bank with environmentally sustainable operations. An example of an ecologically sound economic transaction is the barter system which is compatible with the ecosystem and highly efficient without using money. Cash crops, on the other hand, are a product of colonialism, and this type of agriculture not only replaces native plants and animals, but it also changes intersections with the ecosystem. The majority of the novel’s characters begin to exert excessive effort on their properties in order to meet their tax obligations or keep pace with the emergence of new institutions.

Due to the consequences of negative development instigated by free market policies that perceive the environment as a means of corporate accretion, the formerly delightful and pristine river undergoes a gradual transformation, as demonstrated in the passage below:

Years later, when Rahel returned to the river, it greeted her with a ghastly skull’s smile, with holes where teeth had been, and a limp hand raised from a hospital bed. Both things had happened. It had shrunk ... Downriver, a saltwater barrage had been built, in exchange for votes from the influential paddy-farmer lobby. The barrage regulated the inflow of salt water from the backwaters that opened into the Arabian Sea. So now they had two harvests a year instead of one. More rice—for the price of a river. Despite the fact that it was June, and raining, the river was no more than a swollen drain now. A thin ribbon of thick water that lapped wearily at the mud banks on either side, sequined with the occasional silver slant of a dead fish. It was choked with a succulent weed, whose furred brown roots waved like thin tentacles underwater. (p. 124)

Consumption, capitalism, and greed force marginalized individuals to bear the consequences of river degradation. To put it best, Marx (1977) encapsulated the capitalist view of nature as a spiritually devoid commodity which “becomes purely an object for humankind, purely a matter of utility; ceases to be recognized as a power for itself; and the theoretical discovery of its autonomous laws appears merely as a ruse so as to subjugate it under human needs, whether as an object of consumption or as a means of production” (p. 409). The new world system no longer reveres nature as a spiritual entity with its own laws. Instead, humans view nature as a tool to exploit for their own consumption or production needs. Previously, the majority of individuals worked independently and occasionally participated in labor exchange, but neoliberal capitalism categorizes people according to hierarchical regulations. It is not implied that people were living in paradise prior to colonialism, but rather that life had a stronger focus on moral values. Similar to the caste system, colonial piracy and laziness are the origins of slavery.

Slavery involves the practice of having someone else perform one’s tasks. Slaves were mostly brought in to carry out labor relating to farming, as it was considered beneath the slave owner to dirty their own hands. The master manages administrative tasks and resides in opulence. Thus, both the land and those who subsist on it are exploited and abused. Although slavery has officially ended, individuals who are nonetheless tied to the land continue to experience social and economic marginalization and exclusion. Rahel, assuming a particular identity, returns home after a prolonged absence, reflecting the significantly diminished condition of the river. One may easily discern the parallel process of commodifying and objectifying both women and the environment, particularly the connection between the two.

Domination and commercialization affect Rahel and Ammu, as well as the river. Failed human activities coat the trees in dust, giving them a greenish tint. Similar to marginalized populations, nature bears the burden of human growth. Following Ammu’s experience of alienation among her people, one “couldn’t see the river from the window anymore” (p. 31). After Ammu’s departure, the river had changed into a swollen channel, lacking its previous importance (p. 124). Much like Ammu,

the river was choked with a succulent weed. . . it had had the power to evoke fear. To change lives. but now its teeth were drawn, its spirit spent. It was just a slow, sludging green ribbon lawn that ferried fetid garbage to the sea. Bright plastic bags blew across its viscous, weedy surface like subtropical flying-flowers. (p. 124)

With empathy, there is no subsumption or exclusion of the other. All dimensions—cognitive, psychological, and emotional—actively engage multiple class structures. These components are part of the same action and do not have a pre-existing inclination to classify them in a hierarchical manner. Furthermore, the act of sharing (love) involves valuing and appreciating the perspective and experiences of others, recognizing that they also have a part in one's own reality, and surpassing the boundaries between oneself and others. According to Roy, "Change is one thing. Acceptance is another" (p. 251). This mindset rejects attempts of unfairly viewing others as being of lower status or inferior to themselves. Roy explores the phenomenon of cultural clashes, oppression, and replacement, emphasizing instances where dominant powers, unable to recognize the intrinsic worth of others, force specific groups to alter their customs and interactions with each other and the environment. Roy's book is focused on disrupting these strict practices, aiming to rectify the current state of affairs while defending the marginalized.

III. CONCLUSION

Regardless of the divides that exist within it, the world continues to function as a cohesive organism; any damage that is inflicted upon a single component of it has a negative impact on the entire system. Although subalterns are subjected to a larger degree of suffering as a result of ecological damage, it is essential to acknowledge that the repercussions of this injury will, in the end, have an effect on every single person. Because of this, it is everyone's responsibility to work together to find a solution to this problem. Indifference is characterized as the apex of decadence, embodying sterility and ruin, according to T. S. Eliot's definition of the term in his book *The Waste Land*. When the Parsival fighter inquires, "What ails you, Uncle?" The process of questioning, which involves communication, concern, and a readiness to engage in discussion, rejuvenates life. Roy's ethical framework prioritizes holism in opposition to dichotomous misconceptions that promote ideas of supremacy and elimination. Variety is essential for life's continuation and support; diversity should not serve as a basis for individuals to slander and vilify others. As Innes puts it, "we are shown both the desirability of coexistence between diverse people and cultures, and at the same time the difficulty of sustaining a community which accommodates difference" (p. 76).

The manipulation of difference, which is not inherently malicious, has been done by people who are greedy for power. A significant number of economic elements are the primary foundation for the categorization of individuals into high and low categories. There should be a shift away from monological ideas and toward dialogical ones. In addition, the use of this strategy makes it possible to continue expressing oneself verbally even in the face of political purging. Engaging with the viewpoint of another individual is the essence of dialogism, which can only take place when there is mutual respect and acknowledgment between the two parties.

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Structural and Semantic Properties of Idiomatic Pairs in English and Vietnamese: A Contrastive Analysis

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Abstract—There are idiomatic pairs in both English and Vietnamese. While idiomatic pairs in Vietnamese have been extensively researched from different views, it seems that there have been few thorough studies of idiomatic pairs across English and Vietnamese. This paper looks into the structural and semantic properties of idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese using the framework of idiom analysability (Langlotz, 2006). This is a contrastive analysis that presents the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese idiomatic pairs in terms of structural and semantic properties, including grammatical and componential patterns, semantic compositions, and transparent-opaque components. A manual search of Giang's (2018) idiom collection yielded a corpus of 231 English and 2374 Vietnamese idiomatic pairs, which served as the data for the study. The findings of this study indicate that the biggest difference between English and Vietnamese idiomatic pairs lies in their distribution in each language. There are much more idiomatic idioms in Vietnamese than in English. Grammatically, idiomatic pairs in both languages are formed by two syntactically equivalent component parts. In Vietnamese, the components that create idiomatic pairs are even, and in English, they are odd. Semantically, the majority of English and Vietnamese idiomatic pairs are able to be analysable, and their meanings are at least motivated in some way.

Index Terms—idiomatic pairs, structural properties, semantic properties, component parts, idiom analysability

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a strong and adaptable communication tool as well as a cultural repertory. Since idioms reflect the previous culture of a community, they are regarded as unique linguistic units in a language's vocabulary. To put it another way, idioms are crucial to the linguistic ontologization of feelings, ideas, experiences, and other phenomena because they capture the richness and diversity of human social interactions. In some cases, idioms can develop an extragrammatically anomalous structure (Fillmore et al., 1988), which means that the general syntactic rules of the language are unable to interpret them. This is why idioms sometimes cause confusion and frustration for both non-native speakers and native speakers. As a result, in order for the hearer and the speaker to correctly understand an idiom and place it inside a relevant semantic domain, they need to have a shared frame of reference. However, idioms are a topic of ongoing interest to linguists and lexicographers due to their complexity, as well as their commonality, abundance, and availability (Fellbaum, 2006). The reason for this is that idioms express a wealth of cultural information by illustrating both the exploitation of the natural world and the vibrant social lives of people throughout history (Giap, 1996; Lan, 2003).

Idioms abound in both Vietnamese and English, and speakers frequently use a broad variety of idiomatic terms that usually have figurative meanings. Cowie et al. (1993) state that one telltale sign of a native command of the language and a valid indicator of the proficiency of non-native speakers is the accurate and appropriate use of idioms that are, in the broadest sense, idiomatic. Stated differently, one characteristic that sets native competency in a given language apart is idiomatic competence. Thus, it is impossible to naturally improve a language without learning idioms, which are a necessary component of language (Giang, 2018).

Idiomatic pairs are a kind of idiom that can be found in both English and Vietnamese. Although idiomatic pairs in Vietnamese have been studied, it seems that there have been relatively few studies on idiomatic pairs in English and much fewer comprehensive studies of idiomatic pairs across English and Vietnamese. Therefore, by using data from a

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language other than Vietnamese, our linguistic analysis of idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese will greatly advance this research field. The study undertakes a contrastive analysis of idiomatic pairs in terms of their structural and semantic properties in English and Vietnamese. There are two main points of interest: (1) similarities and differences in structural properties, including grammatical and componential patterns, between the idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese; and (2) similarities and differences in semantic properties, including semantic compositions and transparent-opaque components, between such idiomatic pairs.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. *Idiom Definition*

In English, there are already several definitions of idioms as well as a variety of approaches to idiomaticity. However, finding the features (or properties) that will sufficiently capture all the idioms in a language while rejecting all the non-idioms is the most difficult task when attempting to define an idiom (Fernando & Flavell, 1981). Over time, idiom definitions have evolved from being conventional to being flexible (Liu, 2003). Here are some well-known and influential definitions of English idioms. An English idiom has been defined as:

(i) “[a] group of words with set meanings that cannot be calculated by adding up the separate meanings of the parts. Some idioms are virtually unchangeable. Others allow a limited amount of manipulation. Some idioms allow certain transformations but not others” (Bolinger, 1975, p. 100).

(ii) “a fixed phrase that has its own special meaning. It is often impossible to guess the meaning of the whole phrase from the meanings of the separate words that is formed from” (Longman dictionary of language and culture, 1992, p. 12).

(iii) “its meaning is not a function of the meanings of its parts and the way these are syntactically combined; that is, an idiom is a non-compositional expression” (van der Linden, 1992, p. 223).

(iv) “a phrase or sentence whose meaning is not clear from the meaning of its individual words and which must be learnt as a whole unit” (Hornby, 1995, p. 67).

(v) “an indivisible unit whose components cannot be varied or varied only within definable limits. No other words can be substituted for those comprising. Nor are the words of an idiom usually recombinable” (Fernando, 1996, p. 30).

It is obvious that several distinct standards have been used to define English idioms. Moon (1998) defined idioms as having three characteristics: conventionality, noncompositionality, and fixity. It seems that there hasn't been much agreement reached over idioms after this, though. Actually, there has been some conversation about this subject lately. Furthermore, according to Lakoff (1987), the conventional and tried-and-true procedures, standards, and techniques created for normal language and its related phenomena do not apply to idioms since they are syntactically and semantically non-standard.

In Vietnamese, an idiom has typical features of its own. Given below is a summary of the defining features of a Vietnamese idiom. Such an idiom:

(i) “is a fixed group of words which is firm in terms of structure, complete and figurative in terms of meaning, and is widely used in daily speaking” (Hanh, 2008, p. 31).

(ii) “is a fixed group of words or a clause in a sentence that is used as a word and has an identifier function” (Luc & Dang, 2009, p. 29).

(iii) “is a set of fixed, commonly used words whose meaning cannot be explained simply by the meanings of the words that make it up” (Phe, 2017, p. 1210).

(iv) “(1) is a fixed unit whose components can be unvaried or varied under definable control; (2) is regarded as a complex scene with a bipartite semantic structure: a literal reading and an idiomatic meaning; (3) has the meaning which is usually different from the meanings of the combination of its components; (4) expresses a pure concept” (Giang, 2018, p. 12).

The definitions given above show that there are various approaches to defining an idiom. Generally, the majority of linguists hold the same opinion that an idiom is a fixed phrase whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meanings of its constituent parts. In the present study, from a cognitive view, an idiom in both English and Vietnamese (1) is a phrase whose components are commonly fixed; (2) is considered a complex scene with a bipartite semantic composition that can be analyzable: a literal reading and an idiomatic reading; (3) has meaning that usually differs from the literal meanings of its components but is at least partly motivated; (4) conveys a pure concept (Giang et al., 2024).

B. *Idiom Classification*

There have been several attempts to classify English idioms. According to Fernando and Flavell (1981), there are “two main headings: the ‘formal’ idiom family and the ‘concept’ idiom family,” which in reality typically overlap to some degree. Fernando and Flavell (1981) also classified idioms into four categories based on their semantic perspective: transparent (e.g., *slowly but surely*), semi-transparent (e.g., *as white as a sheet*), semi-opaque (e.g., *spill the beans*), and opaque (e.g., *kick the bucket*). In terms of parts of speech concerns, Seidl and McMordie (1988) offered eight categories of idioms, including key words with idiomatic uses, idioms with nouns and adjectives, idiomatic pairs, idioms with prepositions, phrasal verbs, verbal idioms, idioms with key words from special categories, and idioms with comparisons. Grammatically, Cowie et al. (1993) divided English idioms into clause patterns, possessive clause patterns,

phrase patterns, and noun phrase patterns with repeated elements. From a cognitive view, Nunberg et al. (1994) classified idioms into two categories: idiomatic phrases and idiomatically combining expressions. Fernando (1996) added that there are three categories of idioms in English, based on pragmatic and discursive analysis (ideational idioms, interpersonal idioms, and relational idioms). Moon (1998) and colleagues identified five functional kinds of idioms that are informational, evaluative, situational, modalizing, and organizational.

The classification of idioms in Vietnamese is mostly based on their constructions. Luc and Dang (2009) classified Vietnamese idioms into seven types according to the quantity of words that comprised the idioms and their compositions: idioms with three single words or more, idioms with a single word and a compound, idioms with two compounds, idioms as simple sentences, idioms with alliterations or compounds, idioms with symmetrical comparisons, and idioms with summary comparisons. Actually, Vietnamese idioms have two symmetrical portions to their common patterns. Idiom structures are also created through the connecting of rhymes, typically interior rhymes. These features preserve the idioms' fixation and unwavering qualities while also making them simpler to utter and recall. Tu (1983) classified Vietnamese idioms into three kinds according to their expressive functions: idioms expressing things, idioms expressing properties, and idioms expressing activities. Structurally, there are three main groups of idioms in Vietnamese: idioms with symmetrical structures, idioms with comparative structures, and idioms with non-symmetrical structures (Duc, 1995). Hanh (2008) emphasized the formation of idiomatic meanings and classified Vietnamese idioms into three main categories: symmetrical figurative, non-symmetrical figurative, and similitized. Semantically, Vietnamese idioms can be transparent, semi-transparent, semi-opaque, or opaque (Giang, 2018).

The classifications of idioms in both English and Vietnamese above clearly show that idioms are traditionally classified due to their syntactic characteristics, while the categorization of idioms from a cognitive perspective is based on their semantic features. In this study, idioms in English and Vietnamese are divided into idiomatic pairs (e.g., *wear and tear* in English, and *chạy ngược chạy xuôi* 'run back run forth' [manage to do something with much difficulty] in Vietnamese), comparative idioms (e.g., *as busy as a bee* in English, and *khỏe như voi* 'strong like elephant' [very strong]), and ordinary idioms (e.g., *paint the town red* in English, and *đẽo cày giữa đường* 'shape plough middle road' [be indeterminate in one's position]) (Giang, 2023).

C. Idiomatic Pairs

According to Seidl and McMordie (1988), idiomatic pairs in English are idioms having pairs of adjectives (e.g., *black and white*), pairs of nouns (e.g., *body and soul*), pairs of adverbs (e.g., *slowly but surely*), pairs of verbs (e.g., *hit and miss*), or identical pairs (e.g., *bit by bit*). More specifically, Giang (2023) stated that English idiomatic pairs are formed by pairs of words or phrases linked together by coordinators such as *and*, *or*, *but*, or *by*. Since pairs of words or phrases are joined together by coordinators, these pairs often have syntactically equivalent roles.

In Vietnamese, idiomatic pairs have been normally called "symmetrical idioms" (Duc, 1995; Hanh, 2008; Giang, 2018). The aforementioned authors claim that these idioms have two symmetrical component parts in their meanings and words, which is why they are known as symmetrical idioms. However, some idioms that Duc (1995), Hanh (2008), and Giang (2018) gave for illustrations, such as *theo đóm ăn tàn* 'follow spill eat cinder' [be a sycophant], *chọn mặt gửi vàng* 'choose face send gold' [a trusted person], *bới lông tìm vết* 'dig up hair find trace' [a nitpicker], etc., do not show a symmetrical relationship. The two component parts of these idioms do not have relationships of opposite meanings or opposite words. The criteria for identifying a type of idiom given by the above authors do not cover all idioms established by two component parts. Giang (2021) argued that any idiom in Vietnamese formed by pairs of words, phrases, or clauses with syntactically equivalent roles is called an "idiomatic pair." This name is based on the criteria of identifying a consistent type of idiom and covering all idioms with two component parts.

Thus, idiomatic pairs in both English and Vietnamese are established by two syntactically equivalent component parts. In English, the two component parts of the idiomatic pairs are linked together by coordinators, while Vietnamese idiomatic pairs do not have this property.

III. METHODS

The current study is a contrastive analysis. According to Chaturvedi (1973), the contrastive analysis highlights the importance of the mother tongue in translation and second language acquisition. The first step that has to be taken is to describe and analyze both languages independently in order to determine which structural and semantic features of the two languages are notably different from one another. After the independent description and analysis, sorting out the similar and dissimilar properties of the two languages is necessary.

In this study, we examine how the collected English and Vietnamese idiomatic pairs are similar to and different from each other from a cognitive-linguistic perspective through idiom analysability (Langlotz, 2006). Idiomatic pairs (231 English and 2374 Vietnamese entries) are described and analyzed according to grammatical properties (Taylor, 2002) and semantic properties (Fernando, 1996; Langlotz, 2006). The data are restricted to idiomatic pairs collected from Giang's (2018) collection of English and Vietnamese idioms (4134 English and 4053 Vietnamese idioms). Vietnamese data are semantically translated for the convenience of contrastive analysis. To indicate the actual words in the original language, a word-for-word translation is also provided.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A hand search of 4134 English and 4053 Vietnamese idioms in Giang's (2018) collection helps establish a corpus of 231 English and 2374 Vietnamese idiomatic pairs. It means that 5.59% of our English data are idiomatic pairs, whereas idiomatic pairs in Vietnamese account for 57.81%. From our corpus, the structural and semantic properties of idiomatic pairs in both English and Vietnamese are described and analyzed separately before giving the similarities and differences between them.

A. Structural Properties of Idiomatic Pairs in English and Vietnamese

The structural properties of idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese are described and analyzed in terms of grammatical and componential patterns.

(a). Grammatical Patterns

Idiomatic pairs in English are pairs of words or phrases joined together by coordinators such as *and* (e.g., *body and soul*), *or* (e.g., *by hook or by crook*), *but* (e.g., *slowly but surely*), and *by* (e.g., *bit by bit*). These coordinators are used to combine two syntactically equivalent component parts of the idioms. Such two component parts are:

- pairs of nouns or noun phrases: *body and soul*, *bread and butter*, *the birds and the bees*, etc.
- pairs of adjectives: *black and white*, *cut and dried*, *slow but sure*, etc.
- pairs of verbs or verb phrases: *aid and abet*, *come rain or come shine*, *lose the battle but win the war*, etc.
- pairs of adverbs: *backwards and forwards*, *first and foremost*, *slowly but surely*, etc.
- pairs of pronouns: *all or nothing*, *one and all*, *such and such*, etc.
- pairs of conjunctions: *as and when*, *if or when*, etc.
- pairs of prepositional phrases: *by hook or by crook*, *for better or for worse*, etc.

As shown above, each idiomatic pair has a pair of syntactically equivalent component parts. That is, the two component parts belong to the same word class. They must be both nouns, noun phrases, adjectives, verbs, verb phrases, pronouns, conjunctions, etc. However, there are still idiomatic pairs that do not follow this grammatical rule. The idiom *by and large* is an example. The first component part (*by*) is an adverb, but the second one (*large*) is an adjective, and they are linked by *and* (coordinator). Thus, the two component parts are not syntactically equivalent. This is an unusual phenomenon in English grammar but is normal in idioms since idioms themselves have special characteristics, including syntactic properties. Similarly, the idiom *so and so* has two nouns joined together by *and*, but it is considered a lexeme.

In Vietnamese, idiomatic pairs consist of two component parts with similar grammatical properties, linked together according to the principle of independence in form and without coordinators. Specifically, idiomatic pairs can be:

- pairs of noun phrases: *mẹ tròn con vuông* 'mother round baby square' [a healthy delivery], *chân ướt chân ráo* 'foot wet foot dry' [begin doing a new job, activity, etc.], *đầu voi đuôi chuột* 'head elephant tail mouse' [good plan but bad result], etc.
- pairs of verb phrases: *thay lòng đổi dạ* 'change bowels change belly' [be fickle], *chạy ngược chạy xuôi* 'run back run forth' [manage to do something with much difficulty], *ăn cháo đá bát* 'eat soup kick bowl' [be shifty], etc.
- pairs of prepositional phrases: *trên đe dưới búa* 'on anvil below hammer' [in a dilemma], *trên bến dưới thuyền* 'at wharf on boat' [a bustling trading scene], *trong họ ngoài làng* 'within family outside village' [close relatives], etc.
- pairs of adjective phrases: *bầm gan tím ruột* 'bruising liver bruising intestine' [feel extremely heartbroken], *béo trương béo nứt* 'fat bloated fat cracked' [be extremely fat], *bất di bất dịch* 'no move no leave' [be immutable], etc.
- pairs of clauses: *tay bắt mặt mừng* 'hand shake face happy' [feel extremely happy], *đầu xuôi đuôi lọt* 'head pass tail pass' [a good beginning makes a good ending], *ông ăn chả bà ăn nem* 'he eat pork bologna she eat spring roll' [Adultery is committed by both the husband and the wife, typically one after the other], etc.

In this study, we consider a verb phrase as a phrase that begins with a verb as a head followed by other elements; a noun phrase as a phrase with a noun as a head combined with a pre- or post-modifier (mainly a post-modifier), or both; a prepositional phrase as a phrase that begins with a preposition followed by other elements; an adjective phrase as a phrase with an adjective as a head combined with a pre- or post-modifier, or both; a clause as a phrase that acts as a sentence with a subject and a predicate. Although made up of two phrases or two clauses, when building sentences, idiomatic pairs still function as independent sentence elements.

(b). Componential Patterns

In terms of componential patterns, English idiomatic pairs are established with an odd number of components. In the present study, each component is regarded as a word. Idiomatic pairs usually have three components (e.g., *bits and bobs*, *body and soul*, *blood and thunder*, etc.). Additionally, idiomatic pairs may include five components (e.g., *come rain or come shine*, *the quick and the dead*, *the birds and the bees*, etc.) or even seven components (e.g., *the fat years and the lean years*, *lose the battle but win the war*, etc.).

For idiomatic pairs, the first component parts are usually different from the second ones. However, there are still idiomatic pairs in which a component in the first part coincides with another in the second one (e.g., *come rain or come shine*, *for better or for worse*, *the birds and the bees*, etc.). In some cases, the pairs of component parts in the idioms are the same (e.g., *bit by bit*, *so and so*, *such and such*, etc.). In particular, the first component part (on) can be inverted to

the second one (off) in the idiom *on and off*. A variant of this idiom is *off and on*, and it also has the same idiomatic meaning as *on and off*.

In Vietnamese, idiomatic pairs are built with an even number of components. There are usually four components in each idiomatic pair (e.g., *nói cạnh nói khéo* 'say innuendo say innuendo' [abuse with innuendoes], *chạy ngược chạy xuôi* 'run back run forth' [manage to do something with much difficulty], *khen nức khen nở* 'praise much praise much' [be full of praise for somebody], *mẹ tròn con vuông* 'mother round baby square' [a healthy delivery], etc.). In addition, idiomatic pairs may consist of six components (e.g., *được đằng chân lân đằng đầu* 'obtain legs reach heads' [be greedy], *trâu lội ngược bò lội xuôi* 'buffalo wade back ox forth' [have a difference of opinion with somebody], etc.), or even eight components (e.g., *trong nhà chưa tỏ ngoài ngõ đã tường* 'in house opaque at alley transparent' [The matter needed to be kept secret, but internally it was unknown, and outsiders were already talking about it], *con rô cũng tiếc con diếc cũng muốn* 'anabas also regret crucian carp also want' [be greedy with hesitation], *bán mặt cho đất bán lưng cho trời* 'sell face to soil sell back to sky' [a hard life], etc.). In fact, an idiomatic pair having eight components is formed by two idioms with comparisons (e.g., *nói như rồng leo làm như mèo mửa* 'say like dragon climb do like cat vomit' [Talking is good, but doing is bad]).

The components of idiomatic pairs in Vietnamese all have rhythms. According to Hanh (2008), the rhythms of idiomatic pairs can be specified as follows:

- sound repetition: the first component of the first part has the same sound as the first component of the second one (e.g., *chân ướt chân ráo* 'foot wet foot dry' [begin doing a new job, activity, etc.]);
- consonance: the tone of the first and last components in the first part must be of the same pitch as the tone of the first and last component in the second one (e.g., *mẹ tròn con vuông* 'mother round baby square' [a healthy delivery]);
- rhyme: the rhyme of the last component in the first part matches the rhyme of the first component in the second one (e.g., *đầu tắt mặt tối* 'head off face dark' [have to work hard all the time, from one job to another, with no time to rest]);
- double beat: double beat appears in idiomatic pairs to create emphatic, enhancing rhythms (e.g., *năm bè bảy mối* 'five part seven relationship' [There is no common unity in an organization or group]).

In terms of form, the two component parts constituting an idiomatic pair have an independent syntactic relationship and, in principle, can be reversed in order without their idiomatic meaning changing. In fact, there are two types of inversions of the order of the components of idiomatic pairs. The first type involves the second component part being inverted to the front, for example: *sa cơ lỡ bước/lỡ bước sa cơ* 'fall chance miss footstep/miss footstep fall chance' [be unlucky to fall into dire straits], *bầm gan tím ruột/tím ruột bầm gan* 'bruising liver bruising intestine/ bruising intestine bruising liver' [feel extremely heartbroken], *mát mái xuôi chèo/xuôi chèo mát mái* 'cool oar advantage row/advantage row cool oar [have a good job], etc. The second type is to simply invert one component of the first part for one component of the second one. *Con ông cháu cha/con cha cháu ông* 'child grandfather grandchild father' [children of the rich and powerful in society], *cao chạy xa bay/xạ chạy cao bay* 'high run far fly/far run high fly' [someone has escaped and disappeared], *lòng cá dạ chim/lòng chim dạ cá* 'bowel fish stomach bird/bowel bird stomach fish' [be evil-minded, treacherous, fickle, disloyal, etc.] are the examples.

The ability to reverse the order of the components of idiomatic pairs has created variants with the same idiomatic meanings, if any, only differing in nuances. However, there are also idiomatic pairs whose components cannot be reversed, such as *đầu tắt mặt tối* 'head off face dark' [have to work hard all the time, from one job to another, with no time to rest], *tay bắt mặt mừng* 'hand shake face happy' [feel extremely happy], *đầu xuôi đuôi lọt* 'head pass tail pass' [a good beginning makes a good ending], etc.

B. Semantic Properties of Idiomatic Pairs in English and Vietnamese

The semantic properties of idiomatic pairs in this study are examined from two perspectives: semantic compositions and transparent-opaque components.

(a). Semantic Compositions

The meanings of the two component parts of idiomatic pairs in English are able to be synonymous (e.g., *aches and pains, bits and pieces, as and when*, etc.), antonymous (e.g., *ancient and modern, dead or alive, for better or for worse*, etc.), similar (e.g., *bag and baggage, all day and every day, any and every*, etc.), or different (e.g., *body and soul, bricks and mortar, milk and water*, etc.). These pairs of meanings are combined together to create idiomatic meaning in three ways: combination, selection, and purpose. Firstly, for the combination, the meanings of the first and second component parts are joined together to represent a new meaning, which is called "idiomatic meaning". For example, *body* goes with *soul* in the idiomatic pair *body and soul*, which is paraphrasable as "completely." In fact, not all pairs of component parts in idiomatic pairs are combined to create new meanings. There are some English idiomatic pairs whose idiomatic meanings coincide with the actual meanings of the component parts. The idiom *slow but sure* is an example. Secondly, the selection of semantic combinations allows the choice to occur between the first and second component parts of the idiomatic pairs. Let's have a look at the idiom, *dead or alive*. In this idiom, *dead* is the first choice, and *alive* is the second one. The combination of *dead* and *alive* creates a choice in the idiomatic meaning of the idiom: whether *dead* (possibly killed) or *alive*. The final direction of the meaning combination between the two component parts of the idiomatic pairs is purpose. The second component part is the purpose of the first one. *Lose the battle and win the war* go

together to form the idiomatic pair *lose the battle but win the war*, which means “endure a small setback or failure but eventually attain a bigger, more significant, or overall accomplishment or victory”.

In Vietnamese, idiomatic pairs are based on two component parts that are syntactically equivalent. According to Hanh (2008), these two component parts can be synonymous (e.g., *thay lòng đổi dạ* ‘change bowel change stomach’ [be treacherous], *đổi trắng thay đen* ‘change white replace black’ [acts of distorting the truth, turning right into wrong, and wrong into right], *mồm năm miệng mười* ‘mouth five mouth ten’ [say all the others’ words], etc.), antonymous (e.g., *đầu voi đuôi chuột* ‘head elephant tail mouse’ [good plan but bad result], *mặt nặng mày nhẹ* ‘face heavy eyebrow light’ [an attitude of annoyance, frustration, or anger towards someone], etc.), similar (e.g., *hứa hươu hứa vượn* ‘promise stag promise gibbon’ [promise a lot, but not keep the promise], *nói ngon nói ngọt* ‘speak delicious speak sweet’ [speak sweetly and pleasantly to seduce or persuade someone], etc.), or different (e.g., *theo đóm ăn tàn* ‘follow spill eat cinder’ [be a sycophant], *chọn mặt gửi vàng* ‘choose face send gold’ [a trusted person], *bới lông tìm vết* ‘dig up hair find trace’ [a nitpicker], etc.). In the idiom *thay lòng đổi dạ*, *thay lòng* and *đổi dạ* are two verb phrases that are synonymous. The idiom is paraphrasable as “unfaithful, ungrateful (in love); disloyal, betrayal (in politics)”. More specifically, the component *thay* in the first part is synonymous with the component *đổi* in the second one, and the same goes for *lòng* and *dạ*.

The meaning of *đầu voi* is opposite to that of *đuôi chuột* in the idiom *đầu voi đuôi chuột* ‘head elephant tail mouse’ [big plans but limited results]. Here the antonymous relationship comes from pairs of opposite meanings: *đầu - đuôi* and *voi - chuột*. Literally, an elephant's head is much bigger than a mouse's tail, and the idiomatic meaning is a combination of both component parts. The elephant's head is associated with big things, and the mouse's tail represents small things. This combination of the two opposite parts creates the meaning of the idiom: big plans but limited results. In the idiom *nói hươu nói vượn* ‘talk stag talk gibbon’ [brag], *nói hươu* and *nói vượn* are not synonymous, but they are similar. The component *nói* in the first part coincides with that in the second one; *hươu* in the first part is not synonymous with *vượn* in the second one but they express the same way of *nói*. In other words, the meaning of the first part is close to that of the second one, and the idiom means “brag”. Another example that shows the different relationship in terms of meaning between the two component parts of the idiom is *theo đóm ăn tàn* ‘follow spill eat cinder’ [be a sycophant]. The meanings of *theo đóm* and *ăn tàn* in the idiom *theo đóm ăn tàn* ‘follow spill eat cinder’ [be a sycophant] are completely different.

In fact, there are four directions in the semantic relationship of the two component parts forming idiomatic pairs in Vietnamese: combination (e.g., *đầu trộm đuôi cướp* ‘head steal tail rob’ [thieves, swindlers], *mắt tròn mắt dẹt* ‘eye round eye flat’ [be extremely surprised or scared], *thở ngắn than dài* ‘breathe short moan long’ [groan], etc.), selection (e.g., *một mất một còn* ‘one lose one stay’ [fight fiercely without compromise], *một sống một mái* ‘one live one die’ [fight to the end, fiercely, irreconcilably], *một sống hai chết* ‘one live two die’ [fight to the end, fiercely, irreconcilably], etc.), causality (e.g., *gieo gió gặt bão* ‘sow wind meet storm’ [People who live evil lives and like to cause trouble and harm others will never have good results], *miệng ăn núi lở* ‘mouth eat mountain break’ [If you just eat without working, no matter how much you have, it will all be gone], *già nèo đứt dây* ‘hard tie break rope’ [Being too stubborn and refusing to compromise leads to failure], etc.), and purpose (e.g., *theo đóm ăn tàn* ‘follow spill eat cinder’ [be a sycophant], *chọn mặt gửi vàng* ‘choose face send gold’ [a trusted person], *bới lông tìm vết* ‘dig up hair find trace’ [a nitpicker], etc.). For causality, idiomatic pairs can be made explicit by adding words such as *thì (sẽ)*, *tất (sẽ)*, *ắt (sẽ)*, *nên*, etc. between the two component parts (e.g., *tin bọm (nên) mất bò* ‘believe swindler (so) lose ox’ [People who are foolish or gullible will be cheated of money and property by swindlers]). Similarly, if the second component part of an idiomatic pair is the purpose of the first one, adding *để*, *cốt để*, *nhằm*, *nhằm để*, etc. between the two component parts can make it explicit (e.g., *há miệng (để) chờ sung* ‘open mouth (to) wait fig’ [People who are lazy don't want to work but want to eat]).

(b). Transparent-Opaque Components

There are two degrees of motivation for idiomatic pairs in English: transparent and semi-opaque. For transparent idiomatic pairs, the component parts are all explicit. It means that the idiomatic meanings of these idiomatic pairs can be derived from the literal meanings of the component parts. *Dead or alive* [whether dead (possibly killed) or alive] is an example. In this idiom, the components (*dead*, *or*, and *alive*) are transparent. To some extent, the literal reading of the idiom and its idiomatic meaning are the same. Semi-opaque idiomatic pairs are idioms whose components are quite opaque but possibly interpretable. The idiom *body and soul* belongs to this type of idiomatic pair. A man always consists of two parts: *body* and *soul*. *Body* involves material value, and *soul* refers to spiritual value. It implies that *body* and *soul* serve as a whole man, from which the idiomatic meaning of the idiom comes from (Giang, 2018). Thus, the idiom *body and soul* is understood as “completely”.

In Vietnamese, idiomatic pairs can be transparent, semi-opaque, or opaque. *Bàn đi tính lại* ‘discuss one discuss again’ [discuss something carefully] is a transparent idiomatic pair since its components (*bàn*, *đi*, *tính* and *lại*) are all explicit. *Kén cá chọn canh* is an idiomatic pair whose components are quite opaque but possibly interpretable. In this idiom, *kén cá* (the first part) and *chọn canh* (the second part) are both verb phrases that indicate the action of selecting. Thus, the meanings of the first and second component parts are synonymous. This semantic composition creates a repeated selection, and therefore, the idiom *kén cá chọn canh* ‘chose fish select soup’ is understood as “be too picky”. With a similar interpretation, we can clarify many semi-opaque idiomatic pairs such as *mồm năm miệng mười* ‘mouth

five mouth ten' [say all the others' words], *xanh vỏ đỏ lòng* 'green cover red bowel' [people whose outward appearance is completely contrary to their inner nature], *mặt sứa gan lim* 'face nettles liver ironwood' [stubborn people], etc. Of course, this interpretation is not easy. It can only be done by native speakers with a lot of experience. Opaque idiomatic pairs involve idioms whose idiomatic meanings cannot be derived from the meanings of their components. The components of these idioms are implicit, i.e. the idioms are completely opaque. The idiom *già kén kén hom* 'old cocoon jam bamboo frame' (one who is very picky will fall into a slump and worry), is an example. The idiomatic meaning of this idiom totally differs from the sum of the meanings of its constituent parts, i.e., *già*, *kén*, *kén* and *hom* are completely implicit (Giang, 2018).

However, the idiom *già kén kén hom* 'old cocoon jam bamboo frame' [one who is very picky will fall into a slump and worry] can be motivated by conventional knowledge. According to Hanh (2008), *già kén kén hom* is an idiomatic pair derived from the silkworm feeding trade in Vietnam. Similarly, *qua cầu rút ván* 'pass bridge withdraw board' [be ungrateful, treacherous] is an idiomatic pair originating from a story about two students, Liu Cai and Le Chau, and *áo vải cờ đào* 'blouse cloth flag red' [national hero] originates from the event of King Quang Trung's death in 1788.

C. Contrastive Analysis

(a). Similarities

Idiomatic pairs are found in both English and Vietnamese. In terms of grammatical patterns, idiomatic pairs have two syntactically equivalent component parts, which are constructed in pairs of noun phrases (e.g., *the birds and the bees* in English, and *mẹ tròn con vuông* 'mother round baby square' [a healthy delivery] in Vietnamese), pairs of verb phrases (e.g., *lose the battle but win the war* in English, and *thay lòng đổi dạ* 'change bowels change belly' [be fickle] in Vietnamese), and prepositional phrases (e.g., *by hook or by crook* in English, and *trên đe dưới búa* 'on anvil below hammer' [in a dilemma] in Vietnamese).

A further similarity is that the meanings of the two component parts of idiomatic pairs in both languages can be synonymous (e.g., *aches and pains* in English, and *thay lòng đổi dạ* 'change bowel change stomach' [be treacherous] in Vietnamese), antonymous (e.g., *ancient and modern* in English, and *đầu voi đuôi chuột* 'head elephant tail mouse' [good plan but bad result] in Vietnamese), similar (e.g., *bag and baggage* in English, and *hứa hươu hứa vượn* 'promise stag promise gibbon' [promise a lot, but not keep the promise] in Vietnamese), or different (e.g., *body and soul* in English, and *bới lông tìm vết* 'dig up hair find trace' [a nitpicker] in Vietnamese). The semantic relationship of the two component parts forming idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese conforms to combination (e.g., *body and soul* in English, and *đầu trộm đuôi cướp* 'head steal tail rob' [thieves, swindlers] in Vietnamese), selection (e.g., *dead or alive* in English, and *một mất một còn* 'one lose one stay' [fight fiercely without compromise] in Vietnamese), or purpose (e.g., *lose the battle but win the war* in English, and *theo đóm ăn tàn* 'follow spill eat cinder' [be a sycophant] in Vietnamese).

A final similar property noted in both English and Vietnamese involves motivation degrees of idiomatic pairs. These idioms can be transparent (e.g., *dead or alive* in English, and *bàn đi tính lại* 'discuss one discuss again' [discuss something carefully] in Vietnamese), or semi-opaque (e.g., *body and soul* in English, and *kén cá chọn canh* 'chose fish select soup' [be too picky] in Vietnamese).

(b). Differences

Apart from the properties shared by both languages, the findings of the study have revealed some striking differences between English and Vietnamese. The primary difference lies in the distribution of idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese. Although idiomatic pairs appear in both languages, the idioms are far more popular in Vietnamese than in English, with as many as 57.81% in Vietnamese as against the figure of 5.59% in English.

The grammatical patterns of idiomatic idioms found in English but not in Vietnamese involve pairs of nouns (e.g., *bread and butter*), pairs of adjectives (e.g., *black and white*), pairs of verbs (e.g., *aid and abet*), pairs of adverbs (e.g., *backwards and forwards*), pairs of pronouns (e.g., *all or nothing*), or pairs of conjunctions (e.g., *as and when*). However, idioms as pairs of clauses are distinctive in Vietnamese (e.g., *tay bắt mặt mừng* 'hand shake face happy' [feel extremely happy]). It is noted that the two component parts of the idiomatic pairs in English are combined together by coordinators such as *and*, *or*, *but*, etc., while Vietnamese idiomatic pairs do not have this property. In terms of componential patterns, idiomatic pairs in English are formed with an odd number of components (e.g., *slow but sure*) but with an even number of those in Vietnamese (e.g., *ăn cháo đá bát* 'eat soup kick bowl' [be shifty]). In addition, idiomatic pairs whose component parts can be reversed in order without changing their idiomatic meanings are very popular in Vietnamese (e.g., *bầm gan tím ruột/tím ruột bầm gan* 'bruising liver bruising intestine/ bruising intestine bruising liver' [feel extremely heartbroken]). In English, idiomatic pairs hardly have this feature except for *on and off*, which can be realized as *off and on*.

In terms of semantic compositions, causality—the direction in the semantic relationship of the two component parts forming idiomatic pairs—is unique in Vietnamese (e.g., *gieo gió gặt bão* 'sow wind meet storm' [People who live evil lives and like to cause trouble and harm others will never have good results]). Additionally, opaque idiomatic pairs are only found in Vietnamese (e.g., *già kén kén hom* 'old cocoon jam bamboo frame' [one who is very picky will fall into a

slump and worry]). The idiomatic meanings of these idioms cannot be derived from the literal meanings of their component parts; however, they can be motivated by conventional knowledge.

V. CONCLUSION

Idiomatic pairs are available in both English and Vietnamese. Nevertheless, these idioms are much more prevalent in Vietnamese than in English. In terms of grammatical properties, idiomatic pairs in both languages are established by two syntactically equivalent component parts. The components forming idiomatic pairs are odd in English (with coordinators) and even in Vietnamese (without coordinators). In terms of semantic properties, most idiomatic pairs in English and Vietnamese are able to be analyzable and have meanings that are at least partly motivated (Langlotz, 2006). The meanings of the two component parts of idiomatic pairs can be synonymous, antonymous, similar, or different (Hanh, 2008). These pairs of meanings are linked together to create idiomatic meanings in four directions: combination, selection, causality (only in Vietnamese), and purpose. Furthermore, idiomatic pairs can be transparent, semi-opaque, or opaque (only in Vietnamese) (Fernando & Flavell, 1981). The results demonstrate that there is a close relationship between the forms and contents of idioms and between their literal and idiomatic meanings. In other words, the association between the literal reading and the idiomatic reading is analyzable in most cases.

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Social Attitudes Towards the Central Najdi Dialect Among Speakers of Other Najdi Dialects

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Abstract—This study examines the social attitudes towards the Central Najdi dialect among speakers of other Najdi dialects, i.e., Qassimi and Northern dialect. The Central dialect, spoken in the capital city of Riyadh, which has the largest population in the kingdom, is considered representative of Saudi Arabic. Based on the gravity model (Trudgill, 1974), it is hypothesized that other Najdi dialects will gravitate towards the dialect of Central Najd. The social attitudes towards the Central dialect will be assessed using the indirect method known as the verbal-guise test. The test measures individuals' implicit attitudes towards a dialect or a language. Participants listen to authentic short speech excerpts from each of the dialects under study and rate each speaker based on selected status and solidarity traits. Findings indicate that the Central Najdi dialect is perceived more favorably in terms of status traits such as being civilized, educated, and open-minded compared to Qassimi and Northern dialect.

Index Terms—Central Najdi, gravity model, Northern dialect, Qassim dialect social attitudes, verbal-guise technique

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Dialects Understudy

The linguistic varieties within Saudi Arabia exhibit a continuum resembling the dialects of neighboring countries. For example, southern Saudi Arabian dialects resemble those of Yemen, while eastern dialects share characteristics with those found in Bahrain and the other countries in the region (Holes, 1984, p. 30). Western dialects, particularly in the Hijaz region, demonstrate similarities to Egyptian and Levantine Arabic (Ingham, 1971, p. 277). However, Najdi dialects, spoken in the central region of Saudi Arabia, have remained more isolated and are therefore considered more conservative (Ingham, 1994, p. 1). These Najdi dialects are further classified into three groups: Central Najdi (Riyadh Province), Northern (northern Arabian Peninsula, Hayil, and Northern Borders Provinces), and mixed Northern-Central (Qassim Province), Ingham (1994, p. 5).

The most popular dialect in Saudi Arabia is the Najdi dialect, particularly the Central Najdi variety. This dialect is spoken in the capital city, Riyadh, and the surrounding areas, which makes it highly influential in the country (Al-Azraqi, 2007). The Central Najdi dialect is also the dialect associated with the Saudi royal family. Riyadh, being the political and administrative center of Saudi Arabia, is where the royal family resides and conducts much of their official business. As a result, Central Najdi dialect has a prominent status and is often heard in media, government communications, and formal occasions.

B. The Study and Research Questions

This study investigates the social attitudes of speakers of two Najdi dialects— the Qassimi and Northern dialect— towards the Central Najdi dialect. The Central Najdi dialect, spoken in Riyadh, not only serves as the linguistic norm for Saudi Arabic due to the city's demographic and political prominence but also embodies the cultural and social identity of the nation (Ingham, 1994; Prochazka, 1988).

The research builds on the gravity model proposed by Trudgill (1974), which suggests that linguistic features tend to diffuse from larger, more influential urban centers to smaller, less influential areas. Accordingly, this study hypothesizes that the dialects of Qassim and Northern regions will show a linguistic shift towards the Central Najdi dialect. This hypothesis will be tested through the assessment of social attitudes using the verbal-guise test (discussed in details below), an adaptation of the matched-guise technique initially introduced by Lambert et al. (1960) and further developed by Cooper (1975) to measure implicit language attitudes.

Research Questions:

- What are the implicit social attitudes of Qassimi and Northern Najdi speakers towards the Central Najdi dialect?

This question aims to uncover whether speakers of other Najdi dialects hold positive or negative attitudes towards the Central Najdi dialect, which is seen as the prestigious form of Saudi Arabic.

- Do social attitudes towards the Central Najdi dialect vary significantly between Qassimi and Northern Najdi speakers?

This question examines whether the social perceptions of the Central Najdi dialect differ between the two groups of speakers, potentially indicating regional biases or varying degrees of influence.

- What status and solidarity traits are most strongly associated with the Central Najdi dialect among speakers of other Najdi dialects?

This question focuses on identifying the specific characteristics that speakers of Qassimi and Northern Najdi dialects attribute to the Central Najdi dialect, such as being civilized, educated, open-minded, confident, modest, sociable, and emotional.

These research questions aim to provide insights into the sociolinguistic dynamics within the Najdi dialects, contributing to a deeper understanding of language attitudes and their implications for dialect convergence in Saudi Arabia.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Before examining the language attitudes towards the Central Najdi dialect, it is essential to define language attitudes. Ferguson (1972) describes language attitudes as “elicitable shoulds on who speaks what, when, and how” (in Cooper & Fishman, 1974, p. 6). Cooper and Fishman (1974) provide a definition that focuses on the outcome of language attitudes, such as behavior toward a language. They define language attitude in terms of referents, which include “attitudes toward a language (e.g., Hebrew), a feature of a language (e.g., a given phonological variant), language use (e.g., the use of Hebrew for secular purposes), or language as a group marker (e.g., Hebrew as a language of Jews)” (Cooper & Fishman, 1974, p. 6). In this study, language attitudes are considered as attitudes towards a dialect, specifically the Central Najdi dialect.

As reviewed in Alajmi (2022), the relevance of language attitudes emerged from the work of Labov (1963). As noted by Cooper and Fishman (1974), language attitudes can influence sound change (Labov, 1963), define a particular speech community (Labov, 1966), affect second language achievement (Anisfeld et al., 1962; Lambert, 1967), and shape teachers' understanding of students' linguistic abilities (Seligman et al., 1972). Social attitudes to a dialect can explain how behavioral inputs potentially lead to behavioral outputs such as language/dialect change (Garrett, 2010).

Studies examining language attitudes often focus on communities where multiple languages are spoken, aiming to explore speakers' attitudes towards each language and their associated social traits and preferred uses. Examples of such studies include Bentahila (1983), Chakrani (2011), and González-Rivera (2021). Additionally, research has been conducted on language attitudes towards standard (high) and colloquial (low) varieties in diglossic communities, e.g., Brown et al. (1985), Dweik (1997), and Murad (2007).

However, when examining social attitudes to dialects that are all ranked at the same level of standard/colloquial, it might be challenging to predict the attitudes to each dialect. The results in these studies are sometimes unpredictable. Examples of such studies conducted in the Arab world include Al-Raba'a (2016) and Hussein and El-Ali (1989).

As reviewed in Alajmi (2022), Aldosaree (2016) explored social attitudes towards regional dialects Saudi Arabia, focusing on Central Najd, Western Hijaz, and Southern dialects. The study found that speakers of the Najdi dialect are perceived as friendly, kind, humble, and religious; Southern speakers are viewed as brave, kind, humble, religious, and respectful; and Hijazi speakers are considered creative, kind, neat, and respectful. Other studies exploring social attitudes towards particular dialects in Saudi Arabia include Alhazmi and Alfalig (2021) and Alabdali (2017).

Despite these efforts, there is no existing study that specifically explores social attitudes towards the Central Najdi dialect among speakers of other Najdi dialects.

As for gravity model, according to Britain (2005), the spread of linguistic changes across geographical regions is often referred to as urban hierarchical diffusion. However, Trudgill (1974) developed an intricate hierarchical model called “the gravity model”, which factors in distance, size, and linguistic similarity to help explain how linguistic features spread from London to other towns. Besides this type of diffusion, the diffusion of linguistic features can follow other geographical patterns: (1) wave model, where innovations move outward from a central area to nearby locations first; (2) contra hierarchical diffusion, where linguistic features spread from rural areas to towns and then cities, against the urban hierarchy; and (3) cultural diffusion, where a linguistic form establishes itself in one area before diffusion to other areas of the country.

According to Al-Rojaie (2013), in modern Arabic dialects, various sociolinguistic studies have shown that dialects spoken in major cities, especially capital cities, are becoming national or regional standards. These dialects influence the surrounding areas (e.g., Abd-el-Jawad, 1986; Abu-Haider, 1989). Typically, linguistic changes follow an urban hierarchy model, starting in large metropolitan centers and spreading to smaller towns before reaching rural and Bedouin dialects. However, this urban hierarchy model is not the only pattern observed in Arabic dialects. In some instances, established urban dialects have declined due to the influence of newly arrived groups from rural or Bedouin areas, driven by the political power and prestige of these newcomers (e.g., Abu-Haider, 1991; Holes, 1983, 1986).

III. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Language attitude studies can employ either direct or indirect methods. Direct methods, such as surveys, interviews, and rating scales, ask participants to explicitly state their feelings towards a language or dialect. However, this approach can be problematic, as respondents might conceal their true feelings due to social desirability bias or unconscious prejudices (Preston, 2013). Additionally, many individuals are not consciously aware of the linguistic variables being studied (Labov, 1966), which can lead to inaccurate results. To address these issues, Lambert et al. (1960) developed the

Matched-Guise Technique, which indirectly elicits attitudes by having listeners evaluate speakers of different languages or dialects without knowing they are listening to the same bilingual individuals. This method reduces the effect of vocal characteristics as the stimuli are produced by the same speaker.

The Verbal-Guise Technique (VGT), introduced by Cooper (1975), is used when it is challenging to find speakers who can authentically produce stimuli in multiple dialects. In VGT, each stimulus is recorded by a native speaker of the respective dialect, ensuring the authenticity of the speech samples (Alajmi, 2022). However, this method introduces the potential influence of vocal qualities on listeners' judgments, as a speaker's voice may affect their ratings on certain traits.

The stimuli were produced by native speakers of each dialect under study (Central Najdi, Qassimi, and Northern Najdi). All efforts were made to ensure that the vocal characteristics of the speakers were not markedly different, thereby minimizing the influence of vocal quality on participants' ratings. The stimuli consisted of a short narrative incorporating the distinctive linguistic features of the dialects under examination.

The linguistic features of each dialect that were incorporated in the stimuli are mostly differences in the personal pronoun paradigms, both free and suffixed, between the three dialects. The pronouns lists, discussed extensively in Alajmi (2023), are as follows:

TABLE 1
INDEPENDENT PERSONAL PRONOUNS IN DIALECTS OF NAJD

Person.Number.gender	Central Najdi	Qassim	Northern
1SC	<i>ʔana:</i>	<i>ʔana:</i>	<i>ʔana:</i>
1PC	<i>inna</i>	<i>hinna</i>	<i>hinna</i>
2SM	<i>ʔint</i>	<i>ʔant</i>	<i>ʔant</i>
2SF	<i>ʔinti / ʔintaj</i>	<i>ʔinti</i>	<i>ʔinti</i>
2DC	--	--	--
2PM	<i>ʔintaw</i>	<i>ʔantu:</i>	<i>ʔantu:</i>
2PF			
3SM	<i>hu:</i>	<i>hu:</i>	<i>hu:</i>
3SF	<i>hi:</i>	<i>hi:</i>	<i>hi:</i>
3DC	--	--	--
3PM	<i>hum</i>	<i>hum</i>	<i>ham</i>
3PF		<i>hin</i>	<i>hin</i>

TABLE 2
DEPENDENT PERSONAL PRONOUNS IN DIALECTS OF NAJD

Person.Number.gender	Central Najd	Qassim	Northern
1SC	<i>-i:</i>	<i>-i:</i>	<i>-i:</i>
	<i>-ni/-a:ni</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>
1PC	<i>-na/-a:na</i>	<i>-na</i>	<i>-na</i>
2SM	<i>-ik/-k</i>	<i>-ik/-k</i>	<i>-ak</i>
2SF	<i>-s / -ik</i>	<i>-ts / -ik</i>	<i>-ts / -ik</i>
2DC	--	--	--
2PM	<i>-kum</i>	<i>-kum</i>	<i>-kam</i>
2PF		<i>-kin</i>	<i>-kin</i>
3SM	<i>-ah</i>	<i>-uh</i>	<i>-uh</i>
3SF	<i>-ha:</i>	<i>-ah</i>	<i>-ah</i>
3DC	--	--	--
3PM	<i>-hum</i>	<i>-hum</i>	<i>-ham</i>
3PF		<i>-hin</i>	<i>-hin</i>

A total of 30 participants took part in VGT, with 15 speakers each representing the Qassimi and Northern dialects. To control for potential confounding variables, all participants were male and in their twenties. This demographic uniformity helps isolate the effect of other social factors. A proposal for further studies might examine the social attitudes towards Central Najdi dialects across the social factors of age, gender, education and social network.

Participants listened to the stimuli and rated each speaker on a Likert scale (1-5) based on the following traits: civilized, educated, open-minded, confident, modest, sociable, and emotional. The presentation order of the stimuli was systematically varied every five speakers to mitigate any order effects, ensuring that the sequence in which the dialects were heard did not influence the ratings.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

The data set of each group of participants yielded quite similar results across all dialects and most traits. The standard deviation (SD) is low for the majority of traits across dialects, except for modesty and emotionality.

The study's findings indicate that speakers of the Central Najdi dialect generally scored higher on status traits compared to speakers of Qassimi and Northern Najdi dialects. Specifically, Central Najdi speakers were rated higher in terms of being civilized, educated, and open-minded. However, there were no significant differences among the dialects regarding solidarity traits such as confidence, modesty, sociability, and emotionality. The results are provided in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3
VGT RESULTS

Trait	Dialect	Mean	SD
Civilized	Central Najdi	4.5	0.6
	Qassimi	3.8	0.5
	Northern Najdi	3.6	0.8
Educated	Central Najdi	4.7	0.5
	Qassimi	4.0	0.7
	Northern Najdi	3.9	0.5
Open-minded	Central Najdi	4.6	0.6
	Qassimi	3.7	0.9
	Northern Najdi	3.5	0.8
Confidence	Central Najdi	3.9	0.6
	Qassimi	4.0	0.7
	Northern Najdi	3.8	0.6
Modesty	Central Najdi	3.2	1.4
	Qassimi	3.4	1.7
	Northern Najdi	2.8	2.1
Sociability	Central Najdi	3.8	0.7
	Qassimi	4.2	0.5
	Northern Najdi	4.5	1.1
Emotionality	Central Najdi	3.4	1.8
	Qassimi	3.7	2.3
	Northern Najdi	3.8	0.8

B. Discussion

The results suggest that the Central Najdi dialect is perceived as having higher status compared to Qassimi and Northern Najdi dialects. These findings align with the gravity model proposed by Trudgill (1974), which posits that linguistic change and prestige flow from larger, more influential urban centers to smaller, less influential areas. In this context, Riyadh, where the Central Najdi dialect is spoken, acts as a linguistic and cultural epicenter within Saudi Arabia.

According to the gravity model, the Central Najdi dialect's association with traits such as being civilized, educated, and open-minded can be attributed to Riyadh's status as the capital and its significant economic, political, and cultural influence. This gravitational pull attracts and shapes the linguistic perceptions of surrounding regions. As a result, the Central Najdi dialect is viewed more favorably in terms of status, reflecting the central role of Riyadh in the nation's sociolinguistic landscape.

The lack of significant differences in solidarity traits among the dialects indicates that while status perceptions may be influenced by the centrality of Riyadh, interpersonal qualities like confidence, modesty, sociability, and emotionality are more evenly distributed across the Najdi dialects. This finding suggests that regional dialects maintain unique social identities and interpersonal connections, independent of their perceived status.

It should be noted that Qassimi and Northern Dialect speakers are well-known for strong identity and pride of their heritage. The concept of language and identity is extensively discussed in sociolinguistic literature. Language is not just a means of communication but also a critical component of social identity (Edwards, 2009; Joseph, 2004). Fishman (1999) emphasized that language serves as a symbol of identity and group membership. In the context of Najd, Qassimi and Northern dialect represent more than a linguistic variety; it embodies their cultural and social heritage.

The strong identity associated with the two groups' dialect may explain why there were no significant differences in solidarity traits such as confidence, modesty, sociability, and emotionality among the Najdi dialects in this study. Despite the Central Najdi dialect being perceived as having higher status, the Qassimi and Northern dialect speakers' strong social identity and pride in their dialect likely contribute to their sense of solidarity and community. This aligns with the findings of Suleiman (2003), who highlighted that language pride and loyalty can lead to the preservation of linguistic traits and resist external influences.

The social cohesion and pride among the groups might also influence their language attitudes. According to Woolard (1998), language ideologies and attitudes are deeply rooted in social and cultural contexts. The positive attitudes towards their dialect and the strong sense of community likely reinforce their confidence and sociability, independent of the perceived status of the Central Najdi dialect. This is consistent with the idea that language attitudes are influenced by factors beyond mere linguistic prestige, encompassing broader social and cultural dimensions (Garrett, 2010).

Furthermore, the findings resonate with the gravity model proposed by Trudgill (1974). While the Central Najdi dialect is perceived as prestigious due to Riyadh's socio-political influence, the Qassimi and Northern dialect's social traits are maintained through strong regional identity and pride. This indicates that the gravitational pull of linguistic prestige from urban centers like Riyadh is moderated by local social dynamics and cultural identity.

The speakers' attitudes towards their own dialect and the Central Najdi dialect can be seen as an interplay between linguistic prestige and social identity. The Central Najdi dialect's association with status traits such as being civilized, educated, and open-minded reflects its prestige and influence. However, the lack of significant differences in solidarity traits suggests that the strong social bonds and identity among Qassimi and Northern speakers play a crucial role in maintaining their dialects' social traits. This is evident in the linguistic behavior of social media influencers observed in Alajmi (2023). For example, a social media influencer from the Qassim region might style-shift according to the social setting they are in. If they are advertising a newly released brand in the capital city of Riyadh, they tend to use a more koineized form of their dialect, using fewer marked features that are stereotypical of their region. Conversely, the same influencer tends to use a more localized version of their speech when they are in a friendly social gathering in the Qassim region. The same behavior is evident among Bedouin Central Najdi speakers who live in the towns surrounding Riyadh (Alajmi, 2019).

In general, these findings contribute to our understanding of language attitudes in Saudi Arabia and highlight the impact of urban centers on regional dialect perceptions. Future research could further explore the mechanisms behind these attitudes and examine how they evolve over time as urbanization and social mobility continue to shape the linguistic landscape of the country.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the sociolinguistic dynamics within Najdi dialects in Saudi Arabia. The Central Najdi dialect, associated with Riyadh's economic, political, and cultural prominence, exerts a gravitational pull that influences linguistic perceptions across the region. While status attributes are more closely linked to the Central Najdi dialect, solidarity traits remain distinct across different Najdi varieties. Future research could explore longitudinal changes in language attitudes and the evolving role of urban centers in shaping regional dialect perceptions. It is predicted that the shift towards Central Najdi (Riyadh Dialect) is inevitable. However, the stronger the social network and identity of a society, the longer it will take to occur. A large population of Qassimis have settled in Riyadh for more than three generations. Their version of Qassimi dialect showcases the future shift. This is similar to what has been discussed in Alajmi (2019) as to whether Bedouins living in Al-Kharj (a city located 100 km south of Riyadh) will shift towards Riyadh dialect in the near future.

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Translating Four-Character Structures in Chinese Literary Works on Traditional Architecture—A Case Analysis of *Canal Towns South of the Yangtze* and *Folk Houses South of the Yangtze*

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Abstract—Traditional Chinese architecture boasts a unique style and profound cultural connotations. Accordingly, the related literary works attain value for international dissemination. The four-character structures in these works serve as concise expressions for describing architectural details and design concepts. However, due to their linguistic implicitness, grammatical structure diversity, and rich cultural images, their translation into English requires multidimensional shift, redundancy elimination, and the avoidance of cultural defaults. This research has developed an effective translation workflow that leverages the synergistic strengths of Large Language Models (LLMs) and the human translator. By strategically employing tailored methods and techniques, it addresses the challenges in the translation process. Analysis suggests: It is recommended that the technique of shift be employed to address the implicit content and complex grammatical structures in translating four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture into English. Besides, the selective application of combination and omission can help deal with information redundancy. Furthermore, it is advisable to apply foreignization and a combined method of literal translation and paraphrasing in conveying cultural images. These approaches will, to a certain extent, convert the untranslatability of four-character structures into translatability, enhancing the dissemination of the essence of traditional Chinese architecture.

Index Terms—Four-character Structures, Chinese literary works on traditional architecture, LLMs, *Canal Towns South of the Yangtze*, *Folk Houses South of the Yangtze*

I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese literary works on traditional architecture serve as the fundamental carriers of traditional Chinese architectural concepts and cultural elements. These texts introduce building components and design principles, and provide comprehensive insights into architecture's history, social context, and cultural significance. Therefore, they are abundant in literary four-character expressions. While research on the translation of architectural works still needs to be conducted in international contexts, Chinese scholars have extensively discussed the translation of such texts. The C-E translation studies encompass lexical and syntactical translation strategies in construction engineering texts (e.g., Sun et al., 2011), hard-to-translate brick masonry terms (e.g., Guo & Zeng, 2020), and the guiding principles for translating architectural drawings (e.g., Zhang, 2023), among others. Existing studies on the English translation of Chinese literary works on traditional architecture primarily focus on architectural terminologies (e.g., Xiao, 2018), cultural-loaded words (e.g., Yin & Wu, 2023), the intertextuality in the translation of multimodal architectural terms (e.g., Tian et al., 2023; Wang & Zheng, 2024), compositional translation of Chinese architectural culture (e.g., Wang & Sun, 2023), among other diverse research aspects. These studies contribute to the multifaceted exploration of translating Chinese literary works on traditional architecture into English.

Feng (1985) divided four-character structures into idioms and four-character phrases that can be flexibly combined according to the context. It is a distinctive word formation in Chinese expression, particularly common in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture. In translation studies, Chinese scholars have delved into four-character structures in the following aspects. In E-C translation, four-character structures have demonstrated full applicability and effectiveness in various contexts. Relevant studies have focused on the advantages and techniques of using four-character structures in the Chinese translation version of English sentences (e.g., Guo, 2009), their application in the translation of film titles into Chinese (e.g., Chen, 2009), and their use in Chinese translations of English literary works (e.g., Zhang & Ding, 2023). Furthermore, the application of four-character structures in different genres has garnered considerable attention in studies on its English translation. These structures are not only prevalent in product manuals (e.g., Zhang, 2011), but are also commonly seen in government work reports (e.g., Wu & Liu, 2016), as well as in traditional Chinese medical classics (e.g., He, 2023; Cui et al., 2023), highlighting their significant position and influence in Chinese language and culture. Currently, there is limited research on the English translation of the four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture, and the translation methods and

techniques applied in other genres may not be entirely applicable to this specific context.

This article aims to explore and provide valuable references for the English translation strategies of the four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture. The research objects are the original and English-translated versions of *Jiangnan Water Village (2nd ed.)* and *Jiangnan Folk Houses*, primarily based on the following considerations: Firstly, the Jiangnan region is one of the significant birthplaces of Chinese culture. “Jiangnan region’s traditional folk houses boast small bridges over flowing water, stucco-covered walls and dark blue tiles, carved beams and painted rafters, as well as *toukong* and flying eaves, all of which serve as vital cultural strands within the traditional architectural heritage” (Li, 2008, p. 88). It can be seen that Jiangnan architecture embodies a distinctive architectural style and mirrors the typical features of traditional Chinese architecture. Secondly, these two books are excellent works in the “Jiangnan Architectural Culture Book Series”, written by Lin and Ding, two experts in the field of architecture. The books render detailed explanations of architectural forms and decorative techniques, such as eave colonnades, *qilou* (similar to *sotto porticos*), brick carvings, and mud walls of houses, as well as the portrayal of the humanistic spirit contained in the architectural forms under the reflection of Jiangnan culture. Professional and accessible, these two books embody the quintessence of typical Chinese traditional architectural literature. One year after the original publications, their English translations, *Canal Towns South of the Yangtze* (translated by Jin & Chen) and *Folk Houses South of the Yangtze* (translated by Li), were released, showcasing the artistic and cultural charm of traditional Jiangnan architecture to international readers. Additionally, these two works frequently feature four-character structures, and they cover common patterns and translation difficulties in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture. The detailed analysis of the original texts and their English versions in these works will be crucial for understanding the English translation of the four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture. The translated examples cited in this article are all from these two books.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF FOUR-CHARACTER STRUCTURES IN CHINESE LITERARY WORKS ON TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

“Four-character structures possess characteristics such as concise and condensed language, symmetrical and rigorous structure, harmonious and pleasant tones, as well as rich connotations and images” (Qiu, 2013, p. 149). In addition to these features, four-character structures in architectural texts exhibit implicitness brought about by their highly generalized nature, a diversity of grammatical structures due to their rigorous construction, and profound cultural images stemming from their implications.

A. Implicitness in Language

Feng (1985) noted that four-character structures, known for their brevity and profound meaning, allow for a concise and precise conveyance of the original text when translated from English to Chinese. However, this highly generalized nature may result in ambiguity and pose challenges to Chinese-to-English translation. Hall (1976) introduced the concept of high-context and low-context cultures. As a typical high-context language, Chinese is characterized by its implicit expressions and succinctness with profound meaning, with information transmission highly reliant on context. These features are particularly evident in four-character structures, where intricate meanings are condensed into refined four-character forms. When translated into English, it is often challenging to find precise equivalent expressions. For example, in the four-character structure “*笼捻巧意*” (Ding, 2008, p. 64), “*笼*” and “*捻*” refer to the finger techniques of the Chinese instrument *Pipa*. Within the specific cultural context of traditional Chinese architecture, the whole structure symbolizes that the ingenious design of the entrances of Jiangnan dwellings resembles the dexterous finger techniques of the *Pipa*. Given this example, grasping the four-character structures’ implicit and profound meanings requires contextual amplification.

B. Diversity in Grammatical Structures

The four-character structures in Chinese can be broadly categorized into four primary types according to their grammatical structures: parallel relations, semantic overlap, objective relations, and attributive structure (Pei, 2021, p. 57). What is similar yet slightly different is that, the most frequently encountered four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture include parallel relations, semantic overlap, attributive structure, and subject-predicate structure. For example:

TABLE 1
EXAMPLES OF THEIR GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES

parallel relations	semantic overlap	attributive structure	subject-predicate structure
“灰瓦白墙” (Lin, 2008, p. 70)	“精致玲珑” (Ding, 2008, p. 179)	“枝叶扶苏” (Ding, 2008, p. 15)	“芙蓉出水” (Ding, 2008, p. 13)
words in parallel relations without a clear distinction between main and subordinate	coordinating words stress the same meaning	composed of a headword and modifier components	composed of a referent and a predicate serving as the semantic focus

As displayed in Table 1, the phrase “灰瓦白墙” (Lin, 2008, p. 70) employs a parallelism of notional words, “灰瓦”

(grey tiles) and “白墙” (white walls), depicting a tapestry of distinctive visual features of the architecture. Concerning the semantic overlap observed in “精致玲珑” (Ding, 2008, p. 179), both “精致” (exquisite) and “玲珑” (delicate) emphasize the intricacy of the architecture, with these “two parallel terms... appearing in pairs and conveying the same meaning” (Pei, 2021, p. 57). In the attributive structure “枝叶扶苏” (Ding, 2008, p. 15), “枝叶” (leaves and branches) serve as the headword, while “扶苏” (in overflowing vitality) functions as a modifier, forming a clear phrase hierarchy to describe the lushness and vigor of a foliage tree. Furthermore, within the subject-predicate structure of “芙蓉出水” (Ding, 2008, p. 13), the referent “芙蓉” (lotus) is promptly followed by the predicate “出水” (emerging from water), thus creating a distinct semantic focus. Besides the syntactic structures shown in Table 1, the phenomenon of multiple similar four-character structures arranged in parallel is referred to as consecutive four-character sentences. This term refers to the arrangement of “more than one four-character structure arranged in sequence... using synonymous repetition to enhance linguistic sense” (Zhang, 2011, p. 225). Therefore, during the translation, it is critical to follow the structural characteristics of the four-character structures and analyze the grammatical relationships between the notional words within them to convey the semantic meaning more accurately.

C. Richness in Cultural Images

“The four-character structures epitomize the cultural orientations embedded in Chinese phrases” (Lu & Yang, 2008, p. 104). They are abundant in cultural images, usually making it challenging to find expressions in the target language that fully align with the cultural schemas. For instance:

TABLE 2
EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL IMAGERY IN THE FOUR-CHARACTER STRUCTURES

“鹅兜差参” (Ding, 2008, p. 13)	“芙蓉出水” (Ding, 2008, p. 13)	“壶中天地” (Ding, 2008, p. 88)
“‘鹅兜’ refers to a round wooden container used for washing clothes in Wenzhou, with a handle shaped like a goose’s head” (Ding, 2008, p. 17).	The literal meaning is that of a newly bloomed lotus, commonly employed to depict an exquisite and captivating woman or characterize poetry or prose as fresh and elegant.	“壶” refers to a gourd, stemming from the legend of <i>Biographies of Immortals</i> .
It is the portrayal of the eaves of Jiangnan residences. They resemble a scattered but artful arrangement of round wooden vessels placed by a stream for laundry, vividly capturing the dynamic beauty of the roof eaves.	It depicts the harmonious blend of Jiangnan folk houses with the natural surroundings, evoking the understated charm like a budding lotus, embodying an innate and captivating allure.	It illustrates the sophisticated techniques of traditional Chinese garden design, capturing the essence of “large scenes within a small space”, where a confined space accommodates a diverse array of natural landscapes.

As illustrated in Table 2, these cultural images tend to carry rhetorical effects, incorporating elements of regional culture, historical allusions, and philosophical thoughts. During cross-cultural translation, it is challenging to find expressions corresponding to the cultural schemas of English. Therefore, ensuring that these images are comprehended and appreciated in the target language culture poses a considerable challenge for translators.

III. DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATING FOUR-CHARACTER STRUCTURES IN CHINESE LITERARY WORKS ON TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

The translation of four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture presents significant challenges due to their implicit meanings, diverse structures, and rich cultural images: 1) The complexity of multidimensional conversion derives from their nuanced meanings and varied grammatical structures. 2) Four-character structures generally feature parallel relations, semantic overlap, and consecutive four-character sentences, inherently leading to redundant information. 3) There is a challenge of conveying cultural images likely to be absent in the target language.

A. The Complexity of Multidimensional Shifts

Catford posited that “by ‘shifts’ we mean departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL” (1965, p. 73). This view highlights the inherent differences in expressions between the source and target languages, particularly pronounced between four-character structures and their English translation versions. Thus, “translators must perform multidimensional conversions in terms of structure and content when translating four-character structures” (Wang, 2023, p. 108). The complexity arises mainly from two key characteristics of them: their highly implicit content and diverse grammatical structures. To begin with, the vast majority of them convey meanings implicitly, frequently applying metaphor and symbolism. Such implicitness challenges translators to capture the intended meanings. It necessitates a profound grasp of the context to ensure precise content-level conversion. Moreover, these four-character structures demonstrate a wide array of complex grammatical structures. Each type displays unique semantic features and word formation patterns, which complicates the task of adapting the original text to English expressions in a versatile manner.

B. The Presence of Redundant Information

“In terms of diction, Chinese includes many redundant modifiers to achieve rhetorical effects or to create balanced language. Regarding the sentence structure, Chinese also uses synonymous repetition to set the mood” (Shi & Zhang, 2022, p. 47). Tian (2001) classified redundant information into two types: grammatical redundancy, which originates from the inherent characteristics of the language system, and semantic redundancy, which stems from semantic analysis. On account of the literary rhetoric and expressive effects required, the four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture typically manifest florid linguistic features. Given this, grammatical redundancy is less common in them, while semantic redundancy may arise from two situations: the “repetition of identical terms” (Tian, 2001, p. 31) and the “repetition of synonymous terms” (Tian, 2001, p. 31). For instance:

TABLE 3
EXAMPLES OF REDUNDANT INFORMATION IN FOUR-CHARACTER STRUCTURES

repetition of identical terms	repetition of synonymous terms
frequently found in parallel relations	primarily seen in semantic overlap and consecutive four-character sentences
“一错一落” (Ding, 2008, p. 41)	“张弛有度, 挑拽自如, 伸缩得法” (Ding, 2008, p. 41)
“或低或昂” (Ding, 2008, p. 41)	“有堂皆井, 无宅不花” (Ding, 2008, p. 83)

Table 3 illustrates that identical term repetition frequently occurs in parallel relations, such as the repetition of “一” in “一错一落” (Ding, 2008, p. 41) and “或” in “或低或昂” (Ding, 2008, p. 41). Meanwhile, synonymous term repetition is typically found in the semantic overlap of four-character structures, like “有” and “皆”, and “无” and “不” in “有堂皆井, 无宅不花” (Ding, 2008, p. 83). Additionally, this repetition can be observed in consecutive four-character sentences, like the three phrases “张弛有度”, “挑拽自如” and “伸缩得法” (Ding, 2008, p. 41) in a row. Translators are required to balance the rhetorical effects of the source text with expressions of the target language to carefully simplify and restructure redundant information to maintain the text’s fluency and readability.

C. The Phenomena of Cultural Defaults

The concise and refined nature of four-character structures can be seen in the omission of supplementary information to introduce cultural images, sometimes leading to potential comprehension difficulties and creating a “vacuum of sense” (Wang, 1997, p. 55). For example, “飞檐翘角” (Ding, 2008, p. 12) refers to a distinctive architectural component in Chinese buildings. Translating it as “cornice” in the Western cultural context would strip away its aesthetic value and cultural significance. While such a translation might be appropriate in specialized architectural texts to specify the exact component, it fails to convey the cultural essence in traditional Chinese architectural contexts. To preserve the cultural essence, the translator could consider adopting a foreignization strategy with a combined method of literal translation and paraphrasing. Hence, the translation version “*feiyan*, flying eaves in Chinese architecture” rather than the English equivalent “cornice” highlights the upward motion of the eaves and allows readers to gain new knowledge. This approach ensures that the aesthetic significance is maintained, showcasing the unique cultural charm of traditional Chinese architecture.

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Translation Workflow

Wu (2024) has ushered in a new avenue of intelligent translation based on the reflection workflow. Leveraging LLMs, he structured the translation process into distinct stages: initial translation, reflection and suggestions, and optimized output. Drawing on the insights of his core viewpoint, this research follows the reflection principle, commencing with the use of the ChatGLM AI agent for the first-round translation, followed by the proofreading suggestions by Ernie Bot, and then an improved version by Kimi, all underpinned by the author’s post-editing to render the final translation.

B. Prompt Design

The AI agent features a novel, task-oriented, and custom-tailored approach to specific requirements and complex problems, without adhering to a universal standard or employing a one-size-fits-all design (Crouse et al., 2023). Therefore, in the first round of translation using the ChatGLM AI agent, it is crucial to design the prompts, with a thorough consideration of the characteristics of four-character structures in Chinese literary works on traditional architecture and the inherent challenges of their translation. The author has crafted the following prompt: “As a translation expert specialized in the English translation of four-character structures from Chinese literary works on traditional architecture, you are adept at capturing the subtleties, diversities, and cultural essence embedded within these concise phrases. When translating, be mindful of the implicit meanings, the variety in grammatical structures, and the richness of cultural images. Ensure that your translations navigate the complexities of multidimensional shifts between contexts and structures, streamline the presence of redundant information, and clarify cultural nuances to avoid

misunderstandings for the target audience. Your expertise lies in transforming these structures into the target language while preserving their depth and elegance, making them accessible and engaging for readers worldwide”.

The initial translation may reveal certain deficiencies, such as inappropriate content or structural transformations, the inclusion of redundant information, or the defaults of cultural images. Therefore, it is essential to have another LLM conduct a review. The prompt is as follows: “As a translation expert specialized in the review and refinement of translations for four-character structures from Chinese literary works on traditional architecture. Your task is to critique and suggest improvements for the existing translation provided, ensuring that implicit meanings are correctly interpreted, grammatical diversity is appropriately rendered, and cultural images are vividly conveyed. Address any complexities in context and structure, eliminate redundant information that detracts from the translation’s impact, and refine cultural nuances to prevent misinterpretation by the target audience. Your task is to elevate the quality of the existing translation, ensuring it retains the original structures’ depth and elegance, and resonates with a global readership.” Suppose proofreading suggestions provided by the Ernie Bot in the second round fail to adequately address these issues. In that case, the author will refine these suggestions to uphold the quality and accuracy of the translation. This iterative process allows for continuous improvement in translation quality and accuracy, ultimately leading to the generation of precise and fluent translations.

Subsequently, the final iteration of Kimi is tasked with integrating the refinements proposed by its predecessor to deliver the ultimate translation version. This final LLM must adeptly consolidate the suggested enhancements, ensuring that the translation is not only an accurate and elegant rendition of the original text but also culturally nuanced and contextually appropriate for the intended audience. The ultimate goal is to produce a translation that is both authentic and accessible. The prompt is detailed here: “As a translation expert specialized in translating four-character structures from Chinese literary works on traditional architecture, your role is to synthesize the suggested improvements and provide the definitive version. Build upon the recommended enhancements in implicit meanings, grammatical structures, and cultural images. Ensure that the final translation adeptly manages the complexities of multidimensional shifts at the content and structural level, is free of redundant information, and conveys the cultural subtleties to prevent any misinterpretation by the target audience. Your expertise is crucial in transforming the suggested revisions into a polished translation that preserves the original depth and elegance and resonates with and engages readers worldwide. Please craft the final translation based on the following revised text and suggestions”.

Most importantly, for the four-character structures’ implicit nature, contextual information and the architectural features associated with these terms should be fully integrated into the prompts to facilitate better understanding by the LLMs. For their complex and diverse grammatical structures, it is necessary to accurately convey their grammatical structural properties to aid the LLM in comprehension. Additionally, regarding cultural images, as much useful information as possible should be provided, or the model should be tasked with collecting and integrating this information to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance in the translation.

V. ANALYZING AND REFINING FOUR-CHARACTER STRUCTURES TRANSLATION VERSIONS IN *CANAL TOWNS SOUTH OF THE YANGTZE* AND *FOLK HOUSES SOUTH OF THE YANGTZE*

In *Jiangnan Water Village* (2nd ed.) and *Jiangnan Folk Houses*, the translation of four-character structures encounters difficulties in certain aspects: multidimensional conversion related to both content and structure, reduction of redundant information, and cultural defaults. By examining the translation examples in the English editions *Canal Towns South of the Yangtze* and *Folk Houses South of the Yangtze* (as seen in Tables 4, 5, and 6), this study aims to analyze their noteworthy strengths for reference and identify cases for enhancement based on the translation workflow, thereby proposing translation strategies that can serve as valuable references for future works.

A. Handling Multidimensional Shifts

TABLE 4
EXAMPLES OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL SHIFT

	Improper transformation at the content and structure level	Technique: Shift	
Number	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
The Original Text	“参差玲珑、顾盼生情” (Ding, 2008, p. 43)	“线条屈曲、圆转自如” (Ding, 2008, p. 25)	“方圆互寓” (Ding, 2008, p. 205)
The English Version	“multi-level” (Ding, 2009, p. 47)	“the crooked lines and the smooth shapes” (Ding, 2009, p. 24)	“the square-curvature composition” (Ding, 2009, p. 243)

(a). Inadequate Multidimensional Shifts

In Example 1, the phrase “参差玲珑” (Ding, 2008, p. 43) consists of two parallel components: “参差”, which describes the staggered yet harmonious arrangement of buildings, and “玲珑”, which denotes their delicate and intricate construction. These two terms do not overlap in meaning. However, the translation only uses “multi-level” (Ding, 2009, p. 47) to convey the sense of “参差”, neglecting the nuance of “玲珑”, thus resulting in an undertranslation as defined

by Newmark (2001). This four-character structure is employed to depict the beauty of the horsehead wall. Following the translation workflow, the final version of “参差玲珑” is “tiered exquisiteness”. It encompasses the whole meaning of the structure to rectify the error of undertranslation. On top of that, the phrase “顾盼生情” (Ding, 2008, p. 43) embodies implicit meanings. In light of the context, it can be inferred that it compares the evocative gesture of someone lifting his or her gaze and glancing back to the play of light and shadow on horsehead walls. The translation fails to capture this poetic literary expression and preserve the original text’s meaning. Instead, a shift technique is recommended to convert the verb phrase “顾盼生情” (Ding, 2008, p. 43) into an adjective and a prepositional phrase “alive with the dance of light and shadow”. This version avoids verb accumulation at the structural level and clarifies the meaning at the content level, effectively illustrating the vibrant interaction in the horsehead wall design.

(b). *Approaches to Addressing Multidimensional Shift Challenges*

“English sentence structures are complex and lengthy, with flexible arrangements in logical order and semantic emphasis. In contrast, Chinese rarely use long sentences; semantic information is arranged according to specific rules, and semantic and logical relationships are usually indicated by word order” (Li, 2014, p. 12). In Example 2, the two four-character structures “线条屈曲，圆转自如” (Ding, 2008, p. 25) each form an independent clause. Here, “屈曲” serves as the modifier of “线条”, and “自如” modifies “圆转”, both being attributive structures that depict the aesthetic beauty of lines and the technique of brush strokes in calligraphy. Directly translating them into parallel short sentences without altering the sentence structure would result in a rigid version that does not conform to English expressions. The translator employs a transformation technique, converting the Chinese run-on sentences into noun phrases within a long English sentence, “the crooked lines and the smooth shapes” (Ding, 2009, p. 24), which offers a valuable approach to translation.

In Example 3, the phrase “方圆互寓” (Ding, 2008, p. 205) is a subject-predicate structure that has been translated as “the square-curvature composition” (Ding, 2009, p. 243), effectively achieving shifts in both content and structural dimensions. On the content level, this translation accurately conveys the aesthetic effect of Qing Dynasty furniture design. Here, “圆” refers to the curves in the lower part of the furniture rather than a complete circle. The word “curvature” captures a broader range of curvilinear characteristics. Thus, it ensures precise meaning. Additionally, on the structural level, the translator converts the subject-predicate structure into an attributive structure, which aligns with English stylistic conventions.

B. *Handling Redundant Information*

TABLE 5
EXAMPLES OF REDUNDANT INFORMATION

Number	Oversimplification	Technique: Combination	Technique: Omission
The Original Text	Example 4 “得心应手，神投气合，水乳交融” (Ding, 2008, p. 217)	Example 5 “依河设市，夹岸为街” (Lin, 2008, p. 59)	Example 6 “浓妆淡抹，美在相宜” (Ding, 2008, p. 31)
The English Version	“can match the colour” (Ding, 2009, p. 251)	“The streets...stretch along rivers and canals” (Lin, 2009, p. 67)	“Beauty Lies in Appropriate Make-ups” (Ding, 2009, p. 29)

(a). *Inadequate Redundancy Tacklement*

In Example 4, “得心应手，神投气合，水乳交融” (Ding, 2008, p. 217) is composed of three four-character structures forming consecutive four-character sentences. Translating this as “can match the color” (Ding, 2009, p. 251) oversimplifies the redundant information, focusing solely on the physical color match and neglecting the connotation of the harmonious integration between the wall and its surrounding environment. Inspired by the translation workflow, a combination technique is suggested to be applied to translate it as: “be attuned to the color palette in harmony and resonates with the quintessence of the surroundings”.

(b). *Approaches to Dealing With Redundant Information*

In Example 5, “依河” and “夹岸”, and “设市” and “为街” are repetitions of synonymous terms. They outline the development layout of streets along the river, creating semantic redundancy. The translator focuses on delivering the core meaning and avoiding redundant constructions in the original text. Hence, the translation applies a combination technique, and “The streets...stretch along rivers and canals” (Lin, 2009, p. 67) succinctly and precisely conveys the notion of spatial extension.

In Example 6, “浓妆淡抹，美在相宜” (Ding, 2008, p. 31) is a chapter title. It specifically refers to wall decorations: Whether the design is elaborate or simple, the key is its harmony with the environment to achieve a perfect balance. The omission of “无论” results in a semantic gap; it is categorized as “implicit semantic redundancy” (Tian, 2001, p. 31). Furthermore, the repetition of the synonyms “妆” and “抹” introduces semantic redundancy. The translator employs a

combination technique by merging “妆” and “抹” into a single concept and applies an omission technique by removing “浓” and “淡”, while retaining the core idea of “相宜”. The translation version, “Beauty Lies in Appropriate Make-ups” (Ding, 2009, p. 29), is attractive and readable. As Yan (1997) put forward, article titles should be brief and eye-catching. The translator’s approach in this instance is exemplary and thus furnishes an outstanding reference for other translators.

C. Handling Cultural Defaults

TABLE 6
EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL DEFAULTS

Loss of Cultural Images		Misinterpretation of Cultural Images		Strategy: Foreignization Method: Literal Translation Technique: Paraphrasing	
Number	Example 7	Example 8	Example 9	Example 10	Example 11
The Original Text	“菰雨生凉” (Ding, 2008, p. 92)	“五岳朝天” (Ding, 2008, p. 41)	“鸟篆虫书” (Ding, 2008, p. 25)	“四水归堂” (Ding, 2008, p. 41)	“檐牙高啄” (Ding, 2008, p. 179)
The English Version	“Chilly Rain” (Ding, 2009, p. 107)	“mountainous” (Ding, 2009, p. 44)	“seal script and clerical script” (Ding, 2009, p. 24)	“the courtyard house” (Ding, 2009, p. 44)	“rising eaves like birds sticking up their beaks” (Ding, 2009, p. 213)

(a). Loss of Cultural Images

In Example 7, “菰雨生凉” (Ding, 2008, p. 92) is the name of a pavilion by the water. “菰” refers to the aquatic plant zizania, “雨” denotes rain, and “凉” describes the refreshing coolness felt after the rain. This name blends natural landscape with sensory experiences, creating an ambiance of coolness and comfort amidst the zizania by the water. Translating this as “Chilly Rain” (Ding, 2009, p. 107) fails to convey the intended aesthetic, as it omits the visual elements of “菰” (zizania) and “雨” (rain), and “chilly” suggests an uncomfortable coldness, which contradicts the pleasant coolness intended in the original text. Adhering to the translation workflow, an apt translation is deemed “Pavilion of Rain-Born Coolness Amidst the Zizania”. This translation employs a foreignization strategy, aiming to preserve the cultural image inherent in the original phrase. Additionally, the term “pavilion” is incorporated to enhance the clarity and evoke a more vivid image of the architecture.

In Example 8, “五岳朝天” (Ding, 2008, p. 41) is used as an adjective to portray the grandeur of the horsehead walls. The metaphor of the Five Sacred Mountains is used due to their overlapping and multilevel features, as noted by the fact that “the trilevel-form horsehead wall is often employed” (Ding, 2008, p. 40). The use of “mountainous” (Ding, 2009, p. 44) cannot fully convey the layered meaning of the cultural image. Under the translation workflow, it is better to revise it into “the imposing eaves soaring skyward, reminiscent of the Sacred Peaks of China”. This translation effectively highlights the distinctive structure of the horsehead walls, allowing readers unfamiliar with the Chinese culture to appreciate their unique characteristics.

(b). Misinterpretation of Cultural Images

In Example 9, “鸟篆虫书” (Ding, 2009, p. 24) is a four-character structure with semantic overlap. “鸟篆”, also known as “虫书”, is an ancient Chinese pictographic script. Given the context in the article, which notes that “鸟篆” and “虫书” serve as “tile ornaments” (Ding, 2008, p. 25) and are “pictorial arts” (Ding, 2008, p. 25), it is clear that this term refers to an ornamental form of script characterized by the shapes of its strokes. The translated version of “seal script and clerical script” (Ding, 2009, p. 24) misinterprets the term and fails to capture the pictorial images of “bird” and “insect”. Translating it as “Bird-and-Insect Script” is advisable to preserve the ornamental and pictographic nature.

In Example 10, the term “四水归堂” (Ding, 2008, p. 41) describes the unique drainage design of horsehead walls in Chinese Hui-style architecture. The translator’s rendering as “the courtyard house” (Ding, 2009, p. 44) only acknowledges the shared feature of central drainage between horsehead walls and courtyard houses, but it fails to recognize that they represent distinct architectural concepts. Instead, it can be considered to apply the version as “‘funnel pattern’ house” (Ding, 2009, p. 91) by using the technique of paraphrasing. Thus, it will better engage the cultural schema of English readers, allowing them to comprehend the architectural layout more accurately.

(c). Approaches to Conveying Cultural Images

In Example 11, “檐牙高啄” (Ding, 2008, p. 179) originates from Chinese poet Du Mu’s Ode to Afang Palace. It is a distinct cultural image in Chinese literature. This term vividly describes the eaves of ancient Chinese buildings, which jut out like teeth, resembling bird beaks pecking at food. The translator avoids a literal translation or a rigid equivalent like “cornice brackets”. Instead, he employs the foreignization strategy and the paraphrasing technique, using “like” to introduce a simile, forming a translation of “rising eaves like birds sticking up their beaks” (Ding, 2009, p. 213). This approach effectively captures the dynamic visual effect of the eaves extending upwards, and preserves the essence and vivid images of the original description. A refined version of “yanya, rising eaves like birds sticking up their beaks” could serve better, for it enhances the transmission of traditional Chinese architectural and cultural images with a substantial impression on English readers.

VI. CONCLUSION

Through the analysis of the original books and English translations of *Jiangnan Water Towns (Second Edition)* and *Jiangnan Folk Houses*, this paper concludes that managing the implicit meanings and complex grammatical structures of four-character structures can be effectively achieved through shift technique and, when necessary, text reconstruction. To handle the redundancy commonly presents in these phrases, combining synonymous expressions or using reduction translation can help retain the core meaning. Upon addressing cultural defaults, the translator can employ the foreignization strategy, the literal translation method, and the paraphrasing technique to preserve cultural images while making suitable adjustments and interpretations. Since there is no direct equivalent to the four-character structures in English, researching their translation allows for a deeper understanding of and valuable insights into the linguistic and cultural differences between Chinese and English. The translation workflow is a collaborative effort, harnessing the generation and reflection of LLMs and the critical post-editing expertise of the human translator. These efforts, in turn, aid in disseminating China's rich traditional architectural culture and fostering a more nuanced and comprehensive global understanding and appreciation of China.

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Misuses and Abuses of Standard Arabic Passive Voice in the News of the Jordanian Newspapers

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Abstract—The line of demarcation drawn between active and passive verbs resides in the direction of the action. The passive voice in standard Arabic can be used when the agent of the sentence is not expressed. The active Arabic sentences are passivized by skipping the agent of the sentence, but without changing the word order. The paper investigates the misuse and abuse of passive voice in Jordanian newspapers. Four cases of Arabic Passive violation spotted in Jordanian written media are analyzed. Three major official newspapers issued in Jordan are chosen for this purpose: Alqhad, Addustoor, and Alrai. It also focuses on violating the Arabic passive rules.

Index Terms—Arabic passive form, Arabic passive violation, written media

I. INTRODUCTION

Arabic passive voice is used in written and spoken forms when the subject of the sentence is unknown or unnecessary to be used or when it is very well known. Sometimes, it is deleted to express a state of contempt. The speaker/writer wants to focus on the event of the sentence and to hide purposely the doer of the action. Khalil (2010) states that the early Arab grammarians focus on the form and derivation of passive verbs in Arabic which are used when the doer of the action is not mentioned because the speaker/writer wants to hide his/her identity. Languages in the world have witnessed changes throughout the ages. Some languages faced a dangerous change that shot deep into the heart of their structures. Accordingly, some have died and others are considered moribund. Ostler (2005) remarks that Language shift or maintenance refers to the tendency of its speakers to use grammatical and linguistic rules in new ways, violating the basic elements of their language. Language loyalty among its speakers may positively affect its maintenance. Weinreich (1974) focuses on the notion of language loyalty which helps keep the language. He defines loyalty towards the language as “a principle in the name of which people will rally themselves and their fellow speakers consciously and explicitly to resist change in their language” (p. 99).

The speakers of a language over time tend to use specific grammatical rules which are unlike the ones used in standard language. Abushihab (2022) assures that Language is essential for daily communication and in conveying cultural aspects, thoughts, and ideas. It is a means for people to interact culturally and pragmatically. Al-Zyoudi (2023) remarks that “functionalism contributed to linking the linguistic structure with its communicative function, and that interrogative structures were distinguished by the elements included in them, as they had the performing force in performing the function” (p. 137).

In this paper, the issues of Arabic passive violation in Jordanian written media are analyzed. The paper is an attempt to highlight the damage being done to Arabic passive by using some alien structure and linguistic aspects that lead to the loss, drain, and attrition of Arabic identity. Aldamen and Al-Deaibes (2023) assure that Adult native learners of Arabic face several common language problems in their Arabic language acquisition process. Such problems are due to the grammatical difficulties in the Arabic Language.

II. SOUND INVENTORIES OF ARABIC

Arabic alphabet is sorted as follows: 'alif (ʾ), baa' (b), taa' (t), θaa' (θ), jeem (j), ḥaa' (ḥ), xaa' (x), daa (d), ḏaa' (ḏ), raa' (r), zayn (z), seen (s), jeen (ʃ), s'aad (s'), d'aad (d'), t'aa (t'), ḏ'aa' (ḏ'), ʕyn (ʕ), ʔayn (ʔ), faa' (f), qaa' (q), kaaf (k), laam (l), meem (m), noon (n), haa' (h), waaw (w), jaa' (j).

Tables 1 and 2 display the phonetic nature of consonants and vowels in Arabic.

TABLE 1
ARABIC CONSONANT PHONEMES (ADAPTED FROM KHALIL, 2010, P. 14; SEE ALSO WATSON, 2000)

	L	LD	I	D	A	P	V	U	Ph	G
Stop	B			t, t ^ʕ d, d ^ʕ			k	q		' ?
Affr.						dʒ				
Fric.		f	ð, θ, ð ^ʕ	s, z, s ^ʕ		ʃ	x, ɣ		ħ, ʕ	h
Liquids										
Trill					r					
Lateral					l					
Nasal	M				n					
Glides	W					j				

Key: L: labial; LD: labiodental; I: Interdental; D: Dental; A: Alveolar; P: Palatal; V: Velar; U: Uvular; Ph: Pharyngeal; G: Glottal; Affr.: Affricate; Fric.: Fricative

In fact, such classification was also put by many former Arabic scholars such as Al-frahidi and IbinJinni.

TABLE 2
ARABIC VOWELS (ADAPTED FROM KHALIL, 2010, P. 20)

	Front	Central	Back
High	ii i		uu u
Low		aa a	

III. LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF ARABIC PASSIVE VOICE

The passivisation in standard Arabic can be manipulated when the agent (subject) is deleted as the following example shows:

/kataba ʕalijun ʔaddarsa/ Ali wrote the lesson.

/kutiba ʔaddarsu/ The lesson was written.

The example stated above indicates that the performer of the action is deleted without stating anything about it. It refers to someone doing the action without knowing who he is. The passive voice in Arabic is based on the vowel change rule. The short vowel following the first consonant "a" is changed to "u" and the vowel after the second consonant "a" is changed to "i". In other cases, we add/ ju/ to the stem, and the first vowel /a/ is changed to a voiceless sound. The last vowel "a" is changed to "u" as the following example:

/darasa ʕalijun ʔalmawdʕuʕa/ Ali studied the topic.

/judrasuʔ almawdʕuʕ/ The topic is studied.

Saad (1982) assures that Arabic passivisation is used without the "by-the phrase" that is used in English like in the following example:

The topic is studied by him.

Unlike Arabic, English passive may be agentive (by + agent) or agentless. The agent in Arabic passive is unknown or ignorant. The Arab speaker/ writer may face some problems when saying or writing passive sentences. He may wrongly use agentive passive sentences "min qibal" (by-phrase) as a result of negative interference from English to Arabic or incomplete acquisition of his native language as the following example shows:

Kutiba ʔdarsu (min qibal Ali). (the lesson was written by Ali)

Massalha (2005) investigates the agentive passive construction in English and its translation into Arabic. He finds that what is equivalent to (by-phrase) is /min qibal/. When translating English passive sentences into Arabic, the translator translates them literally, so they produce agentive translated sentences as the following example shows:

The rabbit was killed by the lion (agentive English Passive).

It is wrongly translated as follows:

Qutila ʔalʔarnabu (min qibal ʔal ʔasad / by the lion).

The correct translation of this sentence is to be used in an active sentence if the writer insists on mentioning the agent as follows:

Qatala ʔalʔasadu ʔalʔarnaba (The Lion killed the rabbit).

The agentless passive in Arabic is used by deleting the agent as follows: qutila ʔalʔarnabu (The rabbit was killed).

Nofal (2011) remarks that the Arabic passive voice focuses on the event and the meaning of the verb rather than the agent, so it is agentless.

IV. DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF ARABIC: CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

For many scholars, Arabic has the unique privilege of embracing the Holy Quran. This is what makes it safe and unscathed from being affected by other challenging languages over the ages. In Arabic and Islamic culture, the Noble Quran is the arbiter of the misuse and abuse of Arabic rules. Arabic has witnessed changes because of its different versions:

classical, standard, and dialects. Al-Saidat and Al-Momani (2010) state that standard Arabic is derived from classical Arabic. The structure, lexicon, and pronunciation of standard Arabic may vary locally as dialects differ from modern and classical Arabic. The change has touched the surface but not its core rules even though its rules are now under attack because some key grammatical aspects are misused by the media which are supposed to use standard Arabic. Given that Arabic society is media-saturated, the influx of foreign words, usages, and expressions are misused in the media. Alqadi (2020) focuses on the essence of creativity and affirmation in Jordanian culture. She states that realistic social constraints control the use of language in society. Among such abuses and misuses is the use of the Arabic passive voice. Its rules are being violated and it is time to stop this violation by revising the texts used in media by professionals.

V. THE IMPORTANCE OF USING PASSIVE VOICE IN ARABIC

The function of the use of passive in English is different from Arabic. In English, the passive voice is often used for stylistic purposes. This gives the reason why English passive voice has a higher frequency in comparison to Arabic. This is because English passive is agentive and agentless whereas Arabic is agentless. Hale (2004) remarks that hiding the subject of a passive sentence in Arabic could have a very good rationale. In court proceedings and litigations, giving the passive voice precedence over the active in Arabic is intended by the speaker or writer to hide the agent purposefully. Passivisation in Arabic is mostly intended for ambiguities. Fowler (1971) states that voice provides contrasting ways of distinguishing the agency of an action in a subject-verb-object statement.

Unlike Arabic, a contrast in agency in English is used by active and passive voices. The following examples illustrate the level of emphasis or agency:

- 1- The man killed the murderer.
(agent is explicitly stated in an active sentence)
- 2- The murderer was killed by the man.
(agentive passive sentence).
- 3- Someone killed the murderer.
(unspecified agent is stated in an active sentence).
- 4- The murderer was killed by someone.
(agentive passive sentence with an unspecified agent).
- 5- The murderer was killed
(the agent is unstated).

There is no real justification for using the first four sentences. Sentence (5) stands as real justification for the passive.

Crystal (1980) goes in parallel with this trend. He assures that when the agent is not stated purposefully, the focus is on the action and on its object, not on the instigator of the action. Aziz (1989) also goes side by side with the same trend. He points out that contrastive studies of the voice in English are different from Arabic. English uses both the agentive and agentless passive whereas Arabic uses only the agentless passive.

To elaborate, the agent of the passive verb is deleted in Arabic because of the following reasons:

1. It is very well-known as follows:

Xuliqa ?al?insanu d^ʕaʕifa

The man is created weak.

2. It is not specified and unknown as follows:

Suriqa ?albajtu

The house was stolen.

3. The agent is dreadful and the speaker is afraid of mentioning his name as the following example shows:

Suriqa ?al his^ʕanu

The horse was stolen.

4. The speaker is apprehensive for the agent's safety as follows:

d^ʕuriba ?assa?iqu

The driver was beaten.

5. The agent is deleted for his dignity and honor as follows:

ʕumila ʕamalun munkarun

A bad act was done.

6. The agent is deleted to express a state of contempt as follows:

?unʕidat ?alqas^ʕidatu

The poem was recited.

VI. METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The methodology used in this study is a content analysis which is a technique that enables the audience to study written contents of communication, textbooks, essays, newspapers, novels, magazines, articles, songs, political speeches, advertisements, and pictures. The unit of analysis in this study is sentence. One hundred sentences are specified and taken from different issues of three Jordanian official newspapers: Alqhad, addustour, and Alrai. Some of these sentences are

analyzed and discussed to achieve the objectives of the paper. Six jurors (arbitrators) whose disciplines include linguistics and translation are consulted and they are asked to validate the results (see Appendix A). Analysis of reliability is calculated by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Times of Jurors (arbitrators) agreement}}{\text{No. of Jurors arbitrators}} * 100$$

The calculated reliability coefficient is 80% which is a good value for this paper.

As stated earlier, Arabic passive does not allow an agent (subject) in the discourse for different reasons. One of which is brevity because there is no need to mention the subject. The speaker/ writer ignores the name of the agent to avoid defaming it. The rule governing the use of passive in Arabic is used in written and oral discourse. Arabic is used as a first language in Jordan. It is divided into three major forms: classical Arabic, modern standard Arabic, and dialects which are spoken. Khalil (2010) states that classical Arabic is the language of the Holy Quran and pre-Islamic literature. It contains some items which are not used nowadays. Modern standard Arabic is the official language in Jordan and is mostly used in publications and media. The dialects are spoken varieties of Arabic which have different structures and vocabulary from standard Arabic. In the current study, Arabic passive has been traced in three newspapers in Jordan. Cases of various forms of violating the Arabic passive rules are taken and analyzed in terms of misuse and abuse.

There are some cases where the agent is misused in passive sentences. There are also other cases where the passive voice verb is violated and abused by replacing it with other patterns like “tama” (perfect) + verbal noun without mentioning the agent in some cases and the presence of the agent in other cases. Below are different cases of Arabic passive rule violation. They are analyzed and the correct use is provided. The reasons for each misuse and abuse are given.

VII. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Case one

In this case, the passive verb is kept correct and subjected to the rules of Arabic, but the violation lies in the presence of the agent which is not allowed in Arabic passive rules for the reasons mentioned earlier.

Example 1:

ʔinna ʔalmantʔiqata ʔallati tuwdʔadu fiha safaratuna bi sʔanʔaʔ ʔistuhdifat min qibal quwatin ʔadʔnabijatin. (Alrai newspaper, No. 16487, 2016, p. 17).

The area which hosts our embassy in Sana'a has been targeted by foreign forces.

The correct form of the example stated above is the deletion of the agentive phrase “min qibal quwatin ʔadʔnabijatin” (by foreign forces) and to use the active agentive sentence as follows:

ʔistahdafat quwattun ʔadʔnabijattun ʔalmantʔiqata ʔallati tuwdʔadu fiha safaratuna bi sʔanʔaʔ.

Foreign forces targeted the area which hosted our embassy in Sana'a.

Example 2

Turikat owit bayan ʔadiʔatu ʔassini min qibal walidajha wa ʔuhida biha ʔila dʔadatiha. (Alqhad newspaper, No. 4101, 2016, p. 7).

Owit bayan who was newly born was left by her parents and hosted by her grandmother.

The above version is also abused by using the agentive phrase in passive Arabic form (min qibal walidajha/by her parents) where it is not allowed in Arabic passive. The correct version is to be used in the active form as follows:

Taraka walida owit bayan ibnatihima alhadiʔata ʔassini wa ʔahida biha ʔila dʔadatiha.

Owit bayan's parents left their daughter who was newly born and asked her grandmother to host her.

Example 3

ʔinna ʔarbaʔatan mina ʔaldʔarʔa nuqilu biwasitʔati tʔa ʔirati ʔisʔafin ʔila ʔalʔasimati ʔanqara. (Addustour newspaper, No. 17403, 2016, p. 7).

Four of the wounded persons were taken by an ambulance plane to the capital-Ankara.

The Arabic passive form is also abused by using the agentive phrase “biwasitʔati tʔaʔirati ʔisʔafin” by an ambulance plane. The correct form should be written in active to reveal the agent as follows:

Naqalat tʔaʔiratu ʔisʔafin ʔarbaʔatan min ʔaldʔarʔaʔ ila ʔalʔasimati ʔanqara.

An ambulance plane took four of the wounded persons to the capital Ankara.

Case Two

In this case, the passive verb is abused by using the pattern.

tamma/jatimmu (present perfect) + verbal noun and the agent is wrongly mentioned. This kind of passive misuse is the most damaging one because it hits deeper in the core of Arabic passive. We can say that the Arabic passive structure would be in danger if we do not stop such misuses and abuses.

Example 1

Bihajʔu jatimmu ʔintixabu ʔalʔamini ʔalʔammi lilhizbi min qibal ʔaʔdʔaʔi ʔalmuʔtamari ʔalʔami. (Addustour newspaper, No. 17409, 2016, p. 2).

.... where the party's secretary-general has been elected by the members of the General Congress.

The use of “biḥajṡu jatimmu” (present perfect+ verbal noun) and “by-agent” is not allowed in an Arabic form. The correct active version of the above sentence is as follows:

Jantaxibu ḡaṡḡaḡu ḡalmuḡtamari ḡalḡamina ḡalḡama lilḡizbi.

The members of the general congress elect the party's secretary general.

The same sentence may be used in the past tense as follows:

ḡintaxiba ḡaṡḡaḡu ḡalmuḡtamariḡ alḡamina ḡalḡama lilḡizbi.

The members of the general congress elected the party's secretary general.

Example 2

tamma taḡkulu ladḡnatan min qibali ḡaldḡihati ḡalmaḡnijati (Alqhad newspaper, No. 4096, 2016, p. 3).

A committee has been formed by the concerned authorities.

The correct version of the sentence ought to be written by deleting the agentive phrase “min qibali ḡaldḡihati ḡalmaḡnijati” (by the concerned authorities) and the agentive active sentence is used instead as follows:

ḡakkalat ḡaldḡihatu ḡalmaḡnijatu Ladḡna.

The concerned authorities have formed a committee.

Example 3

Tamma ḡixtiḡaruhum min qibali ḡalmaktabi ḡaltanfiḡij. (Alrai newspaper, No. 16487, 2016, p. 4).

They have been chosen by the Executive office.

The above sentence is abused because of the use of “tamma ḡixtiḡaruhum” (perfect tense +verbal noun) in addition to the agentive phrase “min qibali ḡalmaktabi ḡaltanfiḡij” (by the Executive office). The sentence should also be written in active form to reveal the agent of the sentence as follows:

ḡixtaruhum ḡalmaktabu ḡaltanfiḡiju.

The executive office has chosen them.

Case Three

This case focuses on the abused pattern: tamma (perfect tense) + verbal noun. In this case, the agentive phrase is not used.

Example 1

Tama ḡilqaḡu ḡalqabd'i ḡala ḡaxsin maḡbuhin fii madinati ḡirbid (Addustour newspaper, No. 17403, 2016, p. 7).

A suspect has been arrested in Irbid city.

tamma (perfect tense) is misused in this agentless sentence. The speaker fails to derive the passive form of the verb. He ought to use ḡulqija ḡalqabd'a (was arrested) which is the passive form of the verb "ḡalqaḡalqabd'u". Accordingly, the sentence ought to be written in passive form as follows:

ḡulqija ḡalqabd'a ḡala ḡaxsin maḡbuhin fii madinati ḡirbid.

A suspect was arrested in Irbid city.

The agent of the sentence is hidden (covert), but it is known because the police who only arrest the suspect. The writer may state the covert agent and use the active form as an alternative for the same sentence as follows:

ḡalqat ḡalḡurt'atu ḡalqabd'a ḡala ḡaxsin maḡbuhin fii madinati ḡirbid.

The police arrested a suspect in Irbid city.

Example 2

Tamma naqlu dḡuḡatihi ḡila markizi ḡat'ibbi ḡalḡarḡiji. (Alrai newspaper, No. 16480, 2016, p. 4).

The corpse has been removed to the Forensic Centre.

The example stated above is used in active in terms of syntax, but its implication is passive. It also seems to be a wrong attempt to derive the passive form of the verb (nuqilat/was removed) by replacing it with “tamma naqlu” (perfect tense + verbal noun). Accordingly, the correct version should be written in a passive form as follows:

Nuqilat ḡadḡuḡatu ḡila markizi ḡalt'ibi ḡalḡarḡiji

The corpse was removed to the Forensic centre.

Example 3

Tamma taḡdimu ḡalḡisḡafati ḡalḡawalijati ḡalazimati lahum. (Alqhad newspaper, No. 4096, 2016, p. 3).

The first aid needed has been offered.

The example stated above is also misused. The writer fails to derive the passive form of the verb “qudimat” (was offered) by replacing it to “tamma taḡdimu” (perfect tense + verbal noun / has been offered). The correct form of the sentence is as follows:

Qudimat ḡalḡisḡafatu ḡalḡawalijattu ḡalazimatu lahum.

The first aid needed was offered.

Case Four

This case shows that breaching Arabic passive voice is due to replacing the term “tamma” (perfect tense) which was misused in above examples by other terms like ḡinahu wabaḡda (after), faḡad (already), dḡara (carrying out) with abuses in passive voice. Below are some examples related to this case:

Example 1

ḡinahu wabaḡda ḡalkaḡfi ḡan ḡadḡuḡati min qibali ḡalt'abibi ḡalḡarḡiji. (Alrai newspaper, No. 16475, 2015, p. 4).

... after the corpse has been tested by the forensic physician...

This sentence is misused because the writer fails to derive the correct form of the passive verb by using “ʔinahu wabaʕda” (after) and use the agentive form (min qibali ʔaltʕabibi ʔalʕarʕiji /by the forensic physician) even though the passive form is not used in such agentive sentences. The active form should be used instead as follows:

baʕda ʔan kaʕafa ʔaltʕabibi ʔalʕarʕiji ʔan ʔadzuḡati.

The forensic physician tested the corpse.

Example 2

Faqad tawazaʕat haḡihi ʔaltʕaqtu ʕala mustahlikin. (Alqhad newspaper, No. 4101, 2016, p. 8).

The energy has been distributed to consumers.

This agentless sentence is misused because it carries the implication of passive. Accordingly, faqad (already) is misused in the example stated above because it is used before the lexical verb (faqad tawazaʕat /has been distributed) in place of the passive form of the verb wuziʕat (was distributed). The correct form of the sentence is used by replacing “faqadtawazaʕat” to the passive form of the verb “wuziʕat” as follows:

wuziʕat haḡihi ʔaltʕaqtu ʕala mustahlikin.

The energy was distributed to consumers.

Example 3

dzara ʔilqaʔu ʔalqabdʕi ʔala ʕaxsʕin maʕbuhin fii mantʕiqati ʔalbadija. (Addustour newspaper, No. 17409, 2016, p. 4).

A suspect has been arrested in the desert area.

dzara (carrying out) is used in the example before the lexical verb “ʔilqaʔu” (arrested) as a wrong attempt from the writer to form an agentless passive sentence. The writer should be aware of forming the correct construction of Arabic passivisation which is based on deriving the passive from the lexical verb, so he should replace (dzaraʔilqaʔu/ has been caught) with the passive form of the verb (ʔulqija ʔalqabdʕu /was arrested) and delete (dzara /carrying out) which is a useless extra word. The sentence should be written in the passive form as follows:

ʔulqija ʔalqabdʕu ʔala ʕaxsin maʕbuhin fii mantʕiqati ʔalbadija.

A suspect was caught in a desert area.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Arabic Passive voice is used as a writing style when the agent is unknown or unimportant or the writer wants to focus on the object. Nofal (2011) remarks that the construction of the passive voice in Arabic focuses on the event rather than the agent. Nofal adds "agentless passive is a passive sentence that does not have an overt agentive (by phrase) and where the suppressed agent is either (i) unspecified or (ii) can be uniquely recovered from the context" (p. 149). The Journalists and writers of the Jordanian newspapers violate the rules of passive construction and it is being abused by making it agentive by using (min qibal) which is equivalent to the (by + agent) in English passive structure. They also abuse it by using (tamma + verbal noun) and using wrongly the agentive or non-agentive phrase. It is dangerous tend to use the Arabic passive construction in new ways without jeopardizing the basic rules of Arabic passivisation. Willems et al. (2003) state that linguistic elements do not change and they are stable but speakers of a language over time violate them and use different new linguistic elements. This is due to incomplete acquisition and lack of syntactical knowledge of their native language. The issue of the Arabic passive voice is under deep investigation because there is a trend of abusing the Arabic passive voice in three Jordanian newspapers: Alqhad, Addustour and Alrai. Cases of Arabic passive violation are spotted and analyzed to touch how Arabic passive rules are seriously breached. If this serious problem is not solved, such abuses will scratch the clean Arabic surface. Arabic, unfortunately, is showing signs of retreat as a result of abusing its core rules which are now coming under attack in the media which is supposed to use standard language. It is time to stop such violations because there will come a time for Arabic linguistic features to be undermined or even distorted.

We should start with schools and universities. Curricula should have courses relating to contrastive analysis between Arabic and English. The students in both schools and universities must enroll in such compulsory courses to enhance their abilities so that they can use accurate sources and target common constructions and expressions. Among the recommended approaches that may help Journalists overcome such abuses is pragmatic translation which focuses on text intentionality and grammatical constructions. The Journalists who apply for media should be subjected to a thorough contrastive entrance exam. All reports written in newspapers must also be revised and studied carefully by specialists and professionals so that they are revealed safely without language abuse. The Journalists should also refresh their language knowledge by attending obligatory contrastive analysis courses and seminars which ought to be held by the institutions they work.

APPENDIX A. A PANEL OF JURORS

Name	Rank	Specialization	Place of Work	Experience
Dr. Majid Wasfi Harb	Associate Professor	Curriculum and Instruction	Alzaytoonah University of Jordan	13
Dr. Sabha Ahmed Alqam	Associate Professor	Arabic Literature	Alzaytoonah University of Jordan	9
Dr. Sahar Farouq Altikriti	Assistant Professor	Linguistics and Pragmatics	Alzaytoonah University of Jordan	20
Dr. Dima Fathi Alomari	Assistant Professor	Discourse Analysis	Alzaytoonah University of Jordan	20
Dr. Bilal Mohammad Ayasra	Assistant Professor	Translation	Alzaytoonah University of Jordan	10
Dr. Iman Mohammad Abdulhadi	Assistant Professor	Modern Criticism/ Arabic	Alzaytoonah University of Jordan	2

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Ibrahim Mohammad Abushihab was born in Jordan 1958. He got his BA in English and MA in TEFL from Yarmouk University/Jordan (1986), whereas PhD degree in Applied Linguistics was received from Gazi University/Turkey (2003). Over the past 30 years, he has been teaching English as a foreign language to Arab students in the Ministry of Education in Jordan, Aljouf University (Saudi Arabia), and Alzaytoonah Private University of Jordan. Since then, he has been doing research in the field of Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, Stylistics, Applied Linguistics, and Contrastive Analysis. Dr. Ibrahim Abushihab is a Professor of Applied Linguistics at Alzaytoonah University of Jordan.

Illocutionary Speech Acts in *Sawér* Poetry of the Sundanese Ethnic Traditional Marriage Ceremony

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Abstract—The lyrics contained in every *nyawér* ceremony certainly have meaning and a message. This research aims to determine the type of speech of each stanza of poetry and to understand the meaning contained inward. This research adopts descriptive qualitative methods with a cultural approach. The research data were taken from a Sundanese *sawér* poetry by Mr. Tahyan from Ciamis consisting of 9 stanzas. Each stanza, consisting of several lines of poetry, was analyzed using Searle's speech act theory to determine the type of speech and pragmatic manifestations. The cultural approach was used to strengthen the analysis. This was because the speech in the *sawér* poetry of the wedding ceremony is very closely related to the culture of a region, in this case, the Sundanese ethnic group. The results of the research show that the types of speech in Sundanese *sawér* poetry consist of 2 directive illocutionary speech acts meaning requests and hopes; 3 directive illocutionary acts meaning prohibitions and warnings; 2 directive illocutionary commands and suggestions; 1 assertive illocutionary meaning statement, and 1 assertive illocutionary act that means hopeful. The meaning contained in the *sawér* poetry is advice for the newlyweds to enter married life through religious norms and social norms so that they can live it well and achieve happiness.

Index Terms—speech, illocutionary, *sawér*, marriage, Sundanese

I. INTRODUCTION

There has been a lot of research related to speech at traditional wedding ceremonies, both related to the types of speech in Sundanese *sawér* poetry analyzed pragmatically and related to speech at traditional ceremonies in other regions viewed from a linguistic and cultural perspective. However, researchers have not found research specifically examining the types of speech and meaning contained in Sundanese *sawér* poetry sung in Tasikmalaya. Even though many similar studies have been found, in this article, only 3 previous studies will be presented as references. The first is an article by Nifmaskossu et al. (2019) titled "Speech Acts Directive on Traditional Marriage Ceremonies of the Watmuri Community". The author explains that for the Watmuri people of Nirunmas District in West Southeast Maluku Regency, better known as the Tanimbar tribe, located in the Yamdena Islands, their lives cannot be separated from ceremonies. One of them is a wedding ceremony. Traditional marriage ceremonies are considered sacred and are always related to traditional ceremonies. In the traditional marriage ceremonies of the Watmuri community, directive speech acts are found in the marriage ceremony procession, which includes first, directive speech acts in the family gathering procession usually called *kabotkit*, second, directive speech acts in the marriage ceremony procession entering the request which is generally called *bebetu*, third, the wedding ceremony procession where the girl is taken from her house is usually called *kalabasa*. The last is to pay the property which is generally called *kesit*. Of the four processions in this traditional marriage ceremony, many types of directive speech acts are used, meaning commands and requests.

Furthermore, we also refer to an article entitled "*Sawér Panganten* Guidance on Married Life in Bandung Regency" written by Masduki (2015). The article explains that *sawér pangantén* is a legacy of Sundanese cultural traditions created by the Sundanese people from generation to generation. *Sawér pangantén* is a tradition of introduction for two people who are united in marriage. *Sawér pangantén* contains admonitions to the bride and groom about starting life in the household as husband and wife. The values of the *Sawér Panganten* tradition are full of character education: divinity (religion), morals, society, and character. *Sawér pangantén* is a strong cultural tradition of the Sundanese people and is full of advice and prayers. *Sawér pangantén*, or what is usually called *nyawér*, is a ceremony of advising the bride and

groom held after the wedding ceremony. The advice primarily mandates that humans (the bride and groom) behave well in family relationships, husband and wife, social relationships, be firm in their stance, and have devotion to God Almighty. *Sawér* poetry is generally structured into three parts: opening, core, and conclusion. The general opening is an apology to God Almighty, the Prophet, Guardians, ancestors, and the audience for carrying out the *sawér pangantén* event. The closing part is a prayer for the family and audience to obtain safety and grace from Almighty God. The bride and groom sat side by side under the shade of umbrellas while hymns of advice were sung. Occasionally, the contents of bowls were sprinkled, and the audience who watched scrambled to pick up change and candy.

The next article relevant to this research is "Sundanese Bride *Sawér* Tradition in Parigi Village, Parigi District, Pangandaran Regency" written by Kusmayadi (2018). The article explains that the marriage ceremony in Parigi Village, Parigi District, Pangandaran Regency contains values and norms that regulate and direct community behavior. Thus, the traditional Sundanese wedding ceremony in Parigi is a combination of elements of nature, characteristics, beliefs, and religion that mutually support each other. The stages of the wedding ceremony in Parigi Village are described as follows: (1) proposing marriage, (2) *ngeuyeuk seureuh*, and (3) *seserahan* ceremony. The marriage proposal aims to ask the woman's parents whether their daughter is still single or already in a relationship. Usually, this ceremony is held the evening before the wedding ceremony at the house of the prospective bride's parents. *Ngeuyeuk seureuh* is led by someone who knows about this ceremony, called *pangeuyeuk*. In the procession of this ceremony, the bride and groom prepare the bridal equipment, such as the groom and bride's clothes, shoes, cosmetics, mats, and *sawér* equipment. All these items are stacked in a sieve (filter tool). *Seserahan* is a ceremony of handing over a son to the bride's parents while carrying out the things his future needs. The prospective groom only needs to hand over the money. The quantity and value of goods depend on the man's abilities as agreed by the woman. Usually, the items given are money, women's clothes, jewelry such as bracelets, necklaces, and women's beauty tools.

Culture and heritage are symbols of spiritual and intellectual wealth for all civilizations (Idris et al., 2016). Culture can also be seen as a unique symbol of the character and identity of a generation (Dewulf et al., 2013). Culture and traditional arts in society cannot be separated (Wibawa & Awaliah, 2023). Traditions can also be called customs. Customs are a cultural system that includes cultural values, views of life and ideals, norms and laws, knowledge, and beliefs passed down from generation to generation (Lubis, 2011).

As a cultural system, Esten in Dewi (2014) states that tradition is a complete system that includes ways of interpreting speech, behavior, rituals, and other actions from one human to another. The smallest element of the system is a symbol. These symbols include constitutive symbols (in the form of beliefs), cognitive symbols (in the form of knowledge), symbols in the form of moral values, and expressive symbols (related to feelings). Each society has special symbols that distinguish it and become an identity characteristic of other societies. If a society often interacts and lives with other heterogeneous societies, a tradition in that society will likely be influenced. Therefore, it can be said that tradition is part of culture.

Indonesia is an archipelago country rich in culture and customs. Almost every region and ethnic group in Indonesia has its customs, passed down from generation to generation. One of the tribes in Indonesia is the Sundanese ethnic group, and the traditions of the Sundanese ethnic group include traditional marriage ceremonies. According to Basyir (1999), marriage is a contract or engagement to justify sexual relations between a man and a woman to create a happy family life filled with a sense of peace and affection in the way taught by the Islamic religion. The still maintained culture is the *sawér pangantén* ceremony held by the Sundanese ethnic community. The *sawér* is in the form of poetry consisting of several stanzas and is sung by a *juru sawér* or *juru kawih* in the area. The meaning contained in the *sawér* poetry is very deep and useful for the newlywed couple.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Marriage

In modern terms, formally recognized marriage can be seen as a rite of passage in many contemporary societies, particularly the transition of a couple from individuals into a family partnership, bringing a new identity (Akhtar, 2018). Marriage is a union between men and women (Pallathadka et al., 2022). It is the strongest relationship in controlling human behavior (Dewi et al., 2019). In addition, marriage is a social establishment that unites humans in a special form of interdependence to find and maintain a family (Odunayo et al., 2019). Marriage is also an essential event in the life of our society. Marriage does not only involve the woman and man who would be the bride and groom, but also the parents of both parties, their siblings, and even their respective families (Wignjodipuro, 1967).

Marriage, which in religious terms is called *nikah*, is the execution of a contract or agreement between a man and a woman to make sexual relations legal between the two parties, voluntarily and with the consent of both parties, to create a happy family life filled with feelings, affection, and peace in a way that is approved by God (Soemiyati, 1999). Marriage is a stage in forming a family (Rostovskaja et al., 2023). According to Law Number 1 of 1974, "Marriage is a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife to form a happy and eternal family (household) based on the belief in the Almighty God" (Siregar et al., 2023, p. 57).

B. Sundanese Traditional Marriage

Ethnic groups whose civilization has been tested certainly have rules agreed upon and implemented jointly by their supporters (Isnendes, 2019). In Indonesian marriages, there is acculturation of Islam and regional customs. Traditional wedding traditions have their characteristics. For this matter, Samad and Munawwarah (2020) stated that the wedding ceremony is one form of cultural unity initiated by the acculturation of Islam and local customs. One of the wedding ceremonies in Indonesia is that of the Sundanese ethnic group. Wedding ceremonies in the Sundanese tradition are not just an administrative process but also show the value of character education (Wibawa & Awaliah, 2023). As stated by Putri and Nawawi (2021), traditional Sundanese weddings have a series of procedures or traditions that must be carried out by the bride and groom and their families before and on the wedding day. The traditional Sundanese wedding ceremony begins with *sérén-sumérén*, *seserahan*, *ijab kabul (walimahan)*, *sawér pangantén*, *bantayan*, *huap lingkung*, and opening the door. The focus of this research study is the *nyawér pangantén* tradition.

Nyawér is a tradition passed down from generation to generation in Sundanese society (Jatmiko, 2022). *Nyawér* is usually performed for pregnant women, newborn babies, boys/girls during circumcision, and brides when they are married (Rosidi, 2011). However, now the most popular one is *nyawér* for brides. *Nyawér pangantén*, in the view of oral tradition, is a performance to convey meaning in a hidden, symbolic way and is carried out in a special ceremony, namely in a Sundanese wedding ceremony (Sulistian, 2018). There was also a presentation about *sawér*, a ceremony to give marriage advice, carried out at the *panyawéran*. It is called the *nyawér* ceremony, because the marriage contract was carried out in the mosque in ancient times. After completing the marriage contract, they return to the bride's house, and before entering the house, they are first seen at the *panyawéran* located between the yard and the house or where the water falls from the roof/tiles (Kusmayadi, 2018).

The procession "*Sawér Pangantén*" at a traditional Sundanese wedding is essential because it contains guidance and advice conveyed through poetry or ballads. During this procession, parents have the last opportunity to advice handing over their daughter (the bride) to her husband. The symbolic meanings of the tools or ingredients in the *sawér* ceremony are as follows: (1) white rice: a symbol of the basic provisions of a happy life; (2) turmeric: a symbol for them to be honest with each party; (3) various potpourri: a symbol of the good reputation of the household; (4) coins: a symbol of wealth or sufficiency; (5) umbrella: a protective symbol in living life, you have to be careful because temptation can come from anywhere and at any time. The husband is obliged to protect his wife and future children; (6) candy: a symbol of kindness and friendliness.

Meanwhile, Bratawidjaja (1990) suggests that the poetry, which is a song in traditional Sundanese wedding ceremonies, can be divided into 2 parts, namely: (1) poetry for the *sawér* ceremony and (2) poetry for the door opening ceremony. Usually, these poems are sung or performed by the bride and groom, but nowadays, it is rare for anyone to sing them. Therefore, in the current implementation of *sawér*, it is usually delegated to someone who is an expert in this matter, called a *juru sawér*.

C. *Sawér* Poetry

The word "*sawér*" or "*nyawér*" comes from the word "*awér*", which refers to water that gushes downwards (Mustagfiri, 2023). *Sawér* are *sawér* lyrics (*rumpaka*) which are usually sung in a special tone by experts during the *nyawér* ceremony. Seen from its form construction, *sawér* is formed by poetry, particularly *pupuh*, and satire containing proverbs (Iskandarwassid, 2003). *Sawér* is written in poetic form. In poetry, there is usually an aesthetic value marked by the beauty of the language used, namely *purwakanti* 'rhyme'. According to Rusyana in Hadish et al. (1986) regarding *purwakanti* in *sawér*, there are *runtuy pungkas* or "final poem" and *purwakanti rantayan*, namely in one line, there are repeated vowel sounds or the same consonants. It can also be mixed and matched with vowel and consonant sounds. *Sawér* poetry, which consists of several stanzas and is sung to the tune of a song, is an integral part of the traditional wedding ceremony. It is not just a Sundanese song at a wedding ceremony. Deeper than that, *sawér* poetry has a good meaning and message for the newlyweds. To find out the meaning in *sawér*'s poetry, what can be done is to analyze each stanza of the poetry, one of which is by using Searle's speech act theory.

D. *Speech Acts*

As stated by Yule (1996) in Dewi et al. (2024), speech acts include apologies, praise, or requests made through speech. Speech acts are classified into 3 types, namely locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Furthermore, Austin (1962) defined locutionary acts as the words spoken by the speaker, or the act of saying something (Witek, 2015). The illocutionary act refers to certain actions carried out by the speaker when he says something (Hauca et al., 2020). Searle (2000) highlights that speech acts are presented in actual language use situations. Therefore, he said that the basic assumption of speech act theory is that communication is the smallest unit in humans which is the implementation of certain types of actions (Bayat, 2013). Searle divides types of illocutionary speech acts based on the strength of the meaning contained in the act (Saragi et al., 2019). Illocutionary acts are considered the core of speech act theory. An illocutionary act is an action carried out by a speaker in producing a given utterance. Illocutionary acts are closely related to the speaker's intentions, for example: stating, asking, promising, requesting, giving, ordering, threatening, etc. (Yule in Arrosid & Munandar, 2018).

In addition, Searle (1979) differentiates speech acts into five types, namely: 1) Representative (Assertive) Speech Acts. Representative or assertive speech acts are speech acts that bind the speaker to the truth of what he says. Representative speech acts include the speech acts of reporting, saying, and mentioning; 2) Directive (Impositive) Speech Acts. Directive

(impositive) speech acts are speech acts carried out by the speaker with the intention that the speech partner or interlocutor (speaker) act as said. It is further explained that its pragmatic manifestation means ordering, requesting, urging, prohibiting, inviting, begging, suggesting, warning, and hoping; 3) Expressive (Evaluative) Speech Acts. Expressive speech acts are speech acts carried out to judge (evaluate) the things mentioned in the utterance (utterance). It is further explained that its pragmatic manifestations mean anger, shock, resignation, joy, disgust, hatred, acknowledgement, congratulations, and pity; 4) Commissive Speech Acts. Commissive speech acts are speech acts that bind the speaker to carry out what is stated in the utterance or statement. The meanings of commissive speech acts include proclaiming, ordering, inviting, requesting, prohibiting, and affirming; 5) Declarative Speech Acts (Isbati). Declarative or isbati speech acts are carried out by speakers to create a new thing (status, situation). This speech act functions to change status or circumstances. Speech can be done directly or indirectly. This is in line with the statement of Searle (1979) in Simon and Cartis (2015) which states that speech acts can be carried out directly, namely one illocutionary act carried out directly by an utterance, or indirectly, namely one illocutionary act carried out indirectly by doing something else. The distinction between direct and indirect speech acts is based on the observation that differences often arise between what is intended and the results produced (Geukens, 1978). Direct speech acts will occur if there is a direct relationship between the structure and function of the speech (Oktadistio et al., 2018).

III. METHODS

The method used in this research is qualitative with descriptive presentation. Data in the form of *sawér* poetry were analyzed using Searle's speech act theory to determine the type of speech and the meaning contained therein. A cultural approach is very necessary in this research because the *sawér* procession is part of the culture of a society which is still carried out today and is closely related to the behavior of the people of a region, in this case, the Sundanese ethnic community. The cultural approach is carried out by understanding the traditional values that are still adhered to in society, as well as the community's behavior, status, and lifestyle.

Data sources in this research included primary and secondary data. Primary data were in the form of *sawér* poetry in the Sundanese language, obtained from the book *sawér* poetry in Sundanese by Hadish and friends, which was published in 1986. The data analyzed were *sawér* poetry obtained from a trader named Tahyan, who is 52 years old and from Ciamis. Apart from that, primary data was obtained from observations and interviews. Observations in the field were carried out to obtain more complete data regarding events, activities, informant behavior, and more complete social interactions. Interviews were conducted to obtain informants' knowledge, opinions, and experiences regarding the implementation of *sawér* at traditional Sundanese wedding ceremonies. Secondary data were obtained from literature reviews and documentation to help researchers if there were missing data or not recorded by the researcher. The instruments used in this research include observation instruments, interviews, documentation, literature review, and data analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sawér's poetry analysis consists of *Kinanti pupuh* with 5 stanzas and the *Asmarandana pupuh* with 4 stanzas. The songs used are *Kuna Sari*, *Kaléon*, *Jemplang Titi*, and *Candrawulan*. *Sawér's* poetry consists of three parts: the opening, the main, and the closing. The opening part contains a request to God for protection from all temptations. The main part of *sawér* tells about the arrival of the bride and groom, who enter a new realm in life. This section mainly contains advice to the bride and groom in filling their new life, how to live in a family and society, and contains prayers so that the bride and groom will receive good fortune and happiness. The closing part of the *sawér* contains the hope that God will provide protection forever.

Pupuh refers to the name of a unified form in traditional Sundanese poetry with a certain number of lines in each stanza, the number of syllables in each line, and the final vowel sound in each line (Rosidi, 2000). There are 17 *pupuh* in total. Two of them are the *Kinanti* and *Asmarandana pupuh*. Each *pupuh* has its song. *Kinanti* has more than 17 songs and *Asmarandana* has more than 30 songs (Wiraatmadja, 2009). In this research, *Kinanti* was developed with two songs, namely *Kuna Sari* and *Jemplang Titi*, while *Asmarandana* was also developed with two songs, namely *Kaléon* and *Candrawulan*.

There were no changes in *pupuh Kinanti* when it is sung with the songs *Kuna Sari* and *Jemplang Titi*. The number of lines in each stanza and the number of syllables in each line in songs and *pupuh* remain the same. This is different when *pupuh Asmarandana* is sung with the songs *Kaléon* and *Candrawulan*. In the song *Candrawulan*, the fifth line, which according to the *pupuh* rules should have seven syllables, has changed to eight syllables. It should be: *lamun kasasar lampah* becomes *lamun kasasar (na) lampah*. So, there is the addition of the word/syllable "na". This is done to reduce the number of syllables to eight syllables, because in general Sundanese songs have eight syllables in each line (octasilabi). When *pupuh Asmarandana* is sung with the song *Kaléon* there are additional lines, namely the 5th line in the 3rd and 5th verses. In the 3rd stanza, there is an addition: *da kapuba lah deudeuh teuing* and in the 5th stanza there is an addition: *ari suka lah deudeuh teuing*. However, in the 4th stanza, the opposite happens not addition but subtraction. Most likely, there are unregistered arrays. As a *Kaléon* song, this verse is missing two lines, namely lines 4 and 5. In *pupuh Asmarandana*, this stanza is missing one line. The third line in the lost *pupuh Asmarandana* certainly has eight syllables and the final vowel is é. This is by the *Asmarandana pupuh* rules, namely 8i, 8a, 8é, 8a, 7a, 8u, 8a.

To find out the type of speech and the meaning contained in it, the researcher will examine it in detail based on Searle's (1979) speech act theory.

TABLE 1
THE FIRST STANZA OF SAWÉR'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Neda agung nya paralun,</i>	apology, please forgive me.
<i>ka Gusti robbulijati,</i>	to God of Love,
<i>pangéran raga jeung sukma,</i>	ruler of the soul body,
<i>neda pangaping pangjaring,</i>	please provide guidance,
<i>diraksa tina gogoda,</i>	keep away from temptation,
<i>anu jirim anu jisim.</i>	visible or not.

Referring to Searle's (1979) speech act theory, the first stanza, which consists of 6 lines, is categorized as a directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of a request. This is marked by the sentence *Neda agung nya paralun*, which is translated as 'apology, please forgive me'. This apology and forgiveness is addressed to the Most Merciful God, who controls the human body and soul. An explanation like this can be found in the 2nd and 3rd rows. When a *sawér* pronounces this sentence in a certain tone, namely the song *Kuna Sari*, there is a meaning that can be understood by the listener, namely that as a married couple who will enter a new life in the form of a household, they must start their life by asking God for forgiveness for all the mistakes that have been made during life. It is because humans are creatures who cannot be free from mistakes and sins. The request is addressed to God, believed to be a substance that has love, compassion, and power over human life.

Apart from that, directive speech meaning requests and hopes is also found in the sentence that reads *neda pangaping pangjaring* which means 'please provide guidance'. This sentence means a request to God to guide the newlywed household so that it is kept away from all visible and hidden temptations. Starting married life requires a lot of preparation and adaptation from both parties, who may not have known each other well and deeply. By performing a *sawér* song like that, the bride and groom ask God to keep their lives free from temptations and obstacles.

TABLE 2
THE SECOND STANZA OF SAWÉR'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Cunduk waktu numbuk dawuh,</i>	Arrived at the time,
<i>nitih wanci nu mustari,</i>	the time is right and good,
<i>kiwari datang mangsana,</i>	now comes the time,
<i>dugi ka wanci rarabi,</i>	side by side on the aisle,
<i>nincak kana alam anyar,</i>	enter a new realm,
<i>keur pangantén jalar istri.</i>	bride and groom.

Based on Searle's (1979) speech act theory, the stanza from *sawér's* poetry above can be categorized as a type of assertive illocutionary speech act. This is because the content of *sawér's* poetry is in the form of statements or information appropriate to the existing situation. The statement that emphasizes this type of speech can be seen from the sentences in lines 3 and 4 which read *kiwari datang mangsana dugi ka wanci rarabi* 'now comes the time, side by side on the aisle'. This speech is conveyed by the *sawér* to the guests that it is the right time for the bride and groom to sit side by side at the altar. This statement is made clear by the sentences in lines 1 and 2, which contain the statement that it is the right time for the wedding between the bride and groom to take place. The 1st and 2nd lines read *Cunduk waktu numbuk dawuh* 'Arrived at the time' and *nitih wanci nu mustari* 'the time is right and good'. This type of assertive illocutionary speech act has the pragmatic manifestation of a statement. Likewise, lines 5 and 6 are assertive speech acts stating or informing. This line is an explanation for lines 3 and 4 which are spoken to inform the listener, in this case, the guests, that this day is a valuable moment for the bride and groom as they enter a new life as husband and wife in marriage.

TABLE 3
THE THIRD STANZA OF SAWÉR'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Ulah seuri pédah mukti,</i>	Don't laugh because of wealth,
<i>ulah bagja sabab kaya,</i>	don't be happy because you are rich,
<i>ulah bered duméh kasép,</i>	don't be arrogant because you are brave,
<i>karana mangsa kaula,</i>	because we are human,
<i>da kapurba lah deudeuh teuing,</i>	trapped by fate,
<i>anaking kawisésa,</i>	from God Almighty,
<i>kudu émut kana tangtu,</i>	remember the terms,
<i>nyawang kana papacangan.</i>	life is always in pairs.

Sawér's poetry in the 3rd stanza above is performed with the song *Kaléon*. Referring to Searle's (1979) speech act theory, *Sawér's* poetry is a type of directive illocutionary speech act with pragmatic manifestations of prohibiting and reminding. The sentences in lines 1, 2, and 3 show directive speech with the meaning of prohibition. The line reads *Ulah seuri pédah mukti, ulah bagja sabab kaya, ulah bered duméh kasép* which means 'Don't laugh because of wealth, don't

be happy because you are rich, don't be arrogant because you are brave'. The *sawér* delivers this poetry to remind newlyweds that they should not be arrogant about what they have, whether in the form of wealth or their beautiful faces. This is because humans are creatures created by God who do not have any power other than receiving wealth and appearance from their God. This explanation can be seen from the 4th, 5th, and 6th arrays.

Apart from being categorized as a directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of prohibiting, the verse of *sawér*'s poetry above is also categorized as an assertive illocutionary speech act with the meaning of warning. The sentences show this in the 7th and 8th rows which read *kudu émut kana tangtu* 'remember the terms' and *nyawang kana papacangan* 'life is always in pairs'. The *sawér* conveyed this speech to remind the bride and groom that from that moment on they had become a married couple who had to remember the rules of marriage and respect each other. When a human couple has promised a marriage bond, they must not behave arbitrarily towards their partner but must care for and love each other.

TABLE 4
THE FOURTH STANZA OF SAWER'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Ulah sirik ka pangampih,</i>	Don't be jealous of others,
<i>ulah nyawad ka nu lian,</i>	don't hold a grudge against each other's,
<i>nu lian pikeun tuladan,</i>	other people are just examples,
<i>hadé jeung goréng disawang,</i>	good or bad depends on us,
<i>ukur ka tangtung sakujur,</i>	to be a role model,
<i>sasaran di badan urang.</i>	experience it yourself.

Referring to Searle's (1979) speech act theory, *Sawér*'s poetry in the 4th stanza above is a type of directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of prohibiting. This can be seen by the structure of the sentences in the first line, which reads *ulah sirik ka pangampih* 'don't be jealous of others', and the second line, which reads *ulah nyawad ka nu lian* 'don't hold a grudge against each other's'. The meaning of these two lines is that as a newlywed who has just entered the household, you should not envy what other people have, especially in terms of wealth. Apart from that, as humans, you should not have feelings of resentment towards others. As for a household life that looks better before our eyes, it should be used as a good example to lead an even better life. The sentence structure in the third line makes this clear, which reads *nu lian pikeun tuladan* 'other people are just examples'.

In the 4th stanza above, there is also a directive illocutionary utterance with an advisory pragmatic manifestation. This is indicated by the sentence structure in line 4 which reads *hadé jeung goréng disawang* 'good or bad depends on us'. This statement means that every human being has been given sustenance and a good life by God. Having shortcomings in married life is normal. Everything that happens must be responded to with kindness and gracefully because God knows what is best for His servants. This line is an explanation of the previous line and is supported by the next line which strengthens this statement. The explanation in lines 5 and 6 reinforces the statement that the good and bad of a matter is left to oneself, who better understands what one needs.

The moral message from the text of *sawér*'s poetry above is that every human being has basically been given a good life by God, but people often feel dissatisfied and ungrateful and therefore have feelings of envy towards others. With the *sawér* poetry above which was delivered by the *juru sawér* to the bride and groom, it is a reminder that newly formed households must be based on an attitude of gratitude and take examples from other humans.

TABLE 5
THE FIFTH STANZA OF SAWER'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Sugih papacangan miskin,</i>	Prosperous is paired with poor,
<i>beunghar papacangan lara,</i>	rich is paired with hardship,
<i>hadé papacangan goréng,</i>	good is paired with bad,
<i>bagja papacangan nista,</i>	pleasure is paired with disgrace,
<i>ari suka lah deudeuh teuing,</i>	if you like it, don't love it too much,
<i>anaking reujeung duka,</i>	my children are together in a hard life,
<i>ngariung bakal pahatu,</i>	gathered with orphaned,
<i>tas suka bakal midangdam,</i>	after being happy, will talk while crying.

Sawér's poetry above consists of 8 lines that have deep meaning. Referring to Searle's (1979) speech act theory, which is supported by Searle and Vanderveken (1985) speech act theory, the speech in the 5th stanza can be categorized as a directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of a prohibition. This is indicated by the sentence structure in line 5 which reads *ari suka lah deudeuh teuing* 'if you like it, don't love it too much'. The meaning of this sentence is, that when someone likes or loves something, don't overdo it, because this will lead to disappointment if something that is expected does not come true. This advice is aimed at newlyweds, so they can balance all feelings, both joy and sorrow, in married life. Other lines in the poetry can be categorized as assertive illocutionary speech acts with convincing meaning, such as *Sugih papacangan miskin* 'Prosperous is paired with poor', *beunghar papacangan lara* 'rich is paired with hardship', *hadé papacangan goréng* 'good is paired with bad', and *bagja papacangan nista* 'pleasure is paired with disgrace'. The meaning given by these lyrics is an event that normally occurs in this life. The *sawér* conveyed

this speech as a form of warning to convince the bride and groom that in this life, ups, and downs, good and bad, pleasant and disappointing, are normal things that happen and must be faced gracefully by the bride and groom as part of the process of married.

TABLE 6
THE SIXTH STANZA OF SAWÉR'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Ditedakeun ka nu agung,</i>	I pray to God,
<i>ujang nyai geura milik,</i>	you both have a lot of fortune,
<i>nyeri peurih semet ema,</i>	sadness only reaches the mother,
<i>hidep mah ulah prihatin,</i>	you do not undergo a hard life,
<i>lunas kabéh ditalangan,</i>	not inherited by you,
<i>kadé poho ka pepeling.</i>	don't forget the warning.

Sawér's poetry in the 6th stanza above consists of 6 lines sung by the *juru sawér* with the song *Jempiang Titi*. Based on Searle's (1979) speech act theory, the speech above can be categorized as a type of assertive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of hope. This is marked by the sentence of hope which reads *ujang nyai geura milik* 'you both have a lot of fortune'. This sentence is a hope and prayer for the bride and groom which is offered to God in the first line. Apart from that, the speech with the meaning of hope can also be found in the sentence which reads *hidep mah ulah prihatin* 'you do not undergo a hard life'. This hope is very closely related to the previous sentence which reads *nyeri peurih semet ema* 'sadness only reaches mothers'. The meaning of this saying is that the *sawér* prays for the bride and groom so that they do not experience difficulties in this life. It is hoped that the difficulties experienced by his parents will not occur in his child's household.

TABLE 7
THE SEVENTH STANZA OF SAWÉR'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Mungguhing saratna hirup,</i>	Because of life's requirements,
<i>enggoning urang rarabi,</i>	in the realm of household,
<i>kudu silih pikahéman,</i>	must love each other,
<i>silih asuh silih asih,</i>	care for and love each other,
<i>hirup kudu sauyunan,</i>	life must be in harmony together,
<i>geus tinangtu mawa rijki.</i>	fortune will come.

The 7th stanza of the *sawér* poetry above is still part of the *sawér* poetry sung with the song *Jempiang Titi*, and consists of 6 lines. Referring to Searle's (1979) speech act theory, the speech in the stanza above is a type of directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of commands and suggestions. This is characterized by the existence of sayings that say *kudu silih pikahéman* 'must love each other', *silih asuh silih asih* 'care for and love each other', and *hirup kudu sauyunan* 'life must be in harmony together'. The meaning of this saying is that in marriage, the husband and wife must cherish, care for, and love each other, live together in harmony, and not impose personal desires that can cause quarrels. This speech is an explanation of the previous sentence, which states that the condition for being married is to have feelings and attitudes like that.

The last line of the poetry is an assertive illocutionary speech act with convincing pragmatic manifestations. The meaning of the speech is that if a husband and wife in a household have the qualities of mutual affection, care, and love, and their thoughts and attitudes always go hand in hand, then fortune will automatically come their way. The *sawér* said this was to strengthen the bride and groom's belief that everything done well will produce good results too.

TABLE 8
THE EIGHTH STANZA OF SAWÉR'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Éling-éling mangka éling,</i>	Remember and absorb it,
<i>rumingkang di bumi alam,</i>	we live on earth,
<i>darma wawayangan baé,</i>	like the life of a puppet,
<i>raga taya pangawasa,</i>	the body has no power,
<i>lamun kasasar nya lampah,</i>	if the behavior goes astray,
<i>napsu nu matak kaduhung,</i>	lust that makes regret,
<i>badan anu katempuhan.</i>	our bodies are tormented.

The 8th stanza of *Sawér's* poetry above consists of 7 lines sung by the *Sawér* singer with the song *Candrawulan*. According to Searle's (1979) speech act theory which is supported by Searle and Vanderveken (1985) speech act theory, the speech in the poem above is included in the type of directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of commands. This is indicated by the sentence structure in the first line which reads *Éling-éling mangka éling* 'Remember and absorb it', which is clarified by the next line. The speaker wants to convey to the bride and groom to always remember and understand that as humans living in the world, we do not have any power. In essence, humans are God's creation who can live with God's love. The speaker also wants to convey that when people make mistakes in their lives, this will only give them regret and they will feel tormented.

Such words are conveyed by the *sawér* to the newlyweds with the aim that they always remember to do good and not to put forward desires that will make them regret it. Thus, it is hoped that the life of the newlywed couple will be happy in their household.

TABLE 9
THE NINTH STANZA OF SAWER'S POETRY

Sundanese Language	Translation
<i>Sakitu anu kapihatur,</i>	That's all we said,
<i>ka pangantén jalar istri,</i>	for the bride and groom,
<i>mugia anu kawasa,</i>	may God be the Almighty,
<i>Gusti sifat rohman rohim,</i>	Loving and Merciful God,
<i>salamina nangtayungan,</i>	Forever protecting,
<i>lahir dumugi ka batin.</i>	physically and mentally.

The last stanza of *sawér's* poetry above, which is the 9th stanza and consists of 6 lines, is sung by the *juru sawér* with the song *Kuna Sari*. This last stanza is also the closing part of *sawér's* poetry above. Referring to Searle's (1979) speech act theory, the speech above can be categorized into a type of directive illocutionary speech act with the pragmatic manifestation of hope. This is indicated by the structure of the sentence in the 3rd line which reads *mugia anu kawasa* 'may God be the Almighty'. This speech with the meaning of hope is made clear by the following lines, which have the meaning of hope, namely that God, who is Almighty and has a loving and merciful nature, will forever protect the bride and groom, both physically and mentally. The first and second lines are assertive illocutionary speech acts with the pragmatic manifestation of stating or informing. The meaning is that the *juru sawér* informs the bridal couple and guests, that the advice given in the form of *sawér* poetry has been completed. In general, *sawér's* poetry is intended for all audiences because it contains many good messages or advice for married life. Specifically, the *sawér* poetry is aimed at the bride and groom so that they can prepare themselves well for entering married life.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that *sawér* poetry in traditional Sundanese wedding ceremonies consists of an opening, main, and closing parts, in which various utterances exist. Based on the type of speech act, the utterance consists of 2 directive illocutionary acts meaning requests and hopes, 3 directive illocutionary meanings prohibitions and warnings, 2 directive illocutionary commands and suggestions, 1 assertive illocution meaning statement, and 1 assertive illocution meaning hope. Apart from that, the *sawér* poetry contains advice to the bride and groom so they can live their domestic life well. Apart from that, there are prayers offered to God so that the household will be given sustenance and happiness. As for the conclusion, in the poetry, there is a hope that the bride and groom will be given protection by God Almighty. This research is useful for adding to the literature on Sundanese marriage customs and for both local and international researchers interested in cultural studies.

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A Critical Exploration of Cultural and Aesthetic Representation of Shandong Dialect Translation in *Red Sorghum*

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Abstract—The translation of the Shandong dialect, specifically in the novel *Red Sorghum* authored by Mo Yan and translated by Howard Goldblatt, posed significant challenges to both translators and readers due to its local Chinese cultural richness. Previous researches mainly focused on its traditional translation strategies including foreignization and domestication. Exploration of the aesthetic value of dialect and its cultural representations in modern literature is a relatively new area of research yet to be developed. This paper revealed that translation operates in a complicated three-dimensional structure of translator (aesthetic subject), translated text (aesthetic object), and culture (social environment). In the process of translating dialect, the aesthetic experience and the Aesthetic Regulation Devices (ARD) adopted by the translator, as well as the beauty of characterization and symbolization come into play. Therefore, aesthetic values and cultural uniqueness are represented not only on the linguistic, but also on the spiritual level by contrasting the purity of the villagers in rural China and the brutality of the social turbulence that surrounds them. The paper demonstrated that dialect translation involves a multifaceted and dynamic equivalence between source and target language. The research findings indicated that translation techniques of domestication and foreignization are utilized significantly more often (82%) than the strategy of ARD (18%) during the translation process. This imbalance in strategy usage may result in a deficient representation of aesthetic and cultural values. The significance of this study lies mainly in its intention to reconstruct a more effective theoretical paradigm for dialectal translation procedures.

Index Terms—Aesthetic Regulation Devices (ARD), cultural and aesthetic representation, *Red Sorghum*, Shandong dialect translation

I. INTRODUCTION

Dialect plays a significant role both in daily life and in literary works. It is not only a means of communication, but also a representation of regional culture. Not only do local dialects in rural China preserve a diverse traditional culture, but they are also considered a cultural heritage worldwide. With the rapid urbanization and globalization of the world, some distinctive Chinese local dialects are dying out. As dialect is part of cultural heritage and embodies linguistic diversity, it is of significant importance to investigate dialect translation and transmission as a way of preserving the vitality of local dialect; indeed, the study of dialects in literature is regarded as a feasible way of doing so.

Red Sorghum is a magical realist novel written by Mo Yan, Nobel Prize winner in 2012, which was published in 1986. It is also Mo Yan's first novel and depicts local villagers in Gaomi, Shandong, a rural country during a period of war lasting from 1920 to 1970. Emerging from Mo Yan's narration, is a combination of the brutality of society and the patriotism of individual villages; use of regional dialects and contradictory images and colors are abundant in this novel. The beauty of the original local language and the authentic personifications are eye-catching and mind-boggling as it reveals the vivid and cruel realities of rural China in a time of war. The novel utilizes substantial culturally loaded dialects and pseudo-third-person viewpoints, which enhances the authenticity of the local people, the open-endedness of interpretation of the novel's aesthetics, as well as the diversification of its characters. But here is the problem: how is it possible to transmit the originality and spirit, as well as the sociocultural aesthetic values, of *Red Sorghum* and maintain the source language's local flavor? This question poses a great challenge for translators. The focus of this paper, therefore, is to extend literary translations of Chinese dialect alongside their historical and regional cultures by focusing on aesthetic elements that are being neglected among original text, translator, and the translated text in *Red Sorghum*.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Literature Review of Dialect Translation

The field of dialect translation gained a great deal of attention in the West in the second half of the 20th century (Ballbe, 1997; Baker, 1992), but did not receive much attention in China until the 1980s. In terms of previous studies of the presence of dialects in literature, it was found that most studies focused on ontology of language (Marjerison & Yang, 2022; Dowland et al., 2023), comparative studies between regional dialect and Mandarin, or between Shandong dialect and another regional dialect in China (Wang, 2020). According to Halliday (1964, p. 11), dialects are considered “mere representations of a user-relevant variant form of language that is independent of society and context”. This viewpoint was challenged by many researchers (Baker, 1992; Bassnett & Lefevere, 2001), who regard the study of cultural and social elements as essential procedure in the process of translation. The majority of studies (Vermeer, 2000; Han, 2002; Huang, 2012) that examine the translation of dialects focus on English as source language and thus on English versions of the dialects. Among these researchers, Han (2002) conducted a number of studies relating to dialects, including pronunciation and translation. He also conducted a study of foreign literary works placed on the translation of dialects. He concluded that dialects in different countries have different characteristics as a result of cultural differences, and he presented methods for achieving equality in translation by using translation strategy of foreignization. Comparatively fewer studies (Zuo et al., 2021) conducted research on the translation of Chinese dialects into English. Numerous studies of *Red Sorghum* (Wang, 2017; Deng, 2019; Li, 2022) concentrated mainly on cultural identity, word usage, and cultural representations in literary dialect, and much fewer researchers (Klein, 2016; Gibello & Lesch, 2017) have performed any sort of comprehensive case study of *Red Sorghum* in terms of its translation strategies and norms. In addition, most researchers within the latter group focused on the micro-levels, such as the lexical and syntactical aspects of translation, rather than on the more general aesthetic level. Although some previous research has focused on dialect translation procedures, no systematic theory has been presented by these researchers to guide or explain the translator’s representational model during translation.

B. Literature Review of Translation of *Red Sorghum*

Howard Goldblatt (1993), a famous sinologist and high-ranking translator of modern Chinese literature, translated *Red Sorghum Clan* (1986) into English in 1993. Many researchers (Gibello & Lesch, 2017; Wang, 2017; Liu, 2021; Zuo et al., 2021) have conducted substantial studies of his work of translation; they have done so from different perspectives and using different approaches, which included studying translation norms, ecological translation, translation practice, translation thoughts and corpus-based studies. Among these researchers, Zuo et al. (2021) studied Howard Goldblatt thoroughly and revalidated his great contribution to the translation and transmission of modern Chinese literature. Following that, Gibello and Lesch (2017) undertook a thorough descriptive study of *Red Sorghum* by using substantial, concrete, and vivid examples directly selected from both the original work and Goldblatt’s translated text. Findings showed that translation strategies can be used interchangeably in order to produce satisfactory translation effects. However, the regional dialect in the novel posed a great challenge for the translator and linguistics in terms of transmitting accurately the original meaning and intentions of Mo Yan in constructing a certain social environment. Therefore, some researchers (Huang, 2017; Yang, 2022; Zhao & Li, 2023) began to investigate macro-levels, such as aesthetic value and cultural representations, that play a significant role in studying the translation of literature in order to appreciate the inner beauty of the world that is being depicted and preserve the intangible heritage and diversity of languages in the world. However, these studies only restricted on the theoretical comparison, aesthetic reception and children literature, thereby little discussion on the aesthetic translation strategy and representation in Shandong dialect.

III. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

A. The Aesthetic Process in Translation

The novel as a major form of art, is not an entity in nature, in a state of freedom of beauty, without any intervention, proposed by Kant (1790), but depends on interpretation by individual aesthetic subjects (writers, translators, and readers) with different experiences (social status, educational background, and environment) that determine various aesthetic attitudes. Therefore, aesthetic translation is a complex process, particularly in the translation from one language to another. Cultural consideration is essential when there are dialects involved in this complex aesthetic process, and therefore it is important to clarify the following concepts.

B. Aesthetic Judgment

Aesthetic judgment indicates a universal judgment or evaluation of the aesthetic properties of an aesthetic object. The definition was first proposed by Kant (1790), who states that aesthetic judgment is different from logical judgment, which varies from person to person, while aesthetic judgment is a universal concept. For Kant (1790), the aesthetic experience of beauty is a judgment of a common truth held by most people, and beauty is objective and universal. However, this idea was challenged by modern researchers (Bourdieu, 1984; Danto, 2003) who pointed out that beauty does not depend on its intrinsic attributes, but on cultural diversity and individual interpretations. Aesthetic judgments

depend heavily on social norms and traditions, and they can be affected not only by aesthetic subjects' aesthetic abilities, aesthetic preferences, and aesthetic values, but are also influenced by socio-cultural elements, such as ethnic conventions, regional customs, etc.

C. Aesthetic Experience

Beardsley (1958), whose book entitled *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* had a great impact on aesthetics worldwide, proposed that emotions play a significant role in aesthetic experience. More importantly, he argued that aesthetic values depend heavily on the interpretation and attitudes of the artist, on the feelings and responses of the recipient, as well as on the socio-cultural context. This expansion posed a great challenge to the mentioned previous studies from a philosophical point of view. Another literary critic, De Man (1979), also held that aesthetic experience goes through a process of aesthetic activities as a motivating force of aesthetic creation and functions as a key element in artistic appreciation and evaluation.

D. Aesthetic Subject and Aesthetic Object

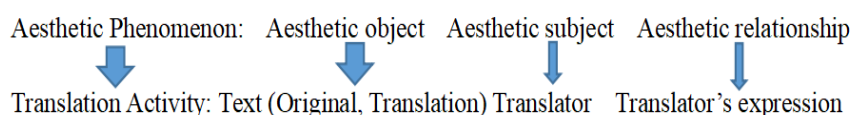


Figure 1. Relationship Between Aesthetic Phenomenon and Translation Activity

The relationship between aesthetic phenomenon and translation activity are shown in Figure 1. Aesthetic Subject refers to subjects undergoing the process of appreciating beauty. The aesthetic object, which coexists with the aesthetic subject, is the object appreciated by the aesthetic subject. According to Liu (2005), there are two aesthetic objects at work in the process of translation: one is the source text (ST), which carries aesthetic value, and the other is the target text (TT). The realization of the source language's aesthetic value depends on the translator's aesthetic experience and judgment of this value; the realization of the target language's aesthetic value lies in the translator's representation and interpretation (Liu & Zhang, 2011).

E. Cultural Turn of Translation Theory

Translation studies as well have undergone a transformation from "linguistic studies" to "cultural studies," along with the "linguistic turn" in philosophy in the mid-20th century. It can be argued that there has been a "cultural turn" in translation studies with the emergence of translation studies. The original motivation for the rise of translation studies was not to achieve "equivalence" in the field of translation, but to understand how and why translations occur. Even-Zohar (1997) proposed in his Polysystem Theory that translation is a cultural system; in other words, it is culture that determines translation strategies and how the translation conducts the relationships between languages. Based on his theory, Bassnett and Lefevere (2001) proposed the concept of the "culture turn" and argued that linguistic equivalence between different cultures in translation is only a strategy adopted in translation and that the really significant aim is actually the transformation of culture. Therefore, cultural turn theory is centered on the equivalence and transformation of cultures and not on traditional, linguistic, equivalence; instead, it regards culture as the unit of translation.

F. Research Methodology

The theory of cultural translation developed by Liu (2005) and his concepts relating to translation are mainly reflected in his book *Outline of Cultural Translation*, which comprises a variety of culture-related categories, dimensions, and operational mechanisms characteristic of different disciplines; the principle of cultural adaptability as well as scientific and aesthetic principles play a role in his demonstrations. However, translation is a significantly complicated and systematic project, which cannot be examined only on the macro-level. This is shown in the Cultural Turn Theory of Bassnett and Lefevere (2001), in which they argued that culture can be refined and analyzed based only on small linguistic units. In addition, they claim that translation cannot be driven only by the micro-level, that is, on the level of morphemes, vocabulary, sentences, and stylistic characteristics. The best way to translate is to reconstruct the traditional strategies and find a relatively scientific framework for translation which can be understood by target readers.

A qualitative approach will be employed in the present analysis of the aesthetic interactions of cultural representations between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) with the assistance of NVIVO12 software. This study adopts the Aesthetic Translation Theory of Liu (2005) and Cultural Turn Theory of Bassnett and Lefevere (2001) as theoretical framework. Therefore, the significance of this paper is to take the cultural turn in linguistics as its basis, to place Chinese and Western translation criticism and translation aesthetics into the context of interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research and analysis, to put forward constructive theoretical propositions, and to construct a more scientific and reasonable theoretical system for the work of cultural and aesthetic analysis.

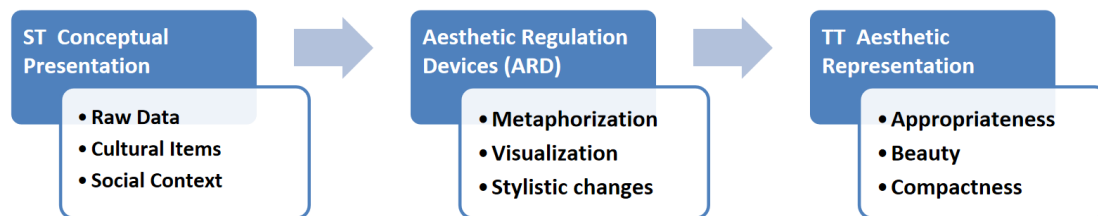


Figure 2. Adapted Schematic Diagram of Cultural Aesthetic Translation Process

As shown in Figure 2, compared with traditional translation strategies, cultural and aesthetic elements of ST can be represented by employing certain Aesthetic Regulation Devices (ARD), i.e. metaphorization, visualization and stylistic changes, etc. To conduct a comprehensive and meticulous data analysis of dialect usage in the novel, the procedure entails using NVIVO 12 Software, which is a qualitative research tool, together with a quantitative corpus tool. It is an effective and comprehensive way for collecting the Shandong dialect data used in Goldblatt's translated version, *Red Sorghum*, first published in 1993. With regards to the complexity and the large quantity of data to be analyzed, the most systematic way of doing so is to classify dialect usage into three categories: the phonetic, the lexical, and the syntactic categories.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In *Red Sorghum*, Shandong dialects are used by Mo Yan to represent authentic and original daily life and they constitute the sharp stylistic character traits of the novel. For example, “作饼” *kǎ bǐng* (fistcake), “挂彩” *guà cǎi* (wounded), “哭丧户” *kū sāng hù* (wailer), etc., which are all typical expressions of Shandong dialect and a real reflection of local people's cultural background and customs in a certain social environment in rural China, namely the so-called “高密东北乡” *gāo mì dōng běi xiāng* (Northeast Gaomi Township). It is mentioned more than 90 times in the novel to demonstrate homesickness of the author. According to Davis-Undiano (2012), Mo Yan's novel *Red Sorghum* is not just a portrayal of heroic civilians, but also a profound expression of his patriotism and quest for liberty. At the same time, different characteristics, social identities, and social status are also represented by different dialects and accents in Mo Yan's original novel and are represented in Howard Goldblatt's translated version.

A. Shandong Dialect Translation on the Phonetic Level

According to Yu (2001, p. 706), “Onomatopoeia is the creation of a term that imitates the actual sound produced by the thing or event being described”. There are many sentences involving dialect translated on the phonetic level. Given their typicality, three sentences are chosen with different phonetic dialects; it is hard to find their English counterparts.

(a). Onomatopoeia of Speech

ST: “鬼子说: ‘**呜哩哇啦啞啞哩呜!**’ 罗汉大爷看着在眼前乱晃的贼亮的刺刀, 一屁股坐在地上。” (Mo, 1987, p. 11)

TT: “‘**Minliwala, yalalimin!**’ he grunted. With the shiny bayonet glinting in front of his eyes, Uncle Arhat sat down.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 14)

In the first translated text, Uncle Arhat, as a Chinese villager without educational background, could not understand the Japanese. Thus, people lived in the village like Uncle Arhat couldn't understand even a word of Japanese language. Goldblatt successfully transferred Mo Yan's humorous personality by using visualization of ARD in his translation. Humor can be regarded as an aesthetic spirit represented not only in the source text, but also in the target reader's mind.

(b). Onomatopoeia of Movement

ST: “奶奶端起酒, **咕咚咕咚**喝了。余司令端起酒, 一仰脖灌了。” (Mo, 1987, p. 21)

TT: “She picked up her cup and drank the wine down **noisily**. Commander Yu held out his cup, threw back his head, and drained it.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 27)

In this instance, the onomatopoeic term “咕咚” (*gū dōng*) is not equivalent to “noisily”, which failed to represent its aesthetic values. Here “咕咚” refers to the sound Jiu'er makes when she drinks, which shows, from an aesthetic point of view, her bold and daring character as a woman. “Noisily”, however, cannot represent the aesthetic judgement of the source text. There are 15 references extracted by using NVIVO 12 to run text search query of the word “noisily,” in TT, and 0.01% coverage of this word in the entire text. Usage of the word can be illustrated in the following figure.

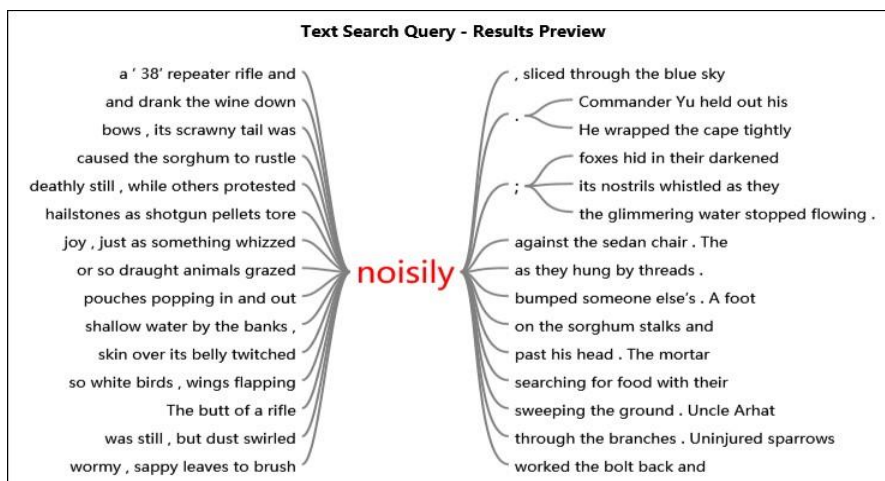


Figure 3. Text Search Query Result of “Noisily” in NVIVO 12

The result shows that “noisily” is usually used as a word to refer to a certain unpleasant sound, by which the aesthetic value of the character cannot be reproduced in the translated text for the target readers. According to DK Oxford English-Chinese Bilingual Dictionary (2005, p. 675), “noisily” means “clamorous, turbulent”, whereas it means “抖动” *dǒu dòng* (twitch) in Chinese Dialect Big Dictionary (Xu, 1999, p. 3346), which is a better substitute for representing the appropriateness and beauty of ST. Therefore, implementing stylistic changes in ARD, rather than domestication, can serve as a more effective means of conveying its cultural and artistic significance in TT.

(c). *Onomatopoeia of Sound*

ST: “温暖的熏风吹拂着狭窄的土路两侧翠绿的高粱。高粱地里传来鸽子咕咕咕咕的叫声。” (Mo, 1987, p. 31)

TT: “A warm wind rustled the emerald-green stalks of sorghum lining the narrow dirt path. Doves *cooed* in the fields.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 40)

The third example shows a translation strategy frequently used by Goldblatt, i.e. domesticating strategy in translation, which means catering to target readers’ aesthetic feelings and attempting to render source cultures acceptable. Therefore, Goldblatt translated “咕咕咕咕” (*gū gū gū gū*) with “cooed”, which is a familiar sound uttered by birds in target readers’ cultures; Goldblatt here also uses an aesthetic regulation device called “style change” in order to represent the natural beauty of birds’ sound in TT.

B. *Shandong Dialect Translation on the Lexical Level*

Different translation strategies are used by Goldblatt to achieve the same effect for target readers that the original novel produces for its readers. Davis-Undiano (2012) regards Goldblatt’s translation of *Red Sorghum* as such an outstanding work that it provides Western readers with a valuable opportunity to delve into Chinese history and culture without imposing Western viewpoints or beliefs. In order to fully demonstrate the Chinese local culture and aesthetic spirits in the original novel, Goldblatt expended great effort to study and investigate Chinese culture as a Sinologist and communicate many times with the author Mo Yan during the process of translation.

Cultural Dialect Words are used to describe individual cultural values and aesthetic standards in different eras. The novel employs distinguished and abundant local dialects in this direction. They include festival dialects, appearance dialects, dialects for injury, names of characters, names of place, names of food, vulgar language, words for measurement, length, money, time, and geography. For the cultural complexity of the original data, Goldblatt adopted both traditional translation strategies i.e. domestication and foreignization as well as ARD. Within those, in turn, he adopted different translation methods, such as transliteration, free translation, imitation, paraphrasing, and literal translation. Findings regarding the translation strategies and methods used in his translation are shown in the following Table by using corpus as a research tool to assist the data analysis.

TABLE 1
TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN *RED SORGHUM*

Sample size (n=236)	Cultural references	Translation strategies		
		Aesthetic regulation devices (ARD) (n=43)	Foreignization (n=129)	Domestication (n=64)
16	Appearance dialect	9	5	2
2	Distance dialect	1	0	1
24	Festival dialect	4	12	8
60	Custom dialect	15	25	20
68	Name and place dialect	1	60	7
12	Geography dialect	3	9	0
5	Injury dialect	1	0	4
3	Money dialect	1	2	0
21	Food dialect	8	10	3
25	Vulgar dialect	0	6	19

Table 1 demonstrates that out of the whole annotated sample size (n=236), there were 129 instances of foreignization. This translation approach was shown to be the most prevalent in handling cultural references in the target text (TT). Nevertheless, the use of ARD (n=43) is not the primary translation approach in TT, leading to a failure in adequately representing the cultural and aesthetic qualities inherent in ST. Furthermore, the occurrence of ARD is only observed in three specific categories of cultural references, namely appearance dialect, custom dialect, and food dialect. Other categories have an exceedingly low occurrence rate, with either no instances (n=0) or only one instance (n=1). The research findings indicate that ARD occurs in just 18% of the overall sample data, while traditional translation strategies such as foreignization and domestication account for 82%, thereby maintaining their dominant position in the field of translation. This section critically examines the cultural and aesthetic depiction in *Red Sorghum* by utilizing various translation strategies. It focuses on specific examples taken from Shandong cultural references.

(a). *Appearance Dialect*

ST: “当时，多少人家都渴望着和单家攀亲，尽管风传着单扁郎早就染上了麻风病。单廷秀是个干干巴巴的**小老头**，脑后翘着一支枯干的小辫子。” (Mo, 1987, p. 30)

TT: “Many local families had dreamed of marrying into the Shan family, despite rumours that Shan Bianlang had leprosy. His father was a *wizened little man* who sported a scrawny queue on the back of his head.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 38)

The first appearance dialect “小老头” (*xiǎo lǎo tóu*) means “little old man.” However, “old” as a characteristic of the man should also be translated into the target language for western readers. Another cultural fact in China is that in ancient times girls were forced to bind their feet to keep them small and wear braids to cater to men’s aesthetic standards. However, it is abnormal to go against human nature. It can be concluded that aesthetic judgement is performed dynamically in different people’s minds in different social contexts.

(b). *Distance Dialect*

ST: “爷爷骑骡奔跑在从我们村通往威水口子的土路上，十五**里**路变得那样漫长。” (Mo, 1987, p. 279)

TT: “Granddad rode his mule from the village to Saltwater Gap, a distance of only fifteen *li*, although it seemed like miles.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 328)

In ancient China, “里” (*li*) was used as the unit of length measurement, and since there was no measuring tool, “footsteps” were used as the standard of measurement, and one mile was equal to 300 steps. From the aesthetic point of view, the ancients were good at finding solutions to problems in their daily lives by using their own bodies. Therefore, the foreignization approach of literal translation was employed in order to accurately convey the distinct cultural and aesthetic qualities.

(c). *Festival Dialect*

ST: “那天是**清明节**，桃红柳绿，细雨霏霏...” (Mo, 1987, p. 30)

TT: “It was *Qingming, the day set aside to attend ancestral graves*; peach trees were in full red bloom, willows were green, a fine rain was falling...” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 38)

Qingming Festival is a traditional Chinese festival, which can be explained in some detail when first mentioned. This cultural term illustrates the customs and activities of this special festival. Therefore, Goldblatt employed a foreignization translation strategy and an annotation translation method to reproduce the custom of this festival; at the same time, the subsequent parts of the translation fully describe the beautiful scenery as well as the freedom and happiness of young girls within their hearts, which can be regarded as the feeling of aesthetics.

(d). *Custom Dialect*

ST: “**民国元年**，曲阜县孔夫子家的‘**哭丧户**’专程前来学习过哭腔。大喜的日子里碰上女人哭亡夫，奶奶感到这是不祥之兆...” (Mo, 1987, p. 33)

TT: “*During 1912, the first year of the Republic*, professional mourners known as ‘*wailers*’ came from Qufu, the home of Confucius, to study local weeping techniques. Meeting up with a woman lamenting the death of her husband seemed to Grandma to be a stroke of bad luck on her wedding day...” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 42)

The first year of the Republic of China was 1912, a special period of Chinese history, so it should be explained in the translation by using ARD translation strategy together with cultural annotation method to fully transfer the special era in Chinese history as one of cultural uniqueness to target readers. In addition, 哭丧户 *kū sāng hù* (wailers) are professional mourners in rural China, whose duty is to weep in other villagers’ funerals for money. The usage of this dialect originates in the author’s own experience, and this unique custom is re-localized by the translator’s profound cultural sensitivity toward local China.

(e). *Name and Place Dialect*

ST: “老子是土匪余占鳌!” (Mo, 1987, p. 144)

TT: “I’m Yu Zhan’ao the *bandit!*” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 180)

In the novel, Yu Zhan’ao is sometimes referred to as a bandit. From an aesthetic point of view, this term reflects the character’s brash and big-hearted personality. There are also other local dialects of characters’ names, for example, 冷麻子 *lěng má zi*, 余大牙 *yú dà yá*, 王虎 *wáng hǔ*, 刘大号 *liú dà hào*, 哑巴 *yǎ ba* (Pocky Leng, Big Tooth Yu, Tiger Wang, Bugler Liu, and Mute). In addition, dialect for a special place, like “蛤蟆坑” *há má kēng* (Toad Hollow) is used in the novel to show the unique features of a certain place in a natural environment, which leaves a terrific impression concerning natural beauty and force. These dialect nicknames reflect the simple and honest qualities of the villagers from an aesthetic point of view. The local dialect reflects the aesthetic characteristics and simplicity of villagers who are good at relating things in nature to their own lives. Therefore, the aesthetic experiences of the author and aesthetic evaluation of the translator can be achieved through the foreignization translation strategy and metaphoric method in ARD in order to reproduce the inner beauty of nature as well as the honorable quality of people.

(f). *Geography Dialect*

ST: “我曾对高密东北乡极端热爱，曾经对高密东北乡极端仇恨。” (Mo, 1987, p. 1)

TT: “I had learned to love *Northeast Gaomi Township* with all my heart, and to hate it with unbridled fury.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 1)

The “高密东北乡” (*Gāomì dōngběi xiāng*) is roughly the northeast township of Gaomi, Shandong Province. It is an imaginary region, based on Mo Yan’s hometown, which reflects his deep love for this land from an aesthetic perspective. A domestication translation strategy is used here to clarify the location in target readers’ minds. The dialectal expression, “Northeast Gaomi Township” appeared 82 times in the novel to show Mo Yan’s aesthetic feelings about his hometown by entrusting his love to the fictional world of literature. “It is not only a geographical background for Mo Yan’s work, but also a symbol of a narrative style, emotional experience and aesthetic view” (He, 2014, p. 77). Goldblatt creatively applies a variety of aesthetic regulation devices to transfer the author’s aesthetic feelings to target readers.

(g). *Injury Dialect*

ST: “‘大叔，’父亲说，‘大叔，你挂彩了。’” (Mo, 1987, p. 7)

TT: “‘Uncle,’ Father said, ‘you’re *wounded*.’” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 8)

In terms of euphemisms and aesthetic standards, in ancient China, 挂彩 *guà cǎi* (wounded) was a dialectal expression used to refer to bleeding from a wound, because the color of blood is red. This word conveys to readers the aesthetic feeling in the original novel, even though it is a disaster, or at least unpleasant, for the sufferers; therefore, in order to represent aesthetic feelings of this particular dialect, stylistic changes in ARD translation technique together with aesthetic annotation can effectively convey the unique aspects of Chinese culture to the target readers.

(h). *Money Dialect*

ST: “事后，奶奶赏给每个伙计三块现大洋。” (Mo, 1987, p. 101)

TT: “When their work was finished, she gave them each three *silver dollars*.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 129)

The “大洋” (*dà yáng*) was a special currency issued during the Republic of China with the head of *Yuan Shih-k’ai* on it and made of silver, which is approximately equivalent to 400 RMB now, and is not equivalent to the “silver dollar”; instead, it introduces the cultural connotation of a specific period. Hence, the translation “silver dollar” does not accurately correspond to the cultural reference “大洋” (*dà yáng*). Consequently, in order to provide target readers with a clear understanding of the specific monetary term, translation strategies such as ARD and sociocultural annotation techniques might be employed.

(i). *Food Dialect*

ST: “她掀起轿帘，看着那个吃**炸饼**的人。” (Mo, 1987, p. 36)

TT: “She raised the curtain to get a glimpse of the man who ate *fistcakes*.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 46)

“Fistcake” can wholly illustrate the characteristics of this food by visualization in ARD. “抻饼” *kǎ bǐng* (fistcake), is a crisp pancake pinched with the hands when eating. The dialectal expression of a particular kind of food with local characteristics of Shandong: tough, moderately thick and thin, are, from the aesthetic point of view, the character traits of the straightforward and open-minded generosity of the Shandong people. Foreignization translation strategy is better than domestication to show the local Shandong food customs.

(j). *Vulgar Dialect*

ST: “你怕了吗？**畜生**！你的威风呢？” (Mo, 1987, p. 17)

TT: “Scared? You **darned beast**! Where’s your arrogance now?” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 21)

The vulgarity used in the local dialect indicates that the local villagers, out of their indignation at having done something wrong, are associated with the local livestock, indicating that humans should be more polite and responsible, a moral distinction made between animals and humans from a spiritual aesthetic standpoint. Undoubtedly, the technique of domestication tends to diminish the distinctive local characteristics of Shandong customs. Consequently, ARD emerges as a superior option for showcasing the cultural and aesthetic attributes.

B. *Shandong Dialect Translation on the Syntactic Level*

Besides onomatopoeia and cultural terms in Shandong dialect translation, idiomatic and metaphoric translation also has significant aesthetic values in Shandong dialect, e.g. “鸡走鸡道，狗走狗道” *jī zǒu jī dào, gǒu zǒu gǒu dào* (Chickens can go their own way, dogs can go theirs), “心急喝不得热粘粥” *xīn jí hē bù dé rè nián zhōu* (Greedy eaters never get the hot gruel), 高粱红成洗洋的血海 *gāo liang hóng chéng guāng yáng de xuè hǎi* (Sorghum that forms a glittering sea of blood), etc., which represent unique cultural and aesthetic elements reflected from rural residents’ aesthetic experience and judgement and accumulated from daily social life and natural environment.

(a). *Idiom*

ST: “**鸡走鸡道，狗走狗道**，井水不犯河水。” (Mo, 1987, p. 29)

TT: “**Chickens can go their own way; dogs can go theirs.** Well water and river water don’t mix.” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 29)

This is a typical idiomatic expression in rural China, and here what we see is an aesthetic perceptiveness of the colloquial language of villagers, who are naturally sensitive to the natural world around them. “Chickens” and “dogs” were commonly seen in that time of rural China; accordingly, lively idiomatic expressions were created by villagers in their simple and pure daily life, which can be a very easy and direct way for target readers to appreciate the humor and intelligence of those lovely villagers. Therefore, the utilization of metaphorization in ARD can more effectively depict the cultural idioms of Shandong.

(b). *Metaphor*

ST: “八月深秋，天高气爽，遍野**高粱红成洗洋的血海**。” (Mo, 1987, p. 305)

TT: “In the deep autumn of the eighth month, under a high, magnificently clear sky, the land is covered by **sorghum that forms a glittering sea of blood.**” (Goldblatt, 1993, p. 359)

Sorghum, as the central concept in the novel, appears about 463 times in the translated text. Mo Yan’s depiction of red sorghum is so all-encompassing that readers may fail to recognize the intimate correlation between sorghum and the characters in the narrative (Davis-Undiano, 2012). However, red sorghum is not only a local term for wheat in the rural area; it is also regarded as a symbol and metaphor, which witnessed the love, loss, wine making, change, death, blood, and vitality of villagers during a brutal time of war, and it became a symbol for the struggles of a harsh life. Mo Yan employed all his sensory organs to feel the beauty of his hometown and his loving fellow villagers, who demonstrate an indomitable spirit of struggle and patriotism, even in a harsh social environment. This is a world that is represented in Goldblatt’s translated works. He employed visualization in ARD in order to retain the original aesthetic attitudes in the novel.

V. FINDINGS

The major finding in this study is that aesthetic representations of dialects go beyond linguistics and demonstrate that every single aesthetic feature in the landscape of Northeast Township of Gaomi, the contradictory beauty of humor and optimism in a turbulent social context, the purity and honorable spirit of the area, the hardworking and honest personalities of the rural villagers, and the indomitable spirit of patriotism, all of these connotations are conveyed by the original novel and the translated text by Goldblatt, whose translation is defined as “creative translation” by many researchers. Goldblatt argued that translation is incapable of fully representing the connotation and artistic value of source material just through proficiency in both languages and cultures, and creativity is also a crucial element in the translation process (Cohorst, 2012). He also points out that the distinctive linguistic difference between English and Chinese requires the translator to be more creative and adopt domesticating strategies. This can be seen in many parts of the novel: dialect translations adopt translation strategies, such as “zero translation”, which is believed to be an inflexible convention in previous translation studies (Toury, 1991), which is also regarded as a mistake, or non-

equivalent translation, on the linguistic level. Nevertheless, Goldblatt endorses aesthetic values that correspond with those of the author Mo Yan and fully reproduces the spiritual aesthetic values of Shandong dialects in this novel.

Secondly, Goldblatt's translation is focused on producing a translated text for English target readers and not for native readers. Thus, his translation is not that close to the linguistic expressions of the source text, because it is his intention to transform as much cultural information as possible, thus catering to English target readers. Therefore, from this point of view, foreignization and domestication translation strategies are a dominant way of approaching the process of translation. However, the main aim is to represent cultural and aesthetic values of the source text, translation strategies of domestication and foreignization (82%) are used far more frequently than ARD (18%), i.e. metaphorization, visualization, and stylistic changes, which may result in aesthetic loss to a certain degree.

Third, fidelity of translation is the core concept in Goldblatt's translation. There are many examples of this, such as in the measurement, custom, name and place dialects he transmits, demonstrating his great efforts to retain the originality, cultural uniqueness, and aesthetic values of the source text by employing various aesthetic regulation devices, such as metaphorization, visualization, and stylistic changes, which can be defined as instances of "creative translation." Davis-Undiano (2012) reaffirmed Goldblatt's great contribution of transmitting Chinese culture to the world, and argued that Goldblatt offered a unique opportunity for readers in the Western world to involve in and gain a deep appreciation for Chinese culture through Mo Yan's perspective. However, creative and free translation should also address precise and comprehensive translations at linguistic levels, which are the basic units of translation. As Zhu and Qin (2014, p. 112) put it, "Goldblatt was influenced by the concept of 'fidelity' in translation, he wanted to retain the visual impact of the geographic space of the source text and convey the linguistic information and aesthetic elements to the American readers faithfully". Thus, an integrative translation framework of linguistic translation strategies, aesthetic regulation devices, and cultural analysis work together as whole to decisively confirm the quality, originality, and acceptability of the novel.

VI. CONCLUSION

Goldblatt's translation uses every means, including different translation strategies, to cater to the understanding and acceptance of Chinese local cultures for target readers by taking their life experiences and aesthetic feelings into consideration. "Translators should employ cultural compensation procedures to effectively recover and reconstruct the original meaning of the source text in different contexts, ensuring a comprehensive and accurate representation of the source text in its new setting" (Wang, 2014, p. 75). The translation process is not static, but rather a dynamic and difficult process, especially when it operates between two different cultures. The translator plays a significant role in stimulating aesthetic empathy and representing aesthetic values of source culture to target readers; translation strategies should vary from one source text to another. At the same time, both the aesthetic subjects (translator and target readers) and the aesthetic objects (ST & TT) interact with one another throughout the process. Aesthetic subjects vary from culture to culture, and their aesthetic experiences and feelings differ, because "literariness is culturally and historically mutable" and "translation is a re-formulation that targets equivalence, rather than identity, of message and of effect" (Lahiani, 2022, p. 2). In conclusion, the framework of integrating cultural consideration and aesthetic regulation devices is a better solution than traditional translation strategies and a new orientation to the translation of dialect.

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Green Discussion: Raising ESP Students' Environmental Awareness Through Film Circles

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Abstract—As global citizens, we need to develop environmental awareness to protect the environment. This study aims to compare students' environmental awareness before and after implementing film circles and investigate their attitudes towards the use of film circles in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classroom. The participants were 30 dual program students in education and social development, also regarded as pre-service social studies teachers. A mixed-method study, using the one-group pre-test-post-test design, was conducted. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were included. The instruments included film circle lesson plans, an environmental awareness assessment with 3 domains, including environmental knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, and an attitude towards film circles questionnaire. The findings revealed that the students believed that their environmental knowledge, attitudes and behaviours improved. They also had positive attitudes towards the use of film circles in raising their environmental awareness in the ESP classrooms. This study appears to echo the integration of environmental issues or themes into English classrooms.

Index Terms—film circles, English for Specific Purposes, Sustainable Development Goals, environmental problems, environmental awareness

I. INTRODUCTION

It is obvious that people around the world have been dealing with a diverse range of ecological concerns (Yildiz & Budur, 2019), and the problems have been consistently worsening (Koculu & Girgin, 2022). Moreover, the ecosystem is deteriorating as a result of human-unfriendly activities such as land conversion, illegal logging, forest fires, river and ocean pollution, and the overuse of plastics (Setyowati et al., 2020). To highlight this, countries across the globe have formally adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to ensure a sustainable, prosperous, peaceful, and equitable life for all people, both presently and in the years to come (UNESCO, 2017). The SDGs address the urgent problems of climate change and environmental protection while also addressing a range of socio-economic needs, such as education, healthcare, social protection, and work opportunities (UNESCO, 2017). Maintaining a balance between addressing human needs and ensuring environmental sustainability should be a mutual objective, in line with the agenda of the SDGs, to secure the sustainability of life in the future (Hermawan et al., 2022).

To shed light on solving environmental issues, environmental awareness holds significance for every global citizen including students. The term "environment awareness" describes an individual's understanding of the natural environment and the behaviours that either protect or damage it (Kousar et al., 2022). Educational institutions including universities have a significant impact on students' environmental awareness and eco-friendly behaviours (Kousar et al., 2022; Mkumbachi et al., 2020). It should be noted that the domains of environmental awareness explored by researchers differ. This can include environmental knowledge, environmental attitudes, and environmental behaviours (Aliman et al., 2019; He et al., 2011; Laabidi & Charafi, 2023).

Environmental awareness should be promoted including among pre-service social studies teachers. In Thailand, there is a need for hiring social studies teachers in both public and private schools. Those interested in becoming social studies educators may consider teaching the subject in English program schools. Additionally, social studies teachers play a role in raising awareness among students by incorporating lessons that emphasize the connection, between human societies and the environment. Sukma et al. (2020) reveal that teachers indicate their belief in the importance of educating students about the environment since elementary school.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has the potential to improve students' proficiency in English, enhance their knowledge within their specific fields, and increase their awareness of global issues, all in alignment with their particular needs. ESP is an approach that focuses on teaching English customized to the needs and interests of a particular group of learners (Chetia & Bhatt, 2020; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Undoubtedly, the primary goal of language teaching is to teach the language, however, incorporating global crises into its content can contribute to

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sustainable goals (Hameed, 2023). Bhusal (2021) points out that, in the contemporary world, English teaching-learning activities extend beyond merely instructing theoretical, grammatical, and linguistic aspects; it is crucial to also incorporate environmental education. Moreover, it is now undeniable that language learners should possess an awareness of global issues (Mete, 2018).

Film circles or movie circles are among the potential classroom activities that can enhance students' environmental awareness. The activities were adapted from literature circles; however, in film circles, films are used instead of books (Stephens et al., 2012). Students are assigned specific roles within the group, ensuring that every member actively participates in their environmental discussions related to films and their experiences.

Most studies on literature circles and their adaptations, such as using films and other media, focus on enhancing speaking or communication skills (Brazenas, 2019; Matmool & Kaowiwattanakul, 2023; Stephens et al., 2012). However, it is important to explore how these activities can be utilized to increase environmental awareness since students can discuss environmental themes in films. This can support incorporating the environmental protection aspect, which is important for the SDGs, into ESP courses. Therefore, this study aims to compare ESP students' environmental awareness before and after implementing film circles and investigate their attitudes towards the use of film circles in an ESP classroom.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Environmental Awareness

Considering the importance of tackling environmental concerns, fostering environmental awareness among individuals including ESP students is important. The term environmental awareness has been defined by numerous scholars. To name a few, Kousar et al. (2022) mentioned that the term "environment awareness" describes an individual's understanding of the natural environment and their behaviours that either protect or harm it. Ham et al. (2016) stated that it can be broadly defined as the perspective or attitude regarding the environmental impacts resulting from human behaviours. Geng and He (2021) defined it as the public perception towards environmental problems.

As societies began to exploit natural resources as if they were limitless to improve their quality of life as a result of industrialization, the natural balance began to suffer (Önal, 2020). Environmental education and awareness are essential because they help to lessen the harm that a variety of activities can do to the environment (Susilawati et al., 2021). Given that protecting the environment is everyone's responsibility, it is expected that by cultivating a positive environmental attitude in students, they will develop into caring individuals (Setyowati et al., 2022).

In the present study, environmental awareness refers to individuals' understanding of the environment as well as attitudes towards and behaviour towards protecting it. Furthermore, this study supports students' awareness of protecting the environment.

B. Film Circles

A film circle activity is a group activity in which students watch a film and are assigned different roles to perform the group discussion about the film. Film circles, or movie circles, were adapted from literature circles (Stephens et al., 2012), which have been successfully used in language classrooms for decades. While students read the same piece of literature (Daniels, 2002), students watch a film instead of books in film circles (Stephens et al., 2012). Moreover, since film circles were adapted from literature circles, it is necessary to introduce literature circles. Literature circles align with reader-response theory as students engage in collaborative reading and discussion with their peers (Chiang, 2018). The activities are small, peer-led discussion groups in which the group members have selected to read the same piece of literature (Daniels, 2002). In this study, while the students in literature circles typically respond to texts based on reader-response theory, the students in this study responded to the chosen films during film circles.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

A mixed-method study, using the one-group pre-test-post-test design, was conducted. This study also investigated the students' attitudes towards the use of these learning materials and activities. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were included.

B. Participants

The research comprised 30 second-year students pursuing a dual program in education and social development, also regarded as pre-service social studies teachers. These students have the opportunity to pursue careers in schools and social development sections. During the second semester of the academic year 2023, the students enrolled in an ESP course at a public university of medium size located in the north of Thailand. The purposive sampling technique was utilized to select participants for this study.

C. Research Instruments

(a). Lesson Plans

Eight lesson plans employing film circles to promote the students' environmental awareness were constructed. The students selected four environmental films to incorporate into the lessons, namely *The Lorax* (2012), *WALL·E* (2008), *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), and *2012 (I)* (2009).

Each lesson required students to watch half of the film and participate in a film circle, rotating roles across three key steps: pre-viewing, viewing, and post-viewing.

Firstly, during the pre-viewing stage, a brief talk about the film and the presentation of vocabulary, environmental issues and background information about the film were conducted to develop the students' schema knowledge.

The viewing stage engaged students with the narrator, settings, situations, characters, and actions. In this stage, students were divided into groups of 5-6. Role sheets adapted from Daniels (2002) were distributed to the students before they watched a film. In this study, roles including a questioner, a film master, a connector, an illustrator, a summarizer, and a word wizard were assigned. While watching, the students were required to complete their role sheets.

Lastly, in the post-viewing stage, the students were encouraged to reflect on the environmental issues depicted in the film and to connect these themes with their experiences in both educational and social development contexts.

The lesson plans were approved by three experts who had over a decade of experience in teaching English.

(b). Environmental Awareness Assessment

An environmental awareness assessment was employed to examine and compare students' environmental awareness before and after the use of film circles. This study examined three areas: environmental knowledge, environmental attitudes, and environmental behaviours (He et al., 2011; Laabidi & Charafi, 2023).

To begin, the knowledge domain of environmental awareness, considering that true-or-false questions can be used to investigate environmental knowledge as in a study by He et al. (2011), 16 items of true-or-false questions were created to assess general knowledge of the environment, including the environmental problems in Thailand.

The second section also examines students' knowledge. Considering the fact that self-assessed knowledge questionnaires continue to be a widely adopted method for collecting data regarding knowledge levels (Chen & Tsai, 2016), 4 items of self-assessed knowledge questionnaires were created. The areas of knowledge were four themes of the selected films, including forests, waste management, climate change, and natural disasters. The scale utilized in this section features five response options from very high (rated as 5) to very low (rated as 1).

Then, the third section is about students' environmental attitudes. Attitude items were adapted from Hameed (2023) and were designed by the researchers based on the importance of the environment and tackling environmental issues in English classrooms. The scale utilized in this section features five response options from strongly agree (rated as 5) to strongly disagree (rated as 1).

The last part is about the environmental behaviour domain. This study incorporated the items related to pro-environmental behaviours from a study by Janmaimool and Khajohnmanee (2019). However, since the items used in their study primarily focused on waste management, this study expanded its questionnaires to incorporate items related to broader environmental issues, such as pollution and deforestation. The scale features five response options from strongly agree (rated as 5) to strongly disagree (rated as 1).

The content validity of the questionnaire items was validated by seven Items Objective of Congruence (IOC) committees, including the three English experts, two experts from the social development field, and two experts from the environmental health field. The overall IOC was 0.94.

(c). Attitude Questionnaires Towards the Use of Film Circles to Raise Students' Environmental Awareness

Attitude questionnaires were employed to assess students' perspectives on integrating film circles to enhance environmental awareness in the ESP classroom. The questionnaires, utilizing a 5-point rating scale, consist of 10 items categorized into two sections: attitudes towards assigned roles in film circles and attitudes towards the benefits of employing film circles for environmental awareness. Responses are rated on a scale from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The content validity of questionnaire items was conducted by the same three IOC English committees. The overall IOC of the two items was 0.83.

(d). Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were designed to explore students' attitudes towards utilizing film circles to enhance environmental awareness in the ESP classroom. Individual interviews were conducted using two main questions: 1) "Do you think that employing film circles can raise your environmental awareness? If yes, how?" and 2) "Did you enjoy discussing environmental issues with your friends in film circles? Why?" Each interview lasted approximately 10 minutes. Additionally, the content validity of the items was assessed by the same three English IOC committees. The overall IOC was 0.67.

D. Data Collection

The study took place from January to March 2024. The researchers developed lesson plans incorporating films selected by the students and environmental topics suitable for discussion in film circles. A pre-test of environmental awareness assessment was then administered to examine students' environmental awareness. Over an eight-week period,

eight three-hour lesson plans were employed, totalling 24 hours. Each lesson included presentations on environmental knowledge, vocabulary and background of the film followed by film viewings and group discussions led by students in designated roles. Afterwards, a post-test of environmental awareness assessment and an attitude questionnaire were distributed. Semi-structured interviews conducted in Thai were utilized to further explore students' attitudes. Finally, both qualitative and quantitative data were analysed.

E. Data Analysis

(a). Data From the Environmental Awareness Assessment and the Attitude Questionnaire

Regarding the environmental awareness assessment, data analysis was conducted using SPSS. Initial tests of normality indicated that the data did not follow a normal distribution, as evidenced by significant results. Consequently, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to assess whether there was a significant difference between the pre-and post-test scores of the first section, the ESP students' environmental knowledge.

In terms of the second section, self-assessed environmental knowledge, mean scores and standard deviation were employed for data analysis using SPSS. The interpretation was analysed as: 4.20–5.00 = very high, 3.40–4.19 = high, 2.60–3.39 = moderate, 1.80–2.59 = low, and 1.00–1.79 = very low.

Concerning the third section, environmental attitudes, and the fourth section, environmental behaviours, mean and standard deviation were used. The interpretation of these sections was interpreted using the following scale: 4.20–5.00 = strongly agree, 3.40–4.19 = agree, 2.60–3.39 = neutral, 1.80–2.59 = disagree, and 1.00–1.79 = strongly disagree.

(b). Data From the Attitude Questionnaires Towards the Use of Film Circles to Raise Students' Environmental Awareness

Regarding data from the attitude questionnaires towards the use of film circles to raise students' environmental awareness, mean and standard deviation were used. The interpretation of these sections was interpreted using the following scale: 4.20–5.00 = strongly agree, 3.40–4.19 = agree, 2.60–3.39 = neutral, 1.80–2.59 = disagree, and 1.00–1.79 = strongly disagree.

The Likert scale interval range was adopted from Pimentel (2010) with slight differences of 0.79 and 0.80.

(c). Data From the Semi-Structured Interview Responses

The content analysis of the semi-structured interview responses focused on two primary areas: using film circles to enhance students' environmental awareness, and the enjoyment or advantages of discussing within film circles with classmates.

IV. RESULTS

A. Students' Environmental Awareness

To compare the students' environmental awareness before and after employing film circles in the ESP classroom, four sections of the environmental awareness assessment were analysed.

(a). Students' Environmental Knowledge Using True-or-False Questions

TABLE 1
STUDENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE USING TRUE-OR-FALSE QUESTIONS

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Sig.
Pre – Post	Negative Ranks	11	11.68	128.50	-.066*	.947
	Positive Ranks	11	11.32			
	Ties	8				
	Total	30				

*Based on positive ranks.

To begin with the first section, Table 1 shows the results of using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test to determine a difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of environmental knowledge of the ESP students using true-or-false questions. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test results indicated that there was no significant difference between the mean scores ($Z = -.066$, $p = .947$).

(b). Students' Self-Assessed Environmental Knowledge

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSED ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Assessment	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Pre-assessment	30	3.52	0.53	6.280	.000
Post-assessment	30	4.18	0.59		

Table 2 displays the results of the second section, the students' self-assessed environmental knowledge. The pre-assessment mean score was 3.52 (SD = 0.53), while the post-assessment mean score was 4.18 (SD = 0.59). Unlike true-

or-false questions, there was a statistically significant difference in the students' self-assessed environmental knowledge. The table further illustrates these results.

TABLE 3
STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSED ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Statements	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment		
	M	SD	Interpretation	M	SD	Interpretation
1. How much do you know about climate change?	3.40	0.72	High	4.20	0.61	Very high
2. How much do you know about waste management in Thailand?	3.63	0.61	High	4.30	0.65	Very high
3. How much do you know about disasters in Thailand?	3.40	0.62	High	4.13	0.73	High
4. How much do you know about deforestation problems in Thailand?	3.63	0.67	High	4.07	0.69	High
Total	3.52	0.53	High	4.18	0.59	High

Table 3 details students' self-assessed environmental knowledge. The students ranked their knowledge of waste management ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.67$) and Thailand's deforestation issues ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.61$) as having the highest knowledge based on the pre-assessment. With respect to the post-assessment, at a very high level, students thought they knew about waste management in Thailand ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.65$).

(c). *Students' Environmental Attitudes*

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES

Assessment	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Pre-assessment	30	4.06	0.61	5.384	.000
Post-assessment	30	4.61	0.51		

Table 4 displays the results of the third section, the students' environmental attitudes. The pre-assessment mean score was 4.06 ($SD = 0.61$), and the post-assessment mean score was 4.61 ($SD = 0.51$). After using film circles, the students' environmental attitudes improved significantly. The following table provides further details.

TABLE 5
STUDENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES

Statements	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment		
	M	SD	Interpretation	M	SD	Interpretation
1. I think education is the best way to help change people's behaviours towards the environment.	3.93	0.78	Agree	4.67	0.55	Strongly agree
2. I think environmental awareness should be promoted in my institution.	4.03	0.76	Agree	4.70	0.60	Strongly agree
3. It is important to raise environmental awareness among Thai citizens.	4.23	0.73	Strongly agree	4.73	0.52	Strongly agree
4. It is important to raise ESP students' environmental awareness.	4.00	0.74	Agree	4.47	0.73	Strongly agree
5. It is important to integrate environmental issues into ESP courses.	3.93	0.69	Agree	4.47	0.63	Strongly agree
6. It is important to promote environmental sustainability in communities.	4.10	0.76	Agree	4.70	0.65	Strongly agree
7. The importance of environmental sustainability in communities should be presented in English classrooms.	3.83	0.75	Agree	4.63	0.67	Strongly agree
8. It is important to pay attention to climate change.	4.07	0.64	Agree	4.57	0.63	Strongly agree
9. The importance of tackling climate change should be presented in English classrooms.	3.87	0.78	Agree	4.63	0.67	Strongly agree
10. It is important to promote the use of eco-friendly technology such as solar panels and plant-based packaging materials.	4.03	0.81	Agree	4.50	0.63	Strongly agree
11. The importance of eco-friendly technology should be presented in English classrooms.	3.97	0.81	Agree	4.50	0.63	Strongly agree
12. It is important to conserve natural resources because they are limited.	4.10	0.76	Agree	4.53	0.68	Strongly agree
13. The importance of conserving natural resources should be presented in English classrooms.	4.03	0.72	Agree	4.67	0.61	Strongly agree
14. It is important to reduce harmful emissions to the air, land and water.	4.27	0.78	Strongly agree	4.53	0.63	Strongly agree
15. The importance of reducing harmful emissions to the air, land, and water should be presented in English classrooms.	4.03	0.76	Agree	4.50	0.63	Strongly agree
16. It is important to manage waste properly.	4.30	0.79	Strongly agree	4.60	0.67	Strongly agree
17. The importance of waste management should be presented in English classrooms.	4.07	0.78	Agree	4.73	0.58	Strongly agree
18. It is important to prevent forest fires and deforestation.	4.33	0.92	Strongly agree	4.73	0.58	Strongly agree
19. The importance of forests should be presented in English classrooms.	4.10	0.88	Agree	4.63	0.67	Strongly agree
Total	4.06	0.61	Agree	4.61	0.51	Strongly agree

Table 5 provides a detailed analysis of students' responses to the environmental attitude section. In the pre-assessment, the highest mean scores indicated the importance of proper waste management ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.79$), preventing forest fires and deforestation ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.92$), and reducing harmful emissions ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.78$). The lowest mean score ($M = 3.83$) was for the belief that English classrooms should teach environmental sustainability in communities.

According to the post-assessment results, the students thought it was important to prevent deforestation and forest fires, as well as to increase awareness of the environment among Thai citizens ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 0.52$). Furthermore, they thought that English classes should cover the importance of waste management ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 0.58$).

Despite receiving the lowest mean scores for raising ESP students' environmental awareness ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.73$) and integrating environmental topics into ESP courses ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.63$), the students ranked these items highly, indicating that they still believed ESP students should raise their environmental awareness and environmental topics can be integrated into ESP classrooms.

Thus, the findings revealed that after employing film circles, the students seemed to have positive attitudes towards conserving the environment and integrating environmental topics into English classes. They also believed that it was important to raise environmental awareness among Thai citizens.

(d). *Students' Environmental Behaviours*

TABLE 6
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOURS

Assessment	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Pre-assessment	30	3.60	0.55	6.643	.000
Post-assessment	30	4.29	0.65		

Table 8 presents the results of the last section, the students' environmental behaviours. According to the responses, the pre-assessment mean score was 3.60 ($SD = 0.55$), and the post-test mean score was 4.29 ($SD = 0.65$). This indicates that, after utilising film circles, the students believed that their behaviours towards the environment differed statistically significantly.

TABLE 7
STUDENTS' ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOURS

Statements	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment		
	M	SD	Interpretation	M	SD	Interpretation
1. I always use solar panels to generate clean energy at home.	2.70	1.02	Neutral	3.83	1.09	Agree
2. I always use public transportation to lower carbon emissions generated by personal vehicles.	3.20	1.16	Neutral	4.10	0.92	Agree
3. I always segregate waste before disposing of it.	3.47	0.90	Agree	4.17	1.02	Agree
4. I always minimize energy consumption by switching off lights when they are not needed.	3.83	0.75	Agree	4.47	0.63	Strongly agree
5. I always refuse to take a plastic bag when buying a few items at a convenience store.	3.40	0.77	Agree	4.17	0.83	Agree
6. I support political leaders who hold positive perspectives towards environmental sustainability.	3.80	0.85	Agree	4.50	0.97	Strongly agree
7. I prefer to work with an organization that cares about the environment.	3.83	0.83	Agree	4.30	0.95	Strongly agree
8. I support goods and services from enterprises that take care of environmental issues in their business operation.	3.77	0.68	Agree	4.50	0.73	Strongly agree
9. I support public and private organizations that have environmental strategies allied with organization goals.	3.97	0.76	Agree	4.33	0.76	Strongly agree
10. I support reforestation programmes that focus on planting native tree species in deforested areas.	4.00	0.91	Agree	4.57	0.73	Strongly agree
Total	3.60	0.55	Agree	4.29	0.65	Strongly agree

Table 7 offers detailed item responses from students on the environmental behaviour questionnaires. The highest pre-assessment mean scores reflected student support for reforestation programs that plant native tree species in deforested areas ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.91$) and for public and private organizations with environmental strategies ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.76$). Conversely, the lowest mean scores were for generating renewable energy at home with solar panels ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.02$) and reducing personal vehicle carbon emissions by using public transit ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 1.16$). These two items were at the neutral level.

According to the post-assessment results, similar to the results of the pre-assessment, students believed that they supported reforestation initiatives that focused on planting native tree species in deforested areas ($M = 4.57$, $SD = 0.73$). They supported goods and services from enterprises that take care of the environment ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.73$) and supported environmental politicians ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.97$). Similar to the pre-assessment, items indicating that the students used solar panels to produce renewable energy at home ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.09$) and public transportation to lower the carbon emissions from their vehicles ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.92$) revealed the lowest mean scores.

Thus, based on the findings, it appears that the students believed they had environmentally friendly behaviours.

(B). *ESP Students' Attitudes Towards Employing Film Circles in Raising ESP Students' Environmental Awareness*

(a). *Students Attitudes Towards the Assigned Film Circle Roles in the Classroom*

TABLE 8
STUDENTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ASSIGNED FILM CIRCLE ROLES IN THE CLASSROOM

Statements	M	SD	Interpretation
1. I think that being a questioner helped me raise my environmental awareness.	4.43	0.63	Strongly agree
2. I think that being a summarizer helped me raise my environmental awareness.	4.63	0.61	Strongly agree
3. I think that being a word wizard helped me raise my environmental awareness.	4.47	0.68	Strongly agree
4. I think that being a connector helped me raise my environmental awareness.	4.47	0.63	Strongly agree
5. I think that being a film master (who brought interesting parts or quotations from the story to discuss with peers) helped me raise my environmental awareness.	4.47	0.57	Strongly agree
6. I think that being an illustrator helped me raise my environmental awareness.	4.37	0.67	Strongly agree
Total	4.47	0.47	Strongly agree

Table 8 reveals the students had positive attitudes towards the assigned film circle roles in the classroom, including raising environmental awareness ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.47$).

With regard to items related to the environment, the highest mean score showed that students believed being a summarizer helped them raise their environmental awareness ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.61$). With the same mean scores ($M = 4.47$), three roles that students thought could help them raise their environmental awareness were a word wizard ($SD = 0.68$), a connector ($SD = 0.63$), and a film master ($SD = 0.57$). Being an illustrator received the lowest mean score ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.67$).

(b). *Students' Attitudes Towards the Benefits of Using Film Circles in the Classroom*

TABLE 9
STUDENTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE BENEFITS OF USING FILM CIRCLES IN THE CLASSROOM

Statements	M	SD	Interpretation
1. I think film circles helped me improve my environmental knowledge.	4.57	0.63	Strongly agree
2. I think film circles helped me gain more positive attitudes towards protecting the environment.	4.57	0.57	Strongly agree
3. I think film circles helped me have more environmentally responsible behaviours, which possibly helped protect the environment and conserve natural resources.	4.53	0.57	Strongly agree
4. I think film circles helped me raise my overall environmental awareness as the activities allowed me to discuss environmental issues with my friends.	4.47	0.63	Strongly agree
Total	4.53	0.51	Strongly agree

Table 9 displays the findings from students' answers to the attitude questionnaires on the advantages of utilizing film circles in the classroom. Overall, the students had positive attitudes towards the use of film circles to raise their environmental awareness ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.51$).

Regarding items related to the environment, the majority of the students showed positive attitudes towards using film circles to raise their environmental awareness as every item was at the strongly agree level. The students believed that film circles helped them improve their environmental knowledge ($M = 4.57$, $SD = 0.63$), gain more positive attitudes towards protecting the environment ($M = 4.57$, $SD = 0.57$), have more environmentally responsible behaviours ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.57$) and raise their overall environmental awareness as the activities allowed them to discuss environmental issues with peers ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.63$), respectively.

(d). *Semi-Structured Interview Results*

1. *Students' Responses Towards the First Interview Question Focusing on Using Film Circles to Raise Their Environmental Awareness*

The following excerpts are from the students' responses to the second semi-structured interview question, "Do you think that employing film circles can raise your environmental awareness? If yes, how? If not, why not?".

"Yes. For instance, The Lorax addresses the issue of logging. In real life, people burn trees for farming purposes, resulting in smog. It has a negative effect on elderly people with respiratory illnesses. It emits PM2.5 dust. It makes me have allergic reactions to PM2.5, so I have to wear a mask". [S2]

"Yes, because I can talk about the CSR and the SDGs. I think I'm more aware of the environment". [S7]

While their responses did not appear to address the behavioural domain directly, they did demonstrate a positive attitude towards environmental conservation and an understanding of the causes and consequences of pollution and global warming. The students also showed an understanding of the factors contributing to PM2.5 pollution in Thailand and its negative effects on public health. For instance, a student (S2) observed that tree burning for agricultural needs leads to smog, adversely affecting elderly people with respiratory conditions due to the generation of PM2.5 dust. The student personally experienced allergic reactions to PM2.5, necessitating the use of a mask, which highlighted the student's attitudes towards forest burning and irresponsible logging practices. This seemed to indicate that the student

had negative attitudes towards such actions and had knowledge of the effects of irresponsible logging practices. They also discussed the SDGs and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) throughout the group activities. This suggested that they were aware of the environment.

2. Students' Responses Towards the Second Interview Question Focusing on the Benefits and Enjoyment of Using Film Circles to Discuss Environmental Issues

The following excerpts are from the students' responses to the second question "Did you enjoy discussing environmental issues with your friends in film circles? Why?"

"Yes, I can exchange ideas with my friends. I like being an illustrator. I have the ability to illustrate and articulate my drawings. If I don't know how to speak English, I ask my friends. Then, they will help me". [S2]

"Overall, I like this activity because it is a way to meet and talk with classmates. I have never worked with some of them before. When it comes to group work, it is a way to build relationships with them". [S8]

During the interviews, the students provided more evidence to support their claims about enjoying film circles. The interviews emphasised the advantages of interactive learning environments. They enjoyed participating in film circles with peers, resulting in supportive discussion engagements.

V. DISCUSSIONS

Film circles allowed students to watch films and engage in peer discussions. These activities positively impacted students' environmental awareness, as shown by assessments, attitude questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The discussions focused on three environmental domains. The students believed that film circles enhanced their environmental knowledge, fostered positive attitudes towards environmental protection, and supported environmentally responsible behaviours.

Firstly, despite the lack of significant improvement in knowledge assessments using true-or-false questions, the students reported personal gains in environmental knowledge through self-assessment questionnaires. The absence of significant enhancement in true-or-false scores can be attributed to the high knowledge of the students, who already had a solid understanding of environmental concepts. However, the self-reported enhancement in knowledge suggests that films fostered a deeper level of understanding, as the students agreed that the films presented relevant environmental topics, facilitating meaningful discussions. The students demonstrated their knowledge of the causes and effects of human actions, as well as their understanding of environmental facts and past occurrences. This suggested that the film selections effectively addressed environmental themes, prompting students to reflect on their relationship with the environment in the film circle discussions. The findings support previous studies indicating that films can serve as a tool for students to explore environmental issues and be aware of the importance of the environment (Topal et al., 2020; Ünlü, 2020). Alyaz et al. (2017) asserted that environmental documentary films have significant potential to enhance environmental awareness among pre-service teachers. Films, as audiovisual resources, represent a fundamental means of engaging with the world and acquiring information and knowledge (Fernandez-Diaz & Sanchez-Giner, 2023).

Moreover, the findings signified that film circles with organized stages facilitated opportunities for the students to acquire knowledge about the environment. In the pre-viewing stage, the students were introduced to the vocabulary and environmental issues presented in the film. This approach facilitated students' foundational understanding of the key concepts outlined in the lesson plan. Subsequent discussions with peers using role sheets enabled them to focus on environmental issues. Throughout the discussions using film circle roles, the students demonstrated their understanding of various environmental topics, contributing to a deeper understanding of the issues. The roles helped students to remain attentive before, during, and after viewing the film (Stephens et al., 2012). Then, the findings implied that film circle stages and roles motivated the students to explore the causes and consequences of environmental degradation within the films and discuss environmental issues with their peers.

Secondly, the students' environmental attitudes improved. During discussions, the students related environmental topics to school and community development settings. Since the students were considered pre-service social studies teachers, enhancing their environmental attitudes is crucial. The pre-service teachers often related their discussions to real-life scenarios, emphasizing the importance of environmental awareness for Thai people. They suggested initiatives such as school garden projects to educate students about different species and supported strict adherence to government directives during the PM2.5 crisis.

Furthermore, regarding the positive environmental attitudes, the students' responses indicated recognition of the significance of environmental education. They believed that education is one of the most effective means of altering individuals' attitudes and actions related to the environment. Moreover, the students held the belief that English classes could incorporate the importance of environmental sustainability in communities. They also believed that raising ESP students' environmental awareness is crucial. Previous studies have confirmed that environmental topics can be integrated into English classrooms (Al-Jarf, 2022; Diachkova et al., 2021; Hussain, 2019; Putri et al., 2024; Raphael & Nandan, 2024; Saiful, 2023; Setyowati et al., 2022; Yu et al., 2024). Setyowati et al. (2022) suggest that integrating

environmental topics into language classes can enhance language skills while fostering the love and care of nature. As a result, the students demonstrated positive attitudes towards environmental protection. These findings suggest the value of incorporating environmental issues, widely recognized as a critical global concern, into English content and activities, including those in ESP classrooms.

Finally, the results related to behavioural aspects were encouraging, showing an increase in environmentally friendly behaviours among students. Film circles appear to inspire action on environmental protection by empowering students to critically analyse film content and cultivate personal connections with environmental issues. Peer-led discussions on environmental concerns motivate students to take responsibility and support each other in adopting eco-friendly practices. Peer-to-peer conversation can serve as an effective tool for fostering pro-environmental behaviour (Hurst et al., 2023). The ESP students in this study discussed environmental issues. During discussions, it was frequently noted that students would negotiate the meanings of specific phrases or behaviours displayed by characters in a TV series episode (Brazenas, 2019). Peer discussions could then serve as a fruitful environment for generating innovative solutions and developing strategies to tackle environmental issues within their local communities.

To support all environmental aspects, English classes that prioritize environmental awareness and guidance can empower students to actively contribute to the protection of the environment and prevent future degradation (Hussain, 2019). Universities must contribute to the public's greater awareness of environmental issues and offer guidance to support individuals in making educated decisions, acting in an ecologically responsible behaviour, and making rational purchases (Mkumbachi et al., 2020). Given that harmful human activities have negatively impacted environmental sustainability, natural balance, and ecosystems, which are essential for human needs and welfare (Abbas et al., 2024), people must enhance their pro-environmental behaviours to protect the environment.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Integrating film circles into English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms appears to have significant potential for enhancing students' environmental awareness. Through film circles, the students not only watch films but also engage in discussions with their peers, leading to a deeper understanding of environmental issues. Results from the environmental awareness assessment revealed positive outcomes across three environmental domains: knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. The students reported personal gains in environmental knowledge through self-assessment questionnaires, indicating a deeper level of understanding facilitated by film discussions. The students' attitudes towards environmental protection were positively influenced by film circle activities, with discussions often extending to real-life scenarios in school and community settings. The students also believed they improved their environmental behaviours. The findings of the attitude questionnaire and semi-structured interviews underscored the importance of incorporating environmental themes into language education including ESP classrooms. Moreover, film circles stimulated action on environmental protection, empowering students to critically analyse film content and discuss potential solutions to environmental issues. Peer-led discussions not only facilitated environmental knowledge exchange but also inspired environmentally friendly behaviours among the students. The findings also suggest that films can be integrated into English courses.

Further research could explore other learning aspects such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar, through the use of film circles. Additionally, researchers might identify factors that influence students' performance during group discussions. This study has limitations. Since students indicated that film circles are time-consuming during the viewing stage, it is recommended that researchers focus on key parts of the film instead of viewing the entire film. Additionally, TV series, cartoons, or anime can be used. The name of the activity might differ from "film circles" to terms like "movie circles," "media circles," or "cartoon circles". It's important to note that this activity is an adaptation of literature circles.

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The Evolution of Modern Literary Criticism From Structuralism to Postmodernism: A Case Study of Edward Said and His Critique of Orientalism in Literature

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Abstract—The study aimed to examine the development of literary criticism throughout its history from structuralism to postmodernism, using Edward Said's criticism of Orientalism as a case study. A discourse-grounded analysis approach was used to analyze critical texts and articles related to this development. The results showed, according to Said, that the traditional Western depiction of the East is biased and based on power relations, which influenced postcolonial philosophy and the literary canon (Smith, 2018). Said sought to expose biases in Western literature's depiction of the East (Jones, 2016). His writings have sparked debate about the role of the critic in shaping literary discourse, shifting critical focus toward questions of power, representation, and identity, and increasing opportunities for underrepresented groups to have their voices heard (Brown & Johnson, 2019). Said's critique of Orientalism has influenced contemporary literary criticism, opening the door to a more diverse and comprehensive literary study (Garcia & Lee, 2020).

Index Terms—modern literary criticism, structuralism, postmodernism, Edward Said, Orientalism

I. INTRODUCTION

The field of literary criticism has experienced distinct transformations over time due to the introduction of various theoretical frameworks. These frameworks have resulted in multiple interpretations and assessment methodologies that scholars employ to examine and assess literary texts. The range of literary criticism disciplines is vast, comparable to the expanse of the sky. Various authors are confronted with the challenge of developing postmodernist styles of writing to establish the structuralist perspective, which relies on uncovering underlying structures and systems. This involves questioning conventional notions of authorship, meaning, and other related aspects. The main focus of this study will be to examine and critique the development of contemporary critical methods, with a special emphasis on the transition from structuralism to post-modernism. The paper will primarily examine the literary critique of Orientalism by Edward Said. This inquiry exemplifies Said's incorporation of postmodernist perspectives and the subsequent shift toward the domain of literary criticism.

The structural school of literary criticism, spearheaded by prominent figures like Roland Barthes and Claude Levi-Strauss, emphasized the importance of delving deeper into artworks to uncover their underlying general patterns and systems. Advocates of structuralism argued that meanings are not inherent in the text itself, but rather they are influenced by internal processes that stimulate the process of signification. Barthes' notion of "the author is dead; the author is dead" emphasized that the author's intentions held no significance in comprehending a book since meaning is constructed through language and societal norms, as per Barthes (1967). This methodology established the basis for further study methods in the field of literary theory, potentially giving rise to the framework for poststructuralist and postmodernist critique. With the shift from structuralism to postmodernism in literature, critics grew more audacious in challenging conventional notions of authorship, meaning, and representation in assessing literary texts. Postmodernist critics like Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault did not question whether the established structures of authority and ranking in literature should be unquestionably accepted. A center dedicated to comprehending the utilization of signifiers was established (Derrida, 1976; Foucault, 1977).

The presence of Orientalism in literature, as analyzed by Edward Said, served as a paradigm for the postmodernist perspective on various elements. Said's influential book "Orientations" argues that depictions of "the East" are inherently biased and must be maintained under colonial power systems (Said, 1978). This paper challenges conventional ideas of power and authenticity in literature by providing a detailed and sophisticated study of these portrayals. The literature given here showcases Edward Said's critique of Orientalism, highlighting the progression of literary analysis from structuralism to postmodernism during the 1900s. Work by Saying explores postmodernist viewpoints that are essential for comprehending literature since they provoke discussions on power dynamics and dichotomies. These concepts challenge traditional methods of analysis. By examining Said's critique within this comprehensive theoretical framework,

we can gain a deeper understanding of how contemporary literary scholars approach the topics of representation, identity, and power in literature.

The trajectory of modern literary criticism, from structuralism to postmodernism, has undergone a significant transformation in terms of theoretical frameworks and approaches. Examining Edward Said's critique of Orientalism in literature offers a captivating portrayal of how the postmodernist perspective has transformed our understanding of Middle Eastern literary works. Viewing Said's work from this perspective allows us to have a more comprehensive understanding of these issues, enabling us to discern the intricate and nuanced aspects of contemporary literary criticism.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Over time, the process of author approval by readers and literary critics has evolved, progressing from the structuralist standpoint to the postmodernist perspective. The development of literature has incorporated the insights and evaluations of numerous experts' intellectual and critical viewpoints from various disciplines. Nonetheless, Edward Said's scholarly work serves as a commendable illustration. Said's perceptive examination of Orientalism in literature not only enlightens contemporary literary criticism but also constitutes a substantial addition to its theoretical framework as a whole. This paper will examine the contemporary nature of literary criticism, namely by exploring the decline from structuralism to postmodernism. Furthermore, it will take into account Edward Said's argument regarding the role of Orientalism in literature, which serves as a distinct topic for discussion. The present study aims to evaluate the advancements in modern literary criticism by examining the theories of structuralism and post-modernism, with a particular focus on Edward Said's critique of Orientalism in Literature. The objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of contemporary literary criticism and its implications for the interpretation of literature as a whole. An in-depth analysis would entail studying the writings of Said and other highly knowledgeable authors in the field.

Smith (2018) is a famous academic in the field who has studied the transition from structuralism to postmodernism in the interpretation of literary readings. Smith associates himself with the principles and theories of structuralism. The structuralist school prioritizes the examination of the underlying patterns and meanings found within texts, while also challenging postmodernism and questioning the fundamental nature of conventional readings of language. As research shifts from the author's perspective to the reader's perspective, the primary objective becomes refuting alternative viewpoints in the examination of literature. However, Jones (2019) highlights research that specifically focuses on Said's criticisms of Western literature. According to Jones, Said's depiction of power dynamics in the Europe encounter with Asia was a significant factor in generating criticism of Eurocentric methodologies. While Said contends that Western authors have constructed an erroneous portrayal of the Orient as being exclusively enigmatic and inferior, the author urges the reader to recognize these Orientalist ideas and dismantle them. Contemporary literary criticism has moved away from the strict yet narrow structuralist approach. Instead, it has evolved into a more adaptable, comprehensive, and extensively grounded framework rooted in postmodern thought. Intellectuals such as Edward Said have made significant contributions in scrutinizing and even challenging the prevailing narrative to create more equitable and comprehensive cultural depictions in literature. Hence, future studies must examine the interconnections between postcolonial theory, postmodernism, and literary criticism to enhance the accuracy and validity of the research outcomes. By exchanging ideas through various texts and ensuring their wide dissemination, academics can challenge established views and foster more inclusive discourses in scholarly discourse.

One area of emphasis in the historical investigation of contemporary literature the above English academic works have examined the connection between theories and approaches in structuralism and postmodernism through critical analysis. major studies aim to understand the process of literary critique growth and how major literary thinkers have influenced this discipline. The primary focus of these studies involves conducting a comprehensive examination of the many trends and movements in literary criticism. Examining the writings of influential critics such as Edward Said enables researchers to observe the methods of literary analysis and comprehension in various critical theories. Additionally, this knowledge can contribute to ensuring that these scholars and students have the chance to develop their talents outside of their professional environment and strive for personal growth.

Structuralism, developed in the mid-20th century, involves analyzing texts using a formal method that aims to identify the fundamental structural and systemic patterns present within them. Poststructuralism emerged as a reaction against structuralism, challenging the belief in stable meanings and highlighting the existence of multiple interpretations in language and literature. The transition from modernism to postmodernism among critics resulted in an increased focus on the subjective experience, power dynamics, and cultural backdrop of literary study. Based on these findings, researchers proposed a novel interdisciplinary method of literary criticism, which involves incorporating information from many cross-disciplinary fields. The subjects include cultural studies, post-cultural theory, and gender studies. The critics will enhance their interpretations by incorporating their historical, social, and political perspectives as a foundation for analyzing the books and plays. According to Smith (2020), the evolution of modern literary criticism diverges from earlier aesthetic formalism. It is characterized by a shift towards cultural and context-based reading, which establishes a connection between power dynamics and imagery.

One of the contributions on our list comes from Jones (2019), who contends that "Critical approaches, such as poststructuralist theories, have challenged traditional concepts of authorship and textual meaning, thereby creating opportunities for alternative interpretations of literature.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This paper investigates the evolution of modern literary criticism, focusing on the shift from structuralism to postmodernism. It does so by analyzing Edward Said's critique of Orientalism. This text adds to the current discourse on power dynamics in literature and culture, emphasizing their significance. Said's critique reveals inherent preconceptions and biases in Western narratives concerning the East, prompting researchers to analyze how literature mirrors and perpetuates conventional ideas by emphasizing power dynamics. This will result in a more sophisticated comprehension of social representation.

The importance of this paper is in its influence on both the postcolonial viewpoint and the literary canon. Researchers examining literary works from non-Western nations have included methodology influenced by Said's work, leading to a reevaluation of traditional approaches in light of his critique. This paper aims to enhance the literary discourse by including varied views and questioning established conventions through a discussion of the notions proposed by Said.

The paper also emphasizes the importance of the skeptic's role in shaping literary discussion. Said's critique questions the validity of traditional film critics and urges researchers to examine their work's social and political consequences. The paper seeks to highlight the significance of efficient communication via message and encourage scientists to embrace a more interdisciplinary approach in their research.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Modern researchers mostly use Arabic literature to analyze Arabic literature. Scholars have always strived to incorporate Western literary criticism theories and adapt them to suit their objectives. The objective of these studies is to analyze the influence of Arab critics on the area of literary criticism, as well as to demonstrate the impact of global trends on their work. Their worth lies in their capacity to demonstrate the multitude and intricacy of Arabic literary critique. The scholarship offers vital perspectives on how Arab critics, such as Edward Said, have critically examined Orientalism in literature. This will facilitate an understanding of how cultural identity shapes conceptual perceptions. This knowledge is essential for effectively connecting Western and Arab education, thereby facilitating the exchange of viewpoints and encouraging intercultural dialogues.

V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Academics have greatly advanced the topic of Arabic postcolonialism by carefully analyzing and offering fresh readings of Arabic texts. They have concentrated on investigating literary trends in peripheral regions and challenging the predominance of Eurocentric viewpoints. Academics like Edward Said have concentrated their efforts on revealing the preconceived notions and prejudices that are deeply embedded in Orientalist discussions. Their research emphasizes the substantial impact of social power dynamics on the depiction of Western civilizations in literature. This signifies the commencement of deconstructing the prevailing viewpoint on literature and emphasizes a variety of interpretations that give priority to the voices of marginalized individuals.

Literary criticism has consistently developed, using many methodologies influenced by theoretical frameworks that shape how critics examine and evaluate literature. The literary criticism movement known as structuralism, which originated in the mid-1950s, is commonly referred to by the same name. Textual analysis aims to uncover the underlying and essential components inside texts, facilitating the detection of patterns and systems inherent in these texts. Barthes and Levi-Strauss (1967, 1966), advocates of structuralism, emphasized the importance of signals and language in shaping a reader's interpretation of literary messages.

By integrating Said's critique within the framework of the development of contemporary literary criticism from structuralism to postmodernism, we may acknowledge his contribution as more than a mere progression of established intellectual paradigms. On the contrary, it rigorously analyzes and questions the constraints of the existing frameworks. Said's interdisciplinary approach combines approaches from history, anthropology, sociology, and literary theory to thoroughly analyze Orientalist discourses in literature (Said & Hitchens, 2003). By integrating postcolonial theory with traditional theories of identification politics, he advanced contemporary understandings of identity by emphasizing how representations shape our perceptions of ourselves and others.

Said's analysis, however crucial in the progress of contemporary literary criticism, also demonstrates its distinctiveness and intellectual depth. This is because it not only draws inspiration from but also questions the fundamental principles and protective structures of structuralism and postmodernism. Said's multifaceted approach incorporates insights from history, anthropology, sociology, and literary theories, enabling a thorough analysis of the cognitive framework of Orientalists in literary works (Said et al., 2003). Postcolonial theories challenge traditional ideas about identity politics by highlighting the significant impact of representations on our perception of ourselves and others.

Orientalism denotes the involvement of Western authors, designers, and artists who integrate aspects of Eastern culture into a Western framework. The term "orientalism," created by Jane Hu, is frequently linked to the art of 19th century France. It pertains to artworks that have been affected by the painters' travels to North Africa, the Western Asian Mediterranean, and other countries, leading to the inclusion of subjects, color palettes, and artistic techniques from these locations. Orientalism encompasses the impact of both favorable and unfavorable elements on a person's everyday life. During the 19th century, Western nations started to establish control over Asia by implementing their colonial initiatives.

Initially, the West's acquisition of extensive information about this continent was vital for establishing substantial influence. Hence, the set of theories referred to as Orientalism offered a thorough examination of the culture and populace of Asia. Over a prolonged duration, Western scholars, under the influence of Edward Said's 1978 article *Orientalism*, were excessively inclined toward European concepts and presumptions, which impeded their capacity to appropriately assess the enigmatic East. Edward Said primarily concentrated on the diverse forms of Oriental studies prevalent in Europe. This area encompasses the examination of philology, linguistics, and ethnographic research, along with the scientific investigation and translation of writings from Eastern civilizations. Said hypothesized that Europeans perceived them as unsophisticated individuals, hence deeming them inferior to Westerners. Therefore, it was reasonable to deduce that their leadership and instruction could only originate from Europe.

He actively participated in disputes with the Orientalists, questioning their conviction that the Orient was unchanging and without the ability to make progress. He argued that the only way for the Orient to make advancements was by adopting Western ideals. Many Western researchers and intellectuals frequently use the word "Easternism" as a means to obscure their beliefs and biases within this particular way of thinking. Without a doubt, Said's main focus and examination were around "Orientalism" - a set of preexisting ideas that served as the basis for Western views and comprehension of East Asia and the Eastern world. Hence, Said formulated the concept of 'Eastern prejudice' which encompasses two fundamental elements) the conscious or unconscious promotion of the North as the standard and the South as a deviation from this standard, and b) the deliberate or unintentional Eurocentric favoritism. The essence of his thesis relied on the long-standing historical prevalence of erroneous and romanticized portrayals of Asia and the Middle East in the collective awareness of Western culture. These representations have been cleverly used to justify Europe and the US' swift pursuit of colonial and imperial supremacy.

Okasha vehemently condemns the conduct of indigenous Arab elites who have embraced the perspectives on Arabic culture propagated by American and British orientalists. Let us suppose that the East has been the most prosperous civilization globally, governed by the West for around 5,000 years since the release of Aeschylus's play, *The Persians*. Europeans exerted a dominant and enduring political influence over Asians, to the point where even impartial Western authors writing about the East were unable to recognize the inherent prejudice within their works. Said emphasized that, alongside the East's political supremacy, Western scholars have ceased to autonomously interpret the languages, history, and culture of other societies. Both individuals have analyzed the historical elements of Asia and shaped the present identities of the Orient, predominantly from a European standpoint that perceives the Orient as diverging from being "exotic" and "inscrutable".

Edward Said argues that Europeans displaced the influence and hegemony of the Orient from the Eastern to the Western side of the planet. This phenomenon was noted in the Orient, where it was classified as either civilized or uncivilized. He vehemently contended that this was purely a subjective perception, and was a misguided belief arising from the dichotomy between "them" and "us" or "ours" and "theirs." Europeans forged their own identity by juxtaposing themselves with others who were lacking in resources, utilizing the concept of Orientalism. Distinctive qualities became synonymous with the East, while contrasting traits were connected with the West. Native Europeans believed themselves as the dominant race and utilized this perception to justify their colonization of the Orientals, whom they considered to have an inferior mentality.

They would assert that this was their duty or their function in the world and that is how they contributed to civilization. The primary concern emerged when Europeans began systematically classifying the characteristics they associated with Orientals as a collective, and subsequently depicting and projecting these artificially constructed and generalized attributes in their literary works and other forms of media. The impact of the Orientals on European cognitive processes left a lasting mark and influenced their skewed perception of the Orientals. The Orientalist technique, which was influenced by prejudice, demonstrated the same bias. Scientists who were aware of the Oriental era conducted studies and produced papers that contributed to the decline of Orientalism (*Orientalism*, 1978).

Said posits that the evaluation of Orientalism encompasses a force, a specific discernment, and a desire for truth, which serves as the knowledge mechanism of a society that manipulates the Orient to acquire influence, authority, and understanding. It is primarily founded on the notion that the Orient is inferior to the West, leading to a tendency to overlook this difference and exaggerate this inferiority as a political ideology. Edward Said's *Orientalism* explores the Western creation of a unique scholarly tradition that originated from their deep preoccupation with the East, or as Said describes it, the Oriental world. However, in this particular tradition, the knowledge presented is not purely objective and unbiased. These impressive portrayals are centered around the suffering of indigenous people, serving as a foundation for the exploitation of the Western heritage by colonialists. Said's book explores both symbolic and tangible forms of aggression, focusing on the intersection of knowledge and politics. It highlights the urgent moral responsibility to raise awareness about the challenges faced by those affected by water scarcity, emphasizing the critical importance of sustainable water management for a secure water future.

Said's theory posits a clear and logical connection between Orientalism and Imperialism. According to this thesis, Orientalists either consciously collaborated or unconsciously facilitated the colonial domination of the Orient (Rassam, 1983, p. 79). The quest in Orientalism does not focus on the issue of accurately representing "other" civilizations, but instead results in a perplexing and unresolved predicament that overwhelms the reader. The author evades the topic by insinuating that his intention is not to manipulate culture but rather to inform the reader about the contextual factors that

gave rise to Orientalism and its subsequent repercussions. Orhan Pamuk argues that even though societies that are considered advanced and civilized often claim to be progressive, they frequently exhibit traits such as imperialism, racism, and ethnocentrism toward other cultures. If Europe is consistently constrained by this fundamental attribute, what enables it to function as civilized?

Said's discourses contributed to the existing debate by incorporating the framework into its abstract comprehension and introducing a fresh perspective by focusing the analysis on a specific aspect, namely 'the Orient'. The issue of "Orientalism" is currently being debated in the Anglo-Saxon world. Edward Said's book provides a comprehensive critique of Westerners, specifically French, English, and American history, literature, and sciences from the 18th century to the present day. Following Said's critique, which highlighted numerous concepts such as Eurocentric, imperialist, racist, and others, other scholars have developed critical works that analyze how writing conveys history. Contrarily, several authors who specialize in the region, particularly Bernard Lewis, have refuted Said's accusation and advocated for an approach that can be classified, to varying degrees, as 'Orientalist' (Halliday, 1983, p. iii). According to the information presented by Research Gate, the psychological consequences of prolonged space travel on astronauts encompass feelings of monotony resulting from restricted surroundings, stress caused by confinement, and sensory deprivation. It seems that Said prefers to adopt a purposefully narrow-minded approach, where writings in the social sciences and associated genres, like as journalism, tunneling writing, and literature, are completely disregarded.

Indeed, there are both similarities and correlations, but there are also secondary modes of administration that are contrary. While the occurrence of the instructions of real authorities, dominance, and exploitation is subject to verification, the assumption that the one is fiction lacks the same level of scrutiny. The ability to critically analyze literature in the same manner as social science discourses may be questionable. Cultural theorists, who derive their validity from the realm of literature, may find the current crisis of hubris to be too ambiguous. The main obstacle in critiquing Orientalism is the lack of Arabian perspectives and ideas in the conversation, which seems biased. In his other works, Said has been a sharp critic of the myths and politicians of the Middle East. He particularly criticizes the lack of intellectual life in the Arab world. While the government may have ambitions to construct large airports, it fails to prioritize the establishment of even a single entrance to a significant library. However, the lack of this criticism in his Orientalism prevents us from discussing how the Orientalists' topics and the East-West relations are portrayed in the region itself. This omission allows for a careless silence. In our marketing strategy, lead generation will be a crucial component. The website will include a comprehensive "Contact Us" section, enabling potential clients to easily reach out to our representatives. They can request a free consultation and obtain information about the high-quality services we provide.

Said's stance, influenced by the previous methodologies of Marxism (as seen in the writings of Gramsci) and postmodernist "high theory" (as presented by Foucault), has been the central point of focus in contemporary discussions on Orientalism. Said did not originate the concept of Orientalism, but he effectively utilized the premise of Foucault that knowledge is not "innocent" and has a significant impact on power dynamics, making his argument more compelling and influential. Said conducted a comprehensive examination of literary texts, travel literature, and several European papers. In doing so, he revealed a cultural description system that was heavily influenced by politics, concerns, stances, and power methods. Applying Ziauddin Sardar's ideas, "Orientalism" highlights the problem of Orientalism, which complicates the process of uncovering this Orientalism skeleton. However, due to Orientalism, we may find ourselves in a world where the singular reality is interpreted, articulated, and observed in many ways, leading to a significant gap in shared knowledge. To engage in a discussion on Orientalism, it is necessary to encourage individuals to move past this misconception and recognize what has been rendered imperceptible: to perceive the potential existence of an alternative perspective inside the depiction. It is conceivable that this image may have become warped over centuries due to the lack of a clear vision among individuals. Due to the absence of Orientalism, there is no neutrality or objectivity. By adhering strictly to a well-defined understanding of reality, the study becomes limited and influenced by personal opinions. Every individual participating in the subject possesses a preexisting background and knowledge, thus arriving with a past and prior experience. Many individuals carry this emotional burden, and many unquestioningly believe that there must be some underlying truth, possibly more profound, related to this topic; and that this reality could, in turn, facilitate comprehension of Eastern cultures. This book aims to completely revamp this concept.

Orientalism, in actuality, is just as untrue as the fake and artificial invention. This demonstrates the precise division and isolated incidents of the East, as determined from and by the East. The book "Sardar Orientalism" argues that Orientalism is not limited to the relationship between two nations, India and the Bible lands, as was commonly believed until the 19th century. The author, Said, supports this point by selectively focusing on Arab issues and disregarding the rest of the Orient or the Middle East. Said excludes Turkish and Persian studies as well as Semitic studies, which limits the historical and philological perspectives. Furthermore, Said's description of this period is flawed due to misconceptions about the events, methodologies, and concepts involved. Said frequently relies on tales and assumes the validity of contributions and discoveries made by non-Arab writers and travelers from different periods spanning from the Enlightenment Period to the Victorian era. The aforementioned argument is relatively limited in its ability to elucidate the motivations behind the English and French's fascination with Islam during the 16th and 17th centuries, notwithstanding their lack of any perceived authority over the Middle East. Critics argue that Said, along with other Eurocentric scholars, neglected to recognize the robust intellectual traditions of the Italians, Dutch, and Germans, and the significant influence they played. Lewis believed that the European fascination in the Middle East was primarily driven by the intellectual

achievements of Middle Eastern countries, rather than the influence of the French or the British. However, the Dutch and the Germans did not have any colonial projects in the Mideast.

If used correctly, Orientalist research, whether conducted by Europeans or non-Europeans, can provide valuable insights into the connections between colonialism and research findings. However, it is important to acknowledge that the validity of Orientalist research cannot be guaranteed, and the implications of colonialism on such research are also uncertain. Furthermore, Said's theory fails to explain why a significant portion of Orientalist studies did not contribute to the advancement of imperialism. Despite these criticisms, it is worth noting that Orientalism raises important questions and promotes a more comprehensive understanding of cultural diversity and our history. Academic critics substantiate the claim that knowledge is wielded as a kind of power, and these researchers have conducted studies on the impact of imperialism, which others have resisted. In addition to being accused of bias against the subjects of their research, these professors also faced criticism for purportedly harboring contempt and even hatred toward the individuals they researched. Undoubtedly, the part that receives the least attention but holds the utmost importance, according to modern Orientalist critics, is the issue of the authenticity and methodology of research findings based on Orientalism. Said has barely addressed this question and has paid very little attention to the scholarly writings of the scholars whose supposed attitudes, motives, and purposes are the focus of his book (Lewis, 1982, p. 54). This argument still pertains to the same issue concerning Edward Said's theory, which can also be applied to Robert Irwin's criticism. Said's theory posits that in the course of European history, each European individual who articulated their thoughts on the Orient made a concerted effort to exemplify the European attitude of acceptance towards the social and political matters of the Muslim world.

Irwin argues that the European studies of the Middle Eastern language, culture, and history were not as closely tied to Western colonial interests as Orientalism suggests. He is also highly skeptical of the value of comparing Orientalist studies with Western literary texts focused on the East, disregarding the distinctions between types of texts by considering them all as indications of colonialist discourse. Although acknowledging the significant influence of Orientalism on postcolonial ideas, George P. Landow, an English and Art History professor at Brown University in the United States, finds that Said's expertise is lacking. He mocks Said for ignoring the non-Arab Asian nation's non-Western oppression, the abundance of Occidentalism recommendations in the East towards the West, and issues related to sexuality. Orientalism assumes that Western domination and its negative political consequences are exclusive to the West's treatment of the East, rather than being a common occurrence in all societies. Landow also criticizes Orientalism's political focus for diverting attention away from the study of literature's linguistic, literary, and rhetorical aspects. Landow points out that Said overlooks China, Japan, and Southeast Asia when discussing "the East," but then criticizes the West for homogenizing the East.

The Middle East has been greatly disregarded, particularly in terms of the significant contributions made by Egyptian and Arabic scholars to various fields. One of Landow's criticisms of Said's argument is that he lacks sufficient knowledge about the history of European and non-European abuses. Another objection is that Said only focuses on the influence of the West on the East in the concept of manifest destiny. Landow argues that these effects were not only discriminatory but also multicultural. Additionally, Said fails to acknowledge other civilizations or aspects within the East. In addition, he criticizes Said's "substantial assertion that no European or American scholar could 'comprehend' the Orient." However, in his perspective, their actions can be classified as acts of fascism. Furthermore, Landow argues that Said failed to incorporate the perspectives of other scholars in his analysis, leading him to commit "the most significant scholarly error" in his work on Orientalism. In his book "Defending the West," Ibn Warraq argues that Said is culpable of committing notable intellectual errors that he openly denies in the revised edition of his work, particularly by oversimplifying and reducing the complexity of diverse human experiences through incorrect associations of essential characteristics with individuals and cultures. Additionally, Said is accused of making moral and political judgments without the necessary historical knowledge that responsible judgment relies upon.

He asserts that frequent use of rhetoric produces showy, meaningless, and conflicting language. In particular, Said emphasizes that "the Orient" is a nonexistent concept, challenging the Western scholars' paranoid creation of it with a more critical and radical approach. However, he contradicts himself by stating that despite this, two centuries of scholarly research in Europe and the United States have indeed produced a "growing systematic knowledge in Europe about the Orient" and "a considerable amount of specific positive understanding about the Orient." Furthermore, Said criticizes Orientalists for their lack of interest and ability in accurately representing the true Orient and Islam, despite their claim to possess extensive knowledge of it. He argues that they deny the existence of a genuine Orient, contrary to his own belief. The position of the Orient in comparison to the West is severely wrong. Warraq is accused of intentionally modifying Western civilization and of misunderstanding the role of various academics.

Charles Paul Freund argues in his post "The end of the Orientalist objection" that Edward Said's book *Orientalism* was a significant assessment of the Western perspective on these specific issues. Furthermore, Freund says that Said's objection persists in scrutinizing the political and social integration of the Western world with the Muslim world and other Eastern societies. Could someone provide me with a definition of Orientalism? As per Said's seminal publication, the Western world has long "managed" its relationship with the Islamic world through the copyright, social, and political framework. This methodology has heavily relied on reductionist distortion as its fundamental method. Both copyright movie reviewers and reporters who have followed his footsteps have stated that Orientalism reduces the East and its people to an enigmatic "Other." This Other, frequently a Dark Other, was commonly perceived as inferior to the West due to their lack of

education, harshness, cowardice, excessive sensuality, susceptibility to deceit, and general contempt from others. The West, in its self-centered manner, perceived itself as knowledgeable and progressive when contrasted with the Eastern Other, whom it derogatorily described.

In response to these objections, Edward Said writes in his study "Orientalism Reassessed" that my disagreement was that both classifications, like the Orient itself, existed solely as 'neighborhoods of analysis'. Each classification represented passions, desires, and RENEWABLE ENERGIES that were not only in intense disagreement but also in a state of open war. The terms 'Arab' or 'Muslim' as categories within 'The Orient' are highly loaded with political, spiritual, and historical implications. Therefore, it is essential for anyone using these terms to be well-informed about the significant controversial interpretations they carry, if any exist. The author of "Orientalism Reconsidered" argues that the deliberate suppression of the Orient as an entity posed a significant obstacle to Orientalism and its inherent connection to the colonial era.

Similarly, just as Orientalism involved a methodical endeavor that paralleled Europe's political domination and colonization of the Orient, it was via scientific investigation and assimilation that the Orient became integrated into Europe. Therefore, the East was perceived as an even more silent and distinct entity compared to Europe. The background of the Orient became a symbol of both ancientness and uniqueness when Europe began exploring it in the late eighteenth century, which sparked European interest and recognition. However, as Europe's economic, financial, and social development surpassed that of the Orient, Europe shifted its focus away from the Orient.

Hegel, Marx, Burkhardt, Nietzsche, and Spengler, among other renowned historical philosophers, recognized the value of Oriental history in depicting a region of immense ancientness and the aspects that needed to be discarded. Moreover, film critics have discussed various forms of symbolic representation and visual imagery that suggest a preference for "Westering." For instance, the works of Keats and Holderlin often portray the Orient as losing its historical significance and importance to the global spirit, which is shifting from Asia to Europe. However, it is important to note that there are significant differences in the many criticisms of Orientalism, taking into account both our ideological background and approach. Certain individuals, known as nativists, employ Orientalism as a basis for asserting the benefits of a particular indigenous culture when making insurance claims. Some individuals, such as nationalists, oppose Orientalism as a means to protect their political convictions.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The given text presents a comprehensive analysis of Orientalism, especially focusing on the perspectives presented in Edward Said's seminal work. The text commences by placing Arabic literature in a current research framework, which frequently incorporates notions of Western literary criticism. This text examines the impact of Arab critics, such as Said, on literary criticism and their reaction to global trends. It highlights the significance of comprehending how cultural identity influences conceptual conceptions, especially in connecting Western and Arab educational frameworks.

In the realm of postcolonialism and literary criticism, scholars are recognized for their efforts to question Eurocentric perspectives and provide greater prominence to underrepresented voices in the field of Arabic postcolonial studies. Said's analysis of Orientalism in literature emphasizes the impact of social power dynamics on Western portrayals of non-Western societies.

The text explores the development of literary criticism, analyzing its progression from structuralism to postmodernism and investigating the approaches impacted by different theoretical frameworks. Structuralism, promoted by Barthes and Levi-Strauss, emphasizes the examination of texts to uncover fundamental elements in literary works.

The text examines Said's multidisciplinary methodology in analyzing Orientalist discourse, which combines history, anthropology, sociology, and literary theory. This approach aims to question established frameworks and emphasize the influence of representations in developing notions of identity and culture.

The text examines the notion of Orientalism, exploring its origins in Western representations of Eastern civilizations and emphasizing the inherent biases present in these depictions. The analysis of Said's criticism of Orientalism as a mechanism for Western hegemony and imperialism is examined, along with its implications for academic investigation.

The critiques of Said's work acknowledge issues raised by many scholars noting limitations in his analysis, including the oversight of non-Arab perspectives and the marginalization of other intellectual traditions. The criticisms encompass a wide range of objections, including allegations of oversimplification, prejudices, and inadequate historical knowledge.

Finally, the work presents a wide range of viewpoints on Orientalism, including its political, social, and cultural consequences, while also analyzing and criticizing Eurocentrism and colonialism in the debate.

VII. CONCLUSION

The paper explores the progression of modern literary criticism, specifically the shift from structuralism to postmodernism. It focuses on Edward Said's critique of Orientalism in literature as a case study. From this analysis, several important conclusions can be drawn.

Challenging Western Prejudices and Power Structures: Edward Said's critique of Orientalism has exposed inherent biases and power dynamics in the Western portrayal of the East. This crucial analysis has prompted a reevaluation of how literature reflects and perpetuates societal norms, and prejudices, and the way influential narratives reshape the discourse in literary criticism.

Said's critique has significantly impacted postcolonial philosophy and the literary canon by uncovering the hidden prejudice embedded in Western depictions of the East. Said's analysis of these representations has facilitated a reassessment of historical images, enabling a more nuanced comprehension of social identities, colonial legacies, and power dynamics within literary narratives. Rethinking the Role of the Critic: Conversations arising from Said's critique have prompted a reassessment of the critic's responsibility in shaping literary discourse. There has been a noticeable shift in literary critiques towards examining issues of power, representation, and identity. This has led to a deeper understanding of how literature reflects and influences societal norms, values, and power dynamics, resulting in a more socially engaged and politically aware literary criticism.

Promoting inclusivity and diverse perspectives in advertising: Said's objection has paved the way for a more comprehensive and varied approach to literary objection, providing underrepresented groups with the opportunity to express their viewpoints and challenge prevailing narratives. This shift towards inclusivity has broadened the discourse in literary studies, allowing for a more comprehensive range of perspectives, experiences, and viewpoints to be recognized and included in critical evaluations.

Edward Said's criticism of canonical methods of analysis and his call for scholars to consider the broader socio-political implications of their work have encouraged a culture to critically engage with literary texts. This significant perspective compels scholars to decode hidden biases, question dominant structures of power, and critically examine how literature influences and reflects societal ideals, fostering a more complex and multifaceted comprehension of literary works.

Facilitating the exploration of novel viewpoints and concepts:

Edward Said's profound critique of Orientalism has not only revolutionized contemporary literary criticism but has also paved the way for a more diverse, comprehensive, and dynamic approach to literary research. Said's work has fostered a dynamic and evolving community of literary research by examining established authority figures and embracing new ideas and perspectives. This community encourages diverse viewpoints and raises questions about entrenched power systems.

Analyzing Edward Said's criticism of Orientalism in the context of the evolution of modern literary criticism emphasizes the significant impact of fundamental approaches on the field. Said's work has fundamentally transformed the way literature is evaluated, analyzed, and understood by decoding inherent tendencies, questioning power dynamics, and promoting inclusivity. This has resulted in a more socially aware, politically engaged approach to literary criticism.

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Investigating the Impact of Educational Aspirations, Study Habits, Parental Involvement, and Institutional Environment on Saudi EFL Learners' Language Proficiency

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Abstract—The study assesses the impact of educational aspirations, study habits, parental involvement, and institutional environment on Saudi EFL learners' language proficiency. It also examines if the demographic profiles of Saudi EFL learners differently shaped their worldviews and responses. As the study focuses on how certain independent variables (educational aspirations, study habits, parental involvement, and institutional environment) impacted the dependent variable (language proficiency), a descriptive quantitative approach was employed to collect data from respondents using a self-designed questionnaire with partial adoption of modified items. A simple random sample method was used to select 131 respondents (10% of the population) from the undergraduate population at the College of Science & Humanities and College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. The findings revealed that educational aspirations followed by institutional environment, study habits, and parental engagement affected the language proficiency of Saudi EFL learners. One way ANOVA analysis showed that year/level of study causes significant differences in the means of the study respondents. However, no statistically significant difference was observed in the means of the responses based on the professional profiles of their parents. The findings of the study hold significance for both language instructors and policymakers for effective teaching and policy making.

Index Terms—level/year of study, institutional environment, learners' language proficiency, parents' professional profiles

I. INTRODUCTION

The growth and development of any country is directly linked to the quality of the education system. A quality education system prepares a professionally qualified workforce which is needed to run the affairs of their countries. That is why reforming the education system and programs and examining the reasons affecting learners are immensely significant for educational institutions (Alabdulkarem et al., 2021). Learning is an active process, and knowledge is generated and constructed according to the principles of constructivism. This learning process is affected by many factors, including the learning and study habits of the learners and their prior experiences. They have a direct connection with the learning outcomes. This explains the increasing number of research studies dealing with the factors that affect the language learning and teaching process.

Multiple studies have been carried out to investigate the factors affecting the academic performance and language learning process in different contexts. For example, Shah et al. (2013) investigated Saudi Arabia's EFL education factors and professional educators' instructional approaches. To gather qualitative evidence, the study team performed semi-structured interviews involving five chosen EFL teachers. The study identified three primary barriers to teaching English as a second/foreign language: students' lack of interest, detrimental institutional policies, and social, cultural, and religious sensitivities. Liton (2016) identified academic, educational, and socio-cultural challenges that impede the learning of English in prep year students at a Saudi university. A questionnaire was utilized to conduct the interview and record the participants' thoughts. The data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. It was revealed that cross-cultural challenges, lack of motivation, EFL methods, and pre-university curricular deficiencies promote learners' negative opinions towards learning English.

All these studies have been carried out to examine how certain factors adversely affect student academic performance. They found a deep connection between independent variables and academic achievement. However, there is a lack of

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studies on how certain variables such as parental guidance, learners' aspirations, educational surroundings, and learners' study habits impact the English proficiency and skills of Saudi EFL learners. This study addresses this literature gap.

A. *Research Problem*

Saudi language learners encounter multiple challenges in acquiring effective English language skills. Many environmental and societal elements affect students' language learning attitudes (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Several studies investigated foreign language learning factors. However, they often disregarded the views of learners. Therefore, this study examines learners' opinions and perspectives regarding the barriers and challenges they experience in learning and acquiring language skills. This differentiates this study from others.

B. *Statement of Purpose*

The study focuses on investigating the opinions of Saudi EFL learners, their attitudes regarding English, and the impact of contextual factors impacting their English language proficiency and performance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In any environment, the educational process is viewed as an amalgamation of conventions and information flow between educators and students, influenced by social and cultural norms. Sociocultural norms influence students, educators, and members' views and expectations, as well as classroom conversations, generating an inclusive educational setting. Multiple studies have dealt with how these factors impacted academic performance and language skills. For example, Alabdulkarem et al. (2021) utilized a questionnaire disseminated among four Saudi Arabian colleges to examine the relationship between thirty-two variables and the students' reported academic performance. 3565 students participated in the survey which focused on factors such as childhood, secondary education, and organized and uncontrolled activities. This study found considerable relationships between many variables and the RAP. It was found that factors such as parental education, employment field, school type, and mosque attendance significantly affect reported performance. The findings hold immense implications for enabling educators and policymakers to improve education results. Wilder (2014) argues that parents' involvement has been acknowledged as one of the important factors that impact the academic success of students. The study carried out a synthesis of the results of nine meta-analyses that looked at the impact of parental involvement on students' performance. The findings revealed that there was a positive relationship between academic achievement and parental involvement. This connection was consistent across grade levels and ethnic groups. Al-Sohbani (2015) investigates various factors that cause poor skills in ESL students. Student responses were collected using an open-ended questionnaire. Lack of family and societal encouragement, lack of instructional and study tools, lack of student motivation, and imperial and colonial attitudes regarding English contributed to poor skills. Sabbah (2016) investigated the study habits of studying English as a foreign/second language at a community college, in Qatar. A five-Likert questionnaire involving 6 dimensions of study habits was designed and sent to students. The descriptive and ANOVA results show a difference of much significance in students' mark levels. Ansong et al. (2019) replicated earlier studies that explored the connection between educational aspirations, self-efficacy, and academic success. Pathway analysis and route invariance research were used on 4282 adolescents to examine causal connections and gender moderation. The results demonstrated interventions such as academic self-efficiency may bolster academic success and achievement in places where a lack of resources acts as a demotivating force.

Daniel et al. (2018) examined English learning and teaching issues in Kuwait. The study evaluated students' self-reported speaking skills using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery to measure socio-educational framework components for second language (L2) acquisition. It was found that all socio-educational model items affected second language learning equally. Ahmad (2015) examined conventional and sociological constraints on English language training and explored new ways to improve learning and instruction in Saudi Arabia. Four qualitative and quantitative analyses revealed that Saudi EFL students developed boredom in English due to their traditional and socio-cultural milieu. The employment of inexperienced instructors, a lack of motivation, insufficient learning environments, and an ineffective teaching method were the main barriers to learning English in Saudi Arabia. The findings are immensely useful for overcoming language barriers. Lodhi et al. (2019) examined the impact of the school environment on the performance of English language learners. A questionnaire was designed, validated, and sent to the study participants. The responses were analyzed quantitatively. The results showed that an excellent educational setting improved the children's language skills. Haberman et al. (2020) looked at several numbers of factors influencing English language learning of learners. The study examined reading comprehension, writing skills, students' parents, and study habits outside of the classroom. The findings of the pre-test and post-test results demonstrated that the role of English native teachers is not as important in the improvement of the vocabulary of learners, writing skills, and comprehension is not as is often thought by both students and parents. Jabeen et al. (2022) looked at the impact of the educational setting on the achievement of students as understood by their teachers at a senior secondary level. A questionnaire was adopted and 17 female and 17 male schools as samples with around 340 teachers. The study was descriptive. The findings imply that the impact of the educational atmosphere on student outcomes differs significantly between female and male

teachers. The results demonstrate that male and female teachers differed on how school atmosphere affected student performance.

A. Research Questions

1. What is the impact of educational aspirations, study habits, parental involvement, and institutional environment on the language skills of Saudi EFL learners?
2. Do factors such as educational aspirations, study habits, parental involvement, and institutional environment shape Saudi EFL learners' differently?

B. Hypothesis

1. Years/levels of study do not significantly affect respondents' responses.
2. Parents' professional profiles do not significantly affect respondents' responses.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

We used a quantitative approach (descriptive quantitative design) because the study is based on data and evaluates how variables such as study level and the professional background of learners' parents influence the dependent variables (language proficiency). Creswell and Creswell (2017) recommend using a quantitative approach when studying data with numbers and statistics.

B. Study Participants' Description

The study includes undergraduate learners from the College of Science & Humanities and College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. They are at various levels of their degree programs. All survey participants are native Arabic speakers who use English as a foreign language. English has been their required coursework for the past seven or eight years. A total of 131 students were chosen at random using a simple selection method.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	131	100%
Female	0	0%
Others	0	0 %
Level/Year of Study		
6th to 8 th Level	11	8.4%
4th to 5th Level	41	31.3%
1st to 3 rd Level	79	60.3%
Parents' Profession		
Government Job	100	76.4%
Private Job	13	9.9%
Self-Employment	9	6.9%
No Employment	9	6.8%

C. Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire was developed after a careful review of the existing studies. Some of the items were self-developed, while others were adopted from earlier studies to meet the study requirements. The demographic profile component of the questionnaire is followed by Saudi EFL learners' educational aspirations, study habits, parental engagement, and institutional environment. Participants were given guidelines to rate their opinions on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree=5, agree=4, neutral=3, disagree=2, and strongly disagree=1).

D. Validity

English questions were translated into Arabic because the respondents lacked adequate English skills. Language experts in Arabic and English approved the translation. The questionnaire and its items were confirmed using a pilot study. The questionnaire incorporated expert thoughts and opinions.

E. Data Collection Method

The questionnaire was used to collect the data from the respondents. A link to the questionnaire was sent to students and instructors. The respondents received the English and Arabic versions to better convey their ideas. They were advised to read each component's instructions carefully. As they were assured of confidentiality and that their responses would be used for academic and research purposes, they felt free to express their true opinions.

F. Data Interpretation

After obtaining enough responses, the data from the Google Form was downloaded and exported into an Excel sheet. Having assigned the numeric codes (5= very true of me, 4= true of me, 3= neutral, 2 untrue of me, and 1= very untrue of me), the data was transferred to SPSS. As the questionnaire consisted of only closed-ended items, the data was quantitatively analyzed. Data means, frequency, and standard deviation were determined using descriptive statistics. One-way ANOVA was used to contrast the demographic profiles of respondents. The following criteria were employed to interpret and categorize perceptions/perspectives.

TABLE 2
PERCEPTION/PERSPECTIVE AND PROSPECTS LEVEL MEASURING SCALE

Mean Square	Level
3.01 – 4.50	high
1.51 – 3.00	moderate
1.00 – 1.50	low

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The results displayed in Table 3 demonstrate Saudi EFL learners' educational aspirations, study habits, parental involvement, and institutional environment. It is revealed that Saudi EFL students hold a high degree of educational inspirations which motivate them to enhance and English language proficiency. The second factor which affect positively their language learning and proficiency is the institutional environment. It also showed that Saudi EFL learners' study habits play a significant role in improving and enhancing their language skills. The factor that plays a minimum role in developing their English language proficiency is parental involvement.

TABLE 3
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS, STUDY HABITS, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Questions/Items	Overall means
1. Saudi EFL learners' educational aspirations	4.47
2. Saudi EFL learners' institutional environment	3.86
3. Saudi EFL learners' study habits	3.54
4. Saudi EFL learners' parental involvement	3.21

TABLE 4
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

STATEMENTS	VTM	TM	N	UM	VUM	MEAN	LEVEL
1	109(83.2%)	14(10.7%)	5(3.8%)	2(1.5%)	1(0.8%)	4.74	HIGH
2	97(74%)	26(14.8%)	7(5.3%)	0	1(0.8%)	4.66	HIGH
3	83(63.4%)	34(26%)	9(6.9%)	4(3.1%)	1(0.8%)	4.48	HIGH
4	79(60.3%)	27(20.6%)	18(13.7%)	5(3.8%)	2(1.5%)	4.34	HIGH
5	94(71.8%)	26(19.8%)	6(4.6%)	4(3.1%)	1(0.8%)	4.58	HIGH
6	64(48.9%)	28(21.4%)	24(18.3%)	13(9.9%)	2(1.5%)	4.06	HIGH

VTM=very true of me, TM= true of me, N=neutral, UM=untrue of me, VUM= very untrue of me

Table 4 shows Saudi EFL learners' educational aspirations measured from items 1 to 6. In item no 1, 93.9% (VTM 83.2% & TM 10.7%) of the respondents stated that they studied because they wanted a good career and employment. While 3.8% stayed neutral, 1.5% differed, and 0.8% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 4.74 which is accepted as high as per the supposed criteria. In the next item no. 2, 88% (VTM 74% & TM 14.8%) of the respondents accepted that they studied because they wanted to get a position of power/influence in their lives. 5.3% were neutral. No one differed, and 0.8% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 4.66 which is classed as high. Regarding item no. 3, 89.4% (VTM 63.4% & TM 26%) of the respondents said that the purpose of their study was to contribute to community empowerment. 6.9% maintained neutrality, 3.1% rejected it, and 0.8% strongly opposed the assertion. The mean is 4.48 which is classed as high. In item no. 4, 80.9% (VTM 60.3% & TM 20.6%) of the respondents said that they studied because they wanted to become mentors for the next generations. While 13.7% remained neutral, 3.8% dissented, and 1.5% severely opposed the statement. The mean is 4.34 which is also accepted to be high. About item no. 5, 91.6% (VTM 71.8% & TM 19.8%) of the participants said that they wanted to study because they wished to enter the business world. 4.6% were neutral, 3.1% disagreed, and 0.8% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 4.58 which is also classed as high. In the last item no. 6, 70.3 % (VTM 48.9 & TM 21.4%) of the respondents said that they wanted to study because they wished to enter the academic world. While 18.3% stayed neutral, 9.9% disagreed, and 1.5% strongly agreed with the opinion. The mean is 4.06 which is classed as high as per the established criteria.

TABLE 5
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' STUDY HABITS

Statements	VTM	TM	N	UM	VUM	Mean	Level
7	23(17.6%)	33(25.2%)	35(26.7%)	27(20.6%)	13(9.9%)	3.19	moderate
8	80(61.1%)	37(28.2%)	4(3.1%)	7(5.3%)	3(2.3%)	4.4	high
9	45(34.4%)	37(28.2%)	34(26%)	13(9.9%)	2(1.5%)	3.83	high
10	24(18.3%)	30(22.9%)	33(25.2%)	33(25.2%)	11(8.4%)	3.17	moderate
11	39(29.8%)	29(22.1%)	28(21.4%)	16(12.2%)	19(14.5%)	3.4	moderate
12	25(19.1%)	31(23.7%)	24(18.3%)	36(27.5%)	15(11.5%)	3.11	moderate
13	39(29.8%)	24(18.3%)	32(24.4%)	24(18.3%)	12(9.2%)	3.41	moderate
14	42(32.1%)	47(35.9%)	29(22.1%)	8(6.1%)	5(3.8%)	3.86	high

VTM=very true of me, TM= true of me, N=neutral, UM=untrue of me, VUM= very untrue of me

Table 5 displays Saudi EFL learners' study habits. In item no. 7, 42.8% (VTM 17.6% & TM 25.2%) of the respondents said that they found it hard to focus when they studied. 26.7% maintained neutrality, 20.6% disagreed, and 9.9% strongly disapproved of the opinion. The mean is 3.19 which is classed as moderate as per the established criteria. In the next item no. 8, 89.3% (VTM 61.1% & TM 28.2%) of the study respondents claimed they usually sought a quiet place to study. While 3.1% stayed neutral, 5.3% differed, and 2.3% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 4.4 which is accepted to be high. Regarding item no. 9, 62.6% (VTM 34.4% & TM 28.2%) said that they allocated time each week to study the course material. 26% were neutral, 9.9% opposed, and 1.5% severely opposed the assertion. The mean is 3.83 which is classed as high. About item no. 10, 41.2% (VTM 18.3% & TM 22.9%) of the respondents said that they could not remember much of what they studied. 25.2% were neutral, 25.2% differed, and 8.4% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.17 which is classed as moderate. As far as item no. 11 is concerned, 51.9% (VTM 29.8% & TM 22.1%) of the respondents agreed that their lack of discipline/disorganized lifestyle caused them to waste time. While 21.4% remained neutral, 12.2% disagreed, and 14.5% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.4 which is accepted to be moderate. In item no. 12, 42.8% (VTM 19.8% & TM 23.7%) said that they had trouble finding study time. 18.3% maintained neutrality, 27.5% differed, and 11.5% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.11 which is categorized as high. About item no. 13, 48.1% (VTM 29.8% & TM 18.3%) said that prioritizing the content of my English chapter was a challenge for them. 24.4% of respondents chose to remain neutral, 18.3% dissented, and 9.2% strongly refuted the opinion. The mean is 3.41 which is classed as high. In item no 14, which is the last item of this category, 68% (VTM 32.1% & TM 35.9%) of the respondents said that they reviewed their chapters/lessons after completion. While 22.1% of the respondents stayed neutral, 6.1% disagreed, and 3.8% strongly disapproved of the statement. The mean is 3.86 which is categorized as high.

TABLE 6
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Statements	VTM	TM	N	UM	VUM	Mean	Level
15	50(38.2%)	21(16%)	20(15.3%)	22(16.8%)	18(13.7%)	3.48	moderate
16	24(18.3%)	27(20.6%)	27(20.6%)	26(19.8%)	27(20.6%)	2.96	moderate
17	60(45.8%)	37(28.2%)	17(13%)	9(6.9%)	8(6.1%)	4	high
18	27(20.6%)	18(13.7%)	17(13%)	36(27.5%)	33(25.2%)	2.77	moderate
19	29(22.1%)	10(7.6%)	27(20.6%)	39(29.8%)	26(19.8%)	2.82	moderate
20	57(43.5%)	39(29.8%)	12(9.2%)	11(8.4%)	12(9.2%)	3.9	high
21	26(19.8%)	12(9.2%)	14(10.7%)	36(27.5%)	43(32.8%)	2.55	moderate

VTM=very true of me, TM= true of me, N=neutral, UM=untrue of me, VUM= very untrue of me

Table 6 represents Saudi EFL learners' parental involvement in their studies and English language proficiency. In item 15, 54.2% (VTM 38.2% & TM 16%) of the respondents said that their parents were very concerned about their English proficiency. While 15.3% stayed neutral, 16.8% disagreed, and 13.7% strongly disapproved of the statement. The mean is 3.48 which is classed as moderate. In the next item 16, 38.9% (VTM 18.3% & TM 20.6%) of the respondents said that their parents often discussed their English grades with the teachers. 20.6% were neutral, 19.8% expressed disagreement, and 20.6% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 2.96 which is classed as moderate. Regarding item no. 17, 74% (VTM 45.8% & TM 28.2%) of the respondents said that whenever they struggled with English, their parents supported them. While 13% stayed neutral, 6.9% dissented, and 6.1% expressed dissatisfaction with the statement. The mean is 4 which is categorized as high. In item no. 18, 34.3% (VTM 20.6% & TM 13.7%) of the respondents said that their parents were involved in their everyday homework. 13% remained neutral, 27.5% disagreed, and 25.2% severely opposed. The mean is 2.77 which is classed as moderate. About item no. 19, 29.7% (VTM 22.1% & TM 7.6%) of respondents said that their parents are unfamiliar with their English class challenges or successes. 20.6% expressed neutrality, 29.8% disagreed, and 19.8% expressed a strong rebuttal of the opinion. The mean is 2.82 which is classed as high. As far as item no. 20 is concerned, 73.3% (VTM 43.5% & 29.8%) of the respondents said that their parents continuously inquired about their English test scores. 9.2% chose to remain neutral, 8.4% disagreed, and 9.2% strongly disagreed with the opinion. The mean is 3.9 which is categorized as high. In item no 21 which is the last item of this category, 29% (VTM 19.8% & 9.2%) of the respondents said that their parents never encouraged them to enhance their English language proficiency. 10.7% stayed neutral, 27.5% differed and 32.8% severely opposed. The mean is 2.55 which is considered high.

TABLE 7
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Statements	VTM	TM	N	UM	VUM	Mean	Level
22	65(49.6%)	35(26.7%)	20(15.3%)	3(2.3%)	8(6.1%)	4.11	high
23	51(38.9%)	34(26%)	30(22.9%)	7(5.3%)	9(6.9%)	3.84	high
24	64(48.9%)	37(28.2%)	17(13%)	8(6.1%)	5(3.8%)	4.12	high
25	40(30.5%)	22(16.8%)	32(24.4%)	23(17.6%)	14(10.7%)	3.38	moderate

VTM=very true of me, TM= true of me, N=neutral, UM=untrue of me, VUM= very untrue of me

Table 7 shows Saudi EFL learners' institutional environment. In item no. 22, which is the first item of this category, 76.3% (VTM 49.6% & TM 26.7%) of the respondents said that their college/university's language resources made learning English fun and joy. 15.3% were neutral, 2.3% differed, and 6.1% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 4.11 which is categorized as high. In the next item no. 23, 64.9% (VTM 38.9% & TM 26%) of the respondents said that they were skilled in English because it is the medium of communication and teaching in their college. While 22.9% maintained neutrality, 5.3% differed, and 6.9% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.84 which is classed as high. Regarding item no. 24, 77.1% (VTM 48.9% & TM 28.2%) of the participants said that their university administration strove constantly to enhance students' English. 13% were neutral, 6.1% differed, and 3.8% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 4.12 which is classes as high. In item no. 25, which is the last item of the study questionnaire, 47.3% (VTM 30.5% & TM 16.8%) of the respondents said that the college environment was not conducive for English speaking and learning. While 24.4% stayed neutral, 17.6% differed, and 10.7% severely opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.38 which is classed as high.

V. SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS BASED ON THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A. Saudi EFL Learners' Educational Aspirations and Educational Level

Table 8 given below represents the findings of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Saudi EFL learners' educational aspirations based on their educational level. The findings show that educational level causes a difference in the means of learners' responses as the F value (3.86106) exceeds the critical F value (3.47805). Hence, HO1 is rejected.

TABLE 8
ANALYSIS OF ONE-WAY ANOVA REPRESENTING SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS BASED ON THEIR EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	2234.267	4	558.5667	3.86106	0.037834	3.47805
Within Groups	1446.667	10	144.6667			
Total	3680.933	14				

B. Saudi EFL Learners' Educational Aspirations and Profession of Their Parents

Table 9 illustrates the findings of a one-way ANOVA for Saudi EFL learners' educational ambitions based on their parents' professional profiles. The calculated F value (1.894456) is below the critical F value (3.055568), indicating that parents' professional profiles do not affect learners' responses. HO2 is accepted.

TABLE 9
ANALYSIS OF ONE-WAY ANOVA REPRESENTING SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS BASED ON THEIR PARENTS' PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1740.5	4	435.125	1.894456	0.163783	3.055568
Within Groups	3445.25	15	229.6833			
Total	5185.75	19				

VI. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The research investigated the impact of educational aspirations, study habits, parental involvement, and institutional environment on Saudi EFL learners' language proficiency. It was revealed that Saudi EFL learners held a high degree of educational inspiration that motivated them to develop their English language proficiency and communicate with people in English. This finding aligns with (Ababneh, 2016; Al Noursi, 2013; Assulaimani & Alqurashi, 2024; Orfan, 2020; Rahman et al., 2021). However, these findings are inconsistent with multiple studies (Alrabai, 2016; Jamshed et al., 2024; Shah et al., 2013). In addition, it was also revealed that Saudi EFL learners' study habits played a significant role in developing and enhancing their language skills. This finding is supported and corroborated by many studies (Gahir et al., 2022; Jafari et al., 2019; John et al., 2020; Sabbah, 2016; Sasi & Anju, 2020). However, many studies (Ahmad, 2018; Marzulina et al., 2019; Lawrence, 2014; Nonis & Hudson, 2010; Silverrajoo & Hassan, 2018) contradict this finding as they do not find any role or connection between students' academic performance and study habits and language proficiency. The study also found that parental involvement played a role in helping Saudi EFL learners acquire enhanced English skills and improve their language proficiency. This finding is supported and corroborated by

many studies (Fan, 2001; Hanif & Alwi, 2019; Jaiswal & Choudhuri, 2017; Jamshed et al., 2024; Mutodi & Ngirande, 2014; Oluwatelure & Oloruntegbe, 2010). The research also revealed that the institutional environment also affected Saudi EFL learners positively. This finding aligns with many studies (Getie, 2020; Le & Le, 2022). However, some studies (Ahmed, 2015; Jamshed et al., 2024) contrast with this finding as they found that the institutional environment acted as a demotivating factor for language skills and proficiency.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study investigated Saudi EFL students' educational aspirations, study habits, parental engagement, and institutional environment. It was found that Saudi EFL students had many educational inspirations which positively affected their academic performance and language skills. The study also found that the institutional environment had a positive impact on their academic success and language proficiency. It was also revealed that Saudi English-language learners' study habits greatly affected their language proficiency and academic performance. The investigation also found that parental involvement also contributed to the development and enhancement of their language proficiency and academic performance. While parents' professions did not affect learners' responses, the respondents' level/year of study caused significant differences in the responses of learners. The study holds immense significance for language instructors and policymakers for enhancing language curriculum and study materials.

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Overcoming Academic Writing Challenges: English Language Learning Strategies for Chinese International High School Students in Blended Learning Environments

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Abstract—With the increasing globalisation and the integration of blended learning models, academic English writing has become a critical skill introduced at the high school level. This study investigates how Chinese international high school students develop and apply effective English language learning strategies to address the specific challenges of academic English writing in a blended learning environment that combines offline EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and online ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction. Utilising a qualitative research design, three participants in this special blended learning environment are selected as specific cases. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, student learning logs, and classroom observations. Findings reveal that students employ a combination of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies to address issues in this special blended learning environment. The study underscores the importance of integrating technology with traditional teaching methods, highlighting the effectiveness of blended learning in supporting students' academic writing. These insights offer valuable guidance for educators in enhancing teaching practices and for policymakers in designing supportive educational frameworks.

Index Terms—blended learning environment, English academic writing, English learning strategies, international high school students

I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalisation, the education landscape is undergoing significant transformations, with blended learning emerging as a prominent model. Blended learning, which combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online components, offers numerous advantages, such as flexibility and access to diverse resources (Bizami et al., 2023; Ortega et al., 2023). However, this model also presents unique challenges, particularly in the realm of academic writing, which poses significant difficulties for many students who must navigate complex expectations for structure, coherence, and argumentation (Muhria et al., 2023; Ahmadi & Sultani, 2023).

For international high school students, these challenges are often compounded by additional factors such as language barriers and cultural differences. These students, who are part of an increasingly interconnected global education system, must adapt to academic standards that may differ significantly from those in their home countries. Research by Wei et al. (2024) highlights the difficulties international students face in blended learning environments, including mastering academic writing conventions in English.

International high school students' academic writing challenges in a blended learning context are multifaceted. They must develop proficiency in English while also understanding and applying complex academic writing norms. This dual burden can be daunting, requiring effective strategies to manage both language learning and academic writing skills. Consequently, understanding what strategies they would employ to address these challenges is crucial for supporting international high school students' academic success.

The aim of this study is to explore the specific English learning strategies employed by international high school students to overcome these challenges in academic writing within a blended learning environment. By examining these strategies, the study seeks to provide insights that can inform educational practices and policies, ultimately enhancing the support provided to this unique student population.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Definition and Classification of English Language Learning Strategies

English learning strategies are defined as specific behaviours, steps, or techniques that students use during the learning process to enhance their language ability and learning effectiveness. Various experts have offered definitions and classifications of these strategies, highlighting their significance in improving learning outcomes. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), these strategies include cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies, which play essential roles in processing information, self-regulating learning, and facilitating interaction, respectively.

Cognitive strategies involve the direct processing of language materials, such as using repetition to memorise vocabulary, summarising to understand content, and guessing word meanings from context (Chamot, 2014). Metacognitive strategies include planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning process, such as setting goals, checking comprehension, and assessing learning outcomes to improve methods (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Social strategies focus on interaction with others to enhance learning, including seeking help from teachers or peers, participating in discussions, and sharing resources, which also boost confidence and motivation (Griffiths, 2003).

Oxford (2011) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding English learning strategies, categorising them into direct and indirect strategies (see Figure 1).

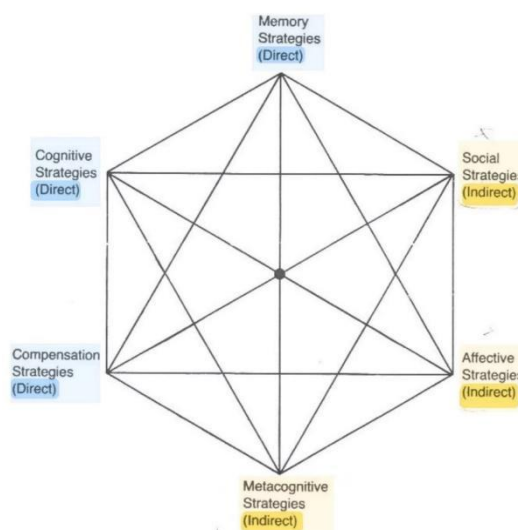


Figure 1.1 Interrelationships Between Direct and Indirect Strategies and Among the Six Strategy Groups. (Source: Original.)

Figure 1. Interrelationships Between Direct and Indirect Strategies and Among the Six Strategy Groups (Source: Oxford, R., 1990, Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know, p. 15)

Direct strategies involve the immediate handling of the language material and are divided into three types: memory, cognitive, and compensation. Memory strategies help learners store and retrieve new information. Cognitive strategies involve the manipulation and transformation of language materials, such as through repetition, summarisation, and guessing meanings. Compensation strategies enable learners to use the language despite knowledge gaps, such as using synonyms or gestures to convey meaning.

Indirect strategies, on the other hand, support and manage learning and are categorised into metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning process, helping learners organise and control their learning activities. Affective strategies are related to managing emotions, motivation, and attitudes towards learning, such as using relaxation techniques or self-encouragement. Social strategies involve learning through interaction with others, emphasising cooperation and communication, such as asking questions, seeking feedback, and engaging in group work.

Oxford's model further updates this theoretical framework by recognising the interconnectedness and interdependence of these strategies. She emphasises that learners often use a combination of strategies tailored to their specific needs and contexts. This holistic approach aligns with Griffiths (2018), who notes that successful language learners can flexibly employ various strategies to overcome learning challenges.

In her later work, Oxford (2017) introduces the Strategic Self-Regulation (S²R) Model, which provides an updated definition and classification of learning strategies. The S²R Model posits that learners actively and strategically regulate their learning processes through a combination of direct and indirect strategies. This model underscores strategy use's dynamic and adaptive nature, emphasising that effective language learners continually adjust their strategies based on their specific learning contexts and goals.

According to the S²R Model, strategic self-regulation involves three key components: strategic planning, strategy use, and strategic evaluation. Strategic planning involves setting clear learning goals and selecting appropriate strategies.

Strategy use encompasses the implementation of chosen strategies in various learning tasks. Strategic evaluation involves assessing the strategies' effectiveness and making necessary adjustments to improve learning outcomes.

This updated theoretical framework highlights the importance of a flexible, learner-centred approach to strategy use. It aligns with Griffiths' (2018) assertion that successful language learners can adaptively employ various strategies to address different learning challenges. By emphasising strategic self-regulation, Oxford's model provides a comprehensive understanding of how learners can effectively manage and enhance their language learning processes.

Recent studies have highlighted the pivotal role of English learning strategies (LLS) in language acquisition for international students, improving language proficiency, enhancing learning initiative, and fostering self-efficacy. Research by Mahmud and Nur (2018) indicates that international students often prefer cognitive and metacognitive strategies over social strategies. Their study found that repetition and summarisation are frequently used cognitive strategies, while planning and goal setting are common metacognitive strategies. Social strategies, though beneficial, are less preferred due to potential cultural and communication barriers. Additionally, Peng and Patterson (2022) highlighted the influence of cultural identity and motivation on the use of learning strategies, finding that high motivation levels can mitigate the negative effects of strong ethnic identification on English proficiency, emphasising the importance of metacognitive strategies in managing learning processes.

Similarly, Woo and Kim (2024) observed that self-regulated learning strategies significantly impact writing achievement in EFL contexts, underscoring the critical role of metacognitive strategies. By effectively utilising these strategies, students can better cope with various learning challenges and improve learning efficiency and outcomes (Sani & Ismail, 2021). The holistic application of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies enables students to navigate the complexities of language learning more effectively, enhancing their overall academic performance.

B. Common Problems in Academic Writing

International high school students often face numerous challenges in academic writing. According to Wei et al. (2024), these problems can be summarised as misunderstandings due to cultural differences, unfamiliarity with academic regulations, limitations in language proficiency, communication barriers, and adapting to technology. Understanding these problems in depth can better support students in their academic writing development.

First, misunderstandings due to cultural differences are a significant challenge for international high school students in cross-cultural environments (Wei et al., 2024). Many students also lack strong evidence to support their viewpoints in their writing due to a lack of critical thinking skills or unfamiliarity with constructing effective arguments with proper resources (Ganapathy, 2016). Therefore, students often state their viewpoints without in-depth analysis and argumentation, making the article unconvincing.

Secondly, unfamiliarity with academic regulations makes it difficult for students to structure and format their written work properly (Wei et al., 2024). The problem of unclear structure is also common in academic writing. The logical structure of the article and the connections between paragraphs are not tight, making it difficult for readers to follow the author's thoughts and affecting the overall coherence of the article (Chapelle, 2003). Students often ignore the logical relationship between paragraphs or fail to effectively organise and arrange their viewpoints and arguments, making the article appear loose and incoherent.

Thirdly, limitations in language proficiency, including the application of vocabulary and grammar, restrict the accuracy and variety of students' academic writing. A lack of sufficient vocabulary makes it difficult for students to express complex ideas accurately. Insufficient vocabulary not only affects students' expression abilities but also limits their ability to understand and analyse complex academic texts. Grammatical errors are also common problems in academic writing for international high school students. Common grammatical errors include tense confusion, subject-verb disagreement, etc. These errors affect the coherence and accuracy of the article (Chakraborty et al., 2021).

Fourthly, communication barriers from the student's perspective also challenge improving their academic writing. Speaking anxiety is a significant reason why students cannot effectively communicate with teachers in academic writing classes. This issue is particularly prominent in English classes, where students often hesitate to participate in discussions due to concerns about their pronunciation. After class, students may also lack initiative in communicating with teachers and classmates, further hindering the completion of academic writing tasks. This problem is especially evident in activities requiring group discussions and peer reviews (Makovskaya & Radjabzade, 2022).

The last challenge in academic writing nowadays is adapting to technology. Students may have varying levels of familiarity with the digital tools and platforms used in academic settings, such as learning management systems, online libraries, and research databases. This can result in delays, lower quality of submissions, and reduced participation in collaborative projects. Students may face challenges accessing reliable internet, necessary software, or hardware, especially if they are studying remotely (Yunus et al., 2022).

These problems not only affect the quality of students' writing but also limit their further development in the academic field. Research indicates that effective English learning strategies are the key to solving these problems. Planning and organising strategies (such as brainstorming and outlining) help students clarify article structure and main content before writing. Resource utilisation strategies (such as using dictionaries and online tools) help students expand vocabulary and check grammatical errors. Self-monitoring and evaluation strategies (such as self-editing and peer feedback) help students continuously improve and enhance their writing quality during the writing process (Dhawan, 2020; Bao, 2020; Maslawati et al., 2018).

C. *Research Gaps in Blended Learning for Language Acquisition*

Integrating blended learning environments in language learning has shown numerous benefits, including flexibility, increased access to resources, and enhanced student engagement (Boelens et al., 2017; Bond et al., 2021). Blended learning combines the advantages of traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning, providing a comprehensive approach to education (Masrom et al., 2019). This model supports various learning styles and needs, allowing for more personalised and effective language acquisition (Nikolopoulou & Zacharis, 2023). Additionally, Yunus et al. (2022) emphasise that blended learning enhances learners' autonomy and motivation, which are crucial for effective language learning.

Despite these benefits, there are notable gaps and limitations in the existing research on English learning strategies in academic writing within blended learning environments. Current research primarily focuses on college students or native English speakers, with relatively few studies on international high school students, limiting our understanding of how younger learners adapt and apply learning strategies in a blended learning context. Additionally, while various effective learning strategies have been theoretically established, there is a lack of empirical studies on how students from different backgrounds use these strategies in practice, necessitating more research to observe and analyse the actual application and effectiveness of these strategies among diverse populations (Taheri et al., 2020). Furthermore, in blended learning environments, students need to switch between traditional classrooms and online learning, which increases the complexity and challenges of learning. There is insufficient research on the application of student strategies in this specific environment, and the transition between different learning modes can create additional barriers that impact the effectiveness of learning strategies (Wei et al., 2024).

In summary, while blended learning offers significant advantages for language acquisition, more empirical research is needed to explore how international high school students use English learning strategies in these environments. Addressing these research gaps can provide valuable insights into improving educational practices and supporting the academic writing skills of international students.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research design, sample, instruments, data collection, and analysis methods used to investigate the learning strategies of international high school students in overcoming academic writing challenges in a blended learning environment, ensuring methodological rigour and reliability.

A. *Research Design*

This study employs a qualitative research design using a case study approach. Qualitative research design is suitable for deeply understanding complex social phenomena and individual behaviours (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In this study, we chose a case study method to explore in detail the English learning strategies international high school students use to solve problems in English academic writing. This method allows us to collect comprehensive data through various means, providing an in-depth understanding of the participants' learning experiences and strategy use (Yin, 2009). By utilising a case study approach, we can closely examine the contextual factors that influence students' learning strategies, offering rich insights into their academic writing processes (Stake, 1995).

B. *Participants*

The participants in this study are international high school students from China. These students attend an international high school in China and are enrolled in the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) online courses. They are in a blended learning environment, with conditions for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESL (English as a Second Language) learning. We selected students from the 11th and 12th grades to obtain a representative sample. The specific sample size is three students, including two males and one female, aged between 16 and 18. The diversity of these students ensures the sample's representativeness, aiding in a comprehensive understanding of the learning strategies used by students from different backgrounds.

C. *Research Instruments*

We employed multiple data collection tools to obtain comprehensive research data. These tools included semi-structured interviews, student logs, and classroom observations.

(a). *Semi-Structured Interviews*

The semi-structured interviews aimed to understand the specific strategies students use during academic writing. The interview questions focused on the strategies employed by students at different writing stages (e.g., preparation stage, writing stage, revision stage). Each interview lasted 30 to 40 minutes and was recorded and transcribed. The interview questions included, "How do you prepare for your academic writing?", "What strategies do you use to organise your thoughts during writing?" and "How do you revise and improve your articles?"

(b). *Student Learning Logs*

The student learning logs recorded the strategies used by students and the problems they encountered during the academic writing process. The student's learning log is a post-course requirement for the online course, intended to document the student's activities throughout the learning process.

(c). *Classroom Observations*

Classroom observations were used as triangulation to enhance the reliability of the study. Through the researchers' evaluation of students' classroom performance using an observational checklist, we could assess the authenticity of the information described in the semi-structured interviews and student logs and determine whether it aligned with their actual classroom behaviour.

D. *Data Collection and Analysis Methods*

Interview and Learning log data undergone content analysis. First, researchers transcribed all data and conducted an initial reading to identify key themes and patterns. In Interview transcripts, the data of these three participants were labelled as M1IN, M2IN, and F1IN, and in the learning logs, the data of these three participants were labelled as M1LL, M2LL, AND F1LL. Then, using NVivo 12 software, the data was coded and classified, generating theme labels and codebooks to analyse further the specific strategies used and their effectiveness (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method allows us to identify the strategies commonly used by students at different writing stages and analyse the effectiveness of these strategies.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings from semi-structured interviews, students' learning logs, and classroom observations, followed by an integrated discussion. The findings are structured around five key challenges Wei et al. (2024) identified that international high school students face in English academic writing: misunderstandings due to cultural differences, unfamiliarity with academic regulations, limitations in language proficiency, communication barriers, and adapting to technology. In the findings, we mainly analyse the different strategies students employ in online versus offline English learning environments based on each challenge; the discussion then focuses on how these strategies align with existing theories and models of language learning, such as Oxford's (2011) classification of learning strategies and the S²R Model (Oxford, 2017), providing insights into optimising these strategies to support students in a blended learning context better.

A. *Main Findings*

(a). *Misunderstandings Due to Cultural Differences*

In the online learning environment, students rely on personal efforts and self-adjustment to bridge cultural gaps. They mentioned that searching for culture-related information online helps understand the cultural context of academic writing, and they use multiple forums to seek explanations and clarifications about cultural nuances in academic texts.

For example:

*"I often **search online** for information about Western culture, so I can better understand the **background and requirements** of the article."* (M1IN)

*"To write a culturally relevant essay, I check **multiple sources online** about the norms and values related to my topic."* (F1IN)

During offline EFL classes, face-to-face guidance is crucial for understanding cultural differences. Students indicated in interviews that teacher guidance helps them better adapt to cultural differences, and teachers also provide contextual examples and share personal experiences to illustrate cultural points, which aids in bridging cultural gaps and enhances students' understanding. For instance:

*"Whenever I don't understand something, **the teacher** patiently explains it to me, which is very helpful."* (M2IN)

*"**My teacher** helps me understand the **cultural aspects** that are not clear from the text itself."* (M1IN)

(b). *Unfamiliarity With Academic Regulations*

In the online learning environment, students seek teacher guidance through class comments and after-class communication, actively utilising feedback to align their writing with academic standards. They claim that the teacher's explanation and comments on writing format enable them to focus on academic writing standards and guidelines. For example:

*"I carefully read the **teacher's comments** and revise my article based on this **feedback**."* (F1LL)

*"When the teacher points out my mistakes in **using MLA format**, I make sure to correct them in the next draft."* (M2IN)

During offline EFL classes, students refer to peers' formats and structures to learn academic regulations. They often learn by observing and imitating their classmates' work. Peer reviews are common practices that help students internalise academic writing norms. For instance:

*"I often ask **classmates** and see how they write their articles, then **try to imitate them**."* (M1LL)

*"Seeing how my **peers structure** their essays helps me understand the **proper format** better; that's real examples rather than a template."* (F1IN)

(c). *Limitations in Language Proficiency*

In the online learning environment, students use translation tools to overcome language barriers and help understand instructions and requirements. These translation tools, including language learning apps and online dictionaries, help students to build their vocabulary and comprehension skills.

*"Whenever I encounter unfamiliar words, I rely on **online translation tools** to quickly understand the meaning of the sentence."* (M2IN)

*"I use **online dictionaries and translation apps** to ensure I understand the academic texts, and I can also use the dictionary to learn how to use some words."* (F1LL)

During offline EFL classes, students seek help from teachers and diligently follow their instructions. When they face any confusion related to their language proficiency restrictions, they ask teachers for help in and after class to clarify their understanding.

*"**The teacher explains** the assignment requirements in detail during class, making my writing process clearer."* (M2IN)

*"My **teacher's individual explanations** help me grasp the **nuances** of the language better."* (M1IN)

(d). *Communication Barriers*

In the online learning environment, students normally communicate with teachers through email to resolve communication barriers, while online discussion boards and chat groups facilitate communication among students and teachers. Students mentioned in the interview and their learning log about the details:

*"Since it's **difficult to meet teachers** after class, I ask them questions via **email** to get timely responses."* (F1IN)

*"I find **emailing** my teachers very helpful when I need assignment clarification. Sometimes the **chat group and discussion group** on the learning forum also helps me to gain clear instructions from my teacher."* (M2LL)

Due to the fear of communication with teachers during offline EFL classes, students rely more on peer support. Asking peers for help before tending to their teachers, students overcome communication barriers and build confidence in interacting with teachers:

*"Sometimes I'm **afraid to ask the teacher directly**, so I ask **classmates** for advice first."* (M1LL)

*"I often **discuss my doubts with friends** before approaching the teacher, then I have strong confidence to talk to my teachers."* (F1IN)

(e). *Adapting to Technology*

In the online learning environment, students choose to adapt to technology by watching tutorial videos. Also, sharing experiences with peers provides students valuable assistance. Through communication with peers, students can learn different methods of using tools. For example:

*"I often **watch educational videos**, which greatly help my learning, and I discuss **different software methods** with **classmates**."* (M1LL)

*"Learning from **video tutorials** and exchanging tips with **friends** makes it easier to use new tools."* (F1LL)

During offline EFL classes, students seek guidance from teachers both in and after class. The practice of online tools helps students' offline learning and facilitates their online task achievements. The in-person help from offline teachers can also visualise and clarify how to apply the tools, as students mentioned in an interview:

*"The teacher **teaches us how to use some online tools**, making it easier for me to complete assignments for both online and offline classes."* (M2IN)

*"Having the teacher **explain the use of digital tools in person** helps me integrate them into my work."* (M1IN)

Through integrated analysis of interviews and field notes, it was found that students exhibit high flexibility and creativity in using learning strategies. For instance, in one observation, researchers noted that a student conducted detailed brainstorming, created a comprehensive outline, and enhanced their arguments by researching relevant literature during preparation for writing. These observations are consistent with students' descriptions in interviews and journals, validating their strategy use in academic writing.

B. *Discussion*

This study reveals the various learning strategies international high school students use to address challenges in English academic writing (Figure 2), encompassing direct and indirect strategies. These strategies play a crucial role in helping students overcome major writing challenges.

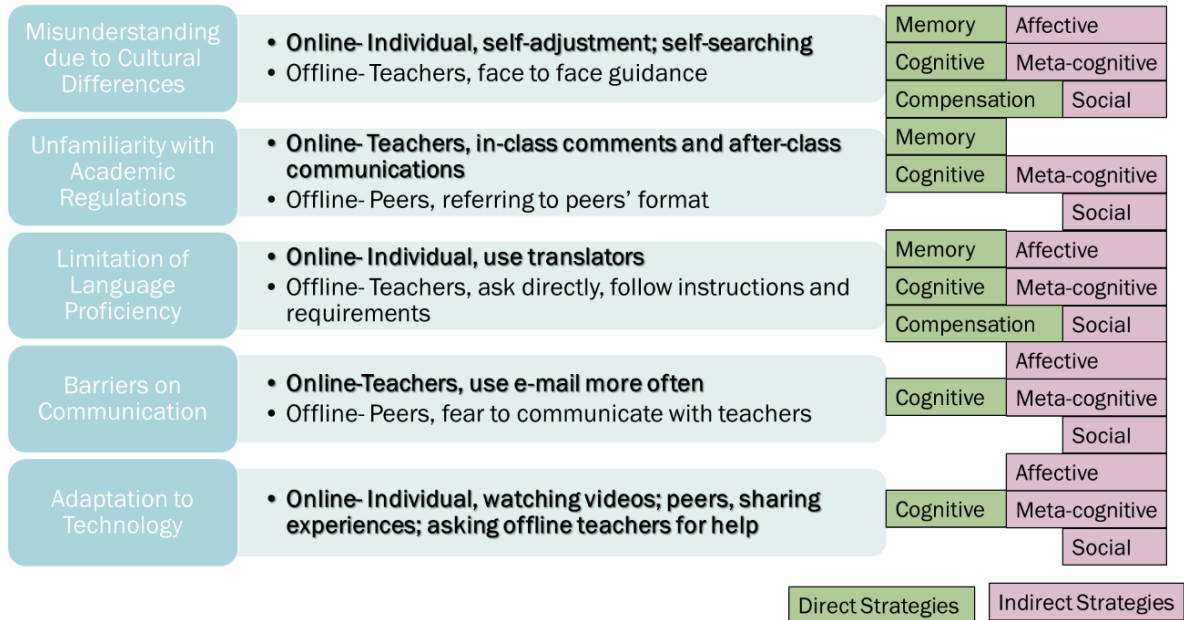


Figure 2. Learning Strategies Used by International High School Students in Addressing English Academic Writing Challenges

(a). *Misunderstandings Due to Cultural Differences*

When facing cultural differences, students rely more on self-adjustment and self-searching online, while offline, they depend on face-to-face guidance from teachers. This indicates that despite the vast amount of information technology can provide, direct guidance from teachers is indispensable in cross-cultural understanding. This finding emphasises the importance of combining technology and traditional teaching methods in blended learning environments.

This study aligns with previous research that underscores the critical role of cultural context in language learning strategies. Oxford (2011) highlighted that understanding cultural nuances is essential for effective language acquisition, and this study reinforces that notion by demonstrating how students actively seek cultural information online and rely on teachers for deeper cultural insights. Furthermore, Wei et al. (2024) discussed the challenges international students face due to cultural differences and the necessity of teacher support in bridging these gaps, consistent with our findings. Technology is a valuable resource for students to explore cultural contexts in blended learning environments independently. At the same time, traditional face-to-face interactions with teachers provide the nuanced understanding that technology alone cannot offer. This combination is crucial for helping students navigate the complexities of academic writing in a cross-cultural setting.

(b). *Unfamiliarity With Academic Regulations*

Students compensate for their unfamiliarity with academic regulations through online teacher feedback and offline peer guidance. Online feedback provides immediate suggestions for improvement, allowing students to align their writing with academic standards quickly. For instance, students reported that they frequently revise their work based on detailed comments received from their teachers through online platforms. This immediate and targeted feedback is crucial for helping students understand specific areas where they need improvement, which aligns with findings by Dhawan (2020) on the benefits of real-time feedback in online learning environments.

Offline, peer guidance plays a significant role in helping students understand and apply academic regulations. By observing and imitating their classmates' work, students can learn the correct formats and structures required for their assignments. This peer learning process is particularly effective as it provides practical examples that students can follow, enhancing their understanding through direct observation. Griffiths (2003) supports this learning method, emphasising the importance of social strategies in language learning, where students learn from their peers.

Combining these feedback sources – online teacher feedback and offline peer demonstrations – helps students gradually adapt to and master academic regulations. This blended approach ensures students benefit from immediate, individualised feedback and practical, peer-based examples. It highlights the effectiveness of integrating different feedback mechanisms to support student learning, a concept noted by Bao (2020), who discussed the importance of multiple feedback sources in blended learning environments. By leveraging online and offline resources, students can develop a more comprehensive understanding of academic regulations, ultimately improving their academic writing skills.

(c). *Limitations in Language Proficiency*

Students use translation tools and teacher guidance to overcome language barriers, demonstrating how the combination of technology and interpersonal support helps improve students' language proficiency. Online translation tools provide immediate help by allowing students to understand unfamiliar words and phrases quickly. This real-time assistance is

crucial for enabling students to comprehend instructions and academic texts without significant delays. However, while translation tools are effective for immediate comprehension, they do not always provide the nuanced understanding necessary for mastering a language. This is where teacher guidance becomes indispensable. Detailed explanations and guidance from teachers help students understand the context and proper language usage, which translation tools alone cannot offer. During offline classes, teachers can provide personalised feedback and elaborate on the subtleties of the language, helping students grasp more complex grammatical structures and idiomatic expressions. This direct interaction enhances students' ability to apply their knowledge accurately in their writing.

Combining the instant assistance from online translation tools with the in-depth understanding provided by teacher guidance creates a comprehensive support system for language learning. This blended approach not only helps students overcome immediate language barriers but also builds their long-term language proficiency. The findings support Oxford's (2011) theory of strategically using cognitive and metacognitive strategies in language learning. This study also reflects the insights of Chakraborty et al. (2021), who noted the critical role of teacher feedback in overcoming language challenges in online education.

(d). Communication Barriers

Students communicate with teachers via email in online environments while relying on peer support offline. This reflects their adaptation to different communication channels and emphasises the importance of social strategies in academic writing. Email communication allows students to seek clarification and feedback outside of class hours, which supports continuous learning.

The reliance on email for teacher interaction requires students to develop strong self-regulation and proactive communication skills. This method of communication helps students practise formal writing and precise question framing, which are valuable skills in academic writing. According to Griffiths (2003), social strategies, such as seeking help from teachers and peers, are crucial for language learning and academic success.

Peer interactions provide a supportive environment where students can discuss difficulties and share solutions. This peer-based learning is essential as it offers relatable explanations and emotional support, fostering a collaborative learning experience. Oxford (2011) highlights the significant role of social strategies, including peer support, in enhancing language learning through meaningful interactions.

(e). Adapting to Technology

Students adapt to technology by watching videos and sharing experiences with peers, demonstrating the importance of self-directed and collaborative learning. Teacher guidance in offline environments helps students better utilise technological resources, improving learning outcomes. Peer interactions further enhance technological adaptation as students exchange tips and experiences, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Teacher guidance in offline environments complements these efforts by providing structured support and personalised instruction. Teachers help students navigate technological resources more effectively, ensuring they can apply these tools to their academic work. These kinds of support are essential for navigating new technological tools and platforms, as Oxford (2011) noted, which emphasised the role of social strategies in effective language learning.

The findings of this study are consistent with some key points in existing literature. Oxford (2017) points out that language learning strategies are crucial for improving language proficiency, and this study further validates this view, especially in the context of academic writing. Chakraborty et al. (2021) emphasise grammatical errors in online education, and this study also identifies similar grammatical challenges, demonstrating how students use various strategies to address these problems. Wei et al. (2024) highlight that cultural differences and academic regulations are major challenges for international students, and this study, through detailed interviews and journal data, further reveals specific strategies students use to address these challenges.

V. CONCLUSION

This study explores the English learning strategies employed by international high school students in addressing academic writing challenges within a blended learning environment. The primary objectives were to identify the specific strategies used by these students and evaluate their effectiveness in overcoming issues such as insufficient vocabulary, grammatical errors, inadequate argumentation, and unclear structure. Through qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, student logs, and classroom observations, the research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how students navigate academic writing tasks in both online and offline settings.

Despite the rich insights provided, this study has several limitations. The small sample size of only three students may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should consider increasing the sample size to obtain more representative data. Additionally, all participants were from China, which may affect the broad applicability of the results. Including students from diverse cultural backgrounds in future studies will help comprehensively understand the impact of cross-cultural differences on academic writing strategies. Lastly, while multiple data collection tools were used, the study primarily relied on students' self-reports, which may introduce subjective bias. Combining observational and experimental methods in future research could provide more objective data.

This study makes significant theoretical contributions by enriching the understanding of the application of English learning strategies in academic writing, particularly among international high school students. It validates Oxford's (2011, 2017) classification theory, demonstrating the application of the combination of various strategies in academic writing. Moreover, the study highlights how the combination of technology and traditional teaching methods effectively supports students in blended learning environments. It also underscores the impact of cultural background on strategy choice, providing new empirical support for research in cross-cultural education.

Practically, the findings offer valuable implications for teaching practice, curriculum design, student self-management, and policymaking. Teachers can utilise these insights to guide students more effectively by combining online and offline methods to cater to specific needs. Educational institutions can develop more flexible curricula integrating online resources and face-to-face guidance to help students overcome academic challenges. The study emphasises the importance of self-adjustment and strategy selection, encouraging students to use various strategies to enhance their academic writing quality. Policymakers can promote blended learning models, providing more teacher training and student support to enhance academic development.

The implications of this study suggest several directions for future research. Expanding the sample range to include more international high school students from diverse cultural backgrounds will enhance the generalizability of the findings. Conducting longitudinal studies to track strategy use and academic writing development over extended periods will provide deeper insights into the long-term effects of strategy use. Employing mixed research methods, including quantitative and qualitative techniques, will yield more comprehensive and nuanced understandings. Finally, further exploring the integration of technology and traditional teaching methods will support international students' academic writing and overall development more effectively.

In conclusion, by analysing the learning strategies used by international high school students in solving problems in English academic writing, this study reveals the importance of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies in addressing various academic challenges. The findings enrich the empirical foundation of learning strategy theories and provide valuable references for teaching practice and educational policy. Future research should continue to expand the scope and depth of investigation to support international high school students' academic success more comprehensively.

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The Interaction and De-Categorization of Word Meaning Categories—The Radical Stage of Word Meaning Evolution*

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Abstract—This paper employs the framework of "dynamic categorization" from cognitive linguistics to examine a more radical phase of word meaning derivation. Specifically, it investigates the interaction between word meaning categories and de-categorization in order to elucidate the principles governing word meaning derivation. Through a comprehensive analysis of extensive Chinese and English corpora, our findings indicate that the interaction between word meaning categories primarily is manifested in two forms: (1) expansion between adjacent categories; (2) expansion between analogous categories. The expansion between adjacent categories encompasses linguistic, conceptual, and factual expansions, whereas expansion between analogous categories involves both objective and psychological similarities. Such interaction between word meaning categories may result in partial grammaticalization, antonymization, and polysemy. De-categorization, on the other hand, is primarily achieved through word conversion, grammaticalization, and subjectivization. These processes contribute to the evolution of word meaning beyond conventional clustering models, transitioning from concrete to abstract and from literal to figurative interpretations.

Index Terms—dynamic categorization, interaction/spanning, de-categorization

I. INTRODUCTION

Since 1984, the concept of "dynamic categorization" emerged with Hopper and Thompson's introduction of "de-categorization". Subsequently, scholars such as Taylor (1989), Lakoff (1987), Liu (2008), Wen and Zeng (2018), Zeng and Wen (2019), Zeng (2020), Wu and Zhan (2022), and Wei and Zhao (2024) explored dynamic categorization of word meaning from various perspectives. This theory significantly contributes to understanding the rules governing word meaning derivation, facilitating the analysis and prediction of its developmental trends. While scholars recognize the close relationship between the evolution of word meaning and the dynamic development of lexical categories, few have systematically expounded upon the theory of dynamic categorization. Wen and Zeng (2018) provided the first systematic definition: due to the dynamic nature of categories and the objective construction of meaning, semantic categories undergo a dynamic development driven by working mechanism such as metaphor, metonymy, and prominence. This development includes: (I) gradual change within the category itself; (II) the interaction/spanning between two categories; and (III) de-categorization. Gradual changes within categories mark the initial phase of lexical derivation, involving partial deprivation, attenuation, expansion, shrinkage, generalization, or specification of word meanings. Interaction and spanning between lexical categories and de-categorization denote the radical stage of word meaning evolution. This paper will illustrate the behaviors and rules governing dynamic categorization of word meaning through the analysis of numerous examples in discourse.

II. INTERACTION/SPANNING BETWEEN ADJACENT OR SIMILAR CATEGORIES

Interaction or spanning between categories can be categorized into interactions or spanning between similar categories and those between adjacent categories.

Expansion between adjacent categories occurs within the same domain matrix, whereas expansion between similar categories involves conceptual expansion across two different domain matrices. This means that individuals leverage known and familiar conceptual content to understand unfamiliar or unknown semantic categories. For instance, the symbol "head," originally used to denote a part of the human body, now encompasses a range of new conceptual categories such as "the head of the mountain," "the head of the parade," and "head of a company," emphasizing the attribute of "top or forefront" from the source domain. As a result, two entities belonging to distinct conceptual categories become linked due to similarities in their attributes.

A. Interaction/Spanning Between Adjacent Categories

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Adjacent categories primarily denote categories that are closely related to each other. Expansion between adjacent categories entails conceptual broadening within the same domain matrix, involving different entities. The cognitive perspective on adjacency was initially introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who posited that metonymy is rooted in physical or causal connections. This definition encompasses adjacency within language, reality, and conceptual frameworks.

(a). Adjacency in Language: Co-Occurrence and Adjacency in Language Structure as Well as Sharing of Word Meanings

The linguistic adjacency of categories is primarily observed through their proximity and co-occurrence within the language structure. The most prevalent instances of adjacency between language categories occur in horizontal combinations and constructions. We mainly discuss expansion between adjacent categories in constructions.

Constructions represent fundamental components of a language system, encapsulating significant facets of human experience. Goldberg (1995) defined a construction as follows: "C is a construction when and only when C is a form-meaning pair <Fi, Si>, and some aspects or the meaning Si of the form Fi cannot be strictly predicted from the constituents of C or other existing constructions" (p. 78). This definition underscores two critical points: constructions consist of paired forms and meanings, and the meaning of a construction cannot always be deduced from its individual components. Within constructional grammar, a wide array of constructions exist. Fillmore (1988) categorized idioms into substantive idioms, such as the fixed Chinese idiom "一日三秋" (a day seems as long as three years), and formal idioms. Formal idioms are partially open, allowing for temporary supplementation of certain content, exemplified by constructions like "V 来 V 去" (V to and fro).

Form and meaning represent the fundamental elements of any construction. For instance, consider the verb-object construction of "送 (send) + object" in Chinese. The core meaning of the verb-object form of "送" is defined by its constructional form, specifically involving relocating someone or something or altering possessive relationships. While the core meaning of this construction remains relatively stable, the meanings of its components undergo dynamic development. This construction functions as a formal idiom, allowing for temporary fillers in its parts. These temporarily filled components, along with their neighboring constructional element "送," interact and span across adjacent categories. In the verb-object construction of "送," the change in the immediately adjacent object results in a corresponding change in meaning. There are two primary types of "送 + object" constructions: "送" + noun object and "送" + verb object, with the former being more typical.

(1) "送" + noun object

a. 过几天我亲自送她回学校。

I will accompany her on her way back to school in a few days.

b. 雪中送炭。

Offer charcoal in snowy weather.

c. 我晚上给你送书过来, 我已经全部看完了。

I will return the book to you this evening because I've already finished it.

d. 明天你也要去送亲吗?

Are you going to escort the bride tomorrow too?

e. 很多老百姓都自发地来为海瑞送葬。

Lots of people spontaneously attended Hai Rui's funeral.

In example (1)a, where the person "她" (her) is the object, "送" signifies accompanying someone to a destination. In example (1)b, with "炭" (charcoal) as the object, "送" means to give as a gift. Example (1)c, where "书" (book) is the object, "送" implies returning something. In example (1) d, with "亲" (wedding) as the object, "送" denotes escorting the bride. Example (1)e uses "送" to mean conveying a deceased person for burial. From example (1)a to (1)e, "送" consistently interacts with the noun object in adjacent categories. The word meaning of "送" in examples (1)a to (1)c is the most typical, as the subsequent object is directly affected. With different fillers in examples (1)d and (1)e, the constructional or purposive meaning of "送" is transformed, showing varied interpretations of the verb. Nevertheless, these examples still fall within the typical semantic categories of "送".

(2) "送" + verb object

a. 明天我们将送别克劳恩。

We will see Klein off tomorrow.

b. 我们会尽快送呈函件至上级汇报事情进展。

We will submit the letter to the superiors to let them know how things are going.

c. 因为犯了严重的错误, 他被学校送遣回国。

He was repatriated home due to a severe mistake he had made.

d. 这些财产已送还原主。

The property has been returned to the original owner.

e. 我把手放在它奔走的前方，待它爬进我的掌心后，轻轻地把它送归到地板上。

I put my hand in front of where it is running towards, and laid it down gently on the floor.

The meaning of "送" in constructions like "送" + verb undergoes more significant changes compared to "送" + noun. As the filler shifts from a typical noun to a verb, "送" interacts closely with the adjacent component in examples from (2)a to (2)e, leading to semantic expansion. The lexical scope of "送" has broadened, no longer strictly indicating "accompanying someone" or "giving". Instead, it functions as a light verb closely aligned in meaning with the verb it precedes. For instance, "送别" equates to "别" (say goodbye); "送呈" translates to "呈" (submit); "送遣" means "遣" (repatriate); "送还" means "还" (return); "送归" means "归" (give back). In these cases, "送" serves to intensify the verb's meaning.

Linguistic adjacency involves syntactic co-occurrence within horizontal combinations and constructions. Syntactic position and the shift in combinatorial function primarily drive lexical grammaticalization. Thus, the broadening and spanning of categories through linguistic adjacency can result in the partial grammaticalization of word meanings. This phenomenon applies not only to individual categories but also informs the analysis of dynamic categorization within compound categories, which will be explored further in a separate article.

(b). *Expansion Between Conceptual Adjacent Categories*

Cognitive linguists, based on the Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM), categorize adjacency into two types: (1) adjacency between the whole and their parts; and (2) adjacency among parts within the same ICM. This adjacency serves as the foundation for metonymy, which plays a significant role in the interaction and spanning between adjacent lexical categories.

1. *Adjacency Between the Whole and Its Parts*

Wen and Ye (2006) categorized the adjacency between wholes and their parts into several systematic categories: thing models, constitution models, scale models, complex event models, category-attribute models, among others.

Initially, in thing models, adjacency between the whole and its parts is manifested through the relationship between the entirety of the thing and its individual components. For example,

(3) Eating peanuts is of great benefit to human health.

In example (3), "peanuts" specifically denotes the edible part—the peanut kernel within peanuts. This semantic transformation of "peanut" relies on the conceptual relationship between the whole thing and its parts. Through metonymy, the term "peanuts" undergoes the spanning of adjacent categories in meaning.

Secondly, the adjacency between the whole and the parts in constitution models is reflected as:

Adjacency between entity and its materials,

(4) I smell skunk. (skunk is metonymized to its odor)

In this sentence, "skunk" refers to the odor typically associated with skunks. This semantic extension arises directly from the adjacency between the entity and its defining characteristics.

Adjacency between entity and its traits,

(5) She is a snow white.

"Snow white" in the sentence does not refer to the real Snow White, but describes a girl who is very beautiful, equivalent to "she is very beautiful". The spanning of the meaning is just based on the adjacency of entity and its traits.

Thirdly, within scale models, adjacency between the whole and its parts is represented by the relationship between the scale itself and its upper limit. For example,

(6) How old are you?

In this context, "old" does not imply "aged" but specifically denotes age itself, positioned at the uppermost point of the age scale. The extension of its meaning depends on the relationship between the scale and its highest value.

Fourthly, in complex event models, the relationship between the entirety and its components is exemplified by the connection between a fragment of an event and the entire event itself. For example,

(7) Mother is cooking potatoes.

The term "cooking potatoes" in this context denotes a specific intermediate stage within the broader process of cooking. It serves to represent the entire cooking event. The extension of its meaning depends on the proximity and relationship between a partial event and the complete event.

Fifthly, the adjacency between the whole and its parts embodied in the category-attribute models includes the adjacency between attributes and genus. For example,

(8) The black is always striving for their civil rights.

In this sentence, "the black" does not signify color but rather refers to the Black human race. Here, the racial attribute is employed to denote the category, and its significance stems from the relationship between attributes and category.

Proximity of typical and generic species,

(9) If only I were a sparrow.

The meaning of this sentence is "If only I were a bird." In this context, "sparrow" does not specifically denote the bird species but rather represents a generic bird. It symbolizes the desire for freedom akin to that of any bird. The

extension of meaning relies on the relationship between attributes and category.

2. *The Adjacency Between Parts*

The adjacency between parts is framed within the Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM). It can occur in various cognitive models such as behavior, perceptual, enabling, product, control, collateral, container, location, and modification models. Due to space constraints, we will specifically analyze two prevalent models in dynamic lexical categorization: behavior models and action models.

To begin with, we examine the adjacency among components in behavior models, encompassing various elements such as participants, entities, actions, tools, outcomes, and others. This adjacency among components represents the adjacency between parts within the Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM). Some of the typical adjacency in the behavior models includes:

The relationship between the tool and the action facilitates dynamic categorization of the tool nouns into the verb category.

(10) He knifed the meat in the dinner.

The connection between behavior and action facilitates the dynamic contextualization of behavior terms into action terms.

(11) Then he opened a restaurant, authored a book, and landed his own radio show.

The relationship between the result and the action allows for the dynamic contextualization of result terms into action terms.

(12) They had landscaped their property with trees, shrubs, and lawns.

The adjacency between manner and behavior allows the dynamic categorization of manner words into action words.

(13) She slipped out of bed and tiptoed to the window.

From the examples above, it is evident that within behavior models, the adjacency between parts facilitates metonymic interactions where nouns shift to verbs and verbs are nominalized. Despite identical word forms, their grammatical classes differ. Beyond these instances, Wen and Ye propose a total of 19 types of adjacencies in behavior models, including purposes linked to actions and tools associated with behaviors, among others, which we won't detail here.

Next, let's take a look at the adjacency between parts in role models. According to Langacker (1991), "semantic roles are conceptual structures rooted in everyday experience, forming a network of interconnected prototypes through interaction with the objective world" (p. 78). These conceptual elements constitute a complex network of adjacencies. In behavior models, our focus is on how the same word can fulfill various semantic roles through inter-category adjacency, whereas in the role models, we explore how different words can fulfill the same semantic role through inter-category adjacency. Thus, adjacency between components in behavior models underpins conceptual metonymy, while in role models, it facilitates syntactic metaphors. Wen and Wu (2007) explain that within the action ICM, comprised of verbs, various semantic roles exhibit conceptual adjacency with each other, allowing for the substitution of subject-object positions by prominent semantic roles through cognitive mechanisms such as metonymy for expressive purposes. Here are some examples.

缠脚(object)——缠纱布(tool)

wrapping feet - wrapping gauze

吃饭(object)——吃馆子(premise)

eat - eat in the restaurant

打扫房间(object)——打扫卫生(result)

cleaning the room - cleaning the house (result)

Semantic role transformation arises from the interaction between adjacent role categories involving verb objects. This transformation affects verb-object constructions in two primary ways, as outlined by Zeng (2018): (1) altering the meaning of the entire verb-object structure, and (2) inducing a gradual, conservative shift in the meanings of verbs within verb-object constructions, either within a category or through interaction across categories.

(c). *Expansion Between Adjacent Categories in Reality*

In both English and Chinese, numerous words include two opposite meanings, referred to as "fanxunci" in Chinese. Take verbs, for instance. The English verb "marry" denotes both "to enter into marriage with a woman" and "to enter into marriage with a man," while "lease" signifies both "to rent out" and "to hire." Similarly, in Chinese, the verb "jie" can signify both "to borrow" and "to lend," while "jia" can denote both "to buy" and "to sell." This phenomenon of words possessing contradictory meanings illustrates the interaction and spanning of adjacent semantic categories in real-life behaviors and events.

Wang (2005) introduced the ECM (Event-domain Cognitive Model), a cognitive analysis method proposed to address the aforementioned phenomenon (refer to Figure 1). In everyday life, an event category typically consists of two primary elements: action and entity. Actions encompass various specific sub-categories labeled A1, A2...An in the diagram, while entities encompass diverse categories such as people, objects, tools, and other entities, labeled B1, B2...Bn in the diagram. These action and entity categories within the same event are adjacent and interdependent,

capable of forming a cohesive whole through organic integration. When the same word is used to express adjacency between subcategories of actions or entities within a real event, it may exhibit two opposite meanings.

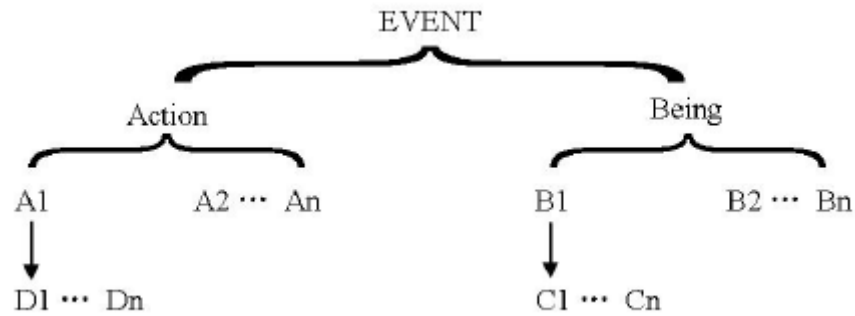


Figure 1. Basic Event Domain Wang Yin (2005)

Consider the verb "marry" as an example. The event of "marrying" comprises both an action and participants. The action of "marrying" involves a range of sub-categories such as proposing, wedding, and marrying a spouse, while the participants encompass roles like bride, groom, best man, bridesmaid, wedding accessories, and reception details. These components are closely interconnected, exhibiting both opposition and cohesion. According to the spreading activation model theory, the retrieval of lexical information relies on conventional associations; thus, mentioning one element (A) prompts a conscious linkage to another (B) due to their inherent relationship. Consequently, emphasizing "marry wife" within the event inevitably invokes its closest counterpart, "marry husband," within the behavioral context. This linguistic phenomenon, where a single word embodies the adjacency, results in the emergence of antonymous meanings within the term "marry".

An action inherently involves a commencement and conclusion, a stimulus and outcome, an agent and recipient. When a word or phrase is employed to signify this proximate relationship and emphasize it cognitively, it can result in the phenomenon of a word possessing two contradictory meanings. As demonstrated by the examples above, numerous antonymous terms, particularly verbs, often utilize the same word to denote the proximity between action or entity categories within real-world events. This underscores the interaction and spanning between adjacent categories manifested in actual actions or entities.

B. Expansion Between Similar Categories

The expansion across analogous categories originates from conceptual developments within distinct domain matrices. Here, the constructor leverages familiar conceptual content to describe unfamiliar or new categories of meaning. Categories encompass both physical and cognitive attributes: the former includes temporal and spatial dimensions, the physical form and color of the object, and the manner of its movement—attributes perceivable through sight, sound, or touch.

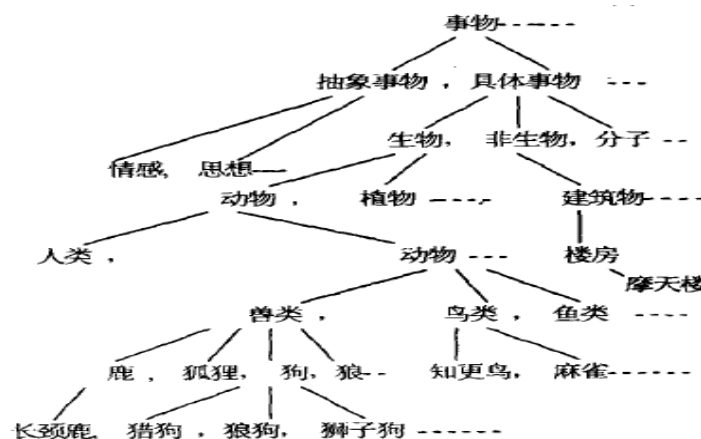


Figure 2. Genus Category Relationship (Li Zuowen & Liu Changqing, 2003)

Chesterman (1998) distinguishes between two types of similarity: "similarity-as-trigger" (p. 7), which is an objective judgment formed by a cognitive subject based on physical resemblance, and "similarity-as-attribution" (p. 7), which involves subjective attribution of similar attributes to two entities during cognitive processing. Chesterman (1998) categorizes the expansion across similar categories into two main types: (1) expansion between objectively similar categories, and (2) expansion between mentally similar categories.

(a). *Expansion Between Objective Similar Categories*

In the objective realm, categories do not exist independently but are universally interconnected. This interconnectedness is evident in both the commonalities between similar categories and the relationships between different categories. Objective similarity between categories denotes the fundamental or generic resemblance between two entities. Based on the degree of physical similarity, categories can be classified into sensory-similar and attribute-similar categories.

1. *Expansion Between Sensory Similar Categories*

A sensory-similar category denotes a tangible resemblance between two categories, characterized by perceptible similarities that can be observed visually or felt physically. Referring to Figure 2, such categories involve entities that traverse relatively few nodes in the diagram, sharing similarities in form, color, time, space, and other perceptual attributes. In ancient Chinese, there are many words and phrases describing beautiful women, such as,

(14)

a. 脸若银盘，眼似水杏，唇不点而红，眉不画而翠。(A Dream in Red Mansions, Qing Dynasty)

a. Her face is like a silver plate, eyes like big and round apricots, lips being naturally red without the need for lipstick, eyebrows shining black without penciling.

b. 芙蓉如面柳如眉，对此如何不泪垂。(Song of Everlasting Regret Qing Dynasty)

b. Finding that the hibiscus looks like Yuhuan's face and the willow her eyebrows, I cannot but shed tears.

c. 余告之曰：“其形也，翩若惊鸿，婉若游龙。”(Ode to the Goddess of the Luo River the Three Kingdoms Period)

c. I said: "Her figure is as lightsome as the flying goose and as graceful as the swimming dragon."

In Examples (14)a and (14)b, descriptions depict the appearance of a beautiful woman. In (14)a, the comparison likens the girl's face to a silver plate, emphasizing similarities in shape and color, and her eyes to apricots, focusing on their size and condition. Example (14)b compares the girl's face to a hibiscus, noting the similarity in color and temperament, and her eyebrows to willow leaves, highlighting similarities in length and shape. Example (14)c from Cao Zhi's "Ode to the Goddess of the Luo River" portrays the goddess of the Luo River whose graceful movement resembles that of a "stunning goose" and "swimming dragon," conveying a light and elegant posture. These examples illustrate intuitive similarities observable to the naked eye. Here's another example:

(15) 手如柔荑，肤如凝脂。(Shuo Ren, Wei Feng, The Book of Songs)

Hands are as tender as catkins, skin as smooth as gelatin.

Example (15) continues to depict beautiful women in ancient Chinese culture. "Catkin" refers to the initial leaf buds of a plant, likened to hands for their cleanliness and tenderness; "gelatin" denotes solidified oil, resembling skin for its whiteness and delicacy. These similarities are perceptible: Cleanliness and pure whiteness are visible. Softness and delicacy are also tangible. Such direct resemblances form the foundation for metaphorical mappings that animate a woman's beauty through her face, eyes, eyebrows, hands, complexion, and posture interacting with physical or botanical categories.

2. *Expansion Between Characteristic Similar Categories*

Characteristic similarities imply that despite apparent surface differences between two categories, they share intrinsic similarities. For instance, we employ the following example to depict a young boy.

(16) 他就是个猴崽子，鬼精!

He is a little monkey!

On the surface, a young boy appears vastly different from a little monkey, as one belongs to the human category and the other to the animal category, differing greatly in form and appearance. However, they share essential similarities: youthfulness, mischievousness, and intelligence. The metaphor draws parallels between the liveliness and cleverness of the "little boy" and emphasizes the mischievous and agile nature of the "little monkey." This metaphor is rooted in their shared characteristics.

The inherent similarity between categories, whether sensory or essential, exists naturally and requires no deliberate construction; it only needs to be highlighted within the contextual stimulus. When categories interact or spanning with objective similarity, they can enhance and amplify certain word meanings. Such dynamically constructed meanings often endure due to their widespread acceptance.

(b). *Expansion Between Psychologically Similar Categories*

Psychologically similar categories are constructed artificially, requiring cognitive effort and processing to establish similarity beyond conventional cognitive salience. These categories encompass functional, conceptual, and contingent similarities.

1. *Expansion Between Functionally Similar Categories*

A functionally similar category is intentionally imagined and constructed through cognitive effort, even when no objective similarity exists between the two categories initially.

To illustrate, consider a metaphor commonly used in English.

(17) IDEAS ARE PLANTS.

- a. Many ideas are beginning to sprout in our mind.
- b. Those ideas are flourishing.
- c. All ideas flag because of his opposition.

"Ideas" belong to the cognitive realm, involving human thought processes, whereas "plants" are classified within the biological domain, representing actual botanical entities. Despite their distinct nature, they can be analogously linked due to functional similarities through cognitive processes and conceptual synthesis. Firstly, plants sprout from seeds; human ideas originate from the mind; both of them are a process of emergence from nothingness. Secondly, plants flourish under favorable weather or natural conditions, paralleling how supported human ideas can develop from something to something more substantive. Thirdly, adverse conditions cause plants to wither, similarly, opposing or suppressing factors can cause human ideas to fade away. This functional resemblance underpins the ability of "ideas" and "plants" to span both cognitive and material categories, facilitating the semantic extension of "ideas" from the cognitive domain to the material domain.

2. *Expansion Between Conceptually Similar Categories*

The conceptual similarity between categories is manifested primarily in two ways. Firstly, these categories are not physically similar but are rooted in our bodily experiences, translating into psychological perceptions—a more abstract form of similarity. Many directional and ontological metaphors leverage this resemblance, predominantly found in traditional metaphorical expressions. For example:

(18) HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP; SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN

- a. He is at the peak of health.
- b. He is in top shape.
- c. He fell ill. He is sinking fast.
- d. He came down with flu.

Health is metaphorically associated with upward movement, while sickness is linked to downward movement. These metaphors do not reflect a physical similarity in sensory or essential terms. Rather, individuals construct a conceptual link between them in their mental perceptions, which is grounded in physical experiences but appears abstract. Good health typically correlates with positive moods, leading people to stand and move more, thereby positioning their bodies and emotions in an upward direction. Conversely, sickness often accompanies negative emotions and physical discomfort, causing individuals to involuntarily stoop due to pain or confinement to bed, resulting in a downward orientation of body and emotions.

Conceptual similarity is also manifested in another aspect: individuals utilize existing words to articulate new concepts and perceived connections. Human perception involves transitioning from the general to the specific. While human thought is boundless, language is inherently limited. Drawing on the principles of linguistic economy and precision, people discern similarities among things through cognition. Simultaneously, they employ the finite symbols of language to denote diverse phenomena and complex relationships. This produces the expansion and spanning of lexical categories, therefore leading to the phenomenon of polysemy. For example:

- (19) a. He bumped into his head on the low beams.
 b. They are still having to live on very low incomes.
 c. She refused to promote Colin above the low rank of 'legal adviser.'
 d. A school would not accept low-quality work from any student.
 e. We are all very tired and morale is low.

"Low" retains its primary spatial meaning in sentence (19) a, specifically denoting a vertical dimension. From (19) b to (19) e, various abstract meanings are derived from this spatial orientation within the category of linguistic economy and conceptual similarity principles: quantity, status, level, and emotion.

3. *Expansion Between Contingently Similar Categories*

Contingent similarity describes the circumstance where two categories may or may not exhibit similarity in developmental changes. This phenomenon is particularly prevalent in novel metaphors. However, this similarity is not guaranteed to endure and may diminish as the categories evolve further or the context shifts. For example,

(20) 你曾对我说，相逢是首歌。眼睛是春天的海，青春是绿色的河。

You once said to me that meeting is a song. The eyes are the sea of spring; the youth is a green river.

In essence, there is no inherent connection between "meeting" and "song". Yet, in poetic expression, the reunion of old friends can evoke cheerfulness. Similarly, listening to songs often brings relaxation and enjoyment. Thus, through cognitive processing, two initially disparate categories find a coincidental similarity. This accidental alignment enables interaction between previously unrelated lexical categories, imparting a sense of novelty and poetic resonance to human experience.

From the analysis of analogous categories in this section, it becomes evident that similarities between categories may either be inherent or artificially constructed. Regardless of the type of similarity-based interaction or spanning between categories, cognitive prominence is essential. Objective similarities between categories necessitate sufficient cognitive prominence, whereas psychologically similar categories demand extensive cognitive processing and construction. This

is due to the multifaceted nature of some categories, where relationships are not readily apparent, thus requiring creative thinking to discern similarities among complex phenomena.

Word meaning experiences the interaction and spanning between categories but no grammaticalization between categories. When categories share mental similarities or are adjacent, the ongoing dynamic categorization involves interaction within the same clustering model. Such interaction or spanning between adjacent and similar categories can lead to generalization and, in some cases, the gradual abstraction of word meanings.

III. DE-CATEGORIZATION: TRANSFERRING BEYOND THE SAME CLUSTER MODEL

During category mutation, categories gradually disengage their original characteristics and undergo de-categorization, reflecting the dynamic evolution of categories. Liu and Liu (2005) point out that lexical de-categorization primarily occurs through word conversion, grammaticalization, and subjectivization processes.

A. Word Conversion

Word conversion is a prevalent linguistic phenomenon that exemplifies lexical de-categorization. Word conversion in both Chinese and English primarily is manifested in two ways. First, through flexible word usage, often achieved through novel metaphor or metonymy, which is transient and episodic. Second, certain words, used extensively over time, evolve into fixed multi-category terms. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the transformation of adjectives into verbs in Chinese. For example:

(21) a. 春风又绿江南岸，明月何时照我还？(Berthing the Boat to Guazhou, Song Dynasty)

The spring breeze greens the fields of the south of the Yangtze River, when will the bright moon shine on my return to my home under the Bell Mountain?

b. 高处已应闻滴血，山榴一夜几枝红。(The Complete Tang Poems, Sui-Tang dynasty Five Dynasties)

From high places one could hear the chirping of cuckoo, plenty of azaleas turned red overnight.

c. 老吾老以及人之老，幼吾幼以及人之幼。(Mencius - King Liang Hui, the Warring States Period)

Support the elders as they are your parents and raise the children as they are your own kids.

For rhetorical effect, adjectives such as "green," "red," "old," and "young," used to describe colors or age in these poems, cease to modify nouns and instead function as predicate verbs, imparting a fresh perspective to readers.

The process of converting nouns into verbs is not exclusive to Chinese. For instance,

(22) a. Did you book a seat on the plane?

b. Please hand me the book.

c. He headed for the bus stop.

Through metonymy, nouns can be transformed into verbs by emphasizing prominent features or functions, thereby using attributes of nouns to denote actions or behaviors, enhancing the vividness and novelty of our linguistic expressions. This form of lexical de-categorization, driven by rhetorical aims, may initially be incidental or temporary but, upon recognition and acceptance, becomes widely adopted and integrated into language use. In the semantic examples above, all converted words are based on abstraction and generalization of word meanings. Moreover, once converted, these words lose their original syntactic and morphological distributional features and undergo a shift in grammatical category.

Both Chinese and English exhibit numerous instances where nouns are de-categorized to acquire verbal meanings.

Word conversion represents a significant aspect of lexical de-categorization (Zeng & Wen, 2018). Most of the instances of word conversion we have listed pertain to de-categorization within the realm of lexical categories, with grammaticalization being relatively uncommon. However, certain words, particularly verbs or nouns, exhibit more distinct patterns in their conversion.

B. Grammaticalization

Grammaticalization is a linguistic process wherein an autonomous word evolves into a grammatical element, allowing lexical items and structures to enter a linguistic context and acquire specific grammatical functions. Once grammaticalization occurs, these elements or structures often continue to develop additional grammatical roles.

If a lexical word changes its syntactic role or its combinatory function with other words, it typically initiates lexical grammaticalization. Many function words in Chinese originate from verbs or adjectives. Verbs typically function as predicates in the "subject-verb-object" (SVO) structure to denote real actions, their typical syntactic role. When a verb transitions from a primary to a secondary status, its grammatical position becomes fixed, leading to a gradual abstraction of its meaning and eventual de-categorization from lexical to grammatical status. Therefore, changes in syntactic position play a crucial role in driving the grammaticalization of a word.

Let's consider the Chinese word "将" ("jiāng") as an example. In contemporary Chinese, "将" functions as a dynamic auxiliary or preposition, having undergone grammaticalization from its origins as a verb. Originally meaning "to carry" or "to lead," "将" has since been de-categorized: "carry" evolved into a dynamic auxiliary, while "lead" became de-categorized into the preposition "dispose".

The evolution of "将" from its verb form "carry" to a dynamic auxiliary began with its appearance in serial verb

constructions. During the Wei, Jin, Northern, and Southern Dynasties period, "将" started to be employed in serial verb constructions and commonly appeared in structures such as "verb + 将 + tendency complement," where "将" indicated the action of "carry" or "lead." Let's take a look at the following examples.

(23) a. 见一老妇，挟将飞见北斗君。(You Mi Lu)

Seeing an old woman, she carried (him/me) and flew to meet the Lord of the Big Dipper.

b. 忽有白蛇，长三尺，腾入舟中……索而将还，置诸房内。(the Collecting Record of Wang Zinian, the Eastern Jin Dynasty)

A three-foot-long white snake suddenly emerged, slithered into the boat……lingered briefly, then carried it and eventually placed it inside the room.

c. 收将白雪丽，夺尽碧云妍。(Jiang Lou Ye Yin Yuan Jiu Lv Shi Cheng San Shi Yun, Tang Dynasty)

Gathering up the pristine beauty of white snow, surpassing and absorbing the radiant charm of azure clouds.

d. 骑将猎向南山口，城南狐兔不夏有。(Wei Jie Du Chi Zhou Ma Ge, Tang Dynasty)

I ride on the steed at the end of the South Mountain Pass, hunting all the foxes and rabbits in the south of the city.

The lexical structure of the verb "将" has evolved from "carry" to a dynamic auxiliary. In this structure, the word meanings of "将" are as follows:

(24)

(a) V + “将” + tendency complement (“将”: verb, to carry)

(b) V + object + “将” (“将”: in the second verb position, the verb is weakened)

(c) V + “将” + object (“将”: indicates the situation after the action is completed and the result of the action)

(d) V1 + “将” + V2 (“将”: dynamic auxiliary)

Changes in both syntactic position and combinatory function can lead to the de-categorization of word meanings. According to Ma (2003), in modern Chinese, monosyllabic prepositions are almost invariably de-categorized from verbs. The lexical structure of “将” from the verb “lead” to a preposition indicating disposition is:

(25)

(a) lead: “将” + N1 (receive/give) + V2 (run) + N2 (premises) (“将”: verb, lead)

(b) Disposition 1: “将” + N1 (suffer/receive) + V2 (kill/send) + N2 (premises) (“将”: begin to transform to preposition)

(c) Disposition 2: “将” + N1 (suffer/receive) + V2 (kill) + N2 (compound N1) (“将”: transform to preposition)

(d) Disposition 3: “将” + N1 (suffer/suffer) + V2 (operation) + N2 (person, different N1) (“将”: preposition meaning is very clear)

(e) Disposition 4: “将” + N1 (suffer/administer) + V2 (as) + N2 (person, same as N1) (“将”: preposition meaning is very clear)

In (25)a, N1 acts as the recipient of "将" and the performer of V2; in (25)b, (25)c, and (25)d, N1 serves as the recipient of both "将" and V2. In (a) and (b), N2 denotes a place, while in (25)c, it is a compound pronoun, and in (25)d, it denotes the recipient. In (25)e, N2 denotes the same entity as N1. Despite similar syntactic positions or lexical structures, varying combinatory functions can lead to the de-categorization of word meanings.

The grammaticalization of "将" from the verb "carry" to a dynamic auxiliary, and from the verb "lead" to a dispositional preposition, illustrates that changes in syntactic position or combinatory function are pivotal in lexical decontextualization. However, grammaticalization is not instantaneous but rather a gradual process. Some words undergo de-categorization through this process, particularly synthetic ones, which may experience partial grammaticalization before full integration. Partial grammaticalization occurs during expansion between adjacent categories, whereas de-categorization is achieved through complete grammaticalization (subjectivization).

C. Subjectivization

Language not only conveys propositional meaning but also reflects the emotions and attitudes of the speaker. The transition from objectivity to subjectivity in linguistic forms also involves the process of de-categorization. Consider the English word "while" as an example: originally a noun denoting a period of time, "while" frequently appears in constructions like "Prep./V. + a + while" or "worth + one's + while". For example,

(26) They walked on in silence for a while.

(27) Don't kill me! keep me for a show; you'll find it worth your while.

In the intermediate stage of its usage, the positioning of "while" within sentences evolves beyond its initial confinement to structures such as "Prep./V. + a + while" or "worth + one's + while". Instead, it increasingly serves to join two shorter sentences. During this phase, the word meaning of "while" undergoes grammaticalization, resulting in a gradual attenuation of its noun-like characteristics while emphasizing its role as a conjunction. As a consequence, "while" transitions from its noun form to function primarily as a conjunction, indicating simultaneous actions or events, and acquiring both linking and discourse functions in the process. The examples are as followings:

(28) While she was watching the TV, I cleaned up the floor.

(29) You were not safe while you held a lot of money.

In examples (28) and (29), "while" signifies "when ...", a transition marking its gradual reclassification as a temporal conjunction. However, even in these instances, "while" exhibits subjectivity due to strong contrasts between concurrent events. In example (28), "while" conveys dissatisfaction, whereas in (29) it suggests a slight sense of worry. Thus, "while" already displays some degree of subjectivity. In contemporary usage, "while" continues its grammatical evolution from a temporal to a concessive conjunction, now implying "however". Consequently, its textual role diminishes while its discourse function becomes prominent. For example,

(30) Most digital camera owners are male, while women prefer film.

In example (30), the speaker expresses subjective surprise at the stark contrast between two concurrent events, giving rise to a concessive meaning. This subjective interpretation by the speaker, influenced by personal experience, imbues the discourse with subjectivity. Consequently, "while" acquires an abstract concessive meaning, evolving further to exist "although", which reflects a subjective perception of the relationship between the clauses:

(31) While I can understand what you say, I can't forgive what you have done.

The subjectivization of "while" significantly influences its evolution from being categorized as a noun to functioning as both a temporal and concessive conjunction. "While" shifts from an objective to a subjective meaning, transitioning its role from a discourse function to a speech function.

A single word typically encompasses multiple senses. As illustrated in Figure 3, during the process of sense de-categorization, this typically occurs within one of the word's semantic positions. De-categorization often results in a secondary or altered sense of the word, which is generally distinct or separate from its original semantic position. However, the other semantic positions of the word retain their functionality and do not diminish with the emergence of new or altered meanings.

Word conversion, grammaticalization, and subjectivization represent distinct methods of de-categorization, yet they are interconnected processes of linguistic evolution. Among these approaches to sense de-categorization, word conversion primarily focuses on altering the sense within a lexical category. In contrast, grammaticalization and subjectivization are more radical forms of word conversion. These processes involve not only shifting lexical and grammatical categories but also signify a progression from concrete to abstract word meanings and from lexical to grammatical functions. Grammaticalization, to some extent, serves as the foundation for subjectivization, representing a deeper level of grammatical evolution and de-categorization.

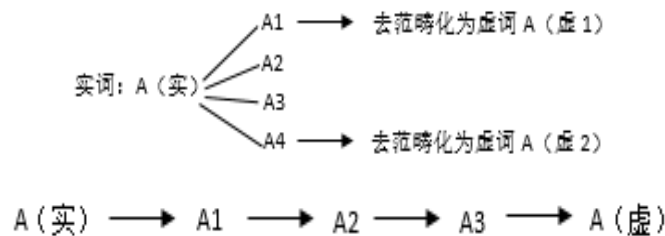


Figure 3. De-Categorization of Notional Words

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper explores the profound stages of word meaning evolution, specifically the interaction between word meaning categories and de-categorization, utilizing examples from both Chinese and English. Through a comprehensive analysis of numerous examples, we elucidate the specific manifestations and evolutionary principles governing the dynamic categorization of word meanings during these stages.

The interaction between word meaning categories is manifested primarily in two ways: (1) expansion between adjacent categories, and (2) expansion between similar categories. Expansion between adjacent categories involves linguistic or conceptual adjacency, as well as adjacency in reality. Linguistically, this can result in the partial grammaticalization of word meanings. Conceptually, it may abstract word meanings or even transfer or alter certain constructs. In reality, adjacency can give rise to words with contrasting meanings. Expansion of similar categories occurs through objectively or psychologically similar categories. Objectively similar categories share inherent resemblances and evolve without necessitating special constructions. However, these meanings may cease to exist when contextual factors change.

Although there is interaction and spanning of meanings between categories, it represents a form of partial de-categorization of word meaning in a strict sense. At this stage, dynamic categorization occurs within the same clustering model due to psychological similarity or adjacency between categories. Interaction and spanning between adjacent and similar categories can lead to generalization and abstraction of word meaning. De-categorization goes through three primary processes: word conversion, grammaticalization, and subjectivization. Among these, subjectivization represents the most radical form of dynamic categorization of word meaning, facilitating the evolution

of word meanings beyond the confines of the same clustering model—moving from concrete to abstract and from real to grammatical domains. Thus, word meaning categories undergo processes of gradual evolution within the category, interaction between categories, and de-categorization. The evolution of word meaning ranges from gradual changes—such as expansion or contraction (through deprivation, attenuation, generalization, or specification)—to more radical processes like partial grammaticalization, abstraction (including antonymization and polysemy), and full grammaticalization of word meanings.

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The Impact of WhatsApp Groups on Improving Jordanian University Students' Vocabulary Learning

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Abstract—The current study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using WhatsApp groups to improve university students' vocabulary learning. The study adopted a quasi-experimental research design. It consisted of 60 male and female EFL students from Ajloun College University at Al-Balqa Applied University. The participants were assigned evenly into a control group, which was taught via conventional teaching methods, and an experimental group, which was taught via a researcher-administrated WhatsApp group. The teaching material included the first three units of the curriculum specified for the English Language 1 course at Ajloun University College. The study used vocabulary pre- and post-tests. The findings of the study revealed that the experimental group members performed better than the control group in the vocabulary post-test results. The findings demonstrated the effectiveness of using the WhatsApp group method to improve vocabulary learning among undergraduate EFL students at Ajloun University College. The study concluded that using group instant messaging mobile applications significantly improves the vocabulary teaching and learning process.

Index Terms—learning, vocabulary, WhatsApp

I. INTRODUCTION

We are living in the age of the media revolution, smart device applications, and smart phones (Smith, 2009). We use phones for more than simply communication. With the introduction of smart phones and other smart gadgets, the usage of mobile applications became an essential element of our everyday lives. People of all ages, including students, can now access smart device applications from any location and at any time (Cook & Das, 2007).

The young students are technologically, electronically, and digitally oriented. They are adapting to new technology so easily. Indeed, they are completely aware of globalization and actively participate in it. They spend much of their time on their smartphones. With the popularity of social media, and smart phones, some students eventually lose interest in learning from traditional books and curriculum. However, these mobile apps play a crucial part in people's daily lives, including schooling. These phone applications have simplified our lives and facilitated education process. In fact, "these profound changes are placing increasing pressure on the traditional models of teaching and learning" (Bansal & Joshi, 2014, p. 1). Thus, our youngsters need new educational techniques or tools. E-learning, m-learning, and technological aids may help to close the gap. Actually, communication technologies have permitted a move toward e-learning (Campbell, 2010).

The world has witnessed a consistent and rapid expansion in the number of phone applications. One of the most popular applications is WhatsApp. "WhatsApp Messenger is a mobile application that has apparently caught the attention of a large number of mobile users" (Giordano et al., 2015, p. 10). WhatsApp allows users to send several types of messages, including images, texts, audios, and videos (Al-Saleem, 2013).

Vocabulary is perhaps the most significant part of language that students should understand (Ur et al., 2014). Insufficient vocabulary in a foreign or second language hinders successful communication. Its importance is illustrated by students' interaction in school and in their daily duties and activities (Hashemifardnia et al., 2018).

Teachers used different methods or applications to improve vocabulary learning among EFL students. WhatsApp is one of the methods used by many language learners to enrich their vocabulary (Jafari & Chalaki, 2016). It allows EFL

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teachers to teach many words at a time. WhatsApp can help learners improve their vocabulary acquisition, which is crucial for effective vocabulary programs (Bensalem, 2018). As a result, including WhatsApp in improving students' language skills is regarded as a wise approach, with WhatsApp being used to improve students' competence in acquiring different language skills (Jafari & Chalak, 2016).

A. Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted for three primary reasons. To begin, pupils should be able to escape the monotony of the classroom and explore various live interactive environments, whether within or outside the classroom. Second, this study can help students recognize the challenges of using WhatsApp as a mobile learning method. Third, it can explore novel teaching-learning approaches that are more relevant and tailored to students' preferences and interests in order to raise their awareness of the subject being taught.

B. Limitations of the Study

The current study was limited to undergraduate students at Ajloun University College / Al-Balqa Applied University in the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024. The sample of the study included 60 male and female EFL students from Ajloun College University at Al-Balqa Applied University.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

A pilot study was conducted to investigate the impact of WhatsApp on the interaction between students and high school teachers because it is still a relatively new phenomenon (Church & de Oliveira, 2013). A scan of the literature on the subject of this study revealed a few references and publications that addressed the WhatsApp problem from a pedagogical standpoint. The majority of the data was found in research papers, publications, and theses. The majority of the writers' arguments in these books suggest using WhatsApp as the ideal teaching tool. However, not all studies viewed WhatsApp from the same perspective. Here is a summary of the opinions of some researchers who suggest utilizing WhatsApp as a successful and efficient teaching-learning tool, along with those of the other members of the compared team.

Over the past ten years, digital communication among student groups and between students and professors has grown in popularity through a variety of platforms, including Facebook groups, Twitter, WhatsApp, SMS, and email. Different features of each of these technologies affect how appropriate they are for educational objectives (Calvo et al., 2014).

Several studies have examined the different uses of WhatsApp in educational settings. Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) investigated how teachers use WhatsApp to communicate with the groups they teach. It concentrated on the way twelve high school teachers, males and females, initiated groups for their students, shared information and, monitored students-students (student-peer) as well as teacher-student interactions within WhatsApp groups (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014).

According to Bere (2013), students in a university class in South Africa who participated in a WhatsApp experiment provided positive feedback and stated that it was more convenient to interact with their teachers and fellow students. They believed that WhatsApp was a productive way to have fruitful discussions on pertinent topics in a casual setting where students could learn in depth and authentically. Man (2014) used WhatsApp to guide 35 students in a study to raise their awareness of academic terms. The results showed that students began to value using WhatsApp because it helped them become more aware of academic terms.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Amry (2014) aimed at exploring the impact of WhatsApp utilization on students' attitudes and academic achievements. The researcher performed an experiment to compare an experimental group of 15 students with a control group of 15 students and found that there is a statistically significant difference at $\alpha = 0.005$ between the study groups in the achievements and attitudes in favor of experimental group students.

In the same field, Lawrence (2014) also investigated the impact of WhatsApp on learning vocabulary items by a group of five Afrikaans undergraduate learners prior to their reading texts. The findings demonstrated that WhatsApp is a useful tool for giving students, particularly those who struggle with vocabulary, opportunities to practice outside of the classroom. Similarly, Gooniband et al. (2013) discovered that using mobile devices to teach English vocabulary items improved the performance of semi-literate individuals.

Additionally, Wong et al. (2015) performed a study to explore students' experiences with using mobile devices for social media applications by studying 68 students in the academic year 2013-2014 using a semi-structured questionnaire. The results showed that students prefer to use their phones to access the internet and do their learning-related activities.

Jafari and Chalak (2016) carried out a quasi-experimental study that investigated the impact of using WhatsApp in teaching vocabulary for Iranian EFL learners. The study sample consisted of 60 EFL learners who were distributed evenly into an experimental group and a control group. The researchers used the vocabulary pre- and post-test tool to assess the level of vocabulary acquisition among the study participants before and after 4 weeks of the experimental procedure. The study findings indicated that using WhatsApp in teaching vocabulary significantly affected the acquisition of vocabulary by the experimental group of students. In addition, the findings showed that there were no significant statistical differences between males and females in the experimental group with regard to vocabulary acquisition.

In addition, Bensalem (2018) examined to what extent vocabulary knowledge is developed among undergraduate EFL learners in Arab Gulf University due to using WhatsApp in the instructional process. The quasi-experimental group was adopted in this study, it involved the recruitment of nineteen students as a control group, and twenty-one students were

assigned to represent the experimental group. The study findings revealed the superiority of the experimental group members in vocabulary acquisition over the control group, who were taught traditionally.

Another study by Bansal and Joshi (2014) explored the usefulness of WhatsApp m-learning in teaching yielded such favorable results. 82% of Indian participants believed that studying via WhatsApp m-learning was collaborative learning. They were eager to upload films, audios, and writings about the challenges, as well as learn from others' efforts.

In another study, Sivabalan and Ali (2022) explored the impact of WhatsApp on developing the vocabulary learning by tertiary level students. The sample of the study consisted of twenty psychology students in the state of Pahang. The study adopted the quasi-experimental method. The study used a vocabulary pre-test and a post-vocabulary test to figure out whether WhatsApp assisted students in learning vocabulary. The findings of the study showed that WhatsApp played a key role in improving vocabulary learning.

The review of related literature indicates that WhatsApp is more effective than traditional face-to-face communication methods. However, few studies investigated the effect of WhatsApp on learning vocabulary in the Jordanian educational context. Thus, the present study aimed at exploring the impact of using WhatsApp groups on improving university students' vocabulary learning in Jordan.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the impact of WhatsApp groups on improving University Students' vocabulary acquisition. In this section, the researchers explain the methods and materials adopted to carry out the study, and other important elements, such as the study setting, sample and population, data collection procedure, and data analysis steps. In addition, this section lists the ethical considerations.

A. Research Design

Research design refers to the data collection procedure in this study. The researchers had followed the quasi-experimental approach, which represented distributing the study participants into two groups; the experimental group (taught using WhatsApp groups method) and the control group (taught via conventional methods). In addition, the researchers developed a vocabulary assessment test that was administered before and after performing the experimental procedure.

B. Study Population

The target population was female and male college EFL learners who were enrolled in the English language department at Ajloun University College in the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024.

C. Sample Size and Sample Selection

The researchers recruited a sample that consisted of 60-second year EFL learners from Ajloun University College who were enrolled in the English language 1 course. The study participants were divided into a control group (n = 30 students) and an experimental group (n = 30 students). Permissions to add the experimental group members to a WhatsApp group were obtained before assigning them to the experimental group.

D. The Study Instrument

The researchers designed a vocabulary test by determining the purpose of the test and examining the content of the educational course English Language 1. The researchers depended on many stages of test preparation procedure, such as the following:

- Identifying the main purpose of the test.
- Reviewing the literature and published studies concerned with vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners.
- Analyzing the cognitive content of the educational material taught to the students.
- Identifying the specifications of the test and determining the test items.
- Setting the test instructions.
- Preparing the first version of the vocabulary acquisition test.

The primary version of the vocabulary acquisition test was submitted to a jury of specialists and experts in curriculum and teaching methods in different Jordanian universities, and they were asked to review the test and provide any suggestions regarding its appropriateness and comprehensiveness. After performing their suggested modifications, the researchers prepared the final version of the vocabulary acquisition test, which was used as both a pre- and post-test to measure the study participants' acquisition of English vocabulary.

The reliability of the vocabulary test was ensured through the test-retest procedure. The researchers administered the vocabulary test to 25 EFL learners at Ajloun University College who were excluded from the study sample and re-administered the test again after two weeks. The reliability coefficient was calculated for the two administrations (0.87).

The final version of the vocabulary test included 25 multiple-choice questions with four possible answers for each question. Each item was given a mark. Therefore, the marking of the test ranged between 0 and 25 for the study participants.

E. The Study Procedure

1. After reviewing literature and published research studies that addressed the integration and utilization of social media platforms in EFL learning, the researchers formulated the research problem and set out the purpose of the study.
2. The researchers identified the study population, the study sample, and the most appropriate sampling technique to recruit the study participants.
3. The researchers had obtained the formal approvals to conduct the study.
4. The study participants were assigned to the study groups.
5. Designing the study instrument through a valid and reliable procedure.
6. The experimental procedure of the study included teaching the control group via conventional teaching methods adopted in the English language department at Ajloun College University, and teaching the experimental group through a WhatsApp educational group.
7. Establishing the WhatsApp group included getting permission from the participating students to share their phone numbers, adding them to the social group, and setting instructions and regulations for this group.
8. The researchers administered the vocabulary pre-test for both groups.
9. The educational material used in the WhatsApp group involved using texts, group discussions, images, short clips, animated images, audio clips, and any possible media that supported vocabulary teaching for the group members.
10. After a 4-week period, the educational material was taught to both groups either conventionally or via WhatsApp group.
11. The researchers administered the vocabulary posttest for both groups.
12. Both pre- and posttest were marked by the researchers. The marks of the participating students were organized, tabulated, and analyzed.

F. Data Analysis

After compiling and coding the data from the vocabulary pre-test and post-test, the results were imported to Excel sheets, and then inserted into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v.23.0) to perform the statistical analysis such as mean, standard deviation, frequencies, independent samples t-test, and ANOVA test.

G. Ethical Considerations and Human Subject Issues

1. Official approvals to conduct the study were requested from the administration of Al-Balqa'a University and the English language department at Ajloun University College.
2. Acceptance was obtained from the students to add them to the WhatsApp group, involve them in the class session, and participate in the vocabulary pre- and post-tests.
3. The participants' responses kept anonymized even after the study is completed.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicated that there are significant differences in the mean scores of the study participants in the pre- and post-measurements based on the group (control and experimental). To detect if those differences were statistically significant, the researchers performed one way ANCOVA analysis for the vocabulary post-test scores after eliminating the pre-test scores for both groups. The results presented in Table 2 showed the One Way ANCOVA test results.

TABLE 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE STUDY PARTICIPANTS' SCORES IN VOCABULARY PRE AND POST-TESTS

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Experimental	30	11.34	1.03	17.94	1.61
Control	30	12.06	0.79	13.38	1.12
Total	60				

It is clear from the results shown in Table 2 that there are significant differences at significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the results of the vocabulary test based on the group (experimental, control), as the F value was 293.341 with a significance of 0.000, which is a statistically significant value, and this indicates a difference referred to the group.

Moreover, results showed that the effect of the teaching method was high, which is indicated by the high value of Eta square (80.1%).

TABLE 2
ONE WAY ANCOVA ANALYSIS OF THE VOCABULARY POSTTEST

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of sum of squares	F	Sig	Eta square
Pre-test	141.251	1	141.251	133.652	0.000	0.641
Group	326.235	1	326.235	293.341	0.000	0.801
Error	81.305	57				
Total		59				

To detect in favor of who those differences were, the researchers calculated the modified means and its standard errors (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
MODIFIED MEANS AND THEIR STANDARD ERRORS OF THE VOCABULARY POST-TEST ACCORDING TO THE GROUP (EXPERIMENTAL, CONTROL)

Group	Modified post-mean score	Standard error
Experimental	17.98	0.04
Control	13.27	0.11

Results presented in Table 3 showed that the significant statistical differences were in favor of the experimental group, who were taught through WhatsApp groups.

The findings of the present study indicated the superiority of the participants in the experimental group (who were taught using WhatsApp groups) over their peers in the control group (who were taught conventionally). The researchers attributed this superiority to the various benefits offered by the constructed WhatsApp group, such as providing students with audiovisual illustrations of the taught topics, the ability to share short video clips that explain the pronunciation and structure of the studied vocabulary, and many other services offered by the application. In addition, students' interaction through the social media platform was reported as significantly reducing students' learning anxiety and increasing their motivation for and engagement in the language learning process. The findings of the present study are in line with the findings reported by Bensalem (2018), who reported the positive impact of using WhatsApp in improving vocabulary acquisition among undergraduate EFL learners at the Arabian Gulf University. Besides, the results are in line with the findings of other studies, such as Gooniband et al. (2013), Lawrence (2014), Jafari and Chalak (2016), and Sivabalan and Ali (2022), who revealed that using WhatsApp had a significant role in the vocabulary learning of undergraduate students.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Vocabulary knowledge is considered one of the requirements for successful communication. One of the symptoms of poor vocabulary learning and teaching is the inability to retrieve vocabulary that has been taught. In the current study, the researchers investigated the effectiveness of using WhatsApp groups in improving university students' vocabulary acquisition. The findings of the study revealed the superiority of the study participants who were instructed through the WhatsApp mobile application and the effectiveness of this application due to the various educational benefits offered by it.

The study recommends the integration of social platforms in general, and instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp in the vocabulary teaching and learning process. In addition, it is recommended to extend the research scope to cover other linguistic skills such as reading, listening, and writing and examine the effectiveness of social media applications in the instructional process. The study also recommends that teachers should receive instruction on how to use WhatsApp's EFL settings effectively. More research is needed to determine the impact of WhatsApp on vocabulary learning at various levels of proficiency.

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Environmental Themes in Michael Punke's *The Revenant*: An Ecocritical Analysis of Human-Nature Interaction

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Abstract—The objective of this research is to explore the environmental themes shown in Michael Punke's novel, titled *The Revenant*, with a focus on the complex relationship between the protagonist, Hugh Glass, the surrounding environment, and interaction. This descriptive research uses the ecocriticism theory to analyze the data and address the related questions. The novel vividly depicts nature as the surrounding forest and the diverse array of animals as the central character. As a frontiersman, Glass perceives nature as a realm to be conquered, which resorts to actions such as felling trees and hunting animals. However, the consequences of these actions significantly impact the natural world. The research findings underscored the disadvantageous and imbalanced nature of the human-environment relationship driven by humans' exploitative tendencies with little consideration for environmental preservation. The consequences of this one-sided relationship are evident in the ecological degradation and the personal suffering experienced by Hugh Glass, hence the novel's critique of this complex interaction between humans and the environment.

Index Terms—human and nature, *The Revenant*, ecocriticism

I. INTRODUCTION

Society is a team of diverse human organizations in unit areas connected by specific systems, customs, rites, and laws (Yulianti et al., 2022). The wealth and complexness of individual social content are conditioned by various associations with the degree to which the varied spheres of life have been assimilated and refracted in conscious activities. Therefore, an individual's behaviour reflects society (Takwa et al., 2022; Afiah et al., 2022), including development level and vice versa. Relating to this discussion, the entire process prevents human dissolution (Spirkin, 1983).

The evolution of science and technology has led to significant changes in the social order (Arafah et al., 2023b) and completely revolutionized the world (Kaharuddin, 2022). These changes impact several aspects of life, including communication, digital media, education, culture, and the environment (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). Moreover, the rapid expansion of the internet and social media has become necessary (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). For example, in the educational field, science and technology led to increased awareness of the coding system, online learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) (Arafah et al., 2024b; Iksora et al., 2022; Kaharuddin et al., 2024). Meanwhile, in the cultural field, the transition from tradition to modernization occurred due to a systemic change (Takwa et al., 2022). Relating to this discussion, environmental issues are reportedly encountered globally (Arafah et al., 2021).

From this viewpoint, the evolution of humans marked the varying forms of life (Emerson, 1967). Human ability to use technology, develop abstract or critical thinking skills, and envisage more wide-scale changes and plans significantly impact the environment more than other forms of life (Arifin et al., 2022; Takwa et al., 2024a). Therefore, the development of culture, including knowledge, technology, and ideas socially upheld and passed to generations, had increased societal advancement compared to the slower biological evolution (Arafah et al., 2020; Kaharuddin et al., 2021). Diverse human labour has been adopted to transform nature. According to Spirkin (1983) and Purwaningsih et al. (2020), humanity has converted nature into a representation of cultural history. Therefore, the surge in human needs led to the excessive exploitation of natural resources, impacting environmental sustainability, balance, and ecosystems

(Manugeran et al., 2023; Abbas et al., 2024). Additionally, the adverse effect of science and technology on society is visible (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019; Suhadi et al., 2022).

Electricity was induced to serve the interests of society, which led to the transfer of varied species of plants and animals to different climatic zones (Arafah et al., 2023c; Halil et al., 2024). Humans have modified diverse habitation forms, including the remodelling of plants and animals. Relating to this discussion, Indonesia tends to face significant environmental problems (Hasibuan et al., 2021; Arafah et al., 2023a), such as the deforestation process in Sibatuloting, North Sumatra, caused by the establishment of a pulp factory. The Indonesian Environmental Forum opposed this activity because the new factory exploited forests without paying attention to environmental management and impact assessment laws and regulations (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023; Misnah et al., 2024).

Several species of animals were lost in the Arctic of Alaska, and ten are approaching extinction, including the musk oxen. Dumont et al. (2006, p. 15) stated that the Musk Oxen was the focus of intense fur trade from the late eighteenth century to the early 1900s. Many individuals hunted Musk Oxen with the intent of processing it into clothing. However, these animals are crucial in preserving the populations of other species, communities and plants, such as willows, wolves and polar bears. According to Yudith et al. (2023), humans threaten animals' lives in various ways, leading to biodiversity loss. Furthermore, biodiversity loss due to species extinction significantly impacts the planet. Cardinale (2012, p. 25) stated that it reduces the ability of nature to provide goods and services such as food, potable water and a stable climate.

Awareness is urgently needed in response to environmental issues (Siwi et al., 2022; Takwa et al., 2024b). However, realizing the problem of nature as the impact of human misconduct has led to concerns about environmental preservation. Religious groups, farmers, loggers, and business leaders have started vocalizing the importance of nature (Cunningham et al., 2007; Usman et al., 2024). Educational method concerning the natural environment was adopted to meet this need (Andi & Arafah, 2017; Arafah et al., 2024a), accomplished by implementing a scientific procedure (Ismail et al., 2020). This method focused on creating awareness, which improved relevant skills and actions associated with preserving and protecting the natural environment daily (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019; Mardiana et al., 2023). In this context, decisive action must be adopted to educate individuals regarding the environment as an integral part of society (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022; Kuswanti et al., 2023). Therefore, humans endeavour to sustain nature through relevant skills and methods to pass the green earth to future generations.

Concerning the analysis, this topic can also be found in literary works such as novels. The research focused on the book *The Revenant* by Michael Punke, published in 2002. This novel provides a detailed exploration of the life of Hugh Glass, an American frontiersman, highlighting his profound relationship with the environment after a brutal bear attack leaves him in a condition of consciousness. Additionally, the novel offers valuable perspectives on the environmental consequences of a hunting expedition. By employing ecocriticism theory, the analysis confidently illuminates the complex portrayal of ecological issues and their impact on the characters within the novel.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary works

Ecocriticism, a literary and cultural theory recently gaining significant attention, offered a unique perspective to examine the complex and multifaceted relationship between humans and the natural world. Originating in the early 1990s, this interdisciplinary field of study expanded its scope beyond the initial focus on American nature writing and British Romantics, investigating diverse literary and cultural expressions and exploring the intricate relations between humanity and the environment. However, at the core of ecocriticism lies the notion that literature and other artistic productions can be analyzed to reveal how they reflect, shape, and respond to environmental concerns. Meanwhile, ecocritics examined how literary texts, films, and other cultural artefacts handled the challenges of contemporary ecological crisis, including the contributions towards understanding the human-nature relationship (Bracke & Corporaal, 2010; Mutmainnah et al., 2022).

From this viewpoint, the rise of ecocriticism was driven by the growing awareness of environmental crisis on a global scale, prompting a renewed interest in redefining and rethinking the age-old relationship between literature and the physical world. This led to the formulation of diverse ecocritical methods informed by various disciplines, including risk theory, queer studies, and postcolonialism (Bracke & Corporaal, 2010). Following the expanded field of ecocriticism, scholars have engaged in active debate on the purpose, methods, and scope of this interdisciplinary endeavour. While some ecocritics focused on identifying and proposing solutions to environmental problems, others were more concerned with the complex and contradictory ways literature and culture shaped the perceptions and attitudes towards nature. In this context, the physical environment, perceived as the investigation's central object, was constantly redefined, adding to the challenges and complexities inherent in ecocritical analysis (Yudith et al., 2024). Despite these ongoing discussions and debates, ecocriticism has been firmly established as a crucial and innovative method for studying literature and culture. It also offered invaluable insights into the dynamic and multifaceted relationship between humans and the natural world.

Since its inception, ecocriticism has shifted from the margins to a more central position within the humanities, as the global scale of environmental crisis has contributed to the prominence of the discourse (Asri et al., 2023). Meanwhile, ecocritics have broadened the scope to include a wide range of literary works, from American nature writing to

Shakespearean drama, as well as adopted interdisciplinary methods informed by the following fields, risk theory, queer studies, and postcolonialism (Bracke & Corporaal, 2010). This expansion of ecocritical inquiry has led to a more nuanced understanding of the complex relationship between literature and the natural world.

Regarding this aspect, ecocriticism explored the interconnectedness between nature and tradition, specifically focusing on the cultural artefacts of language and literature. This critical stance integrated literary analysis with environmental awareness, expanding the notion of the world to incorporate the entire ecosphere (Kerridge & Sammells, 1998). These publications are known for their diverse contributions, covering scholarly research, educational perspectives, creative expressions, and environmentalist insights (Buell, 1995). ISLE, established in 1993, aimed to provide a forum for critical research on literary and performing arts related to environmental considerations, such as ecological theory, environmentalism, conceptions and depictions of nature, the human/nature dichotomy, and related concerns (Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996; Sunyoto et al., 2022).

In this context, ecology focuses on understanding the interconnected relationship between humans and the natural environment (Baa et al., 2023). This field adopted a comprehensive, national method to investigate human-natural systems, recognizing that these organic or mechanical systems are constantly evolving and interconnected. Since its classical origins, ecology's main aim is to thoroughly investigate the relationship between humans and nature, which is evident in its romantic legacy. However, ecological discussions focus on topics such as family and community, the connection between individuals and the surrounding environment, and life and death, including the representation of human relationship with the environment (Fadillah et al., 2022; Arafah et al., 2024). These discussions often question whether humans are a part of a distinct aspect of nature.

Considering this perspective, exploring literary and cultural history can be condensed into three major and recurring themes: (1) Portrayal of pastoral life traditionally showcases shepherds or rural dwellers in an idealized, simple, and innocent state from the complexities of city life. Alternatively, it depicts rural inhabitants as brutish and backward. Reflecting on this evidence, the movement often drives the plot while informing relevant issues. (2) The city as second nature focused on the pleasures and challenges of urban life without drawing rural comparisons. In this context, the capital city, or metropolis, is a complex network of cultures and sub-cultures, offering opportunities and social mobility. However, further exploration portrayed the city as a place of personal loneliness, social alienation, and financial vulnerability. (3) Science fiction, particularly utopias and dystopias, has played a significant role in portraying imaginary utopian and dystopian places. Within this framework, utopia refers to an imaginary ideal place, while dystopia is a make-believe, terrible dwelling. Depending on individual perspective, most utopias also possess potentially dystopian dimensions. This research is categorized under the pastoral version, presenting country folk as brutal and backward, as stated at the novel's beginning.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a qualitative method to gather and analyze non-numerical data such as texts, videos, or audio (Kaharuddin et al., 2023). This aimed to comprehend descriptive data, including concepts, thoughts, or experiences (Abidin & Kaharuddin, 2021; Arafah et al., 2023b). The acquired data was used to identify literary works such as ecocriticism. However, this qualitative research needed more mathematical work (Purwaningsih et al., 2020), while the acquired data was extracted from the novel *The Revenant*, written by Michael Punke. The central data source stemmed from the novel "The Revenant", authored by Michael Punke, which chronicles the events in the life of Hugh Glass, an American frontiersman in the 1823 Missouri Territory. It is vital to note that the term "revenant" within the context of the novel denotes an individual who has returned from the dead to inflict fear upon the living (Punke, 2002). Data collection extended to various literary works, journals, books, and online articles to enrich the findings. Additionally, the ecocriticism theory proposed by Cheryl Glotfelty was used to describe the findings.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Nature's Role as a Provider for Human Needs: Exploring the Profitability and Wilderness of Natural Resources

In the 1800s, Fort Brazeau relied heavily on hunting as an occupation. However, Hugh Glass, a skilled woodsman and sharpshooter, practised this craft at a young age. In August 1823, Glass embarked on a fur trading expedition along the Missouri River with a group of ten men led by Captain Andrew Henry. Despite the challenges posed by the untamed environment, these individuals were determined to make the trade successful. Viewing nature simply as a means to fulfil personal needs, the fur traders depicted in *The Revenant* had a mindset that prioritized exploiting the natural world without concern for environmental preservation. This narrative served to clarify the impact of human activities, such as hunting, on the environment.

Data 1

THE BUFFALO CARCASS WAS PERCEIVED BEFORE IT WAS SEEN. Announcing its presence with a cloud of swirling flies. The air was charged with the buzz of their frenzied activity as if the carcass had its own voice. Despite the relentless scavenging, sinews still embraced the skeleton, preserving its form. However, even the dignity of the majestic, bushy head and the imposing black horns had been tarnished, stripped bare by the relentless birds that had gouged out its eyes (Punke, 2002, p. 101).

The effects of hunting on the ecosystem are discussed in the book. After killing a buffalo, fur traders took the meat and other valuable parts, leaving behind only the bones and head, as discovered by Hugh Glass. The passage concentrates on how humans willingly disrupted the natural balance to meet personal needs by hunting animals.

These humans hunted animals for food, particularly meat, and also engaged in deforestation activities while camping near the Missouri River with the eleven-man team known as the Glass group. In the novel, Hugh Glass is asked by the group captain, Andrew Henry, to go scouting and hunting for food with Black Harris.

Data 2

Captain Henry asked Glass and Black Harris to scout the following day. Glass looked up, overwhelmed by the inability to respond to the beckoning call of sleep (Punke, 2002, p. 23).

Glass noticed plum trees scattered among the willows, a lucky break because these individuals intended to grind pemmican from the combined fruit and meat (Punke, 2002, p. 23).

The following morning, Glass embarked on a solo scout around the campsite and discovered that another group had fallen and used plum trees. Glass also found scattered tree trunks used by the group to grind food. Instead of simply cleaning up the mess, Glass decided to take the opportunity to improve the environment, leaving it in a better condition. Glass ensured the group of the benefits that would be realized from the resources by using the trees, which illustrates the human tendency to exploit nature for personal gain.

B. *A Harmful Relationship: The Exploitation of the Environment by Humans*

In several Western religious and philosophical traditions, the non-human world was often perceived as existing mainly for the benefit of human beings (Arafah et al., 2020; Kaharuddin et al., 2022), and this mindset led to the exploitation of nature. The beginning of *The Revenant* featured a letter by William H. Ashley announcing the introduction of a new competitor in the fur trading company. The urgency to outpace this new competition compelled the group, led by Captain Andrew Henry, to quickly reach Fort Brazeau. The protagonist, Hugh Glass, was also left in a dire situation after being attacked by a bear and snake while left with only a razor. This dire circumstance prompted Glass to exploit the environment for safety while seeking retribution.

In the afternoon, before the grizzly bear incident, Captain Henry assigned Hugh Glass and another individual named Black Harris to embark on a scouting mission. Subsequently, these men were tasked with procuring meat supply through hunting.

Data 3

The scouts set up camp for the night after taking down a buffalo or deer. The wildlife was abused, wood was collected, and two or three little fires were built in the small, shaped like a well (Punke, 2002, p. 70). The wolf-skinned man looked up briefly and then disappeared into the woods (Punke, 2002, p. 70). Both men engaged in hunting activities using a rifle belonging to Glass. In this research, it is evident that hunting and shooting buffalos for profit exploits nature. In addition, the killing of animals in the woods was solely for commercial gain. For instance, an individual was observed wearing a coat crafted from wolf skin, intensifying the exploitation of nature, particularly animals.

After several days, Hugh Glass reunited with the other comrades, led by Captain Henry, while confronting Jim Bridger, who had deserted them earlier, failing to come across John Fitzgerald. Captain Henry offered to make amends for leaving Glass and believing in Fitzgerald's false claim of death. In addition, the captain recruited Red and Chapman to accompany Glass on the quest to seek revenge against Fitzgerald, who had stolen some personal belongings. These men come into a herd of buffalo stuck in the snow while travelling.

Data 4

Glass confidently crested a butte and halted in his tracks, observing a small herd of approximately fifty buffaloes huddled together about a hundred yards away.

... Despite briefly considering shooting another cow or calf, he quickly reasoned that there was already more than enough meat.

Then, struck with an idea, Glass moved within forty yards of the herd, took aim at a giant bull, and fired. He then reloaded and swiftly shot another bull (Punke, 2002, p. 259).

As these men ventured into the wilderness, every opportunity was seized to hunt buffalo for sustenance, armed with a sophisticated rifle. Glass meticulously aimed and fired while the companions assisted in bringing down the magnificent beasts. The objective extended beyond merely obtaining food; these men intended to use the buffalo skins to construct boats to navigate the river, which was a more time-consuming alternative to land travel. With accurate shots, eleven bulls were felled, which were skillfully skinned and dissected using trusty blades.

Red and Chapman positioned themselves next to Glass, who was diligently reloading the rifle. Chapman inquired, "Why?" as the calves appeared to be of better quality for consumption.

Glass responded, "It is the hides I am after, for crafting a bullboat."

After five minutes, the serene valley was now the sombre scene of eleven lifeless buffalo. Though the bounty exceeded the immediate requirements, Red and Chapman's adrenaline-fueled actions were consumed by an unyielding frenzy. Amidst the chaotic aftermath, Glass diligently reloaded, with unwavering determination, even as the barrel became fouled from the rapid succession of shots. Only once the charge was securely in place and the pan primed did

Glass cautiously approach the nearest bull, ready to continue the necessary process. Chapman got on the ridgeline and looked around, making a noise, while Red used the new knife (Punke, 2002, p. 260).

From this viewpoint, the book does not express remorse for hunting, killing, and causing harm to nature. Humans often tried to justify hunting in various ways; some argued that it was necessary to maintain the circle of life or the ecosystem. Meanwhile, others claimed that wildlife should be perceived no differently from harvested crops (Noske, 1997). It was also reported that humans intentionally destroyed nature to reap the benefits, even though Hugh Glass's life depended on natural resources.

C. *The Impact on Human Beings*

The interconnection profoundly influenced both humanity and the natural environment. Hugh Glass bore the brunt of this impact, which had been proven to be catastrophic.

Data 5

Upon entering the clearing, a deep growl filled the air as a powerful animal with black eyes fixed its gaze on Glass. The creature stood poised, processing the unfamiliar scent mingling with the cubs. It faced Glass directly, its coiled and taut body exuding sheer muscularity, with massive shoulders and thick forelegs and a distinctive silvery hump that unmistakably identified it as a grizzly bear (Punke, 2002, p. 25).

Given this scenario, Hugh Glass encountered bear cubs at play while out on a hunting trip. Unaware that the mother was nearby, Glass approached the animals, sensing danger; the mother bear attacked Hugh Glass, who was perceived as a threat due to the proximity and rifle. The attack reflected the defensive instinct of the mother bear and the fear of humans. It also concentrated on the consequences of Hugh Glass's actions as a hunter and how the treatment of nature can evoke aggressive responses.

Data 6

Glass was often unconscious due to the injuries. They could sometimes drink water but could not eat solid food because of the wounds in the throat. Glass fell twice while being moved, and the second time broke two of the stitches in the throat. The throat injuries made Glass unable to speak, and the only sound they could make was a weak wheezing noise as they breathed (Punke, 2002, p. 41).

Glass struggled with the repercussions and pain resulting from the bear attack, a direct consequence of actions towards nature. The injuries incurred were significant, rendering Glass incapable of tending to basic needs, including breathing without assistance. The injuries to the throat restricted the ability to swallow water, and in this vulnerable state, the other companions abandoned Glass, taking possession of personal belongings, thereby intensifying the suffering. This encounter with the bear served as a poignant reminder of the potential risks inherent in previous actions.

Data 7

The day after being abandoned, Glass awakened from unconsciousness only to be confronted by a snake. It struck at the wounded throat, reacting as if with the intent that Glass had treated nature badly.

Hugh Glass started to crawl (Punke, 2002, p. 3). When the snake emerged, Glass had no idea how long he had been lying there (Punke, 2002, p. 72). At last, the snake let go of its lengthy, perpendicular body to Glass's torso. The snake rewrapped itself and attacked again before he could roll away. The snake had its fangs buried in Glass's throat, preventing him from screaming this time (Punke, 2002, p. 73).

Glass was determined to seek revenge against the companions for abandoning him at Fort Union, a distant outpost from the current location at the Grand. Despite the excruciating pain, Glass dragged himself across the unforgiving terrain for weeks until he was discovered by two Indians, who happened to be colleagues from the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

Data 8

Upon examining the situation, one of the individuals in the mentioned group successfully apprehended a contorting white worm and brought it to Glass for inspection. Subsequently, Glass reacted with a visceral expression of horror, frantically attempting to address his wounds and ultimately succumbing to a fit of retching at the disturbing notion of this parasitic intrusion (Punke, 2002, p. 142).

Upon discovering worms in the back wounds, the Indians decided to provide Glass with proper care while transporting him to a Sioux camp for treatment. This showed the significant impact of the relationship with the environment, as Glass endured great pain due to the non-human attack.

From this viewpoint, humanity must consider the relationship with the natural world because human desires often neglect nature's crucial balance. Therefore, the current challenge lies in using nature while maintaining this balance in the modern world. It is also important to approach the contemporary world as an opportunity to coexist harmoniously with nature (Asriyanti et al., 2022).

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the novel *The Revenant* focuses on the close relationship between humans and the environment. Regarding this aspect, humans are an integral part of the ecosystem, and their actions significantly impact the environment. However, the development and progress pursued by humans often led to destructive environmental consequences. Therefore, the main character exemplifies this destructive relationship with the environment. Hugh Glass

showed that the indifferent attitude towards nature resulted in damage by hunting and cutting down trees without considering the long-term effects on the environment. The novel also portrays the detrimental impact of these actions, including the scattering of carcasses and fallen trees in the forest and the decline in the population of hunted animals.

The environmental imbalance caused by these actions affected both the non-human inhabitants of the forest and humans. Glass suffered a severe injury during a bear attack, focusing on the impact of the adverse relationship with the environment. Therefore, *The Revenant* concentrated on the harmful and unbalanced relationship between the main character and nature, resulting in significant environmental damage and negative consequences.

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Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

Aims and Scope

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.

TPLS carries original, full-length articles and short research notes that reflect the latest developments and advances in both theoretical and practical aspects of language teaching and learning. We particularly encourage articles that share an interdisciplinary orientation, articles that bridge the gap between theory and practice, and articles in new and emerging areas of research that reflect the challenges faced today.

Areas of interest include: language education, language teaching methodologies, language acquisition, bilingualism, literacy, language representation, language assessment, language education policies, applied linguistics, as well as language studies and other related disciplines: psychology, linguistics, pragmatics, cognitive science, neuroscience, ethnography, sociolinguistics, sociology, and anthropology, literature, phonetics, phonology, and morphology.

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