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Pp.1-2

Contents

Article Titles & authors	Pages
Team of this issue	1
Contents	1-2
Student Voices on the Teaching & Learning of Pronunciation Sally Youssef Mohamed Ali	.3 - 14
Reading Strategies Used by Palestinian College Students Adnan Shehadeh	15-25
Homonymy and its Effect on Students of Translation at Jordanian Universities Reem Ibrahim Rabadi	26-38
An Examination of Conflicting Theoretical Perspectives in Learning & Teaching Ronnie Goodwin	39-60
Second Language Competence and Student Acculturation: The Case of International Students Hamza Alshenqeeti	61-67
Critical Literacy: Disseminating Power Relations Rachida Labbas	.68-76
Making Representational Meanings of Gender Images in Malaysian School English Textbooks: The Corpus Way Kesuma A.Bakar, Zarina Othman, Bahiyah Abdul Hamid & Fuzirah Hashim	77-89
Arab ESL Learners and Modals Mohsine Bensaid	90-97
Saudi EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Role of Face-to-face Intercultural Communication in Enhancing their English Bakr Bagash Mansour Al-Sofi	98-112
Utilizing Facebook in Language Classrooms: Social Constructivist and Affective Filter Approaches Ahdab A. Saaty	113-127
The Landscape of Translation Movement in the Arab World: From the 7th Century until the Beginning of the 21st Century Fadi Jaber	128-140
Deconstructing the Dichotomy of Native and Non-Native speakers of English: An Analysis of Current Research Nawal I Alhodithi	141-152.
Teaching Pronunciation: Revisited Mohamed Basil Al-Azzawi & Lazgin Kheder S. Barany	153 - 165
Gender Stereotyped Images of Occupations in Malaysian Primary English Textbooks: A Social Semiotic Approach Chairozila Mohd. Shamsuddin, Yuen Chee Keong & Bahiyah Abdul Hamid	166-181
Tripartite Cycle Model (TCM): an Alternative Solution for Translating Novels from English into Indonesian Rudi Hartono & Arif Suryo Priyatmojo	182- 198
"I Like Adventure but I Don't Like Writing": A Case Study of a Digital Native Fifth Grader in	199-207

Contents

an ESL Classroom Zawan Al Bulushi	
Self-Corrected Comprehension of Near-Synonymous Verbs via Comparative Visualizations Hussien T. H. Abushaaban	208-217
Reticence among Jazan University students: A Critical Analysis Syed Reza	218-230
Difficulties of Saudi Arabian Female Students Studying English Abroad Saleh Alqefari	231-144
The Role of Individual Differences in Second Language Writing Corrective Feedback Haytham Bakri	245-259 .
Focusing Teacher's Practices, Learners' Attitudes and Study Skills Through Action Research Nadia IDRI	261 - 274
The Effect of Subtitling on the Enhancement of EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension Noha Sobhy Ghoneam	275 - 290
The Use of Interpersonal Discourse Markers by Students of English at the University of Jordan Eman Awni Ali & Radwan Salim Mahadin	306 -319
Some Aspects of Equivalence in Literary Translation: Analysis of two Arabic Translations of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea1952* Salwa Alwafai	320-335
Reading Comprehension: A Guide for Non-English Lecturers at Higher Education in Central Java, Indonesia Suwandi, Sri Wahyuni & Th. Cicik Sophia B	336 -344
Teachers' perceptions about the process and challenges of designing an English for Specific Purposes course in the Arabian Gulf Samira Boukadi Haj Sassi	345 -364
Developing the English Curriculum in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Possibilities and Challenges Alya Khulaif Alshammari	365 – 372
Syllabification in Najdi Arabic: A Constraint –Based Analysis Mohammad AlAmro	373 - 388
Weblogs on Language Learning: A Technology-Enhanced Instruction in a Tertiary-Level EFL Classroom in China Arnel E. Genzola	389 - 407
Can the Subaltern Communicate? Mohamed BELAMGHARI	408-418
Arab EFL Students' Application and Awareness of Critical Thinking in College Writing: A Case Study Eman Al-Dumairi & Nida' Alhaq Al-Jabari	419-431
Learning Styles-based Curriculum in EFL Class for Senior High School Students Udin Kamiluddin	432-448
Book Review Mobile Learning: languages, literacies and cultures Author: Mark Pegrum Reviewers: Jabreel Asghar & Pir Suhail Sarhandi	449- 453

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Student Voices on the Teaching & Learning of Pronunciation

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Abstract
This research study focuses on the importance of teaching our students pronunciation, on looking at the difficulties students have, and finding solutions for them. In the past, questions were raised about the importance of pronunciation as an instructional focus. Recent discussions have focused on whether or not to teach pronunciation. Today learners too are seen as active learners with needs, not passive recipients. The results from the survey questions in this study show the importance of teaching pronunciation today, difficulties students are facing in this area of English language learning, and some possible solutions. In the past, we knew little about pronunciation, how it was taught or learned, although it was emphasized in language teaching at the time of the audio-lingual approach. Today, students can go online and get pronunciation practice too. Our goal is not to make our students perfect, but it is to make them intelligible and communicative users of English to serve their purposes in and outside the classroom.
Keywords: learning pronunciation, student voices on pronunciation, teaching pronunciation

Introduction

Just how important is pronunciation to learners. This is a question many learners & teachers ask. Many people have a foreign accent and are happy with that, but when pronunciation causes confusion or misunderstanding, this becomes a problem. The problem of teaching pronunciation may not have risen from the lack of its importance, but may have been due to the question of how to teach it (Kelly, 2000). Teachers tend to teach pronunciation only when the need arises, i.e. when students have difficulty pronouncing certain words. Pronunciation needs to be planned and included in lesson plans too. In the past the teaching of pronunciation had taken a back seat, but now many have come to appreciate its importance.

Historical Overview

Pronunciation was viewed as an important part of the English language teaching curricula in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s in both the audio-lingual methodology and the situational language teaching. (Pennington, 1986) show how pronunciation has occupied a central position in theories of oral language proficiency. They refer to the older methods such as audio-lingual method and how pronunciation has been identified with accurate production of isolated sounds or words and how this has also been reflected in contemporary methods such as the Silent Way. Language teaching goals have changed under the impact of communicative views of language and interactive theories of language learning.

In the past, pronunciation accuracy was of high importance. In the late 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s questions were raised about the importance of pronunciation as an instructional focus. Now pronunciation is viewed as a component of communicative competence rather than of linguistic competence and as an aspect of conversational fluency rather than as an aspect of accuracy.

Brown (1991) opens his important anthology on pronunciation teaching as follows: "Pronunciation has sometimes been referred to as the 'poor relation' of the English Language Teaching (ELT) world. It is an aspect of language which is often given little attention, if not completely ignored, by the teacher in the classroom" (Brown, 1991, p. 1).
Pronunciation teachers should encourage their learners to be more involved in real –life situations and be encouraged to interact more with native speakers which will expose students to input-rich contexts. This can also be greatly seen when teachers encourage students to attend and participate in conferences which will provide them with the opportunities to interact naturally without fear.

Hewings (2004) refers to the main components of speech which combine to form the pronunciation of the language. These range from the individual sounds, the vowels and consonants that form speech, to the way pitch is used to show meaning. The individual sounds are the building blocks that form words. There is also a difference between the five letter vowels in the alphabet which are A, E, I, O, U, and sometimes Y, and the 20 different vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds in British English. There are words with two or more vowels that form only one vowel sound, like *ea* in head which is pronounced /e/, and *ch* in chemist which is pronounced /k/.

Morley (1994) believes that educators today seem to be focusing on empowering students to become effective, fully participating members of the English-speaking community in which they "communicate." She adds that, "One part of this movement is a persistent effort to write pronunciation back into the instructional equation but with a new look and a basic premise. Intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence" (Morley, 1994, p. 1).

Levis (2005) refers to research done by Avery & Ehrlich, 1992 & Morley, 1991 who state that pronunciation teachers have emphasized suprasegmentals rather than segmentals over the past 25 years. Derwing (2005) also adds that we need to have empirical studies to improve our understanding of the relationship between accent and pronunciation teaching. Abercrombie (1949), for example, stated that, "language learners need no more than a comfortable intelligible pronunciation" (p. 120) cited in (Derwing, 2005). This of course does not mean that we should prevent students from reaching their desired goals if they want to excel.
Gilbert (2005) advises students to practice the rhythm and melody of spoken English. She recommends that they start with short sentences until they can say them easily, then they will eventually learn to guess the pronunciation of words they have never heard of before.

Intonation and Stress

"The term *pronunciation* as it is understood here includes not only the sounds of the language, but also the rhythm, intonation and stress patterns" (Ur, 2012, p.128). Intonation and stress patterns of the English language are just as important as the sounds of the vowels and consonants. This is not only important so that hearers can understand the learners, but so that they can understand what they hear. English has word stress as well as sentence stress.

Although, in the past, it was obvious that stress and intonation were important to teach, yet they sometimes occupied a subordinate place in many classrooms and were taught with less thoroughness as the consonants and vowels. Today, it is impossible to overlook this and students are given samples of stress and intonation features for imitation together with the vowels and consonants and grammatical patterns. Students find the idea of correlating stress with grammatical patterns a helpful starting point in hearing and practicing basic stress and rhythm patterns. Students can learn to recognize differences in stress by clapping out the rhythm of words as a starting point. Teachers can help students distinguish between statements and yes/no questions by reading a series of sentences and modeling the correct stress pattern and intonation. Coombe (2010) states that, "Dynamic speakers use variety in volume, rate, pitch & rhythm." She adds that, "If you want to become an exciting speaker, learn to use vocal variety to add vitality and excitement to your speeches" (Coombe, 2010, pp.169-170).

Pronunciation Assessment

Clearly since TESOL's publication of the first theme volume on pronunciation (Morley, 1987, Current Perspectives on Pronunciation: Practices Anchored in Theory), many teachers are focusing more and more on pronunciation teaching. More teachers have empowered students to be participating members of the English –speaking community to communicate more. Morley (1994) in her Pronunciation Pedagogy and Theory, refers to (Goodwin, 1994) in the article "Pronunciation Assessment in the ESL/EFL Curriculum" who focus on pronunciation assessment, diagnostic evaluation, ongoing evaluation with feedback, and classroom

achievement testing procedures. According to them, diagnostic evaluation of pronunciation is a process that yields a global assessment of the learner's comprehensibility. This helps determine the students' proficiency level in pronunciation and analyzes the students' individual needs. This can also be beneficial in planning a syllabus.

Research Study

Method

This present study focuses on the importance of teaching our students pronunciation & their voices on learning it. It was conducted on three groups from 2008 to 2013. A total of 131 female university students took part in this study (Group #1=63), (Group#2=26), and (Group #3=42). The survey was divided into various parts. The following are the most significant for our research study:

- Difficulties with pronunciation
- Dealing with pronunciation in class
- Possible solutions to help with the problem of pronunciation

Results and Discussion

Difficulties with pronunciation

Table [1.A] shows the difficulties with pronunciation as a whole. Results also show that students sometimes have difficulties with various areas of pronunciation like prefixes, suffixes, word and sentence stress, and silent letters. Differences between native and target language also cause difficulties for students. The biggest difficulty is with stress. This is due to the fact that English syllables can be made of one syllable, two syllables or many syllables. Students have difficulties distinguishing between the strong syllables that should be stressed and the weaker syllables that should be unstressed. We analyzed the data using SPSS. The Independent samples Kruskal & Wallis Test compares the three groups to see if there are any significant differences. Table [1.B] results show that the distribution dealing with pronunciation difficulties is the same across the groups, thus retaining the null hypothesis.

Table 1.A. ***Difficulties with pronunciation***

Pronunciation Difficulties	Group %	Always %	Very often %	Sometimes %	Never %
I have difficulty_ with_ pronunciation.	G 1	4.8	33.3	49.2	12.7
	G 2	15.4	15.4	65.4	3.8
	G 3	11.9	45.2	35.7	7.1
I_ have _ difficulty _with_ word_ or_ sentence_ stress.	G 1	11.1	28.6	49.2	11.1
	G 2	11.5	23.1	57.7	7.7
	G 3	7.1	38.1	47.6	7.1
I_ have_ difficulty_ with_ sound_ pairs.	G 1	9.5	22.2	49.2	19.0
	G 2	7.7	15.4	38.5	38.5
	G 3	7.1	38.1	38.1	16.7
I_ have_ difficulty_ with_ words_ that_ have_ silent_ letters.	G 1	6.3	27.0	39.7	27.0
	G 2	11.5	11.5	50.0	26.9

	G 3	**19.0**	**19.0**	**42.9**	**19.0**
I_ have_ difficulty_ with_ pronunciation_ because_ of_ the_ difference_ between_ my_ native_ language_ &_ the_ target_ language.	**G 1**	**9.5**	**15.9**	**52.4**	**22.2**
	G 2	**15.4**	**15.4**	**50.0**	**19.2**
	G 3	**11.9**	**26.2**	**45.2**	**16.7**

Table [1.B] ***The Independent samples Kruskal & Wallis Test***

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of difficulty_with_pronunciation is the same across categories of 2013 Pronunciation_Difficulties.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.112	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of difficulty_with_word_or_sentence_stress is the same across categories of 2013 Pronunciation_Difficulties.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.834	Retain the null hypothesis.
3	The distribution of difficulty_with_sound_pairs is the same across categories of 2013 Pronunciation_Difficulties.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.095	Retain the null hypothesis.
4	The distribution of difficulty_with_words_that_ havesilent_letters is the same across categories of 2013 Pronunciation_Difficulties.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.369	Retain the null hypothesis.
5	The distribution of ronunciation_difference_native_ language_and_target_language is the same across categories of 2013 Pronunciation_Difficulties.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.449	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Dealing with pronunciation in class:

Table [2.A] shows the results show that most students strongly agree & agree that pronunciation:

1. Should be taught as an isolated skill, but there are differences between the groups.
2. Should be like that of native speakers.
3. Should be corrected by teachers, but there are differences between the groups.
4. Is important for both listening & speaking.
5. Should be integrated in the total learning experience.
6. Should be assessed.

Students want their pronunciation to be corrected because they want to express themselves clearly. The majority of students also strongly agree & agree that pronunciation is important for both listening and speaking because they need to understand the speakers as well as be understood. They also need to distinguish between features of pronunciation before producing them. We analyzed the data using SPSS. The Independent samples Kruskal & Wallis Test compares the three groups to see if there are any significant differences. Table [2B] Results show that the distribution dealing with Dealing with pronunciation in class is the same across the groups except in the fact that pronunciation should be taught as an isolated skill and that teachers should correct students' pronunciation, thus rejecting the null hypothesis

Table [2.A]: ***Dealing with pronunciation in class***

Dealing with pronunciation in class	Group	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
I_ think_ pronunciation_ should_ be_ taught_ as_ an_ isolated_ skill.	G 1	47.6	46.0	4.8	1.6
	G 2	50.0	19.2	26.9	3.8
	G 3	33.3	40.5	21.4	4.8
I_ think_ my_ pronunciation_ should_ be_ like_ that_ of_ native_ speakers.	G 1	41.3	41.3	12.7	4.8
	G 2	38.5	50.0	11.5	0.0
	G 3	23.8	47.6	26.2	2.4
I_ think_ teachers_ should_ correct_ students'_ pronunciation.	G 1	68.3	25.4	6.3	0.0
	G 2	76.9	23.1	0.0	0.0
	G 3	50.0	11.9	11.9	4.8
I_ think_ pronunciation_ is_ important_ for_ both _ listening_ &_ speaking.	G 1	71.4	22.2	4.8	1.6
	G 2	76.9	23.1	0.0	0.0
	G 3	64.3	28.6	7.1	0.0
I_ think_ pronunciation_ should_ be_ integrated_ in_ the_ total_ learning_ experience.	G 1	52.4	33.3	9.5	4.8
	G 2	57.7	38.5	3.8	0.0
	G 3	45.2	38.1	16.7	0.0
I_ think_ pronunciation_ should_ be_ assessed.	G 1	44.4	42.9	9.5	3.2
	G 2	30.8	57.7	7.7	3.8
	G 3	38.1	42.9	14.3	4.8

Table [2.B] ***The Independent samples Kruskal & Wallis Test***

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of pronunciation_should_be_taught_as_an_isolated_skill is the same across categories of Dealing with pronunciation in class .	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.010	Reject the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of my_pronunciation_should_be_like_that_of_native_speakers is the same across categories of Dealing with pronunciation in class .	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.110	Retain the null hypothesis.
3	The distribution of teachers_should_correct_students_pronunciation is the same across categories of Dealing with pronunciation in class .	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.041	Reject the null hypothesis.
4	The distribution of pronunciation_is_important_for_both_listening_and_speaking is the same across categories of Dealing with pronunciation in class .	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.470	Retain the null hypothesis.
5	The distribution of should_be_integrated_in_the_total_learning_experience is the same across categories of Dealing with pronunciation in class .	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.438	Retain the null hypothesis.
6	The distribution of pronunciation_should_be_assessed is the same across categories of Dealing with pronunciation in class.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.557	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Possible solutions to help with the problem of pronunciation:

Table [3.A] shows what students think will help them. The results indicate that the majority of the students strongly agree and agree that the following will help them:

- Learning sound pairs
- Using a recorder or CD
- Listening to tapes or CDs
- Watching movies
- Practicing exercises with the use of tongue twisters online
- Having knowledge of intonation of English

This clearly shows that the use of technology can greatly help students improve their pronunciation. Many students are now looking at various websites to aid them. We analyzed the data using SPSS. The Independent samples Kruskal & Wallis Test compares the three groups to see if there are any significant differences. Table [3.B] Results show that the distribution dealing with possible solutions to help with the problem of pronunciation is the same across the groups, thus retaining the null hypothesis.

Table [3.A]: ***Possible solutions to help with the problem of pronunciation***

Possible solutions to help with the problem of pronunciation	Group	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
I_ think_ learning_ minimal_ pairs_ will_ help_ me_ with_ my_ pronunciation.	G 1	57.1	33.3	6.3	3.2
	G 2	69.2	19.2	7.7	3.8
	G 3	40.5	45.2	14.3	0.0
I_ think_ using_ a_ recorder_ or_ CD_ will_ help_ me_ with_ my_ pronunciation.	G 1	60.3	27.0	11.1	1.6
	G 2	38.5	42.3	19.2	0.0
	G 3	42.9	33.3	23.8	0.0
I_ think_ listening_ to_ tapes/CDs_ will_ help_ me_ with_ my_ pronunciation.	G 1	57.1	34.9	6.3	1.6
	G 2	34.6	57.7	7.7	0.0
	G 3	52.4	33.3	11.9	2.4
I_ think_ watching_ movies_ will_ help_ me_ with_ my_ pronunciation.	G 1	61.9	23.8	11.1	3.2
	G 2	46.2	50.0	3.8	0.0
	G 3	52.4	33.3	11.9	2.4
I_ think_ practicing_ exercises_ with_ the_ use_ of_ tongue_ twisters_ will_ help_ me_ with_ my_ pronunciation.	G 1	49.2	33.3	17.5	0.0
	G 2	23.1	61.5	15.4	0.0
	G 3	38.1	50.0	9.5	2.4
I_ think_ knowledge_ of_ intonation_ of_ English_ will_ help_ me.	G 1	47.6	39.7	12.7	0.0
	G 2	34.6	53.8	7.7	3.8
	G 3	38.1	45.2	16.7	0.0

Table [3.B] ***The Independent samples Kruskal & Wallis Test***

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Learning_minimal_pairs is the same across categories of Possible_solutions.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.099	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Using_a_recorder_or_CD is the same across categories of Possible_solutions.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.095	Retain the null hypothesis.
3	The distribution of Listening_to_tapes_or_CDs is the same across categories of Possible_solutions.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.253	Retain the null hypothesis.
4	The distribution of Watching_movies is the same across categories of Possible_solutions.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.636	Retain the null hypothesis.
5	The distribution of Practicing_exercises_with_the_use_of_tongue_twisters is the same across categories of Possible_solutions.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.241	Retain the null hypothesis.
6	The distribution of Having_knowledge_of_intonation_of_English is the same across categories of Possible_solutions.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.512	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Recommendations

After looking at the results, it seems that it would be a great idea to not only include pronunciation teaching in our syllabus, but also start by identifying student problem areas or diagnose students' pronunciation weaknesses. Then, it would also be very beneficial to introduce pronunciation activities to make the process more stimulating and fun. The following are some practice activity types according to (Hewings, 2004):

- Developing awareness
- Information transfer and minimal pairs
- Games
- Building consonant cluster towers
- Analysis
- Prediction
- Reflection
- Using reference sources

The Following Are Other Useful Ways To Improve Pronunciation:

1) Using tongue twisters found online:

This is a useful strategy for improving English pronunciation. These tongue twisters found online are also great assessment tools. Tongue twisters could help improve students' production of consonants and vowels. We are not saying that this will work for everyone, but

only that it is one kind of strategy. An example of a popular tongue twister is Betty Botter's better batter. (About Education, n.d.)

This tongue twister also serves many teaching opportunities. The "b" sound can be used to emphasize the minimal pairs / b/ /p/ in addition to the teaching of many vowels. Another popular tongue twister is Peter Piper. (About Education, n.d.)

2) (Kelly, 2000) looks at three main types of lessons: integrated lessons, where pronunciation forms an essential part of the language analysis; remedial or reactive lessons, where difficulties that arise should be dealt with immediately; and practice lessons, where particular features should be the main focus of the lesson. Recommendations for useful pronunciation assessments:\

- Targeting pronunciation
- Using minimal pairs
- Checking Phonetics website:

http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/anatomy.htm
Examples of pronunciation activities:
http://www.soundsofenglish.org/tips.htm
http://www.caslt.org/resources/english-sl/classroom-resource-links-speaking_en.php

- Using Apps for pronunciation practice like that for voice check & voice training.
- "Learn American English Pronunciation" App.
- "How to speak English" App Kaplan International Co.

Conclusion

In the past the focus on pronunciation teaching and assessment was very limited, but today many have come to realize its importance. Students need to be given the opportunity to speak and have updated methods and activities used in the classroom. More research is needed to teach and assess students' pronunciation and address any theoretical issues that may arise to help students communicate more accurately in and outside the classroom. Constant mispronunciation causes difficulties in understanding, embarrassment for the speaker, and frustration especially when the speaker has good command of grammar and vocabulary. Teaching pronunciation is not only necessary when responding to students' errors, but it should also be planned as an integral part of the lesson planning. The question to ask now is whether intelligibility rather than native-like pronunciation is what we need to focus on for our learners. Lightbown (2013), refer to research done by (Derwing, 2005) that shows that, "the presence of a strong foreign accent does not necessarily result in reduced intelligibility or comprehensibility" (Lightbown & Spada (2013: 71).

When looking at the problems students encounter in their pronunciation and how these can inhibit their successful communication, we see the significance of teaching pronunciation to meet our students' needs. Jang (2014), states that, "Students' oral proficiency is not a sufficient indicator of their language abilities" (Jang, 2014:154). Yet, we cannot ignore its importance. Finally, we realize and believe that students' pronunciation needs can no longer be ignored and their voices must be heard. We do not want our learners to be reluctant to speak because of their foreign accent, but we want them to explore the world and express their opinion. Again, our focus is not on getting learners to produce native speaker accents, but it is to enable them to

produce intelligible and comprehensible speech to communicate and open doors before them. Today learners get online assistance and practice pronunciation activities by using online websites and Apps.

"More and more people are learning English today. Also today we have an instructional technology revolution which has been quite advantageous to pronunciation, with all the audio, video, and computer capabilities in the classroom" (Ali, 2010).

"Students' educational, occupational, language, and reasonable intelligible spelling and pronunciation needs must be addressed to give them the empowerment they need to succeed. Here, we have seen the spelling and pronunciation link and have come to the conclusion that we sometimes need to refer to spelling and pronunciation together to indicate differences and similarities. Our goal is not to make our students perfect, but it is to make them intelligible and communicative users of English to serve their purposes (Ali, 2010).

About the Author

Sally Youssef Mohamed Ali earned her Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Georgetown University and has been teaching English since 1977. She has been a teacher, teacher trainer, curriculum developer and presenter. Dr. Ali is presently an Associate Professor in the Linguistics Department at UAE University.

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Reading Strategies Used by Palestinian College Students

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Abstract
This study investigates the type of reading strategies used by Engineering students at Palestine polytechnic University. It also explores the differences between students of high proficiency and those of low proficiency in terms of the type of strategies used as well as the correlation between these types of strategies and the students' reading ability. The participants are 100 sophomore engineering students who are enrolled in their second English course at the university. The data were collected by using a self reported questionnaire and reading comprehension passages. Results show that the most frequent types of strategies used by all students are the global strategies followed by problem solving ones and finally the support ones. They also reveal a significant correlation between the global strategies used and the students' reading comprehension ability. Furthermore, the study shows differences between low-proficient readers and high proficient ones in terms of the frequency and type of strategies used.
***Keywords*:** college students reading, EFL reading comprehension, reading comprehension, Palestinian college students.

Introduction

Reading is an essential skill for all students because it is the main doorway to knowledge. However, for college students, especially those in technical and scientific disciplines, one may argue that proficiency in English reading comprehension is indispensable as these students need it to study their subject matter and to acquire knowledge from various sources. It could be said that good English reading ability is a key factor for success in the technical and scientific disciplines at the college level.

Reading strategies have been an important theme for research in EFL in general and reading skill in particular in an attempt to help improve students' reading ability. However, different categories of strategies were generated (Anderson,1991; Chang, 1998; Oxford, 1990, Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001). Most of the classifications used are built on the two well known reading models; top-down and bottom up. In this study, however, reading strategies were divided into three types; the first is global strategies which are planned by the reader to monitor reading such as predicting the general meaning of the text or having a purpose for reading. The second is problem solving strategies, i.e., those used by the reader to deal with the difficulties he faces during reading such as guessing the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary and reading the parts of the text more than once. The third type is support strategies, which are the strategies that readers use to help them understand the text , such as using dictionaries.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the type of strategies Palestinian Engineering students use in reading comprehension and the relationship between the different types of strategies and reading ability. Moreover, it explores whether high proficient and low proficient students use the same kinds of strategies or different ones. To achieve this aim, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the reading strategies used most by Palestinian college engineering students?
2. Are there differences between high proficient and low proficient readers in terms of the used strategies?
3. Is there a relationship between reading ability and the type of strategies used?
4. What kind of strategies are used by both high and low proficient readers to guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary?

Literature review

Reading strategies have been an important theme in the literature of EFL teaching and learning as they reflect how learners deal with reading as a complex skill. Reading strategies have been classified in different categories by different researchers. The most known classification of reading strategies is Oxford's (1990), which put them into six types; memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. However, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have only three categories; cognitive, metacognitive and, social/affective strategies. Almost ten years earlier, we find that Rubin (1981) suggested five categories related to their contribution to language learning. These categories are, guessing, memorization, practice, deductive reasoning, and monitoring. Another classification was built on the two reading models, top down and bottom up, and included three types; general or global strategies, problem solving and support strategies (Block, 1986).

Several studies have reported on the differences between high-proficient and low-proficient readers in terms of using reading strategies and the relationship between reading strategies and reading ability. (Cheng, 2000; Oxford, 2001; Wenden, 1998; Zhang, 2008). Most of these studies indicated that high proficient readers use more strategies and in more efficient ways (Garner, 1987; Liu 2002; Luo, 2010; Vandergrift, 1999).

Another important dimension of reading strategies that researchers have studied is the relationship between reading ability and strategy use. It was found that the use of some strategies contributes to having a good level of reading comprehension (Block 1992; Hassan, 1999; Zhang ,2001).

In the Palestinian context, a study by Shmais (2002) investigated the use of two participants' reading strategies via think-aloud. She found that they used a number of metacognitive strategies that helped them answer multiple questions on a reading text.

Methodology

Participants

The participants consisted of one hundred students from the college of Engineering at Palestine Polytechnic University. All of them are sophomore students who were enrolled in a second required course in English. These students have received twelve years of English instructions at school and one course at the university level. They are required to have three English courses at the university; the first two mainly focus on reading while the third course focuses on speaking and writing.

Instrumentation and procedures

Three main instruments were used in this study; a reading strategy questionnaire, as well as two passages from newspapers that were used for practicing reading strategies, In addition to the previous instruments four other reading passages from TOEFL practice textbook were used to measure the participants' reading ability. The questionnaire was adapted from Oxford's classification (1990) and it includes 28 statements rated on Likert scale. The students were asked to read a text and then respond to the questionnaire directly. The questionnaire covers three categories of reading strategies; general (global), problem solving and support strategies.

Two reading passages were selected for this study from authentic sources such as newspapers and websites. One of the passages was used to train students on using strategies while the second one was used for the study. For the second passage, the students were asked to read it at home (to be discussed in the classroom) and once they finished reading they responded to the questionnaire and brought it to the teacher.

The third instrument was a reading test that is composed of four passages taken from TOEFL practice book. Each passage is followed by ten multiple choice questions that test general idea, specific details, vocabulary, relationship between different ideas and critical reading. The result of the exam was used to classify students into high proficient and low proficient ones. Moreover, it was used to explore if different types of strategies correlate with reading ability in general. The test was validated by a number of EFL college teachers and piloted before being used. The test reliability turned out to be .78.

Data collection

In order to answer the research questions and to ensure that the participants are fully aware of the reading strategies, they were familiarized with the aim of the research and the questionnaire items. Then, to be sure that they understand the meaning of the items, they were asked to read one-page article and then fill in the questionnaire inside the classroom and ask about any ambiguous item. On the following day, the students were provided with similar articles taken from a newspaper and asked to read at home and respond to the questionnaire. The participants' responses were collected and analyzed according to the research questions.

To measure participants' ability in reading, they were asked to sit for a reading exam using four passages from a TOEFL practice textbook. Each passage is followed by ten multiple choice questions that cover the different constructs of reading. The goal of this test is to measure the participants' proficiency in reading and to divide them into two groups; high proficient and low-proficient.

Results and discussion

Results of the study and the discussion are presented according to the research questions of the study.

Research question 1: What types of strategies are the most used by Palestinian college students?

The results of data analyses for the frequency of using strategies show that the general or global strategies are the most used ones. Table one shows that the mean for general strategies used is (M=2. 8) followed by problem solving ones (m=2.20). By contrast, the support strategies were the least frequently used (M=2.12). This means that most of the students rely on their general knowledge of the world and the topic so as to compensate for their linguistic knowledge. However, Al-Sohbani (2013) found that Yemeni university students used problem solving strategies a little more than global and support ones. In fact in this study the most used strategies as individual ones are support ones ; items 27, 28, 14, 13, 3. (See appendix 1)

Table1. ***Results of descriptive statistics for the different types of strategies used by participants.***

N.	Strategy type	M.	Maximum	SD.
100	global(General)	2.800	4	.570
100	Problem solving	2.2079	4	.598
100	Support	2.1229	4	.609

Research question 2: Are there differences between high proficient and low proficient readers in terms of the used strategies?

It is very important in EFL research to investigate the strategies that are used by proficient learners so that they can be used in teaching and learning to help those students with low proficiency. The high proficient students were selected by including having those participants who scored at the highest 25%. By contrast, the lowest- proficient ones were chosen by selecting those who have the lowest 25%.

The results showed that the strategies most used by high proficient students are the global ones, (M=3.06), followed by problem solving ones, (M=2.18), and then comes the support ones, (M=2.13). Although, the participants with low proficiency have the same patterns in terms of the preferred type of used strategies, they have lower frequency. The means of the three types used by low proficient readers are, 2.43 for the global, 2.16 for the problem solving ones and 2.07 for the support. This shows that high proficient readers use strategies more frequently than the low proficient ones, and this may explain the fact that they are better readers. Shang (2011) also found that reading scores correlate with cognitive and testing strategies.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for strategy use by both high proficient and low proficient participants.

Level of participants	Type of strategies	N.	M.	Maximum	SD.
High proficient	global	22	3.06	4	.508
	Problem solving	22	2.18	4	.77
	support	22	2.13	4	.93
Low proficient	global	36	2.43	4	.59
	Problem solving	36	2.16	4	.54
	support	36	2.07	4	.50

Research question 3.Is there a relationship between reading ability and the type of strategies used?

An important goal of this study is to investigate the relationship between reading ability and the different type of strategies. Results show that there is significant correlation between the scores of reading comprehension and only one type of reading strategies, that is the global one, p=.025. This indicates that students use global strategies to get higher scores in reading. However, the study did not show significant correlation between reading ability and both the problem solving strategies as well as the support ones. Table 3 shows the results of the correlation analyses between reading ability and the three types of strategies.

Table 3. Correlation between reading ability and types of reading strategies.

Type of strategy	N.	Correlation (R)	Sig. (P)
Global	100	.317	.025
Problem solving	100	-.105	.453
Support	100	-.004	.978

However, the highest correlations were found between reading ability and five individual strategies; three of them are global and the other two are support ones. This means that reading ability requires the use of all types of strategies that reflect top-down and bottom up processing. Other researchers (Shang, 2011; Zhang & Seepho, 2013, Al-Sohbani, 2013; Chen & Intaraprasert, 2014) found a correlation between different types of reading strategies and reading ability.

Table 4. Shows the result of the correlation analyses of reading ability and the five individual strategies.

Table 4. ***Correlation between reading ability and the individual strategies.***

Strategy	N.	Correlation (R)	Sig. (P)
I read the title and try to predict what the reading will be about.	100	.277	.050
I use my knowledge of the world to help me understand the text	100	.401	.004
I connect the reading to other materials I have read	100	.327	.020
I translate into my native language.(Arabic)	100	.280	.049
I try to understand the meaning of every word.	100	-.327	.020

Research question 4: What kind of strategies is used by both high and low proficient readers to guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary?

Vocabulary is a very important construct of reading ability. The results of the study show that the most used vocabulary guessing strategy is "I keep a record of the words I learn", (M=.40) and followed by, "I employ special techniques to help me remember the new words", (M=3.7). The other well known guessing strategies such as using context clues and word analysis were used less than these two ones although they are always encouraged and emphasized by teachers.

The results also show that high proficient students use guessing strategies less than low-proficient ones (M=2.22) and (M=2.35) respectively. This could be explained by saying that high proficient students have better knowledge of vocabulary than low proficient ones and that they do not need this strategy as much as the low-proficient ones.

Other strategies:

To explore any other strategies that students may have used**,** there was an open ended question to elicit their answers. Most of participants who responded to this question included translation activities. Several answers mentioned using translation into the native language (Arabic) of every unfamiliar vocabulary and write it on the passage. Some participants mentioned that they try to have a translation of the difficult sentences or even paragraphs and write the translation on the same sentence or paragraph in the article. This may reflect on teaching practices in high schools. Most teachers encourage students to resort to the Arabic meaning of vocabulary, and they themselves use a lot of Arabic in their classes.

Another group of participants mentioned reading the whole article several times, then trying to do the same with every paragraph. They said that this strategy helped them in identifying the main ideas of the article.

Conclusion

This study explored an interesting issue that plays an important role in EFL reading comprehension which is the use of reading strategies by college students. The results showed

that the most used type of strategies is the global strategies that are required for the top- down processing of the reading skill. It also showed that this type of strategies correlate significantly with the reading ability. This means that one could argue that training students on using such strategies should be an indispensible activity when teaching reading classes.

The study also indicated that although both high-proficient and low –proficient readers have the same order in using the types of strategies, global, problem solving and support, there are differences between them in terms of frequency. High-proficient readers employ the three types of strategies more frequently than low –proficient ones. This result suggests that students should be trained and encouraged to use all types of strategies more frequently.

Regarding vocabulary strategies, the study revealed that the most used strategies are related to keeping records of the new-learned vocabulary items and having special techniques to remember the word. Although teachers always emphasize using guessing strategies such as context clues and the analysis of words into stems and affixes, it turned out that they are not the strategies most used by students. One may safely propose that teachers should know the needs of their students and their learning styles and build on them to help students achieve the intended goals. However, further research on vocabulary and its relationship to reading is needed.

About the Author:

Director of Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Palestine polytechnic University. Have PhD in TESOL & Teacher Ed. From the Ohio State University. Have been involve in EFL activities as a teacher, supervisor, trainer for more than 20 years.
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Appendix A: Strategy Questionnaire.

Self Evaluation of Reading Strategies

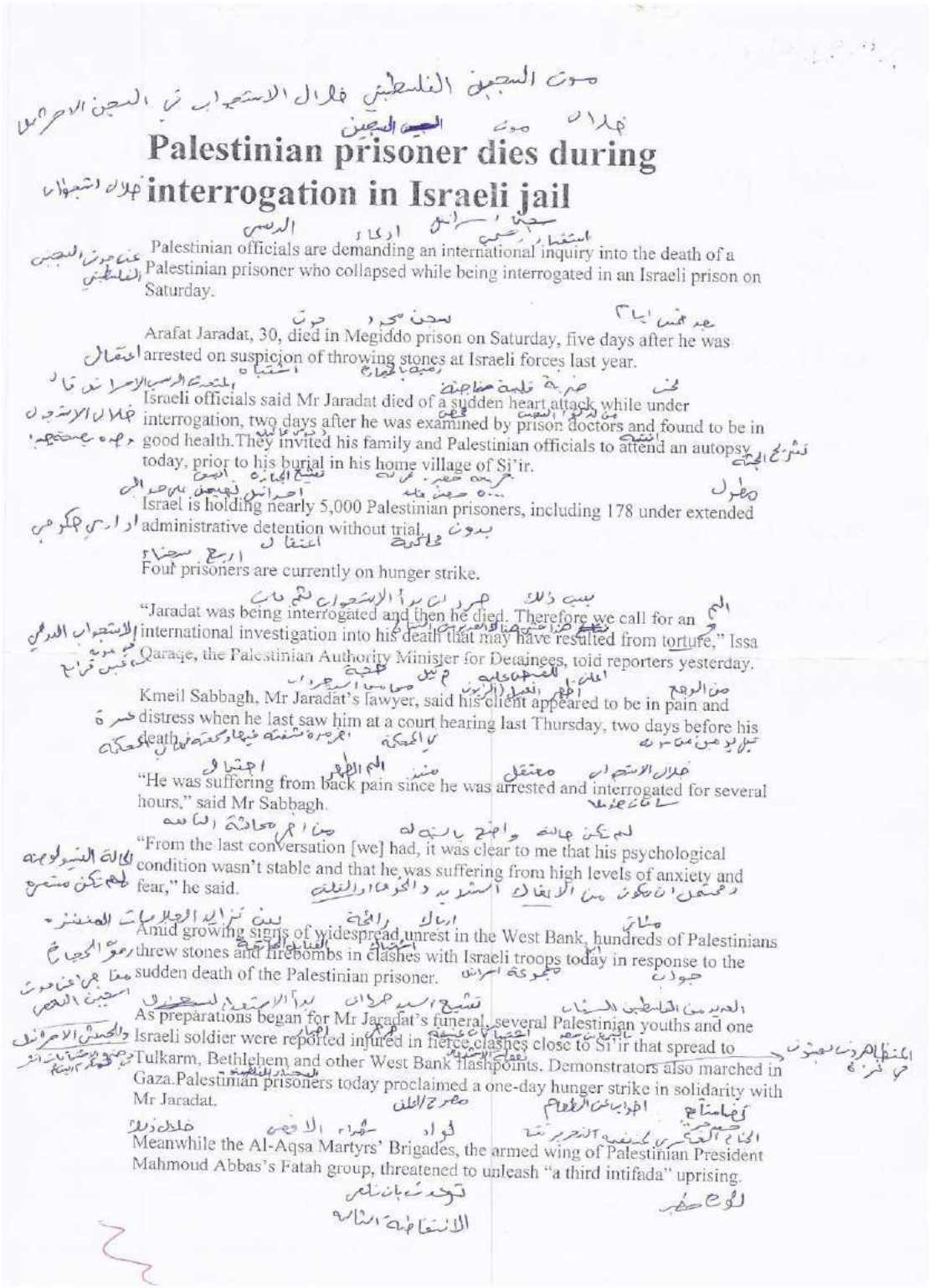
Please rate the strategies that you have employed while reading the article on a scale from 1-4. One means that you have not used the strategy at all while 5 means that you relied heavily on it.

#	Strategy	1	2	3	4
1	I read the title and try to predict what the reading will be about.				
2	I use my knowledge of the world to help me understand the text.				
3	I read knowing that every text contains meaning and I try to understand it.				
4	I use illustrations to help me understand the text.				
5	I ask myself questions about the text.				
6	I continue if I am not successful.				
7	I identify and underline main ideas.				
8	I connect details with main ideas.				
9	I summarize the reading in my own words.				
10	I skip unnecessary words.				
11	I usually look up words in an English-English print dictionary.				
12	I usually look up words in an English-English on- line dictionary				

13	I look up words in an English-Arabic print dictionary.				
14	I look up words in an English-Arabic on- line dictionary.				
15	I connect the reading to other materials I have read.				
16	I translate into my native language.(Arabic)				
17	When reading I try to distinguish between facts and opinions.				
18	I try to make inferences about the author's attitude towards the issue presented.				
19	I read difficult sections more than once.				
20	I go back to the section that precedes the difficult section to help me understand.				
21	I try to focus on grammatical structures to help me understand the idea.				
22	I use text layout (punctuation, paragraphing, organization, etc.) to help me understand meaning.				
23	I use a variety of types of context clues				
24	When facing a difficult word, I continue to read in order to discover meaning.				
25	I try to guess meaning of a word by dividing it into smaller units (suffixes, stems, prefixes, etc.)				
26	I try to understand the meaning of every word.				
27	I keep a record of the words I learn.				
28	I employ special techniques to help me remember new words.				

Use the space provided to list any other strategies you normally use when reading texts or dealing with vocabulary. You may write in Arabic if you like.

Appendix B: Sample of students use of translation on the text.



Palestinian prisoner dies during interrogation in Israeli jail

Palestinian officials are demanding an international inquiry into the death of a Palestinian prisoner who collapsed while being interrogated in an Israeli prison on Saturday.

Arafat Jaradat, 30, died in Megiddo prison on Saturday, five days after he was arrested on suspicion of throwing stones at Israeli forces last year.

Israeli officials said Mr Jaradat died of a sudden heart attack while under interrogation, two days after he was examined by prison doctors and found to be in good health. They invited his family and Palestinian officials to attend an autopsy today, prior to his burial in his home village of Si'ir.

Israel is holding nearly 5,000 Palestinian prisoners, including 178 under extended administrative detention without trial.

Four prisoners are currently on hunger strike.

"Jaradat was being interrogated and then he died. Therefore we call for an international investigation into his death that may have resulted from torture," Issa Qaraqe, the Palestinian Authority Minister for Detainees, told reporters yesterday.

Kmeil Sabbagh, Mr Jaradat's lawyer, said his client appeared to be in pain and distress when he last saw him at a court hearing last Thursday, two days before his death.

"He was suffering from back pain since he was arrested and interrogated for several hours," said Mr Sabbagh.

"From the last conversation [we] had, it was clear to me that his psychological condition wasn't stable and that he was suffering from high levels of anxiety and fear," he said.

Amid growing signs of widespread unrest in the West Bank, hundreds of Palestinians threw stones and firebombs in clashes with Israeli troops today in response to the sudden death of the Palestinian prisoner.

As preparations began for Mr Jaradat's funeral, several Palestinian youths and one Israeli soldier were reported injured in fierce clashes close to Si'ir that spread to Tulkarm, Bethlehem and other West Bank flashpoints. Demonstrators also marched in Gaza. Palestinian prisoners today proclaimed a one-day hunger strike in solidarity with Mr Jaradat.

Meanwhile the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the armed wing of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah group, threatened to unleash "a third intifada" uprising.

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Homonymy and its Effect on Students of Translation at Jordanian Universities

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Abstract

This study explains the ambiguity of Arabic homonyms and its negative effects on the performance of undergraduate Translation students in three Jordanian universities. In addition, it aims to show the benefits of the annex given to the students that includes meaning of each tested word. The questions of the study are: Does the phenomenon of homonymy negatively affect the translation of Jordanian undergraduate students studying Translation? Does the annex that students were provided with affect their translation positively? A pre-test and a post-test were used as achievement tests to answer these questions to measure the performance of 36 fourth year Translation students at three Jordanian universities. They were asked to translate (30) sentences from Arabic to English. A group of (18) students were asked to retranslate the same sentences using a prepared annex, whereas, the other group did not use the annex to retranslate these sentences. The (t-test) was used to test the statistical significance of the differences between the two groups. Results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the averages of both the experimental and control group in the pre–test. Whereas, there were statistically significant differences between the averages of both groups in the post–test in favor of the experimental group who used the annex, in comparison with the control group who did not use the annex. The lack of courses that increase their knowledge in Arabic language relating to vocabulary and structure was the reason behind these negative results.

Key words: Homonymy, lexical semantics, semantics, translation, types of homonyms

1. Introduction

Homonyms can be considered the cause of different linguistic phenomena and have several consequences as a result such as misunderstanding and lack of communication through language. To my best knowledge, as far as Arab students in general and Jordanian students in particular are concerned, there does not appear to be any studies investigating this linguistic effect other than this study. This study attempts to explore one of the major semantic phenomena related to ambiguity of homonyms and their effect on the translations of undergraduate students studying Translation in Jordan. The study of homonymy has been scrutinized in several fields of linguistics as in lexical semantics (See Cruse, 1986; Palmer, 1984; Ullmann, 1962), language teaching (Todd, 1987), psycholinguistics (Pinker, 1995), stylistics (See Allan, 2001; Lyons, 1963) and computational linguistics (Schütze, 1998).

Homonymy is one of the main issues nominated for ambiguity since unawareness or negligence of homonyms might lead to a significant misunderstanding of the uttered messages, as they contribute to meaning extension as well as pronunciation constancy. This is the danger as students of Translation would see the utterance, then they might render it into one of its various meanings without consideration or thoroughness. Therefore, they might follow it, which might lead to corrupted results.

Information obtained from the analysis of the frequent mistakes committed by the undergraduate students studying Translation is due to the phenomenon of homonymy. In this light, an urgent need arises for investigating this phenomenon with an expectation that information obtained from this study will help in gaining some insight into the phenomenon to overcome the hurdles of sense disambiguation of words. The significance of the present study is also derived from the fact that Arabic homonymy is the source of ambiguity in the case of those students.

Since the focus of this study is on ambiguity of homonyms and its effects, it is crucial to highlight the effect of Arabic homonyms on the performance of Jordanian students of Translation. In addition, it will be a useful study for curriculum planners at the Jordanian universities in order to develop them in line with the students' level.

The study was limited to the investigation of Jordanian students' mistakes due to two reasons: first, the depletion of specialized studies which dealt with such a problem, and second, the need for a practical conception about the nature of errors and the ways to deal with them. Therefore, the study attempts to answer the following two questions:

1- Does the phenomenon of homonymy negatively affect the translation of Jordanian undergraduate students studying Translation?
2- Does the annex that students were provided with affect their translation positively?

Homonymy is a major source of ambiguity, whether intentional or unintentional, that often presents serious hindrances to the undergraduate Translation students. This phenomenon, indeed, creates lexical ambiguity in the use of language, hinders communication at times, and renders translation more difficult than it already is. This study aims to recognize the effect of homonymy phenomenon on the students' performance. In addition, it aims to investigate the effect of the annex which explains the nature of homonyms on the students' performance. The last aim of the study is to develop recommendations which contribute to the enhancement of students' performance.

2. Background

Homonymy in Greek is "same name" (Riemer, 2010, 161), and Palmer (1984) defines it as words (lexemes) which denote two different meanings at the same time according to the native speakers of the relevant language. This term is also described in semantics for lexical items that are identical in spelling and pronunciation but have different meanings (See Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1982; Macdonald, 1977; Richard & Schmidt, 2002; Yule, 2014). Moreover, Atichison (1993) and Fromkin *et al.* (2014) agree with the previous definition of homonyms but they add that homonyms may or may not be identical. Accordingly, their definition is rather similar to that of homophones. Conversely, homonyms are defined as homophones as words with the same sound but different spellings as stated by Watkins *et al.*, (2001) but without labelling homophones as homonyms as Fromkin *et al.* (2014) do.

Crystal (2008) states that homonymy can be illustrated as homographs, words that are spelt the same but have different meanings such as *row* (boat) vs. *row* (noise), and homophones, words that are spelt differently but have similar pronunciation as *threw* vs. *through*.

Homonyms can be classified to two major types in semantic analysis. First, total, full, absolute or complete homonymy which are words (lexemes) that have the same pronunciation and the same spelling, i.e. the identity covers spoken and written forms that make their forms identical which are grammatically equivalent (Allan, 1986; Fellbaum, 2000; Löbner, 2013; Lyons, 1982). For example, *bank* a slope, *bank* a place for money, and *bank* a bench or row of switches. Second, partial homonymy or heteronomy as Crystal (2008) refers to the term or 'near homonyms' as Watkins *et al.*, (2001) refer to it. Thus, partial homonymy are words either identical in spoken form as homophones or in written form as homographs (Crystal, 2008; Watkins *et al.*, 2001). For instance, *scene visual location and seen past participle of to see.*

Traditionally, the terms homonymy and polysemy are used for the phenomenon of multiple meanings. When meanings are related, we talk of polysemy, and when meanings are unrelated and essentially coincidental we call them homonyms. The theoretical distinction between homonymy and polysemy in semantic analysis has always been a problematic aspect for linguists to solve (Crystal, 2008). One is easily misled to assume homonymy as polysemy or vice versa. Polysemy is defined as one word (lexeme) with a wide range of related meanings, whereas homonymy is a set of words which have no relationship except their agreement in written or spoken forms. For instance, *foot* of person, of mountain, of bed is a polysemy. As Yule (2014) and Fromkin *et al.*(2014) declare that polysemous words appear in dictionaries as a single word (lexeme) with a numbered of the different meanings of it, like *pupil*, *wood* and *book* are polysemous, whereas homonyms have separate dictionary entries as words like *bank* and *mole* each one has two separate meanings.

Homonymy is a general semantic phenomenon and a capability of explanation and communication, but it leads to ambiguity in some positions since a homonym might hold two or more meanings, and thus, one meaning might be replaced with another despite the availability of a sentence context. Indeed, homonyms could cause a more significant problem whether in translation in particular or in communication in general.

As this study investigates the effect of Arabic homonyms on Translation students, it is essential to tackle homonymy in Arabic. Homonymy in Arabic is often referred to as ' attajanus

allaẓdi ' or ' almushtrak allaẓdi', all Arab linguists agree to define it as a word (lexeme) that has one articulation or form and more than one meaning (Al Khuli 2001; Al Salih,1968; Al Ubaidi, 1998). For example, the word "sin" has one articulation whether it means 'age' or 'tooth'; and "daqi:q" which means 'flour', 'precise', and 'thin'.

Homonymy is a contentious linguistic subject among Arab linguists despite the fact that it could not be denied by them. Arab linguists have disagreed on its existence in Arabic such as Ibn Dorstoya in his book "*Sharhu al Tafsil*" (Explanation of the Eloquent) denied it by interpreting the examples of homonyms in a way that excludes them from being categorized under homonymy. They might consider one of the homonym meanings is real, and the other meanings are metaphorical (Shahin, 1980). For example, the word "wajd" has several meanings like 'to find', 'anger', or 'to love'. Such Arab linguists would state that this word might seem to have several meanings but actually all these meanings are related to one thing. In contrary, other Arab linguists such as Al Aṣma'y and Abu Obaidah Mu'ammar bin Al Muthana headed for its frequent existence as they provided a range of undoubted evidence were among this party (Shahin, 1980).

Homonyms in Arabic can be classified to six types which are:

1. Homonyms of multiple root morphemes

This embodies the first type of homonymy, and it indicates that the meanings of a single homonymous word belong to two different root morphemes. For example, "arrajulu qa'ilun ẓuhran" (Lit. translation: The man spoke at noon), where the word "qa'ilun" is homonymous as it might indicate the meaning of saying (i.e. the speech articulated by the tongue, which is derived from the Arabic root "qawl"), or the meaning of having a nap (i.e. a short sleep during the noon, which is derived from the Arabic root "qail"), but the word "ẓuhran" presents in the context explains the first meaning (Ibn Manẓour, 1994).

Firth (1957) called this aspect "Co-occurrence" and incidence probability, which results in "Collectability" according to him it is based upon lexical alternation, i.e. a word comes up with the set of words with which it is arranged to show the intended meaning, and it has another meaning different from the first one according to the adjacent words, so that it could be located in more than one linguistic context (See Mukhtar, 1998).

2. Metaphorical homonyms

This type of homonymy occurs when two similar words have different meanings by moving from the original position into the extension of the meaning. A sentence as "la yasħ ýrauna filjanatu shamsan wa la bardan" (Lit. translation: They won't feel the sun or cold in paradise). The homonymous word is "shamsan" which means "too hot" and it also means "a planet, which is a celestial body". (Ibn Manẓour, 1994). However, the word "la yasħ ýrauna" is used with a negative particle along with the words "janatu" and "bardan" all combined together in order to represent the linguistic context which is likely to be the first meaning.

When Lyons (1995) tackled the aspect of deixis, he pointed out that the linguistic context and the meaning are highly related to each other, which mean that they lead to the lexical meaning, the lexical semantics. For example, Mohammed has a cow. The word "cow" can refer either to the cow as an animal or to another meaning determined by the verbal context.

3. Homonymic particles

This type indicates the use of linguistic particles such as negation particles, question words, relative pronouns and prepositions … etc, for different functions. Thus, sometimes a particle might replace another or sometimes a particle might be a noun in a position or an article in another, or, some particles also might be used to denote a different meaning, i.e. to perform another function.

For instance, the sentence "ṣalabahu fi jidha al nakhlati" (Lit. translation: He was crucified in the trunck of a palm tree). The preposition "fi" (in) here refers to "the high position" and it might refer to "the reason behind" (Al Murādi, 1992). However, the two words "la'uṣallibannakum" (crucify) and "juthu? alnakhl" (truncks of palm trees) represent the linguistic context which leads us to infer the first meaning.

4. Homonymic words that have multiple meanings (polysemy)

This concept indicates having several denotative meanings, which are not metaphoric, for the same word. This can be explained on the basis that such a homonymous word might be due to a particular motive rather than the metaphoric one which is defined through the development in its use, and this is completely different, i.e. there is no relationship between the two words, as one of them might come from another ancient language or each word has a particular meaning but they are accidently similar in form only.

An example of this type is "annajmu washajaru yasjudani" (Lit. translation: The plants and trees – both (alike) prostrate in adoration), where the word "anajmu" is homonymous since it means a plant with no stem (Al 'Askari,1980), or a shining celestial body (a star), whereas the word "ashajaru" which is conjoined to it, in addition to the verb "yasjudan" represent the linguistic context which proves that "alnajm" in this context means (a plant).

Homonymic words that have multiple meanings cause perplexity in both Arabic and English, as they can be homonymy or polysemy. Lyon (1995) distinguishes between homonymy and polysemy by referring to the etymology of words. Such a standard can be applied to Arabic as the word "ba'l" (Lit. translation: husband) its historical use has a different meaning from the modern one; it referred to a name of a god (Ibn 'Ashour, 1984).

5. Using derivations in unfamiliar positions

This type means to use a derivation to refer to two different meanings. For example, a word might be an active participle (*ism fa'il*) in a position, and an adverb in another. For instance, "ihtiramu maqami al'ustathi wajibun" (Lit. translation: Respecting the standing place of a teacher is essential.), where the word "maqami" (standing place) is homonymous as it indicates the meanings of dignity, position and greatness, as well as the meaning of rank (Al 'Askari,1980).

'Awn (2005) defined the context as the outcome of using a word within the sentence when it is coherent with other words, which grants it a specific determined meaning. This definition applies to the previous example.

6. Homonymy due to different parts of speech

This type of homonymy refers to the parts of speech which include nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs …etc. We should draw a line between this type of homonymy and the first

type. The first type shows the origin from which two words are derived, while the sixth type shows that the difference between two words belongs to the fact that each word corresponds to a part of speech which is incompatible with the correspondence of the other one.
An example of the sixth type is the sentence "shajara bainahum khilafun" (Lit. translation: A fight has occurred between them), which includes a homonymous word "shajara" as it includes the meaning of disagreement in opinions, or a plant with stem.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants:

The participants of the study were fourth year undergraduate Jordanians from three universities in Jordan studying Translation, the universities are: Jordan University, German Jordanian University, and Yarmouk University. They were 36 students selected randomly and divided equally into two groups: an experimental group and a control group.
These two groups were tested twice in their universities, while attending lectures in their departments, during the Second Term 2013-2014.

The participants' gender was not taken into consideration when the study was applied. In addition, only fourth year undergraduate students participated in the study.

3.2. Research Instrument and Procedure

3.2.1. Instrument:

Language tests can be considered helpful sources of feedback on the two processes of language learning and language teaching (Bachman, 1990). Additionally, tests may also help in solving a number of theoretical and practical problems related to language acquisition and language assessment in pedagogical conditions (Chapelle, 1998). As a result, a test was needed to diagnose the effect of homonymy on the language of learners.
An achievement test was the instrument used to measure the impact of Arabic homonymy on the translation of undergraduate students studying Translation and the effect of an annex at improving their translation. This test consists of (30) sentences, every (5) sentences contain homonymous words that belong to one type of the Arabic homonymy mentioned earlier. Students were asked to translate these words then points were distributed according to the number of responses required from students.

A number of specialists in this field at different Jordanian universities reviewed the test to be evaluated. Their notes were taken into consideration and the required modification was conducted.

The reliability coefficient of the achievement test was measured by testing 10 BA Translation students selected randomly from the three universities; they were not involved in the study. The test was conducted once again; the correlation coefficient of the test was (0.846) and it has a statistical significant at the level of (0.01).
The total points of the test were (30) as the test was divided into (30) sentences; the scoring being correct (one point) or incorrect/blank (0 point).

3.2.2. Procedures of the study:

The participants (the experimental group and the control group) were asked to translate carefully 30 sentences from Arabic to English. They were instructed to translate them in different ways if there were other possible translation for the targeted words. Additionally, they were allowed to use English dictionary if they needed to.

The participants were tested twice when they were attending lectures in their departments, during the second term of 2013-2014, as in class tests. The participants were randomly distributed into two groups of 18 students each; one group was the experimental group and the other was the control group.

The first test was conducted by both groups when they had the achievement pre-test by translating 30 sentences from Arabic to English. As for the second test, it took place after a 10-day interval of the first test. Both groups took the achievement post-test; the control group was asked to retranslate the same 30 sentences with underlined words without using the prepared annex, while the experimental group was asked to retranslate the same 30 sentences with underlined words by using the annex prepared by the researcher.

Four instructors (PhD holders) of translation working at different Jordanian universities corrected the participants' translations. The sentences were corrected according to a list of the targeted Arabic words underlined and defined in order for the instructors to be aware of the exact meaning of the translated words.

3.2.3. Annex:

An annex was prepared by the researcher which included only the target words in the test with their commonly used meanings. These words were used in simple linguistic contexts using their familiar meanings in order to meet the students' levels.

The purpose of the annex is to improve the performance of translation students, so they can produce translated sentences which are congruent with linguistic validity standards. Below is a sample of the annex used in the study.

Table 1. *A sample of the annex*

1	al shams(lit. translation: the sun)	Celestial body	Al shams qaribatun mina al arḍi (lit. translation: The sun is near the earth.)
		Too hot	La nash'uru bi shams bisabab al mokayyifi (lit. translation: We do not feel the sun because of the air condition.)
2	fi (lit. translation: in)	On	ṣalabahu fi jidha al nakhlati (lit. translation: He was crucified in the trunk of a palm tree).
		Because of	ṭurida aṭalib fi imtiḥanin rasaba bihi (lit. translation: The student was dismissed because of his failure in the exam.)
3	shajarah (lit.	Plant	aṣunawbaru shajarun muthmirun (lit.

	translation: tree)		translation: Pine is a fruitful tree.)
		Fighting	ashejar amer marfudun (lit. translation: Fighting is unacceptable.)
4	qa'il (lit. translation: said).	Noon time	alqailulatu turiḥu a jisma (lit. translation: Having a nap relaxes the body.)
		Speech	alqawlu kalamun mufidun (lit. translation: This speech is worthy.)

3.2.4. Statistical Analysis:

The statistical analysis used in this study was the (t-test) as there is one dependent variable which is the translation of homonymous words. This is the major variable that is measured in the study and is influenced by the other variable (Hatch & Larzaraton, 1991). The other variable is the independent variable which is the prepared annex about homonymy phenomenon; it will influence the dependent variable. In addition, the (t-test) was used in calculating the performance averages and standard deviations obtained from the achievement tests. Moreover, it is used to ascertain the statistical significance of differences between the experimental and control groups.

4. Results and Discussion

This study aims at investigating the impact of homonymy on the performance of translation students and revealing the impact of a prepared annex on their performance. The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Does the phenomenon of homonymy negatively affect the translation of Jordanian undergraduate students studying Translation?
2. Does the annex that students were provided with affect their translation positively?

4.1. Results of the first question:

In order to answer the first question, the means and standard deviations obtained from the points of the students in both the control and experimental groups who submitted the pre-test were calculated. A statistical analysis of (t-test) was applied. The results of the first question are presented below in Table (2); it presents the pre-test mean and standard deviation of each group as well as the (t- test) results.

Table 2. *The pre–test mean and standard deviation of each group and the (t – test) results*

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degree of freedom	Significant Level
Control	18	1.83	2	0.301	18	0.767

Experimental	18	1.72	1.96			

It is notable from the (t-test) results in Table (2) that there is a lack of statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) and t-value was (0.301), and this was confirmed by the clear convergence between the averages of students' performance in both experimental and control groups. The mean of experimental group in the pre–test was (1.72), while the mean of the control group in the pre–test was (1.83).

4.2. Results of the second question:

To answer the second question if the annex that students were provided with affect their translation positively or not. The means and standard deviations obtained from the points of the students in both the control and experimental groups who submitted the post-test were calculated. A statistical analysis of (t-test) was applied. The control group retranslated the sentences without using the annex, whereas the experimental group retranslated the sentence by using the annex. The results of the second question are presented below in Table (3); it presents the post-test means and standard deviations as well as the (t- test) results.

Table 3. *The mean and standard deviation of the post-test for each group and the (t – test)*

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Degree of freedom	Significant Level
Control	18	3.8	2.23	20.201	17	0.00
Experimental	18	18.33	4.56			

It is notable from the (t–test) in table (3) that there are statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) due to the annex. The t-value was (20.201) which has a statistical significance at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$); this indicates that the annex has a notable positive impact on the performance of the experimental group. This was also reflected in the means of students' performance of both groups, which were in the favor of experimental group, as the mean of the experimental group in the pre–test was (1.72), and then it increased in the post–test to (18.33). On the other hand, the mean of the control group in the pre–test was (1.83), and then it increased in the post–test to (3.8), as shown in the means of Tables (2 and 3).

4.3. Discussion of the first question results:

In light of the aforementioned results, the (t–test) indicates that there were no statistically significant differences at the level of significant ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the means of both the experimental and control group in the pre-test. This indicates that there was an evenly convergent level of performance for both groups. The average of the experimental group in the pre- test was (1.7), whereas the average of the control group in the pre- test was (1.8).

4.4. Discussion of the second question results:

In light of the aforementioned results, the (t -test) indicated that there were no statistically significant ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the averages of both the experimental and control group in the pre–test. It also indicated that there were statistically significant differences at the level of the significant ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the means of both the experimental and control group in the post–test in favor of the experimental group members who used the annex, in comparison with the members of the control group who did not use the annex. These differences were reflected through the improvement of students' performance in the post- test. This indicates that the annex was effective at improving the performance of translation students in the experimental group, which shows that the aim of the annex has been achieved.

5. Analysis of homonymy errors

This section deals with the analysis of errors committed by fourth year students studying Translation in translating Arabic homonymous words to English. This study tackled these errors depending on three stages: error detection, error description and error interpretation (Corder, 1981). The first two stages have been discussed earlier, and the following is the last stage.
In this study, the errors are attributed to the types of Arabic homonymy discussed earlier in the study.

5.1. Errors due to multiple root morphemes

Students did not pay attention to the differences in the derivation of the target words. If they have checked the etymology of each word, the differences between them would have been clarified. Thus, the students might – more carefully – consider such words, and this would have led them to the fact that it is necessary to check these words before translating the sentence. For example, the root of the word "qa'il" (Lit. translation: said) in the sentence "arrajulu qa'ilun ẓuhran" (Lit. translation: The man had a nap at noon) might be (qaila) or (qawla), where the meaning of speech (alkalamu) is derived from the root (qawla), and the meaning of a nap is derived from the root (qaila).

To overcome this problem in this aspect, students have to be trained on how to check the etymology of Arabic words by looking at the triple (three-letter) or quartet (four-letter) root, and how to know whether the origin of the letter (alif: ا) is (wau: و) or (ya': ي). They also have to check the letters which are added to the root of the verb to derive different words with different meanings. They also have to be familiar with the use of Arabic dictionaries.

5.2. Errors due to metaphorical homonyms

Students did not take into account metaphor, which is when a word has a meaning in the original position and then it is moved through extension into another meaning. Here, the students had to rely on the context. For example, in the sentence "la yashʿ ýrauna filjanatu shamsan wa la bardan" (lit. translation: they will not feel in paradise nor sun or cold), the verb "yashaur" (lit. translation: feel) is compatible with "heat, coldness, warmness, happiness, joy and sadness" for these are moral matters which are not material like (sun or day). This indicates that in this sentence the sun was not meant to be, however, the homonymous word 'sun' used metaphorically, because its presence indicates heat.

To resolve this aspect, students have to consider the linguistic context because the sentence contains indicative clues which make it possible to know whether the use is denotative

or metaphoric. Moreover, they have to check Arabic dictionaries such as "al Wasit Dictionary" in order to be familiar with the original meaning.

5.3. Errors due to homonymic particles

Some Arabic particles have multiple functions and are used to provide different meanings. The participants were not aware of such a linguistic issue. For example, the preposition "ba': بـ" might have the meaning of "fi: في" (lit. translation: in) in a sentence like "naṣrukum bil mʻaraka" (lit. translation: your victory in the battle). It might also mean "maʻ: مع"(lit. translation: with) in a sentence like "atbaʻahumu al ustadhu bi ṭulabih" (lit. translation: the teacher was followed with students). It might also mean "min: من" (lit. translation: from) in a sentence like "'ainun yashrab biha" (lit. translation: a spring where they drink from). It might also mean "ila: إلى"(Lit. translation: to) in a sentence like "qad aḥsan bi" (lit. translation: he made goodness to me). Another example is the particle "ma"which can be used as a question word, exclamatory word, negation word or a relative pronoun.

The context is likely to determine the suitable meaning. For instance, the sentence "ṣalabahu fi jidha al nakhlati" (Lit. translation: he was crucified in a trunk of a pamlm tree), the meaning shows that the preposition "fi" (Lit. translation: in) refers to the preposition "'ala" (Lit. translation: on) because it is impossible to think that someone might be crucified inside a truck. General knowledge would serve to infer the crucifying on a trunk of a tree not inside it.

Students have to be introduced to an important phenomenon in Arabic language which is particle function shifting. The focus should be placed upon different types of particles, and this should be supported with an empirical study of practical examples taken from real-life situations.

5.4. Errors due to polysemy

Students did not consider – though it is hard to note – polysemy where some words have different meanings denotatively not metaphorically. One reason behind this is that such homonymous words might have a foreign origin. This means that the two words are not connected to each other. For example, the word "thaqib" is derived from the root "thaqaba" (lit. translate: breach) (Ibn Manẓour, 1994), but in Kananah language, it means "moši'"(Lit. translation: shining) (Al Muqri', 1946). Another example is the word "bardan" (lit. translate: cold) which has another meaning in Huthail language which is sleeping (Al Muqri', 1946).

It is recommended to prepare an extended list which includes the most popular Arabic polysemous words used in all fields such as fields of arts, humanities or sciences, then to collect them in a simplified dictionary.

5.5. Errors due to homonymy of different parts of speech

Students did not pay attention to the fact that a derived word might indicate two different meanings. For example, an active participle might replace a passive participle and vice versa, or an active participle might replace a *masdar*-type abstraction such as the word "nadhirun" (lit. translation: presage) which might mean (the person who warns) in a sentence like "ja'a alrasulu nadhiran liqaumihi" (lit. translation: the prophet came as a presage to his people). This might stand as a *masdar*-type abstraction in a sentence like "inna hadha aliʻlana nadhirun lirasibina" (lit. translate: this announcement is an alert for failed students) which is similar to the previously mentioned word "maqam".

6. Conclusion

Homonymy as a main cause of lexical ambiguity in languages, it is frequently acquainted with the obstruction of communication and generating difficulty to the native language speaker. As a result of this lexical ambiguity, the present study was an attempt to find answers to the questions of the research, which are: Does the phenomenon of homonymy negatively affect the translation of Jordanian undergraduate students studying Translation? Does the annex that students were provided with affect their translation positively? The findings of this study indicated that the ambiguity of Arabic homonyms affected negatively the results of translation students, while the prepared annex positively affected their results.

It is recommended that translation departments at Jordanian universities should add more Arabic lexicology and lexical courses to the study plans of the undergraduate Translation programme. Besides, it would be useful for students to be provided with a special dictionary consists of polysemous words. This dictionary should be based on the extent popularity of such words in real-life situations. These suggestions can help students to understand the possible sense variations of words in the lexicon to overcome various problems in communication in general and in translation in particular.

Extensive academic research focuses on the effect of homonyms whether Arabic or English would elucidate on the linguistic errors that language students make. It would also help in the syllabi planning to achieve the desired learning outcome.

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An Examination of Conflicting Theoretical Perspectives in Learning & Teaching

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Abstract
The theoretical perspectives that inform educational policies are typically developed by lawmakers. However, the implementation of these legislative measures are seldom developed in conjunction with practicing educators. Thus, new paradigms are rooted on theoretically salient procedures as well as real-word applicability. This gap has created a significant number of educational practitioners that harbor conflicting theoretical perspectives regarding teaching and learning the curriculum as prescribed. However, many educators refrain from expressing their disagreement with existing policies. This research intends to highlight the presence of these conflicting perspectives as well as the underlying reasons prompting these disparaged notions. Through examination of existing literature, this study outlines the numerous educational theories that formulate the foundations of educational practice to create the theoretical framework used to analyze the data collected. A Likert-based survey was used to gather personal impressions from 415 in-service teachers in the U. S. of pre-kindergarten through 12th grade to determine the current theoretical perspectives shaping the curriculum. A majority of the respondents reported discord as it pertains to current policies and standards of practice.

Keywords: Conflicting educational theories, education, learning theories, teaching methods

Introduction

Early childhood education can be traced back to the time of the Puritans (Sadker & Zittleman, 2009). The Old Deluder Satan Law implemented in 17th century colonial America instilled the tenets of rudimentary education to teach students basic reading, writing, and arithmetic (Sadker & Zittleman, 2009). The subsequent progression of knowledge regarding the cognitive development of children has changed the way teachers are traditionally trained. The Kindergarten Movement, which occurred between 1837 and 1852, was an educational revolution that has been attributed to the theories and ideas of Friedrich Froebel, known as the 'Father of Kindergarten'. The Nursery School Movement, which occurred in the following years between 1911 and 1933, is credited to theorist John Dewey (Estes & Krogh, 2012). During these primary movements in the development of early childhood educational standards, a plethora of philosophers have contributed theoretical perspectives intended to aid in the comprehension of how children think, grow, and learn. It is important to consider that these thoughts serve as the basis for educational theorists in the modern setting and continue to affect how educators implement their practices today.

During the Progressive Movement, many theorists presented behavioral, biological, contextual, mechanistic, organismic, psychological, and psychosexual explanations to describe the phenomenon that allows infants to cognitively develop into adulthood (Leonard, Noh, & Orey, 2010; Morrison, 2009). The major educational philosophies and theories include Behaviorism, Constructivism, Critical theory, Essentialism, Existentialism, Idealism, Perennialism, Post-modernism, Pragmatism, Progressivism, Psychodynamic, Psychosexual, and Realism (Bayla, 2007; Leonard, Noh, & Orey, 2010; Morrison, 2009). These theories have provided the foundation that western educators have used to develop curricular models to facilitate learning in children and have also been expanded to assist in adult learning contexts. Many education professionals have learned of these theorists during their formal training and continue to learn about them throughout their professional development. These theorists have pioneered the way educators think about their trade and have prompted a more significant scientific understanding of how children learn and what educators can do to help children with different learning needs.

The dynamic changes resulting from increased understanding regarding how children learn has prompted educational leaders in the U. S. to make repeated changes intended to increase the educational benefits for each student (Nelson & Guerra, 2014). These educational reforms are intended to improve student achievement, particularly in regards to culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students (Nelson & Guerra, 2014). However, there is not much qualitative evidence to support the efficacy of these educational reforms in regards to how they improve the educational experiences of the students as well as the teachers (Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007). A majority of previous and current research studies that were read are primarily quantitative in nature because they consider trends on the basis of test scores and grades. However, this type of information does not allow teachers to understand what will help children learn. Instead, it creates a focus on data when instead, there needs to be an emphasis placed on individualized learning.

Educational policy is problematic because it is seldom created by actual educators. This is unfortunate because it is the teachers who have the most comprehensive understanding of their

students. Specifically, studies that help education administrators understand the connection between curriculum presentation and learning should involve the experience of teachers who have viewed the successes and failures of their students firsthand (Miretzky, 2010). To increase student achievement, district leaders and school personnel must collaborate to foster learning environments that encourage the development of high levels of self-efficacy in students (Anderson, et al., 2001). The relationship between educator and student self-efficacy is vital to academic progress, instructional performance, and the development of a positive learning environments (Decker, Decker, Freeman, & Knopf, 2009). It is therefore valuable to gain a greater understanding of how educators can help administrators develop relevant curricula in the modern setting. It is also important for public and private education to reach different types of students; incorporating teacher involvement will allow this goal to become more achievable.

Teacher beliefs, attitudes, and their ability to respond appropriately to students' needs determine how well they are able to remember information presented in the curriculum and incorporate this information in practice (Fairbanks, et al., 2010). Studies have identified the personal beliefs of educators as vital elements regarding how teachers make decisions in the classroom (Gay, 2010). Essentially, teachers use their knowledge as a lens through which they view learning, which allows them to filter additional pedagogical knowledge, helping experience become acquired or rejected (Fairbanks, et al., 2010). When the teacher's beliefs or theoretical perspectives conflict with a curricular agenda they perceive as fixed, rigid, or not negotiable, they may grow to mirror this disposition and become inclined to resist responding to students to provide the instructional support needed (Fairbanks, et al., 2010). Teachers are heavily influenced by education policy makers and others around them. Therefore, it is important for individuals with education experience to become directly involved in the conversation regarding curriculum development. It is beneficial to hear unadulterated opinions of education and enhancing learning of diverse students. In this manner, education researchers can best contribute to the development of curricula to help students learn.

Research Questions

As knowledge regarding childhood learning experiences has increased, policies have drastically changed the expectations of mainstream teachers and the institutions they work for. It has been found that these individual experiences can be disengaged from the language, culture, and approaches to learning that facilitate student achievement (Williams, 2013). The purpose of this project is to examine the dynamics regarding the conflicting theoretical perspectives involved in language and teaching. It is important to determine the conflicting theories utilized in education to determine which can be most successfully applied to facilitate student achievement. This research will examine the topic of conflicting educational perspectives by seeking to analyze the following research questions:

Research Question 1 Which theoretical principles do educators support in the underlying curriculum they teach?

Research Question 2 How do teachers perceive the theoretical perspectives regarding education and learning that conflict with the actions necessary to comply with the implementation of educational policies?

The analysis of these research questions will provide additional insight into the nature of the difficulties educators face due to augmentations to existing policies and procedures absent

the relevant input of practicing educational professionals. Furthermore, it will allow the education community to gain a greater understanding of the theories that educators apply on a regular basis that directly contribute to efficacy in learning.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the presence of conflicting theoretical perspectives amongst teachers and pedagogical educators in regards to established educational policies developed through legislative, or other, measures. Furthermore, it is necessary to determine which theoretical perspectives educators use preferentially to aid in the success of student learning. The identification of this particular issue is of grave importance to educational professionals since teacher perceptions have a deterministic influence on how curricular material is presented. Likewise, the presentation of curricular material at the administrative level impacts how teachers present it to the students. This research aims to add new information to this field that will help educators and administrators understand the connection between theoretical perspectives and the implementation of curricula from both the educator and administrative standpoint.

This research relies upon a foundation a literature that discusses the progression of early childhood educational perspectives and expounds upon the theoretical framework of this research through an examination of the numerous learning theories that influence education. The next section will discuss the research methods followed by the results and discussion of the research findings. Key findings and inferences will be summarized in the conclusion section.

Literature Review

The development of teaching and learning paradigms are rooted in the historic development of the compulsory educational system. To gain an understanding of the theoretical perspectives used to format educational curricular mandates, this literature review will present the theoretical framework that will support the subsequent research into the presence of conflicting academic perspective in learning and teaching.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research includes concepts relative to the propensity of theoretical perspectives but also addresses the typical top-down nature of the legislated large-scale educational reforms that occur in the United States (Smith & Southerland, 2007). Since these reforms are often mandated by the courts and/or sponsored through government agencies or other special interest organizations, personnel who are actually engaged in educational professions typically do not actually play a role in creating the policies and procedures that follow the enactment of new legislation (Smith & Southerland, 2007).

Nonetheless, lawfully mandated educational reform endeavors demand extensive changes within schools that originate from external sources that may not consider the actual demands on personnel and students such changes will accord. Teachers are often resentful of these mandates that are usually disseminated through the public school system in the form of policy reports or other publications that outline specific curricula, practices, and programs teachers must follow based on hypothetical/theoretical assumptions rather than real-world practices involving actual children (Smith & Southerland, 2007). The numerous learning and teaching theories that

constitute the basis of educational policies will construct the background for this research since these ideals are essential to influences in childhood educational practices. Furthermore, they also form the criterion for the conflicting perspectives teachers form in opposition to legislated policies.

Cognitive Learning Theories

Cognitive learning theories intend to help educators and psychologists comprehend how the mind functions with regards to organizing new knowledge. In particular, these theories help us understand how learning environments impact the ability to absorb and retain information in addition to the process in which knowledge is constructed and recalled through the process of learning and thinking (Macy, 2007). These theories provide a common language for instructors and instructional designers that has been the basis for the development of educational strategies (Macy, 2007).

The Information Processing (IP) theory explains how the mind functions using a computer as an analogy that breaks cognition and memory into three components, including short-term memory, sensory register, and long-term memory (Bayla, 2007). The five senses, echoic (hearing), iconic (seeing), tactile (touch), olfactory (smell), and gustatory (taste), are capable of triggering the sensory register, which stimulates the processing of new information that is stored in the short-term memory (Berk, 2008). New details stored in the short-term memory can be combined with existing long-term memory information and enhanced through elaboration and repetition (Berk, 2008).

Psychologist Jean Piaget developed what is known as the constructivist learning theory, which identifies three processes associated with learning (Bayla, 2007). These mechanisms enable the learner to organize new knowledge according to schemas or mental representations of tangible or intangible objects that can be applied to any situation or event (Kosslyn, 2009). When new schemas are developed, assimilation allows new knowledge to be processed and added to previously existing schemas (Bayla, 2007). Accommodation is an adaptation process that occurs when existing schemas are insufficient to incorporate new information and equilibration occurs when assimilation and accommodation reach a balance in the mental structures (Kosslyn, 2009). This research provided educators with a basic understanding of how to provide children with new experiences that can help them learn or rectify incorrect understandings. Further research allowed educators to refine this understanding, contributing to the acquisition of knowledge in finer detail.

Bloom and a group of education professionals developed what is commonly known as Bloom's Taxonomy (Huitt, 2011). The original version of Bloom's Taxonomy had six levels of understanding: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Wilson, 2006). In 2003, the hierarchy was reinvented to indicate the necessity for action within the taxonomy (Anderson, et al., 2001). The reformation of the taxonomy divided the cognitive domain into six sequential levels of thinking with the first three levels or lower order skills including remembering, understanding, and applying, while the last three levels or higher-order skills include analyzing, evaluating, and creating (Huitt, 2011). The taxonomy was created to help curriculum builders plan learning experiences and prepare relevant evaluation tools, clarify the meaning of a learning objective based on the level of 'understanding' trying to be achieved,

and provide a framework for research regarding teaching and learning in terms of how well the student remembers, thinks, and problem solves (Wilson, 2006).

Constructivist Learning Theories

Vygotsky is credited with advancement of the constructivist perspective of developmental psychology, which is based on the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition (Berk, 2008). The primary elements of Vygotsky's theories are based on the more knowledgeable other (MKO), which describes a peer with more knowledge about a particular subject and can scaffold the educational experience of another student with less knowledge (Decker, Decker, Freeman, & Knopf, 2009). As a consequence of this theory, educators have been able to incorporate group learning in the scaffolding process, contributing to a greater understanding of information for some types of learners. Vygotsky also defines the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which describes the gap between what the learner can or cannot do, even with assistance (Sadker & Zittleman, 2009). Thus, it is apparent that some individuals are not capable of learning the same information as others or even in the same manner. The development of constructivist learning theories contributed to the development of learner-centered theories, which emphasized the necessity for educators to more greatly personalize the learning experience.

Learner-Centered Theories

Learner-centered theories emphasize the relevance of the learner's existing knowledge and offer instructional techniques that permit an educator to consider each student's individual characteristics (Leonard, Noh, & Orey, 2010). This includes theories regarding individual motivation, which attempts to explain what extrinsic or intrinsic factors inspire people to participate in any activity (Boachie-Mensah & Dogbe, 2011). The motivational theory specifies that extrinsic motivation indicates external factors such as the desire for greater earning potential or avoiding punishment, while intrinsic motivation relates to internal elements like curiosity or personal achievement (Sacbusiness.org, 2007). Whether extrinsic or intrinsic, motivation requires defined goals to direct behavior towards realizing certain performance levels, such as earning excellent grades or becoming skilled in the learning concept and encouraging feedback or expert assistance that produces successful experiences can improve motivation (Silvia, McCord, & Gendolla, 2010).

The theory of multiple intelligences, established by Howard Gardner, identifies a taxonomy of nine intelligences as follows:

1) bodily/kinesthetic
2) existential
3) interpersonal
4) intrapersonal
5) logical/mathematical
6) musical
7) naturalistic
8) verbal/linguistic
9) visual/spatial (Brualdi, 1996; Gardner, 1993; Berk, 2008)

Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences attributes an integrated organizational approach with multiple points of intellectual stimulation an educator can target during the course of instruction to stimulate the learning process (Morrison, 2009). This theory also acknowledges that culture plays a major role in the development of these intelligences and that all students will enter the classroom with a different set of developed intelligences or intellectual strengths/weaknesses. Therefore or as a result educators should structure presentations in a manner that will engage numerous intelligences simultaneously (Brualdi, 1996). It is important for educators to consider the different learning styles of each student in order to maximize learning.

Overall, it is valuable for educators to determine how to incorporate a variety of learning theories into their educational practices to ensure that their students are able to master the curriculum. Often, it is important for teachers to incorporate these teaching elements in a manner that has not been specified to them by their administrators or regulatory body. However, in other cases, differentiation is specified in a manner that prevents educators from extending their expertise into practice. It is necessary to determine how the implementation of curriculum relates to the use of these techniques in addition to how teachers cope with the development of curriculum without their consideration. Doing so will provide information necessary to help direct education policy in the future.

Research Methods

This section will discuss the research methodology that was employed in this research with a justification for the use of this method based on the attributes of the research objectives. The research design elucidates the strategy used to integrate the various facets of the research project in a coherent and cohesive manner (Flick, 2011).

Literature Review

The literature review was conducted utilizing a variety of peer-reviewed educational journals. Studies included both systematic reviews and experimental studies. Primary focus was placed on researchers who have assessed the efficacy of classical educational theorists, as these individuals were likely studied by a majority of educators during the course of their training. These theorists help educators understand how students learn, so emphasis on them is an important focus to gain a comprehensive background understanding of the types of information that teachers attempt to implement in their presentation of the curriculum. Google Scholar was used to identify the primary sources used for this component of the research project. A majority of articles were selected from within the past ten years to draw a more current understanding of the problem being discussed, but older articles remained in the search criteria if these articles were based on original research and are considered to be pioneering studies of particular theorists. Search criteria included the names of the theorists, such as "Vygotsky", "Piaget", "Erickson", and the word "theory".

Rationale for Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research consists of several procedures based on of various systemic questions relative to the selected topic designed to assist the researcher in gaining an in-depth understanding about the particular issue (Graziano & Raulin, 2009). According to theorists, qualitative research is not bound by the necessity to adhere to pre-specified methods or a static

hypothesis (Willis, 2008). Adapting the qualitative methodology present the greatest measure of clarity for the statistical analyses representing the data collected. This study uses a qualitative design to help determine the impressions teachers have regarding the underlying theoretical guidelines that shape curriculum. In this research, there are elements that quantitative methods cannot provide answers to, necessitating the use of qualitative methods. Based on the requisite for personal impressions in the research questions, the qualitative approach provides a better understanding of the research problem. Furthermore, the qualitative method is used because it enables the researcher to examine the opinions, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of the research subjects through statistical quantification of the collected data. This qualitative approach will incorporate the findings within existing research and literature to formulate a conceptual theoretical framework in which the research will be formatted.

Data Collection

A total of 500 in-service public school teachers were contacted in 2013 and 2014 in Texas and Michigan via e-mail and invited to take a brief 21 question survey that would hopefully take them less than ten minutes to complete. All individuals are teachers in the public school system in the local community and their e-mail addresses were found online through Google and Bing search engines, which identified school websites containing their names and respective contact information. Although the search was targeted, the selection of research participants can be considered somewhat randomized. Every three links (every third teacher listed) were examined for contact information, and teachers were contacted on this basis. The survey was completely anonymous and only asked for basic demographic information that would not compromise their identity. To avoid biases in the respondent base, purposive sampling was used, so there was no instructor grade preference and approximately 35-40 teachers of each grade, levels pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Eligible individuals were invited to participate in the study by completing and returning the survey within the allotted three week timeframe (Patton, 2008).

The participants were asked to complete a 21-question survey (see Appendix A Section A) that presented questions adapted from Chen (2008) that focused on the following aspects: (a) teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning, (b) teachers' ideal instructional approach, and (c) factors preventing teachers from implementing their ideal instructional methods and instructed to return the survey via e-mail. As recommended by Babbie (2007), negative or biased terminologies were excluded from the questionnaire to avoid misinterpretations or biased results. The first part of the survey consisted of several demographic questions. The investigational aspect consisted of 15 Likert style questions that used a scale ranging from totally disagree (0) to totally agree (4), and each participant was instructed to report his or her agreement on each constructivist statement (Chen, 2008). The final investigational question was open-ended and allowed the respondents to record their individual impressions.

A total of 419 individuals returned the survey by the indicated deadline with only four being incomplete and therefore excluded as data points from the study. Of the 415 remaining surveys, the compiled results are recorded in Table 1 in Appendix A, detailing the constructive statements that composed the survey (Chen, 2008).

Ethical Considerations

The current research has complied with all relevant codes of ethics during the course of gathering the primary and secondary data (Graziano & Raulin, 2009). The primary ethical considerations faced in conducting this research involved ensuring participants were fully informed of all pertinent details of the study. The respondents in the primary investigation were truthfully acquainted with the purpose, nature, and mode of execution of the study, as well as how the findings would be processed and reported. This complete disclosure allowed informed consent of the participants to be granted.

Participant privacy was respected and subjective data interpretations were avoided to maintain the integrity of the participant/researcher relationship (Flick, 2011). The collection, treatment and disclosure of the accumulated data or information was performed according to all relevant statutes, with careful consideration given to research ethical implications with regard to the economic, political, communal, and psychological consequences of this work. The welfare and interest of all directly or implicitly associated respondents and the professional establishment of the researcher was taken into consideration.

Participant Demography

The first five questions of the survey were designed to capture anonymous demographic details of the participants, such as age, gender, teaching experience, current grade levels taught, and the subject(s) taught. The participants' age demography is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows that the majority of those surveyed (51%) were between 36-45 years of age. Very few of the teachers were near retirement age (9%), while the median age of those in the study was 26 to 35 years old (40%) and hence at the beginning of their careers.

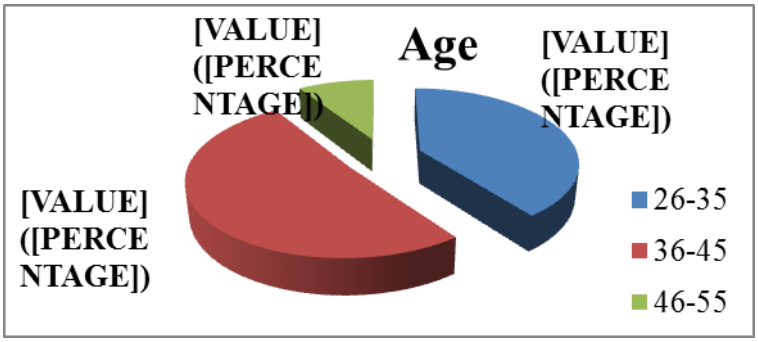


***Figure 1*: Participant Age Demography**

The results of the second survey question, which asked participants to identify their gender, are illustrated in Figure 2. More than three quarters of the participants were male: thus, the results represent a primarily female perspective.

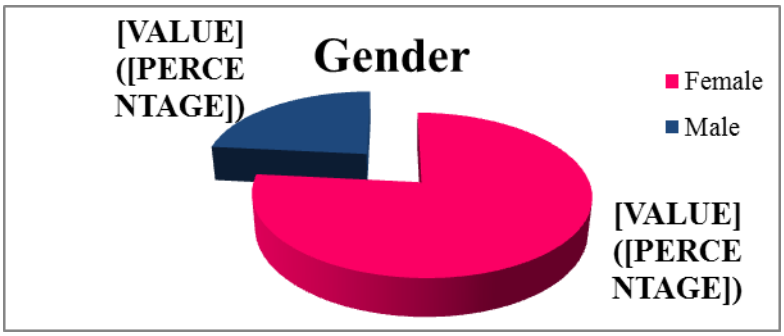


Figure 2: **Participant Gender Demography**

The results of the next survey question are illustrated in Figure 3, showing the level of experience ranging from novice teacher (0 to 5 years) to seasoned veteran (26+ years).

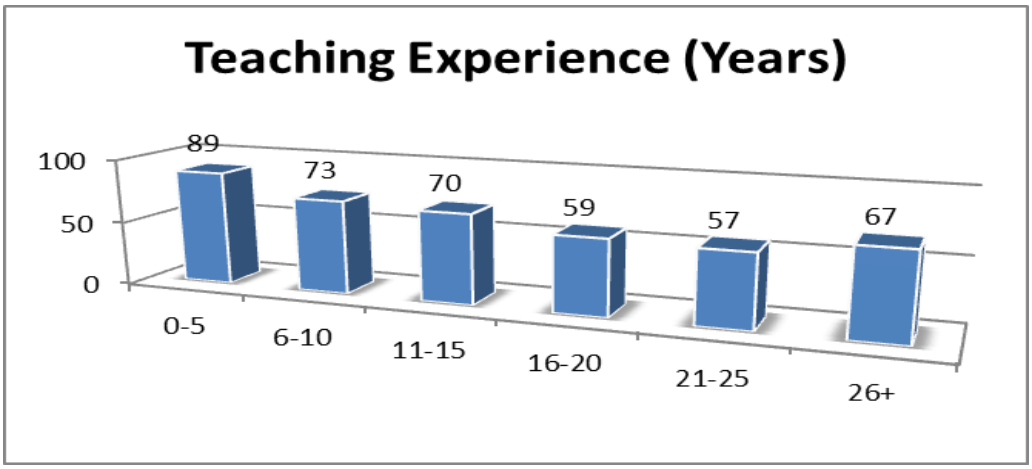


Figure 3: **Participant Teaching Experience**

The results indicate that the level of teaching experience varied amongst the participants, with the largest number of teachers (89 or 21.45%) having only 0-5 years of experience, and the smallest group of participants (57 or 13.73%) having 21-25 years of experience.

The fourth survey question asked participants to specify the grade level that they taught, and the responses were correlated according to teachers that taught pre-kindergarten to first grades, second to fifth grades, sixth to eighth grades, and ninth to twelfth grades. As a consequence, the grade level representation of the participants is quite even.

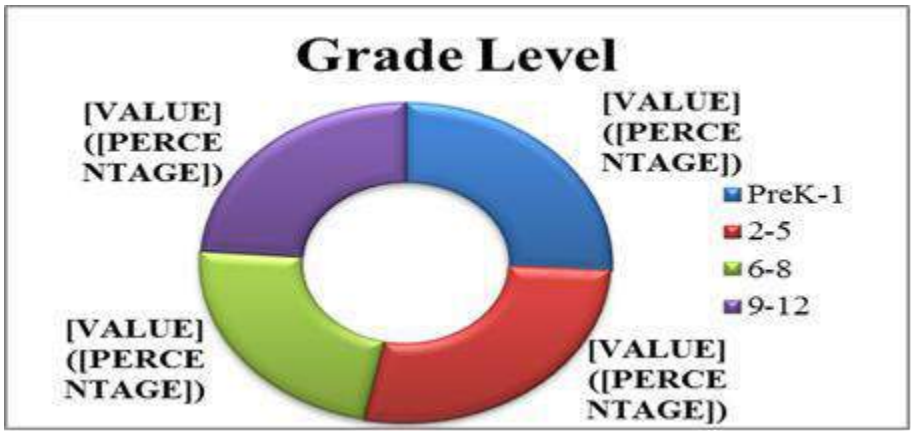


Figure 4: **Grade Level Taught by Participant**

The illustration in Figure 4 shows that the participants were almost evenly disbursed amongst the four grade level groupings, with most teachers in the second to fifth grade grouping (114 or 27%) and the smallest group (95 or 23%) teaching sixth to eighth grades.

The final demographic question asked participants to specify what subject they taught, and the results are presented in Figure 5, which shows that the majority of participants (211 or 53.25%) taught elementary grades pre-kindergarten to the fifth grades.

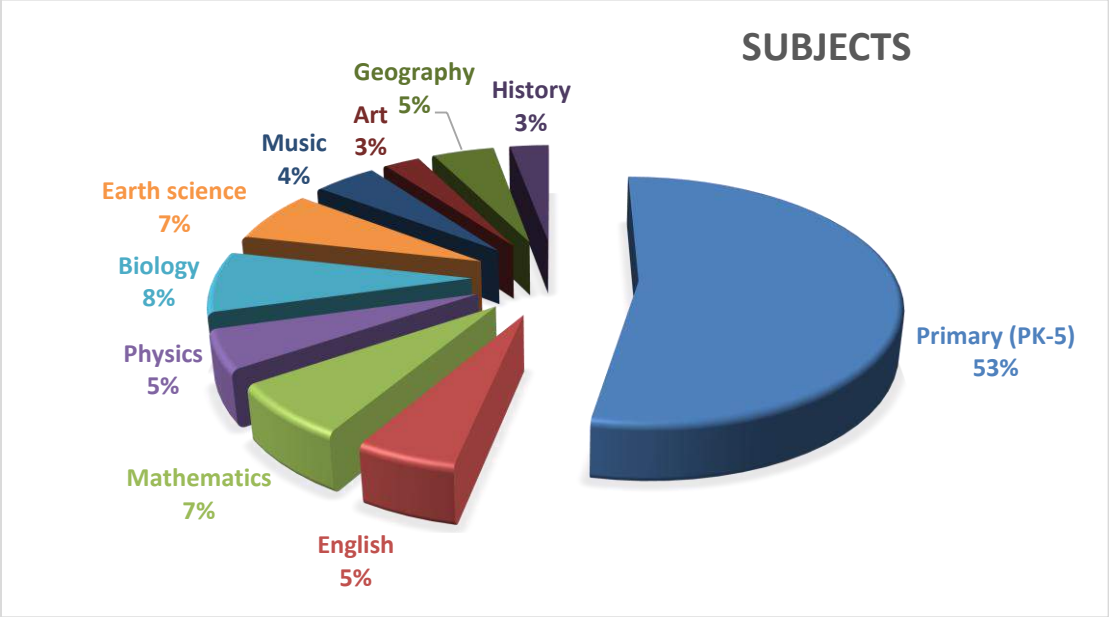
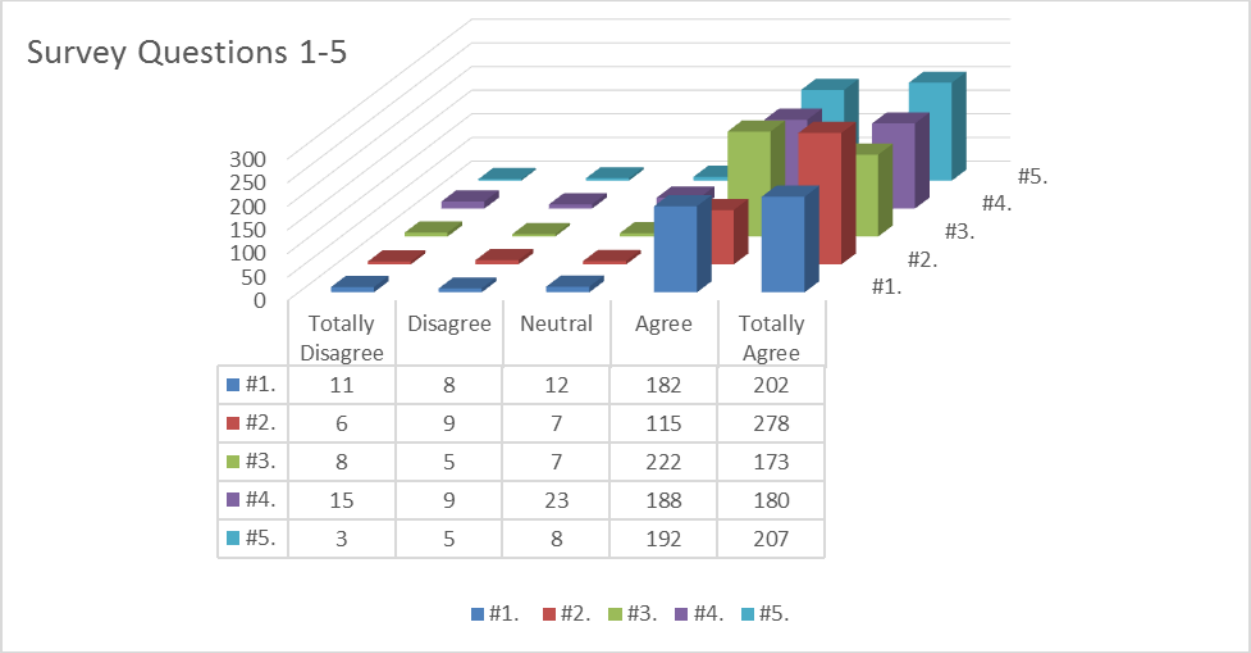


Figure 5: **Subjects Taught by Participant**

However, the remaining 47% of the participants ranged from 11 or 2.65% for art and 12 or 2.89% for history teachers to 33 or 7.95% for biology teachers with the remaining numbers ranging from 4.58% to 6.99% as illustrated in the graph.

Survey Results

Overall, the first five constructivist questions showed that the majority of the respondents agreed or totally agreed with the constructivist statements posited. In the first investigational statement posed, a total of 384 or 92.53% participants either agreed or totally agreed that active participation in learning was more important than the teachers' lectures while the remaining 31 teachers or 7.47% disagreed, totally, disagreed, or took a neutral stance.



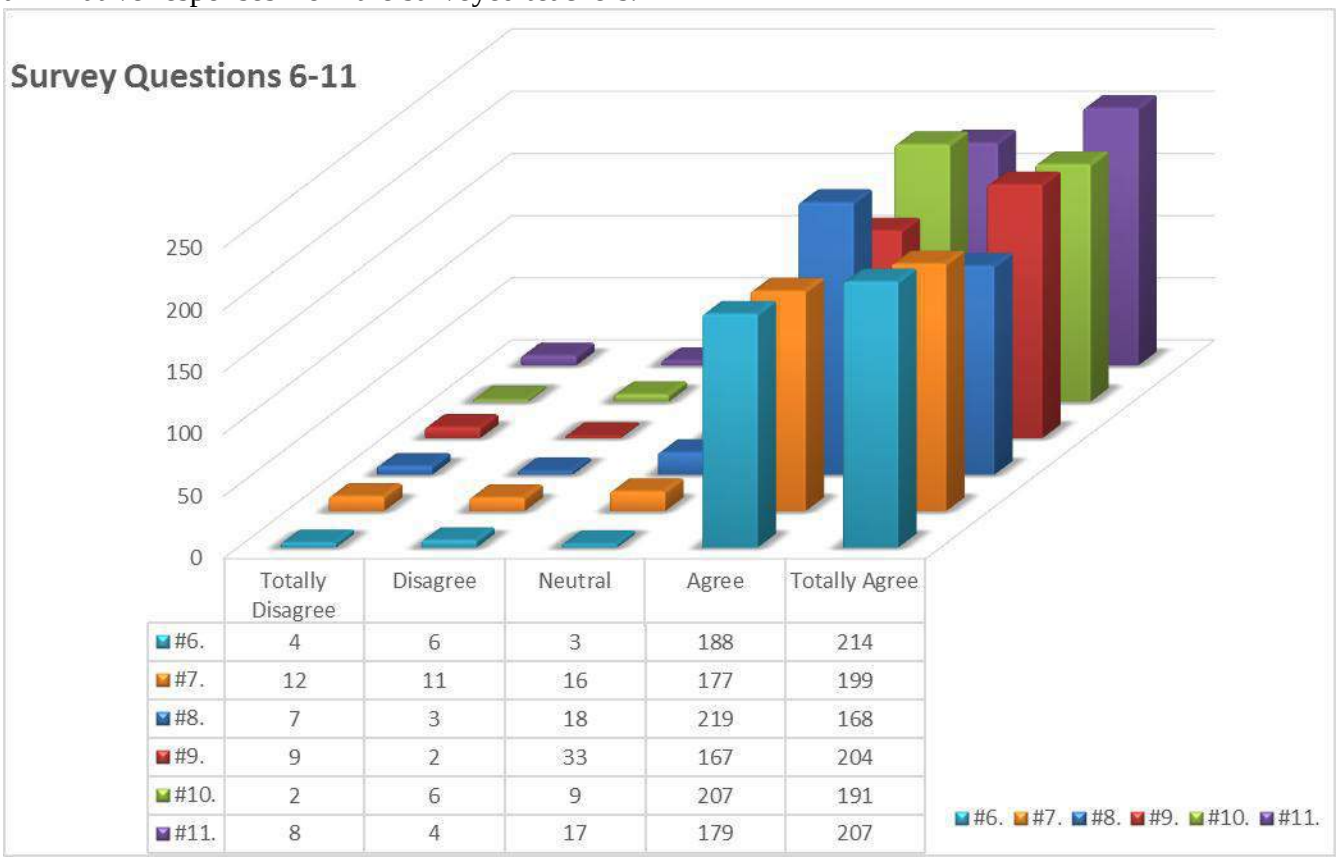
	Totally Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally Agree
#1.	11	8	12	182	202
#2.	6	9	7	115	278
#3.	8	5	7	222	173
#4.	15	9	23	188	180
#5.	3	5	8	192	207

Figure 6: **Participant Responses, Questions 1-5**

The second survey question showed that a total of 393 or 94.7% teachers agreed or totally agreed with the position that students need to engage in problem-solving learning activities in order to achieve a deep understanding of the material, while the remaining 5.31% either disagreed totally disagreed, or indicated a neutral response. The responses to the third question indicated that a total of 95.18% of the teachers surveyed either agreed or totally agreed that identification of students' prior learning experiences and abilities before instruction should be a preliminary activity while the remaining 4.82% either totally disagreed, disagreed, or gave a neutral response to the question.

The fourth survey question had fewer affirmative responses with 368 or 88.67% of the teachers totally agreeing or agreeing that the instructional design should account for multiple intelligence or individual students' learning styles, while the remaining 52 or 11.33% teachers totally disagreeing, disagreeing, or indicating a neutral response for this question. The final question in this series had a the largest total affirmative response rate of 399 teachers or 96.15% or 399 totally agreeing or agreeing that learning tasks or assignments should challenge students' existing conceptions or abilities while the remaining 16 teachers or 3.85% totally disagreed, or took a neutral stance on this question.

Figure 7 presents the participant responses for questions 6-11, which focuses on instructional methods and student/teacher interactions and demonstrated a similar propensity for affirmative responses from the surveyed teachers.



	Totally Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally Agree
#6.	4	6	3	188	214
#7.	12	11	16	177	199
#8.	7	3	18	219	168
#9.	9	2	33	167	204
#10.	2	6	9	207	191
#11.	8	4	17	179	207

***Figure 7*: Participant Responses, Questions 6-11**

For question six, an overwhelming 402 teachers or 96.87% totally agreed or agreed that instruction should foster students' problem solving and learning abilities while a total of 3.13% totally disagreed or had neutral impressions regarding the question. Question seven had a significantly greater negative response with 39 teachers or 9.4% surveyed totally disagreed or indicated a neutral response while the remaining 376 participants or 90.6% totally agreed or agreed that educational instruction should encourage students' abilities to monitor and evaluate their own learning experiences. Questions 8-11 had affirmative totally agree or agree responses totaling 387 or 3.25%; 371 or 89.4%; 398 or 95.9%; and 386 or 93.01%, respectively with the highest neutral/negative response totaling 44 or 10.6% to question nine regarding whether interactions within the learning environment should be encouraged.

The series of questions regarding teacher impressions of conflicting perspectives revealed the most dynamic collection of responses.

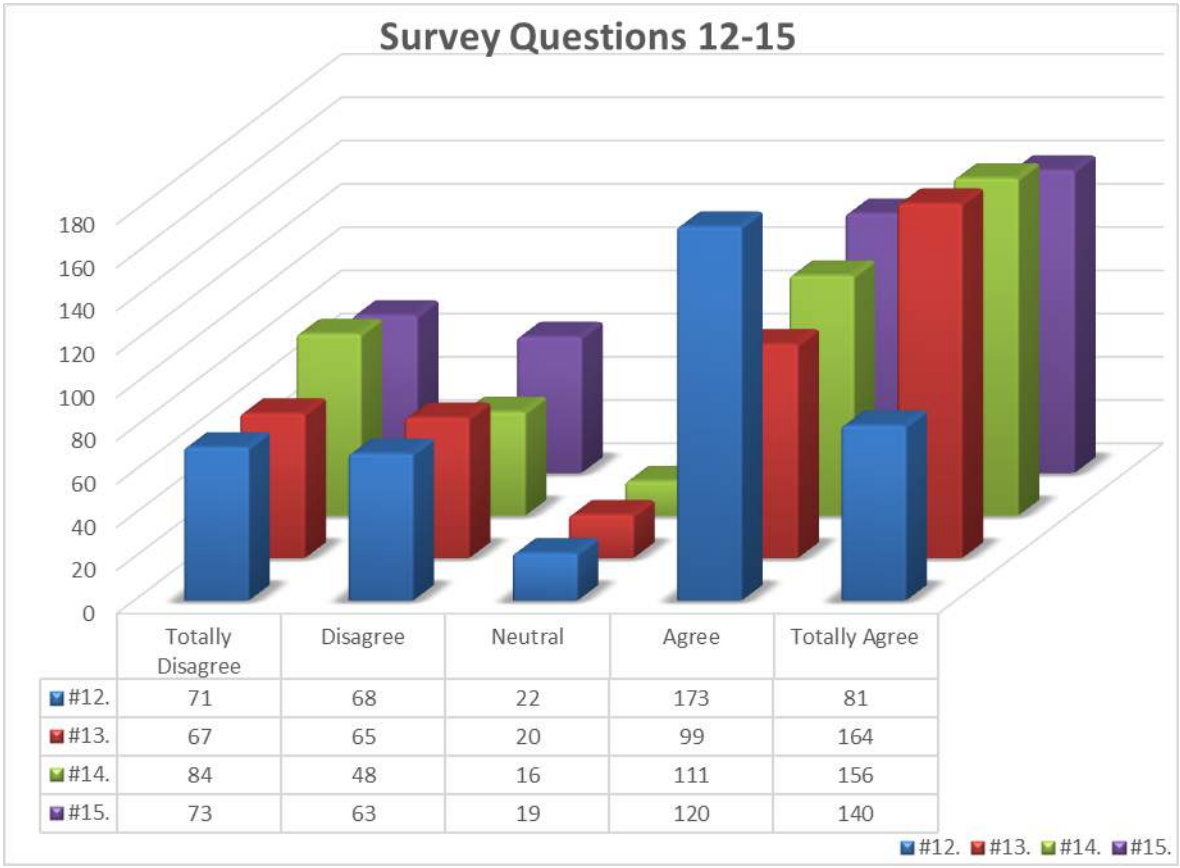


***Figure 8*: Participant Responses, Questions 12-15**

Only 254 teachers or 61.21% indicated that they feel they are teaching a curriculum that reflects their theoretical beliefs about teaching and learning while 139 respondents or 33.5% totally disagreed and 22 or 5.3% chose a neutral response. The negative responses for question 13 totaled 132 teachers or 31.8% that totally disagreed or disagreed that the curriculum allowed for the integration of their personal instructional approach while 20 teachers or 4.82% indicated the neutral response leaving 263 teachers or 63.38% that totally agreed or agreed with the statement. For questions 14 and 15, 132 teachers or 31.81% and 136 teachers or 32.77% totally disagreed and disagreed that the theoretical perspectives in the taught curriculum facilitated students' ability to problem solve, collaborate or cooperate during learning, or self-regulated learning and that the theoretical perspective conflicted with their personal pedagogical theoretical perspective, respectively.

The responses to the last survey question are illustrated in Figure 9, showing the participant responses to the open-ended query that allowed for multiple answers. The five most prominent responses detailing the factors teachers felt impeded their ability to implement their ideal instructional method are shown, with 388 or 93.49% indicating limited flexibility as the greatest impediment; 357 or 86.02% stating lack of supplies; 339 or 81.69% professing poor administrative support; 271 or 65.30% citing insufficient time for planning; and 237 or 57.11% declaring large class sizes to be the worst impediment.

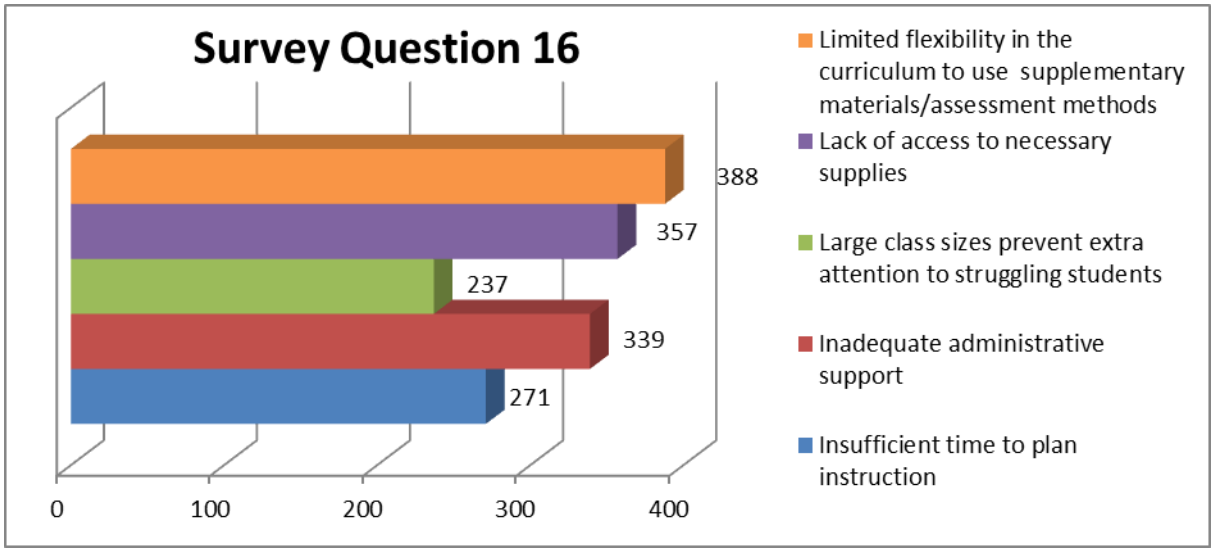


Figure 9: Participant Responses, Question 16

The results from this survey indicate diverse reasons teachers feel that the curricular model does not sufficiently reflect their preferred instructional method or theoretical beliefs.

Discussion

The majority of the respondents overwhelmingly agreed with the tenets presented in the constructivist instructional ideals forming the basis of the statements in the survey, but the questions identifying conflicting theoretical perspectives revealed discord with the current policies and standards of practice. This discussion will discuss the results of the survey in direct relation to the research questions to establish whether this study has satisfied the stated objectives of the research.

Research Question 1

Which theoretical principles do educators support in the underlying curriculum they teach?

While many of the surveyed teachers agreed that the school improvement models should address disparities in student achievement, as many as one-third of respondents did not feel that the curricular program they were teaching supported the theoretical perspectives they believed were most relevant to providing a cohesive educational experience. Despite the U. S. national school-wide initiatives, known as Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) endeavors, supported by policymakers and researchers, the curriculum many educators are teaching do not support the perspectives respondents indicated overwhelming support for in survey questions 1-11, which are also proposed by prominent theorists such as Bowlby, Bandura, and Vygotsky (Bayla, 2007). Overall, an average of less than 2% of the respondents disagreed or totally disagreed with the statements in questions 1-11 regarding the constructivist activities and routines that support student learning, but this average climbs to 32% totally disagreeing or disagreeing for questions 12-15.

If teachers do not believe in the theoretical standards they are using, it is important to consider that either their teaching is intrinsically flawed or that the current use of theory in education practice is not sufficient. It is important to determine which is the case in order to gain a greater understanding of how teachers can contribute to effective learning practices in the classroom.

It is reasonable that cultural differences and contextual divergences between classroom teachers and students of diverse nationalities or ethnic origins can further impede the realization of positive educational outcomes since teacher educators typically have limited contact with and knowledge of culturally diverse groups, cultures, and experiences (Gay, 2010). Inexperience with diverse cultures can produce unconsciously harbored beliefs that negatively correlate to increased student performance and the teacher must accept responsibility for implementing proven instructional strategies (Chen, 2008; Dai, 2010).

Research Question 2

How do teachers perceive the theoretical perspectives regarding education and learning that conflict with the actions necessary to comply with the implementation of educational policies?

While the determinations presented in the findings for the first research question partially address this second question, the finding relative to survey question 16 most aptly provides support for the finding that the teachers participating in this survey harbor conflicting theoretical perspectives regarding the implementation of educational policies. Overall, an average of 318 or 76.72% of respondents indicated there was at least one impediment hindering them from integrating their idea educational model that would support learning according to the tenets of constructivist educational principles, such as student engagement, teacher assessment of prior student knowledge, providing changing material, and development of autonomous self-monitoring abilities in students.

This research is limited in that the perspectives of the teacher respondents were not analyzed according to their tenure or experience, which could yield additional details to assist in bridging the gap between educator theoretical beliefs and the implementation of educational policies. Currently, lack of substantive research has limited the knowledge regarding the best techniques for educating students in a multicultural classroom, particularly what skills, knowledge, and dispositions best support classroom practice while challenging students to develop and grow in experience (Miretzky, 2010).

Conclusion

Throughout history, children were perceived as smaller forms of adults and not much significance was attached to the advancement of physical growth, language use, and cognitive abilities (Duncan, 2014). However, recent theories have outlined the developmental stages of children and identified the age groups in which such characteristics occur to assist educators in developing curricular standards that are proven beneficial based on tested theories (Duncan, 2014). Although the pedagogical paradigms are based on such reliable theories, the policies regarding early childhood cognition developed resulting from the changes in legislation have led to the engineering of curriculum and programs that do not always meet the needs of the students

and lead to stagnation in the implementation on the scholastic level. This research has demonstrated that some teachers disagree with the theoretical paradigms that they have been taught. It is therefore important to determine how to incorporate teachers into policy making in the education setting. It is with importance that administrators allow their teachers to grow with their students and provide them the necessary tools to aid in their students' learning. Administrators must share control and trust their teachers to build curricula. When given this opportunity to lead, teachers can provide the useful and needed data to their administrators to engineer curriculum and programs that students need to achieve scholastic levels of education. These individuals have the ability to effectively reflect on the education theories that are working effectively and those that are not. In this manner, incorporating teacher opinion on policy matters can potentially reshape practice.

More study is needed into the roles of administrators and teachers towards what curricula students are to learn and why as this could have dramatic impact upon students' educational outcomes.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Table 1: *Survey Results for all Participants*

	Survey Questions					
		0	1	2	3	4
		Totally Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Totally Agree**
#1.	Instruction should focus on students' active participation in learning rather than teachers' lecture.	11	8	12	182	202
		2.65%	1.93%	2.89%	43.86%	48.67%
#2.	Without engaging in problem-solving learning activities, it is difficult for students to achieve deep understanding.	6	9	7	115	278
		1.45%	2.17%	1.69%	27.71%	66.99%
#3.	Teachers should identify students' prior learning experiences and abilities before instruction.	8	5	7	222	173
		1.93%	1.20%	1.69%	53.49%	41.69%
#4.	Instructional design should account for multiple intelligence or learning styles of individual students.	15	9	23	188	180
		3.61%	2.17%	5.54%	45.30%	43.37%
#5.	Learning tasks or assignments should challenge students' existing conceptions or abilities.	3	5	8	192	207

		0.72%	1.20%	1.93%	46.27%	49.88%
#6.	Instruction should foster students' abilities for solving problems and learning how to learn.	4	6	3	188	214
		0.96%	1.45%	0.72%	45.30%	51.57%
#7.	Instruction should foster students' abilities for monitoring and evaluating their own learning.	12	11	16	177	199
		2.89%	2.65%	3.86%	42.65%	47.95%
#8.	Instruction design should integrate students' real-life experiences and interests.	7	3	18	219	168
		1.69%	0.72%	4.34%	52.77%	40.48%
#9.	In class, interactions between the teacher and students, among students, and between students and the learning environments should be encouraged.	9	2	33	167	204
		2.17%	0.48%	7.95%	40.24%	49.16%
#10.	In class, students should be encouraged to collaborate or cooperate with each other and to respect each other's opinions.	2	6	9	207	191
		0.48%	1.45%	2.17%	49.88%	46.02%
#11.	Teachers should use multiple assessment methods to understand a student's learning status.	8	4	17	179	207
		1.93%	0.96%	4.10%	43.13%	49.88%
#12.	The curriculum I teach reflects my theoretical beliefs regarding teaching and learning.	71	68	22	173	81

		17.11%	16.39%	5.30%	41.69%	19.52%
#13.	The curriculum I teach allows me to integrate methods according to my ideal instructional approach.	67	65	20	99	164
		16.14%	15.66%	4.82%	23.86%	39.52%
#14.	The theoretical perspectives represented in the curriculum I teach enables me to instruct students in a manner that facilitates students' problem solving, collaborative or cooperative learning, and self-regulated learning.	84	48	16	111	156
		20.24%	11.57%	3.86%	26.75%	37.59%
#15.	The theoretical perspectives that support the curriculum I teach conflict with my personal pedagogical theoretical perspective.	73	63	19	120	140
		17.59%	15.18%	4.58%	28.92%	33.73%
#16.	Please list the factors you feel are impeding you from implementing your ideal instructional methods. (This question allowed for multiple responses so total is greater than 100%)	Insufficient time to plan instruction	Inadequate administrative support	Large class sizes prevent extra attention to struggling students	Lack of access to necessary supplies	Limited flexibility in the curriculum to use supplementary materials/assessment methods
		271	339	237	357	388
		65.30%	81.69%	57.11%	86.02%	93.49%

Appendix B

Table 2: *Participant Age Demography*

Age	
26-35	165

36-45	212
46-55	38

Appendix C

Table 3: Participant Gender Demography

Gender	
Female	318
Male	97

Appendix D

Table 4: Participant Teaching Experience

Teaching Experience (Years)	
0-5	89
6-10	73
11-15	70
16-20	59
21-25	57
26+	67

Appendix E

Table 5: Grade Level Taught by Participant

Grade Level	
Pre-K	77
1-5	144
6-8	95
9-12	99

Appendix F

Table 6: Subject Taught by Participant

Subject	
Primary (PK-5)	221
English	22
Mathematics	29
Physics	21
Biology	33
Earth science	28
Music	19
Art	11
Geography	19
History	12

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Second Language Competence and Student Acculturation: The Case of International Students

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Abstract

This paper presents a thorough literature review of the effects of second language competence on student acculturation and adjustment in an international setting. The study stems from a view of globalization as a key factor in today's higher education considering, for instance, the rapid increase of overseas students over the years. A fundamental aspect of studying in a new country is the stipulation of interacting in a different language. With the spread of English as a lingua franca, a large part of the programs taught overseas is undertaken in English. Shedding light on this, the current paper provides a review of recent research efforts aimed at exploring the effects of second language competence on international students' acculturation and academic success. A series of terms and concepts will first be defined, before the findings of various studies are discussed. The paper will then conclude with the author's reflection.

Keywords: Acculturation, adjustment, academic success, second language competence, sociocultural knowledge.

Introduction

Notwithstanding the academic content, be it curricular or extra-curricular, of a certain study program, the notion of banking on a second or a foreign language to interact with peers, teachers and other individuals in a given community has been reported to have varied effects on student acculturation and academic success in an international study (Ward, 2004). According to Masgoret (2006:312), "the development of language fluency and other communication competencies and the development of interpersonal relationships with members of the receiving community appear to function dynamically in the ongoing process of culture learning". The current paper focuses on the linkage between student language competence and their acculturation. Having said that, there are however other factors which may well have an effect on an international student's experience ranging from academic factors to personal ones. Albeit their importance and relation to second language competence, these foci are beyond the scope of this paper.

Relevant Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this paper, the following terms and definitions are utilized. First, and opposed to a 'home student', an international student is a student who is enrolled in an academic or language study in a country other than their own for an extended period of time. Further technical details concerning the nature of study, host and origin communities will be discussed in the next section. It is also worth defining the term 'language competence' which researchers, such as Coleman (1995, cited in Regan et al., 2009:21) as "not a single entity but a multidimensional construct" covering areas such as sentence structure, lexicon, and diction, which Regan et al. (ibid) describe as the "standard categories" of language competence. Universities in Western contexts, i.e. where the majority of international students tend to enroll, resort to certain measures as proofs of students' language competence before such students embark on their academic study. For instance, standardized tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and other matching tests, e.g. DALF and DELF for French. As a further measure for international students' language competence, such students are also required to undertake placement tests and rate their own language ability in the forms, surveys or interviews they go through. Added to the above, it is worth including in this section terms such as adjustment and academic achievement which Andrade (2006:134) amply defines as "adjustment describes the fit between students and the academic environment (Ramsay et al., 1999), and may examine issues such as learning styles, study habits, educational background, culture and language proficiency. Academic achievement refers to evidence of learning, which may be measured by successful completion of course requirements, grade point average (GPA), satisfactory academic standing or retention". By and large, international students' adjustment refers to how they adapt daily life practices and challenges into their new environment. On the other hand, academic achievement (which can be measured more straightforwardly) is focused on evaluating student performance and thus it encompasses tests, of various forms, and certain formulas which students compulsorily undertake, and the outcome of which are what decides student success or failure. Added to this, students' perceived recital and objectives are other factors that also shape both student adjustment and academic achievement. A further notion to remark is that of 'acculturation', which Duru and Poyrazli (2007:100) define as "a process of cultural change that results from repeated direct contact between two distinct cultural groups". Elaborating on this, Spenader (2011) adds that "the social and psychological integration of the

learner with the target language group" (p. 382). Clément (1986:285), amongst other researchers, claim that "language proficiency has a direct impact on acculturation". Undoubtedly, therefore, the current study takes into account the effects (if any) of acculturation on language competence, and vice versa. A good reader of literature on studentship and language development could easily figure out the various ways in which a particular cross-cultural exchange is conjectured, e.g. immersion, integration, assimilation and acculturation (c.f. Berry 1990, cited in Spenader 2011: 387). This paper focuses on the latter given its evident prominence in the relevant literature, particularly that which deals with international students and their language competence.

ESL/EFL Settings

Amongst other English-speaking countries, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States are ranked to be the top destinations for international students accumulating a percentage of 38% of the overall international student population (UNESCO, 2012). Such figures, together with the marketization of Western degree programs to non-English settings, do make English a major second/foreign language (ESL/EFL respectively) for most enrolling students. Andrade (2006: 139) remarks that:

> International students at various institutions have identified English-related skills, such as listening ability, lecture and reading comprehension, note taking, oral communication, vocabulary and writing, as being problematic (Lee, 1997; Lewthwaite, 1996; Senyshyn et al., 2000). Studies have found that students lack confidence in their English abilities (Lewthwaite, 1996; Robertson et al., 2000; Senyshyn et al., 2000; Tompson and Tompson, 1996) and fear making mistakes (Jacob and Greggo, 2001), which may inhibit their class participation. (Lewthwaite, 1996; Robertson et al., 2000; Tompson and Tompson, 1996)".

Studies such as that of Holmes (2004) and Mendelsohn (2002) reported an increasing strive amongst international students with general pedagogical activities, e.g. note-taking, due to their relatively-low English language levels. Accordingly, it is without a doubt that English language may well represent a major challenge for international students, particularly in academic programs which they study with their native peers. The linkage between English language competence and academic achievement was further explored in a study by Vinke and Jochems (1993) who investigated the academic performance of a group of international postgraduate Indonesian students in the Netherlands. The authors concluded that "age and English proficiency affected the ability to earn grades and to succeed in a postgraduate English-medium program" (p. 281); yet, they observed that:

> If students have a thorough command of English, language proficiency will hardly be an impediment to academic achievement. In this case the relationship between English proficiency and academic success will be weak and further improvement…will hardly affect academic success. The lower a student's level of English proficiency, the more it will stand in the way of academic success. (p. 281)

In another study, Woodrow (2006) has investigated the validity of the IELTS examination bands and descriptors in predicting students' academic success. She found that "the strongest relationships were between speaking [and] listening and GPA and, surprisingly, the

relationship between reading and GPA was not significant" (Woodrow, ibid:58). Nonetheless, she concluded that "the correlations [overall] were not large, indicating English proficiency only accounts for a portion of academic success" (ibid:58). In line with Vinke and Jochems (1993), Woodrow (ibid:61) noted that "when proficiency is at the lower end of the entry requirement, it influences academic performance, whereas for those students who enter with scores in excess of the minimum requirement, no influence is detected". Such findings are in agreement with those found by Berman and Cheng (2001), Dooey and Oliver (2002), Feast (2002), and Kerstjens and Nery (2000). Interestingly, however, Andrade (2006:148) adds that "the achievement of international undergraduates may be less affected by English proficiency than that of graduate students".

In a recent study which utilized the outcomes of both students' language tests and their (students, that is) own ratings, Young et al. (2012) investigated the academic success of a group of international students (n= 102) enrolled in Newcastle University in England. The study was aimed at investigiating facors which may well have an impact on student wellbeing and life experience in relation to their English language competence. Albeit that most of the participating students have achieved high scores in their IELTS examinations, nearly half of them have rated themselves to be at the middle of the study scale (i.e. between 3 and 5 where "1 = being unable to communicate in English at all to their own satisfaction; 5 = being able to communicate in English a great deal to their own satisfaction" (Young et al, ibdi: 8). Evidently, by this, students' perceived English language competence did not coincide with their IELTS grades and seemed to have an impact on student academic achievement. Conceptualizing this factor as 'language self-confidence', Yang et al. (2006: 490-491), in line with Clément (1986), reported that "[s]elf-confidence [can be] a more important predictor of language use and acculturative outcomes than actual linguistic competence." This notion was established in light of the findings of a study of a group of international students at a Canadian university. The authors noted that "[g]iven that comfort using the language of the host society facilitates the fulfillment of everyday needs, self-confidence was associated with better ability to carry out everyday tasks [, which is] consistent with the idea that fewer daily difficulties are associated with better psychological adjustment" (Yang et al., ibid:502). In a similar vein, Duru and Poyrazli (2007) found that "self-reported English competency is a significant predictor of acculturative stress". The researchers who carried out a field study of a group of Turkish students in the United States, added that "[a] higher level of English competency may help with students' general adjustment to a new culture and educational environment, as students would more likely be able to ask for help, meet new people, and participate in class discussions. This process, in turn, may reduce the level of acculturative stress Turkish international students experience" (107-108). Summarizing the above-mentioned findings, Yu and Shen (2010:77) stated that:

> L2 proficiency, integrative motivation, and linguistic confidence were significant predictors of socio-cultural adaptation...linguistic confidence was found to be the strongest predictor of socio-cultural adaptation…linguistic confidence was the strongest predictor of academic adaptation, followed by integrative motivation and L2 proficiency.(P.77)

The authors, who investigated the acculturation of a group of international students from China, concluded by reporting a strong correlation between students' perceived language competence and their academic and cultural acclimatization to the host community.

Other Second/Foreign Languages

Unlike the rapid increase in studies on language competence and student acculturation in English-speaking contexts, there is a clear lack of research in other contexts. This could be attributed to the prevalence of English as a recognized language in higher education contexts globally. Nonetheless, however, this necessitates the presence of further scholarly efforts to establish whether factors found influential (in relation to student language competence and acculturation) in English speaking settings are evident elsewhere. Pearson-Evans (2006, cited in Byram et al. 2006) carried out a longitudinal study on Irish students living in Japan between 1994 and 1995 (n=6). The participating students were, at the time of data collection, enrolled on a four-year bachelor degree study in international marketing. Prior to this, they had 24-month experience studying Japanese which makes the subjects more likely to have ample linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of their host community. However, the researcher reported that:

> Even students with low language skills expected to speak Japanese with host culture members and interpreted unwillingness on the part of their hosts to do so as a way of excluding them from Japanese culture. Being intuitively aware of the power associated with host language competence and the question of who decides what language is spoken in an interaction (Bourdieu, 1991; Kim, 1988), they reacted with resentment and sarcasm on such occasions. (Pearson-Evans 2006, cited in Byram et al. 2006:51)

Given that English was largely used amongst students in the host community (c.f. Pearson-Evans, 2006), the participating students' competence in Japanese was below expectation given the matter of fact that students in the host community were more interested in practicing English, not Japanese, with these students. In addition, Pearson-Evans (ibid) observed that mastering Japanese alone was not sufficient for the participating students according to members of the host community who viewed it as discourteous not knowing certain cultural notions and practices. However, this is not surprising in contexts such as Japan where linguistic mastery is as equally important as sociocultural mastery (Byram et al., 2006).

Discussion and Conclusion

Hitherto, a review of the literature was presented. Issues of second language competence and student acculturation were explored. This review was necessary to broaden one's knowledge in the field which will provide a deeper understanding of various aspects of the notion in hand. It is apparent thus far that a primary tendency in relevant literature distinctly revolved around the existence of correlation (albeit degrees may vary) between second language competence and desired outcomes, both lingual and academic, related to international students' acculturation and adjustment to their host communities. Further investigation is however recommended, particularly in non-English L2 contexts, perhaps in non-English speaking contexts where English is the medium of instruction, e.g. Germany. In other European contexts that resemble less targeted study destinations, Norway for instance, it was found by researchers such as Sam (2001) and Selmer and Lauring (2011) that there was no correlation between international students'

second language competence and their acculturation. This is perhaps due to the widespread use of English as a lingua franca in such contexts. However, this leads one to enquire whether the findings reported by Pearson-Evan (2006) on Irish students in Japan may well be found in other non-English contexts. One could also enquire whether learning languages other than English is as equally important for international students as learning English, both inside and outside the classroom. These questions, together with whether bi/multilingualism could be the resolution for international students' academic achievement and acculturation, are indeed fruitful areas for further exploration. For instance, research could be carried out to establish whether the European-funded 'Erasmus Intensive Language' program, which is aimed at familiarizing students with less prevalent languages, is useful in easing student integration and ensuring their apposite acculturation. If the answer is yes, then language educators and decision makers elsewhere could take an advantage of such initiative in enhancing their international students' acculturation and academic success. In sum, whilst increasing numbers of international students embark on studies in countries other than their own, the issue of second language competence and student acculturation becomes more prevalent and thus further research is required.

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Critical Literacy: Disseminating Power Relations

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Abstract
Research on literacy as the ability to read and write has mainly focused on how to decode, encode and comprehend printed alphabetic texts (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). This conceptual paper aims at exploring the development of sociocultural theory. It also aims at exploring the way critical literacy has led to the emergence of multiliteracies. Research on literacy was also grounded on psychological theory (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). With the challenges and the changes that are happening in the 21st century, the focus on learning in groups is what drives research on literacy. The main shift that has occurred in literacy is to approach learning from a sociocultural theory. Many theories have emerged under the umbrella of sociocultural theory. Among the many factors that have led to the sociocultural theory is the focus on power relations that are embedded in literacy. Disseminating power relations in literacy has also led the emergence of multiliteracies as a critique to the dominance of the print word over other forms of literacies (Kress, 2000). Within the frame of sociocultural theory and critical literacy, literacy as multiple is more and more acknowledged.
KeyWords: critical literacy, multiliteracies, power, sociocultural theory

Introduction

Prior to the 1970's, the word "literacy" scarcely featured in formal educational context. Research was focused on instruction, and how to decode, encode and comprehend printed alphabetic texts (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). Cognitive perspectives have long shaped literacy because the main concern of curriculum designers and policy makers was a focus on particular skills, such as phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension (Perry, 2012). The work of Vygotsky (1978) has caused a big shift in the field of literacy, as psychological perspectives have been associated to social ones. Learning is no longer isolated from the context where it occurs. The sociocultural theory has emerged as a theory that is focused on the way people learn in groups and the way culture shapes their practices. Most importantly, power relations are also disseminated within this frame (Perry, 2012). The most influential works on literacy from a sociocultural theory have been conducted outside school (Street, 1984; Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Gee, 2000) as the aim of research is to understand literacy practices and the way knowledge is constructed by, for, and between members (Gee, 2000). Most of sociocultural theories have emerged from a non-formal literacy context (school). However, the theories have had a great impact on education and classroom instruction (Tracey & Morrow, 2006).

Vygotsky (1978) asserts the child interacts with his environment, and the impact of the environment should not be ignored when addressing literacy practices. Research on literacy school from a sociocultural has emerged as an attempt to understand the inter-psychological (between people) and the intra-psychological (within the individual functioning.

The sociocultural theory concept is used as an umbrella term in this paper because there are several sub-theories, and they all are interrelated (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). Green (1997) posits there are three dimensions of learning from a sociocultural perspective: The operational, the cultural, and the critical. For the purpose of this paper, the critical dimension of literacy is going to be focused on. Within the frame of the sociocultural theory, literacy is not neutral and it is embedded into power relations. The critical theory (Freire, 1970) emerged as a field of study to disseminate the inequalities, and the power relations that shape literacy. Perry (2012) asserts the critical theory plays an important role in the sociocultural perspective as it may describe all the other theories that have emerged within the frame of sociocultural theories.

The purpose of this paper is to understand literacy practices within the critical theory framework. For the purpose of this paper, an overview of the development of the sociocultural theory and the causes of the emergence of this theory will be explored. Then, the critical theory will be explored to show the impact of this theory on literacy as well as the impact of the theory on other theories, such as multiliteracies.

Sociocultural Theory

The sociocultural theory has its roots in the work of Vygotsky (1978) as he shifted research on learning from a purely psychological perspective to a social one. Vygotsky's work focuses on human interactions which take place in cultural contexts and are mediated by language and other symbol systems, and can be best understood when investigated in their historical development (genetic epistemology).As mentioned in the introduction, addressing the impact of the interaction of several environment factors on the human development started with the work of

The sociocultural theory emerged from research, which was conducted outside school. Street's work (1985) focused on literacy practices that he defined as the "broader cultural conception of particular ways of thinking about and doing reading and writing in cultural contexts. Street (1985) points out the context shapes the literacy practice, and so it can be inferred as contexts differ, literacy practices are also different depending on the context. Street's work is also based on a critical perspective of the dominance of the print word over oral literacy, which has also led to the emergence of the concept "literacies' (written literacy, oral literacy etc.)

Focus on literacy from a sociocultural perspective has engendered a growing emphasis on culture, activity, identity, and power into contexts (Perry, 2012). Reading and writing is now looked as how they occur into contexts and because of the diversity of contexts, the construct "New Literacy Studies" (NLS) was coined (Gee, 1991; street, 1985). Within this new frame, Brand and Hamilton (2000) have come up with the six features that enable us understand literacy from a sociocultural perspective, and they are:

1 Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts
2 There are different literacies associated with different domains of life
3 Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies become more dominant, visible and influential than others
4 Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices
5 Literacy is historically situated
6 Literacy practices change, and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making. (p.8)

Research on literacy from a sociocultural literacy may not explain the process of how to read and write, but it has described the way knowledge, culture, and relation powers are interrelated, and the way they influence literacy practices. Purcell-Gates, Perry & Briseno (2011) build up literacy model (Fig1) in which they explain that literacy is multiple as they state, "Literacy as multiple, and socially and culturally-situated, school literacy, or academic literacy,

is but one of many literacies. The forms and functions of academic literacy are shaped by the the social and cultural suppositions and beliefs of the academic community

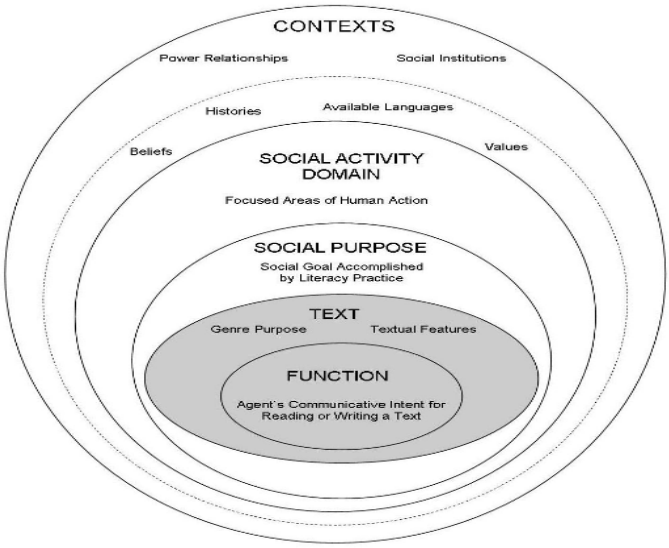

***Figure 1*: Model of Literacy Practice (Purcell-Gates, Perry & Briseno, 2011).**

Literacy as multiple has emerged because of the several contexts and domains where literacy can be practiced. It is also important to note that the sociocultural theory has challenged the traditional definition of literacy as the ability to read and write because learning is now looked at social and the influence of culture and power relations are taken into consideration. Literacy is more than reading and writing as it is about meaning making into context. Besides, all these changes, there is also the emergence of multiliteracies which have integrated the multiplicity of communication channels and media (Cope & Kalanzis, 2005). Before exploring the development of multiliteracies theory, the following section will be devoted to critical literacy development and the way it is connected to sociocultural theories.

Critical Literacy

Critical literacy is based on disseminating power relations, inequalities, and injustices in texts. The term critical literacy was coined by Freire (1970) as a result of a critique to the education system, which does not allow students to think critically. Freire (1970) argues about school being as a bank in which students are filled with information and concepts only, and the power is exercised on students because they are regarded as people who do not know anything and "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p.65). For Freire (1970), literacy is not only a cognitive skill, but it is about relating learners' world to education so that they can think critically about their education. Freire's contribution to literacy has resulted in a new definition that goes beyond the traditional definition as the ability to read and write. For Freire (2001), literacy is reading the word to read the world as he states

> To acquire Literacy is more than to psychologically and mechanically dominate reading and writing techniques. It is to determine these techniques in terms of consciousness; to understand what one reads and write what one understands; it is to communicate graphically. Acquiring does not involve memorizing sentences, words, or syllables- lifeless objects unconnected to an existential universe- but rather an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one's context (p.86)

According to Freire's definition of literacy is central to the relation of students with knowledge, and the way they read texts. Students should not be considered as ignorant as they already know a lot of things they have learned from their own context. They come to classroom from a context where they have had their own experiences, and if students are just filled by concepts without connecting their experiences, the concepts will be just objects without life. Form Freire's perspective; the bank concept education inhibits students from investing in the world, as they will remain just passive receivers of a privileged knowledge. Freire's work is focused mainly on the print word. However, his work has had a great influence on the emergence of multi-literacies. Before exploring the way multiliteracies are connected to critical literacy, the following section will be devoted to exploring the definition of multiliteracies.

Multiliteracies

The dominance of print word over other forms of literacy is the premise of multiliteracies (Cope & Kalanzis, 2000). The construct has been coined by the New London Group (1996). For the researchers of the group, education has the purpose "to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, and economic life" (New London Group, 1996, p. 9). The researchers of the group are challenging the ways the students get education, and here lies the concern of multiliteracies theory. The theory is built on a critical perspective to challenge the traditional classroom, which is usually built on teacher talk. According to this theory, mainly with the rapid and deictic changes that technology development is causing, students have to be given more choices in their learning. Not only students should be exposed to more choices, but they should also be collaborators, and so teachers have to be as knowledge collaborators and creators instead of technicians (New London Group, 1996). Multiliteracies theory argues that contemporary literacy pedagogy needs to take into consideration the multilayered learners' identities and engage them to experience transformation in their capacities (New London Group, 1996). For the purpose of creating such pedagogy, the New London Group researchers (1996) coined the 'multimodal construct', and which gives a new picture of how teaching/learning can be through different modes (Fig2). Multiliteracies theory defines literacy as meaning making into a social context, but most importantly, the theory seeks to establish multimodal teaching/learning in pedagogy because the impact of new communication technologies (Cloonan, 2010).

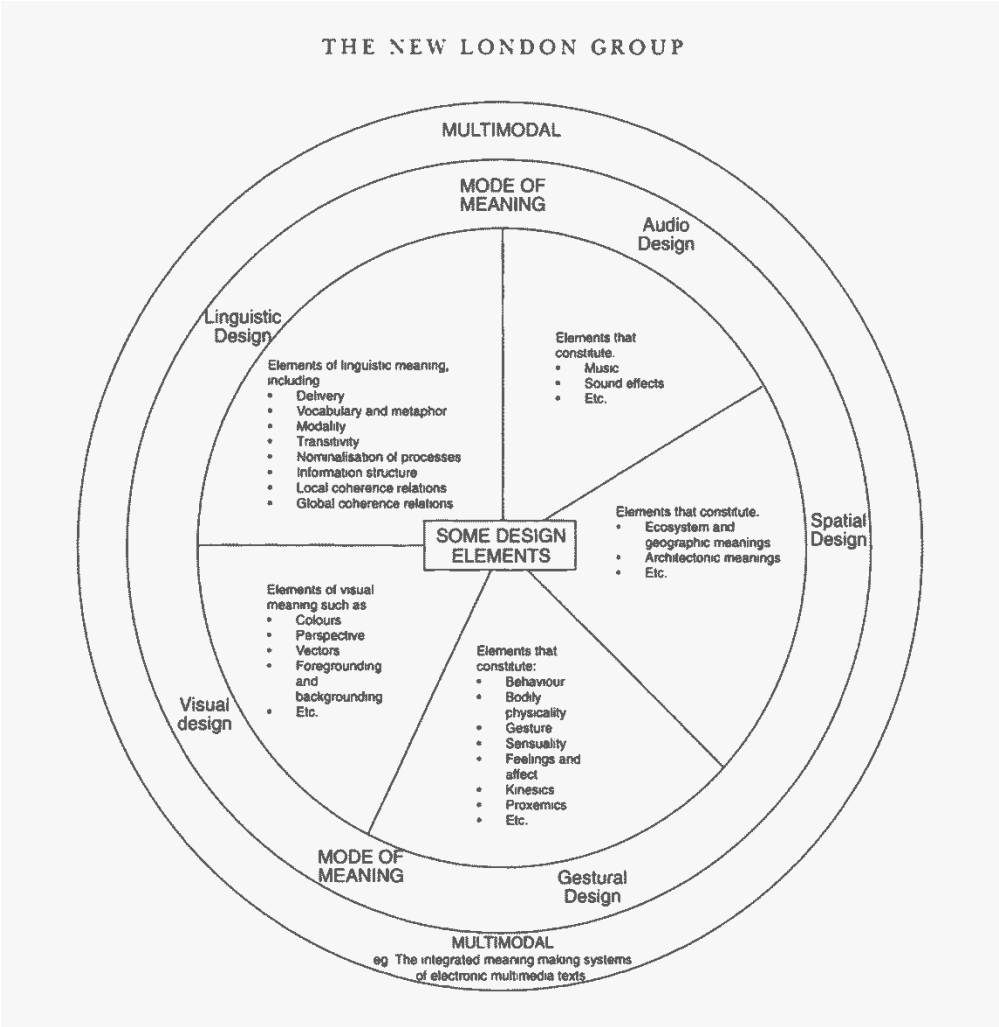

***Figure 2*: Multimodal Teaching (New London Group, 1996)**

Within the theory of multiliteracies, teachers have been found resistant to multimodal teaching as they believe "multimedia and digital literacies are rivals to conventional print text" (Cloonan, 2010, p.16). In terms of multimodality, researchers (New London Group, 1996; Cope& Kalantzis, 2000; Kress, 2005; Baker, 2010) actively criticize those who focus on print literacies only. Baker (2010) asserts "becoming multiliterate was conceived as students developing proficiency in a range of meaning-making modes: linguistic, visual, audio, general, gestural, spatial, and multimodal designs, with multimodal being a combination of the modes." (p.66), so literacy being considered as writing and reading has been criticized. Multiliteracies theory views literacy as including multiple modes of visual (moving image, sculpture, craft etc.), gestural (body language), spatial (proximity, spacing, landscape etc.), oral (live or recorded speech etc.), audio (music, sounds. etc.), writing (print, screened.), and other forms.

The critical stance in multiliteracies theory lies in the fact that the theory gives great emphasis on the mode of learning and teaching; that is to say the theory acknowledges the multiple modes of knowledge production with taking into consideration the context.

Multiliteracies and Power

From a Freiran perspective, critical literacy focuses on the print word, and the power relations that are embedded in the text. According to Perry (2012), the focus of critical literacy on power is to "determine which literacy practices are available to a given community, which are dominant and privileged, and which are marginalized" (p.64). Based on Freiran critical literacy model, Kress (2000) discusses power relations, which the print word has over other forms of literacy. Making students critical thinkers enables them to read the world and the word. In this case, educators have to understand their students' world. Within the 21st century frame, the world of the students is more virtual than physical (Prensky, 2001). Moreover, students do not read from a single text, but several texts; texts being as print word, videos, hypertexts, audio etc. Their learning has become multimodal, and their world is totally different from their educators'. The world is now totally a new one from the world 30 years ago (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). In the students' world, teachers might not feel comfortable, and might even feel as immigrants (Prensky, 2005). 21st century students learn using different modes, and the teachers have to provide integrate multimodal teaching to enhance their students' learning. However, some teachers stick to traditional pedagogy because they feel safe (Rosen, 2010). In this situation, pedagogy practices are embedded into power relations. Integrating multimodal teaching/ learning (multiliteracies) might a way of addressing the conflicting situation, Both teachers and students will be learners. Thus, teachers will transfer power to students, and if students are empowered they will be more critical thinkers (Prensky, 2001). The critical stance in multiliteracies theory lies in the fact that it enhances students to be active agents in education as they bring their world, which is totally different or new to teachers, and collaborate, share, and construct knowledge. Students are given the power to design their own model of education, which enhances their creativity.

Conclusion

Disseminating power relations that are embedded in literacy has highly influenced pedagogy. Critical literacy (Freire, 1970) has urged educators, and policy makers to be aware about the importance of connecting the world of the students to classroom practices. Literacy has become more complex as many other forms of literacies have emerged. Thus, multiliteracies theory has developed as a way of integrating more modes of learning and teaching as these modes are more and more needed in a world that has totally changed (Kress, 2000). Critical literacy is connected to multiliteracies in the fact that it enhances multimodal education. The sociocultural theory does not focus on the learning strategies, but it has impacted literacy because literacy is now considered from multiple contexts, and learning is now approached as social and more collaborative Perry (2012). Within the sociocultural theory, literacy has become

more difficult to understand. However, it has become less difficult to accept differences in literacy practices among people (Brand & Hamilton 2000).

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Making Representational Meanings of Gender Images in Malaysian School English Textbooks: The Corpus Way

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Abstract
Images are in fact representations of reality that are also instrumental in creating imaginary relations between the participants in the image and the viewers. School textbooks are abound with visual images that sometimes can articulate more forcefully social and cultural meanings more so than written texts. This article focusses on a preliminary investigation on the making of representational meanings associated with gender and to critique the patterns of images in relation to gender stereotyping in a selected Malaysian Primary school English textbook with a data of 78 images analysed. Using Kress & van Leeuwen's Grammar of Visual Design (2006) as our method of analysis, we identify and describe gender representations through features of narrative, cultural and biological categorization and circumstance of setting. The analysis focuses on the results of three representational meanings of participant type, relational and institutional categories with the inclusion of ethnicity. Its preliminary findings reveal a predisposition towards gender stereotyping between male and female representation.
Keywords: corpus-based study, gender stereotyping, school textbooks, social semiotics, visual analysis

Introduction

Within the larger spectrum of studies on gender biasness and practices of stereotyping, school textbooks have drawn particular interest among numerous researchers over the past decades (Bahiyah et al. 2008, 2009; Dutro, 2002; Poarch & Monk-Turner, 2001; Turner-Bowker, 1996; Crabb & Bielawski, 1994; Dellmann-Jenkins, Florjancic &Swadener, 1993; Kortenhaus & Demarest, 1993; Mohamad Yassin et al. 2012; Mohd Jasmani et al. 2011; Paterson & Lach, 1990; Collins et al. , 1984; Weitzman et al., 1972). In examining the depiction of participants or characters (van Leeuwen 2006) in the textbook images, we pose this question: *How are participants in the images represented?*

Gender is one of "microcosm of ideologies, values, and beliefs" (Taylor, 2003:301). Therefore, messages about gender roles and gender identity that are transmitted through these texts are thought to affect the future behaviour of the children who consume them as they formulate their own roles in society (Eisenberg, 2002; Drees & Phye, 2001). This is a point which is further stressed by Knowles and Malmkjaer (1996:63) who contend that children have the ability to both "promote certain beliefs and certain forms of behaviour while discouraging others".

This study aims to firstly examine and describe the making of representational meanings associated with gender in the textbook images. Second, it aims to critique the patterns of images in relation to gender stereotyping in Malaysian English textbooks. Specifically, it investigates how gender stereotyping is visually represented in selected English primary textbooks in Malaysian schools and to explore the patterns of representational meanings that create and perpetuate gender stereotyping in Malaysian school textbook images. This is investigated using a corpus analysis approach.

Literature Review

Research on gender construction in school textbooks can serve children well. A heightened sense of awareness about gender disparities could lead to conscious steps being taken by writers, illustrators and publishers to provide children with access to children's books that avoid sexist practices. Clark (2002:288), for example, observes that in recent decades, the extensively analysed 'Caldecott Award' winning books in the United States "have been much more likely to feature female characters" and in less stereotyped ways compared to children's books from the 1960s. Therefore, in more recent publications, children, both girls and boys, have the opportunity to see themselves in a greater range of roles, activities and settings. This is a significant step in reducing the social stereotyping of gender identity.

Another reason why gender construction in school textbooks has continued to hold the attention of researchers is the fact that gender awareness and instruction have featured prominently in the school curriculum, and therefore, it is felt that "such literature had to be reviewed for bias" (Rosa, 1999:5). In Malaysia, English language has been revitalized in the classrooms as the language continues to be regarded as crucial for the country's growth. Among the reasons why mastery of the English language remains prominently on Malaysia's national agenda is the firm belief that the language is a key ingredient in creating knowledge workers, a necessary prerequisite to compete in a knowledge-based economy (Had Salleh, 2003). The teaching of English has obviously been the focus of attention because the supply of a Malaysian workforce competent in the English language is very much dependent on the emphasis placed on the language within the primary and secondary school curricula.

A major area in the study of gender and gender construction that is still lacking is the visual analysis even though there have been several studies in recent years that focus on images/visuals identity such as the one conducted by Abu Bakar (2012). Othman et al. (2012) analyse the frequency count of visual images in a selection of Malaysian English school textbooks for instance. Although their study is helpful towards the general understanding of the importance of visual analyses when analyzing texts (instead of just focusing on the written representation), there is still much to be done and to be understood

especially as to what roles images or visuals have in shaping gender awareness among Malaysian pupils. This paper highlights the use of corpus tool in analyzing images in school textbooks and discusses the preliminary analysis of the use of corpus tool as its method of analysis. It addresses these research questions:

1) What types of visual images are found in the selected English primary textbooks used in Malaysian schools?

2) To what extent are gender biasness and stereotyping represented in the visual images of the selected Malaysian primary English school textbook?

Data and Methodology

Sample

As this is a preliminary finding to test the initial analytical framework, one English textbook from the lower primary level (Year 2) was chosen. The lower level of primary education in Malaysia encompasses year 1 to year 3 and we chose lower level primary level as it is the beginning of formal education for all Malaysian school children in general. A year 2 book is chosen as it is the mid-level of lower primary education level. The primary level books are also predominantly books with pictures and thus, we believe that we would have ample amount of data to analyse for the testing of this analytical framework.

Procedure

We had selected 78 images from the textbook for the analysis which should suffice to test the initial analytical framework. Moreover, the selection of one textbook is reliable as Malaysian Education syllabus is centralized throughout all schools in Malaysia. We had chosen Gill M, Kaur M & Kan Y.Y (2003) as it is the general English textbook used in year 2 throughout most schools in Malaysia. The criteria for image selection are as follows:

(1) The image must contain representation of participants that include people, animals or inanimate objects.

(2) As gender forms the crux of the analysis, represented participants must show clear culturally defined gender of either male or female. Participants with undetermined gender are excluded from our analysis.

(3) Due to issues of salience such as sharpness and size, images displaying narrative containing more than 10 participants were excluded from our analysis.

(4) The images were confined to illustration, which in this study is defined as graphic or commercial art that is created for client to fulfill a task (in this case, the task of educating the readers) (Zeegen 2009). Our selection excluded visuals such as photograph, chart, tables and diagrams.

Data Analysis

This methodology involved annotating images and quantifying representations using explicitly defined categories based on Kress and van Leeuwen's grammar of visual design (2006). Guided by the principles of Systemic Functional Linguistics grammar of visual design presents an extensive description of visual resources based on examples from contemporary visual design in 'Western' cultures. Their tools provide a significant starting point from which images in other contexts can be explored. As our visual analysis deals with representational meaning, the following paragraphs describe the resources for codifying participants, action and circumstances in images.

Representational function focuses on represented patterns of real world experience in the images. This involves looking at the participants in the images (who), the actions (what is happening) and the circumstances (where) surrounding the participants. Based on the research questions, it is hypothesised that despite the increasing number of women leaders in modern Malaysia and the continuous effort in

advancing the role of women in the public arena, gender stereotyping is still pervasive with regards to positions in the institutional and political domains.

In coding the participants, a system network was created based on several main features found in our preliminary analysis. Firstly, the participants in our data are a representation of either human or non-human entities. So, the first contrasting feature in a participant system network is the choice between human or non-human entities. Secondly, the participant must display clear identifiable gender of either male or female. Gender in this study is defined as a form of cultural categorization and is signified by means of physical attributes such as dress, hairdo, facial features and so on (van Leeuwen 2008). Our data also shows that cultural categorization of participants is a simultaneous representations of gender identity (male or female) and other social identity types marked through 1) attire (e.g. school uniform) construing institutional identity, 2) relationship with others such as a mother or other participants of similar age i.e. friend, representing relational identity and finally, through 3) setting such as a podium and stage construing political identity. Figure 1 summarizes these choices of features for coding the participants.

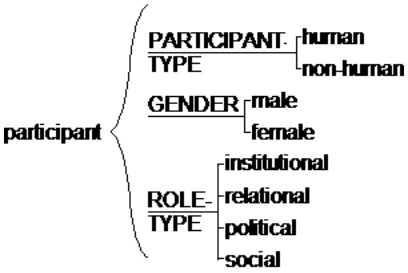

Figure 1. **Participant System Network**

In coding the actions and circumstances, we adapted the term proposed by Painter & Martin (2010) based on Kress & van Leeuwen's narrative system (2006) by extending the level of delicacy. Narrative is labeled **action** (i.e. realized by vectors originating from one participant and directed at another participant) or **reaction** (whereby a participant is on the receiving end of a vector, e.g. being looked at by another participant). Based on the narrative in our data, we extended the level of delicacy by adding three contrasting types of action based on the type of event, where it is carried out and with whom; these types are 1) **institutional** (e.g. reading or writing in a classroom) 2) **relational** (e.g. playing ball with friends or washing dishes at home) and 3) **political** (e.g. giving a speech on stage).

Participants, actions and circumstances are normally realized in different visual forms within a frame; this program allows for the annotation of parts of different sizes (or as a whole) according to different representational meanings. Frequency occurrences of features can be derived from the completed annotation. Additionally, we can also search for instances of specific features in the annotated corpus (e.g. female and institutional or male and relational).

Discussion of Findings

Our discussion focuses on the results of our three representational meanings analysis. The following sections discuss the quantitative findings and how representational meanings contributed to perpetuating gender stereotyping and constructing gender biasness in the English textbooks. Representational or ideational function of images refers to "a function of representing the world around and inside us" (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, p 15). Three patterns of representation included; i) participant type ii) action processes and iii) the setting.

Participant type

The first domain of representational analysis is participant type that is discussed under the relational, institutional, relational and ethnicity categories.

Relational

For this category, the general analysis shows that there are more relational characters that relate to males than females for both human (35 male vs. 31 female) and nonhuman. Most of the relational types featured are as a 'friend' whereby there are 75 (96.15%) occurrences altogether. For this, male characters are more dominant than female characters (43 compared to 32 participants, respectively). Female characters are also featured as a 'neighbour' (2.94%) and a 'canteen food seller '(2.94%) whereas a male character (2.27%) is featured as a 'driver'. This is an indication of gender discrimination as a person can become a 'friend' to any gender, whether male or female. Besides human, animals and objects are also depicted in a social circle of friends.

Participants of this category are also shown within family members namely mother, father, son, daughter, sister and brother. Overall, mothers are depicted as more significant than fathers (24 mothers and 17 fathers) and the most significant in the family. An image of a mother playing a substantial role in attending to her children's needs exhibits the traditional role of a mother in this culture to provide the loving care and support needed by growing children.

Institutional

More male characters are depicted as teachers in the institutional setting compared to females (eight males and five females). In this institutional setting, a large proportion of participants are depicted by male characters. This can be seen in an image in a classroom setting where, besides the teacher, who is a male, four out of the total of six students are also males. It is clearly an example of gender stereotyping as for both human and non-human, the institutional setting tends to imply that there is male dominance in education.

Ethnicity

Malaysia with a population of more than 28 million people (Index Mundi 2012) is a country diverse in culture, language and ethnicity. The largest ethnic groups comprise the Malays (50.4%), Chinese (23.7%) and Indians (7.1%) although there are smaller groups of people who are Sikhs, Eurasians (those within the "others" category 7.8%) and members of various indigenous groups. In the analysis of images, ethnicity in the Malaysian context may be revealed through cues that may be in the form of cultural attributes such as objects, dress, hairstyle, headwear (van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2001:95) markings on the face of religious significance, facial and physical features as well as skin colour. Also of great importance in the analysis are naming conventions found in the text that accompany the images which can clearly denote whether the participant/character belongs to a particular ethnic group. In Malaysia, in the absence of images, naming conventions when they are present in the text can be relied upon quite confidently to show ethnicity.

In Figure 2, the image of the participants of different ethnicity can be identified. Islam is the official religion of Malaysia and is practiced by more than 60% of the ethnic Malay population. One of the female participants in the image (on the right) is depicted wearing headwear that measures to the Muslim standards of modesty. She is wearing a *tudung*, which is a head scarf. We can identify the boy as belonging to the Sikh ethnic group also through the headwear. The sikh boy is depicted as wearing a *patka*, which is a piece of cloth over a knot of hair (equivalent to a turban for adult Sikh males). In Sikhism, the headwear donned by males such as the *patka* and the turban is donned not for cultural significance but for spiritual significance, out of obedience of the wishes of the founders of the faith.

Other images found of a darker skinned girl and a lighter skinned girl and their ethnicity is brought to bear from the identification of their names. 'Sunita', for example, can be easily identified as Indian (darker skinned) and 'Siew Ling' as Chinese (lighter skinned) respectively. These names are common female names related to their ethnic groups. Also reliable in identifying ethnicity in the case of the two images are Oriental facial features such as high cheekbones, slanted eyes and oval face. , Markings on the face such as a black *pottu* on the forehead, i.e., a small round black mark has religious significance,, Additionally it also signifies unmarried status for Indian girls.

Figure 2 **Ethnic Identification**
(Source: Gill M, Kaur M and Kan Y.Y (2003). Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah English Year 2. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur.)

The analysis of images related to ethnicity yielded two categories: the clearly identifiable participants/characters belonging to ethnic groups and those that are ethnically unidentifiable. In the clearly identifiable category, the analysis revealed the following findings. In general, the images found representations of the three largest ethnic groups namely Malays, Chinese and Indians. Additionally, the Sikh ethnic group is also represented. In this textbook there is a frequent representation of human Malay males and females (41 and 39 respectively). For the Chinese and Indian ethnic groups, there are more human Chinese and Indian females (12 as opposed to 8) than males (15 as opposed to 11) represented in the textbook. Interestingly, no non-humans were found to be representing any of the ethnic groups discussed.

The unidentifiable category yielded (111) unclear ethnicity for human males and 59 unclear ethnicity for human females. It was difficult to code ethnicity in cases such as the following: 1) when proper nouns/names were not mentioned in the accompanying text 2) when there are no obvious reference to names related to ethnicity and 3) when cultural attributes such as objects, dress, hairstyle, headwear as well as markings on the face of religious significance, facial and physical features and skin colour were ambiguous or absent.

Figure 3 **Females in 'Baju Kebaya' and 'Baju Kurung' – Malay National Costume**
*(*Source: Gill M, Kaur M and Kan Y.Y (2003). Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah English Year 2. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur.)

The females in Figures 3 are seen wearing the traditional Malay dress of *baju kebaya and baju kurung i.e.* Malay national costume. The Malay word "*baju*" may mean "dress" or "clothing" depending on the context of use. The *baju kebaya* is a pleated blouse paired with a long skirt or sarong. The *baju kurung* is a long tunic-like dress paired with a sarong. In recent years, the Malaysian goverment's policy for ethnic integration has allowed for female non-Malays also to wear the *baju kebaya* and *baju kurung* especially for formal and official functions. This trend is also seen with other ethnic traditional clothings being worn by all ethnic groups. For instance, the *cheongsam*, the traditional wear of Chinese females which is a one-piece dress with a high mandarin collar fastened by small clips or fabric clasps is very often seen worn by women of all ethnicities in Malaysia. The *salwar kameez*, the traditional wear of Sikh females which is a long tunic worn over trousers with a matching shawl is very popular now with Muslim women as it conforms to the ideals of modesty. Women of all ethnicities are also seen to be wearing it for fashion as well as comfort. Very soon we will not be able to confidently identify ethnic identity from the dress they are wearing. Western–style skirts, blouses, dresses, trousers, t-shirts and shoes are also popular as everyday clothings especially for female children of all ethnicities. These western-style clothings are more visible in urban settings.

Action Categories

Actions are classified into 3 types i.e. institutional, relational and political categories. The figure below shows the percentage distribution between 3 categories over the total number of identified actions (220). This section will discuss the institutional and relational categories as they hold the percentage of distribution.

Table 1 ***Action Type Categories***

ACTION-TYPE	Percentage % / No	
Institutional	12.27	127
Relational	87.73	193
Political	0.00	0
Total	100.00	220

Institutional category

From the institutional perspective, images are illustrated most commonly in school classrooms or school playgrounds. Thus, actions represented are mostly learning action. For instance images commonly

depict male and female students sitting down at their desks, answering questions, reading or writing in the classroom (see Figure 2).

Based on the frequency occurrence between boys and girls, the image evidently illustrates more boys than girls. It is evident that there are more boys (six) in the image shown in Figure 2 than girls (four). A ratio of an average of one girl to two boys indicates a certain level of gender biasness in the image as a whole. The prominent learning action shown here are those students depicting the role as the ones who ask questions and those answering the questions. It is worth noting that those depicting the role of asking questions are the boys who are the ones sitting at both heads of tables acting as the leader of each group. The image illustrates three girls putting their hands up to volunteer to answer the questions suggesting girls being the more perhaps, enthusiastic ones in gesture to answer. However, the image also depicts the boys to be the ones to answer questions and to provide the correct answers, i.e. "yes it is' and 'no, it is number 8'. Though the actions show the boys raising their hands together with the girls, the correct answers are however shown to be articulated by the boys only.

Another gender stereotyped action found is an image of girls in the act of 'serving' food to the boys. This act by nature illustrates the gentle action most commonly associated with girls for showing femininity. This example further illustrates the nurturing aspect of female characters often depicted or described.

Relational category

The analysis in general shows that there are more relational actions that relate to males than females for both human (64 male vs. 56 female) and nonhuman participants. From the social perspective, most observable action illustrated is the 'playing' action (28.18%) which is the biggest percentage of actions depicted. In such instances, the illustrated images show a more masculine than feminine type of 'playing'. For instance, for both human and nonhuman, masculine and feminine 'playing' is illustrated by boys playing football and girls playing skipping. This is an indication of gender stereotyping where typically football is associated with boys playing football whereas skipping is associated with girls playing skipping. In other words, playing with a 'ball' is often associated with boys. However, it is found that there is an occurrence of non-stereotyped image of actions illustrated from the social perspective. For instance, there is an image of a boy playing on a swing and girls and boys together playing with a ball though it is not football or soccer.

It is also found the holding action (11.82%) forms the third most common action after talking (14.55%). This holding action refers to items held by characters which indicate an element of gender stereotyping. For instance, females are illustrated to be holding flowers (15.38%), soft toy (30.77%), fruits (7.7%) and present (15.38%) whereas males (15.38%) human and non-human) are illustrated to be holding a bicycle and (7.69%) holding a ball. This is an apparent evidence of stereotyping of objects that are connoted to boys and girls.

Actions that are categorised as relational are commonly represented by family scenarios. Participants are depicted in a co-meronymic relationship with one another such as mother-daughter, father-sons or parents-children. There is an image of a mother and a daughter in the kitchen doing house chores. The process of 'cleaning' is carried out by two female characters (mother & daughter). Interestingly, no male character is present in the kitchen.

It displays an apparent gender stereotyped act of 'women' being the ones to accomplish tasks in the kitchen like washing the dishes and drying them. A sense of hierarchical element between mother and daughter is coincidently depicted between these two female characters with the mum doing the 'washing' (as the more challenging task) as compared to the daughter drying the dishes. It is worth to note that the

characters are illustrated with both of them wearing aprons indicating perhaps the stereotyping of women to be suited to wearing aprons than men. This perhaps is the reason why female characters are depicted in such an image. There is another image that illustrates a relational concept of a family cleaning their living room. Both female and male characters are shown cleaning the living room. However, it clearly depicts the father cleaning the ceiling while the mother vacuuming the floor. This suggests the more difficult task to be dealt by the father and the less difficult chore is dealt by the mother. The image also shows the daughter dusting the furniture whilst the son is depicted wiping the table with a cloth. This relates to an earlier discussion regarding the connotation of 'items' or 'objects' to specific gender.

In addition to the two action types, the data also revealed instances in which the participants are not performing any action. This is referred to as analytical process in which participants are represented in terms of a part-whole structure (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006). This involves two types of elements: the Carrier (the whole character) and any number of Possessive attributes (such as attire). The participants are clearly displaying the parts of their outfits labeled as *a shirt, a pair of shorts, a blouse, a baju kurung* and so on. The males and females are about equally represented for both human and non-human participants. As for political aspect, no images on political actions are represented in this book.

The Setting

Another feature analysed in the data is the 'setting'. This refers to the setting or context in which participants are most commonly portrayed. The findings highlight two types of setting mainly; the indoor setting and the outdoor setting. Overall, more outdoor activities are featured. As for outdoor setting, 45.99% of participants are depicted outdoors with 38.58% in indoor setting and no setting at 15.43%. This no-setting refers to characters depicted in a setting of no background such as a photo portrait image.

A 38.58% of characters (44) out of the 130 characters found in indoor setting are portrayed for both human and non-human participants. The frequency shows more male than female as a whole for humans (67 / 52). The non-humans are portrayed equally as per gender. The classroom setting makes up the most of the setting for the indoor activities. Home setting in the second most frequently used scene. The park makes the most of the setting for the outdoor activities with the dominance of 34.19% compared to others as shown below. As for human participants, male participants are the most dominant (81 to 53) participants depicted. More male non-humans are also portrayed in the outdoor setting than the female (15 to 6). An image in Figure 4 depicts the balance or imbalance of the number of male and female participants. On the whole, the frequency of male participants dominates female participants in most of the outdoor settings and the specific settings identified were in the park (33 to 20), in schools (12 to 3) and in playground (10 to 5).

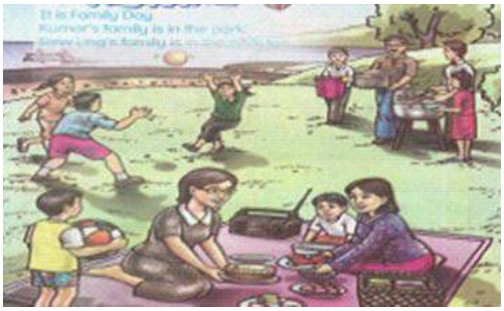

Figure 4 **Outdoor human**

(Source: Gill M, Kaur M and Kan Y.Y (2003). Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah English Year 2. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur.)

Implications

The portrayal of males and females in the images may have a strong impact on how Malaysian schoolchildren view male and female roles in society. Our findings largely suggest that adherence to traditional gender roles is perpetuated in the textbook images. Nevertheless, we noted a sharing of chores when it comes to familial activities around the house and while teaching is traditionally considered a female occupation, we also noted a higher number of male teacher depiction in the images.

1. Some areas that still need attention are increased female participation in institutional and political activities. Images of historical and contemporary female figures (e.g., warriors, politicians and athletes) provide one means of increasing female visibility and importance in the textbook. Because school and textbooks are one means of socializing children, it is important that efforts be taken to ensure teaching materials are fair and unbiased toward both sexes.
2. Those involved in the production of school textbooks should review the portrayal of male and female figures depicted in images. This is to provide the real world scenario in educating the younger generation to have a non-stereotyped mind with regard to gender representation in the Malaysian context that should assist in the nation building of the country.
3. It is timely that textbook writers take note of the changing roles of Malaysian females and their realistic contributions to the society so that whenever possible, females can be represented as equally as males in textbooks. There should be equal opportunities given to both genders via texts and images especially in the presentation of the subject matter (be it in social sciences as well as the sciences). This will encourage females to build awareness not only to the fact that they too can contribute significantly to scientific knowledge and innovation but also that they too have as much access and rights to varied careers in the sciences or otherwise, just as much as their male counterparts.

Conclusion

In this paper, we aim to contribute to the emerging literature specifically, those that highlight issues related to gender, inclusiveness and equality in school textbooks. The image analysis conducted on a primary Malaysian English language textbook related to gender is only a small part of a bigger picture. Nevertheless image analysis carried out on the textbook revealed a clear gender imbalance in favour of males.

The analysis revealed that the domain relegated to female participants is still the private sphere while male participants are predominantly represented in the public sphere usually outdoors. In the textbook analysed, stereotypical gender roles of wives, mothers and nurturers are allotted to women and they are largely confined to the private world of the home, represented by equally private spaces such as the garden and the back yard (see amongst others Othman et al. 2011, Abdul Hamid et al. 2008, 2009; Lee & Collins 2009). In the real world, Malaysian women are entering the workforce in increasing numbers, many taking up unconventional professions and to portray them in the private sphere of the home and in nurturing roles is inaccurate. Malaysian women must now be the accepted on an equal footing with males in the workplace and images in textbooks must reflect and represent that reality.

Giving equal prominence to males and females in the representation of professional and diverse occupations in images as well as in the text may help encourage females to consider a full range of career options and possibilities in different spheres of society. This may also address the small number of women at the highest level of decision making and in the concentration of women in service- related and clerical occupations.

With regards to activities, females are more often than not relegated to a limited array of indoor activities, they are responsible for domestic chores specifically in the kitchen, around the garden and in

the backyard. Males are depicted in a wide range of activities, some indoors but especially those that involve outdoor settings namely in the playground, in the park, at the beach and at playing fields and they partake in active sports such as cycling, playing football, basketball and so on. The analysis revealed that females are underrepresented in a variety of sports activities even though there have been increased attention paid to physical activity and women's sport during the later part of the twentieth century. The textbook analysed does not aptly communicate a physical active lifestyle for females even though in reality, many of the sports activities do not discriminate along gender lines. Textbooks via gender equitable images can be a potential source of content and a viable tool for introducing and reinforcing a physically active lifestyle for both males and females (Nigles & Spencer 2002). This will spearhead more women to participate in sporting events and make a name for themselves as according to Abdul Hamid et al. (2008: 620), "The stereotypical perception of women in sports is that they are not up to par with their male counterpart".

Many images of girls especially in the school environment specifically those in the classroom depict girls in marginal roles in contrast to boys who are depicted as assertive, intellectual, apt at decision-making and taking leadership roles (see among others Othman et al. 2011, Abdul Hamid et al. 2008, 2009; Lee & Collins 2009). Further, there is an absence of positive female role models for girls to identify with.

A gender perspective must be integrated into teacher education and training programs so that educationists may play a crucial role in addressing the issues of gender, inclusiveness and equality, providing valuable input for the formation of gender equitable curriculum, pedagogy and policies. Material developers, textbook writers, editors, illustrators and those directly involved in producing educational textbook, resources and materials may also benefit greatly from a gender perspective. Input by parents is equally important especially those that bring gender concerns to the fore in the process of nurturing the mindsets of their children. It would be a healthy endeavour if we could study how girls and boys react to visual representations that perpetuate sexism and gender stereotyping and to study how they can challenge prevailing stereotypes that undermine equality. The suggestions highlighted above provide us with impetus to further our investigations.

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Arab ESL Learners and Modals

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Abstract
Most English-as-a-second-language (ESL)/ English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teachers would agree that modal verbs remain difficult notions to teach. While intermediate to advanced ESL/ EFL students manifest sufficient command of form, they invariably struggle with using English modals in pragmatic and meaningful ways. With regard to Arab EFL learners' acquisition of modal verbs, several studies have investigated the issue (e.g. Elenizi, 2004; Saeed, 2009; Sabri, 2011). However, none of the previous research endeavors has tried to study Arab learners' difficulties with modal verbs outside of EFL contexts, nor have they explored how ESL/EFL textbooks deal with modality and Arab learners. Thus, this paper attempts to examine the nature of Arab ESL learners' difficulties with modal verbs in English and the inadequacies of ESL textbooks in this regard. Thereby, it analyzes modal verbs from the lenses of reference grammar books and also from the lenses of ESL student grammar textbooks, and it also puts forward some suggestions on how to approach the Arab students' challenges with English modal verbs.
***Key words*:** Arab ESL learners, ESL/EFL grammar textbooks, Modal verbs

I. Introduction:

In English, notions of certainty, possibility, impossibility, probability, obligation, necessity, ability, volition and advisability are grammatically expressed by modal auxiliary and semi-modal verbs. The latter pose a problem for English-as-a-second-language (ESL) and English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) learners due to several reasons. Inter-lingual influence can be one of the major factors, in addition to intra-lingual and developmental reasons that originate from inherent features such as the modal verbs' semantic variability and also from the false hypotheses that a learner might employ about these structures. According to many researchers (e.g. Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman,1983; Vethamani, 2001; Thompson, 2002), modal verbs are one of the most complex structures that most ESL/EFL instructors have to teach. Modal verbs' inherent complexity does not really lie in their formal features; instead, most intermediate to advanced ESL students demonstrate enough declarative knowledge of form, but they struggle with fully comprehending them and pragmatically using them in meaningful and appropriate ways.

II. Rationale

The focus of the present paper is on Arab native speakers as modal verbs prove to be a problematic pattern for them. In my experience teaching in the United States and Morocco, most adult Arabic speaking ESL learners at English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs struggle with comprehending modal verbs and accordingly avoid using them as pragmatic components especially at the macro-level of text. The complexity of modal verbs is well documented in previous literature. A few studies investigated Arab EFL learners' acquisition of modal verbs (e.g. Elenizi, 2004; Saeed, 2009; Sabri, 2011). However, none of the previous research projects has tried to study Arab learners' difficulties with modal verbs outside of EFL contexts, and none has explored what ESL/EFL textbooks have to offer in order to help Arab learners. Therefore, this paper derives its importance from its attempt to investigate the nature of the Arab ESL learners' difficulties encountered while dealing with modal verbs in English and the inadequacies of ESL textbooks with regard to modal verbs. Prior to examining some of the most popular ESL textbooks in the U.S. market, an analysis of the pattern in question will be conducted. The analysis is based on some influential grammar reference publications that take disparate approaches to investigating modality.

III. An Analysis of Modal Verbs from the Lenses of Reference Grammars

Biber, Conrad & Leech (2002) examine modality as a variation in the verb phrase. They identify nine central modal auxiliaries: *will*, *would*, *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *shall*, *should*, and *must*. They also mention a list of semi-modals or periphrastic modals such as *had better*, *have to*, and *be going to*. What is most interesting about Biber et al.'s perspective is its classification of modal and semi-modal verbs into three categories in terms of personal and logical meanings: 1) the permission/ possibility/ ability modals; 2) the obligation/ necessity modals and semi-modals; and 3) the volition/ prediction modals and semi-modals. These categories of modals integrate intrinsic, personal meanings and extrinsic, logical meanings. Some of the modals and semi-modals (*will*, *shall*, *be going to*, and *used*

to) are essentially used to express a certain time frame. Also, modals and semi-modals can be combined with both aspects (simple, perfect, progressive, and perfect progressive) and passive voice. With regard to the frequency of their usage, modals are common across registers; however, they are most frequent in conversational English

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In *Practical English Usage*, Swan (2005) follows a prescriptive approach in order to explain grammatical concepts. Looking at the style it is written in, this reference grammar is meant for advanced ESL students or anyone including native speakers with limited knowledge of grammar. In terms of organization, the grammar concepts are explained as they appear alphabetically. For example, the difference between *may* and *might* appears in the book before the section about *modal verbs*, which makes the book a reference guide and not a textbook. As far as the semantics of modal verbs, it divides modal verbs into two groups: the certainty group deals with degrees of certainty, possibility or impossibility; and the obligation group deals with the freedom to act and some other related ideas. For each entry, the author provides a short, simply written explanation followed by some examples. In the hope to cover as many questions that readers might have as possible, it offers scant explanation for and extremely limited analysis of grammatical concepts.

DeCapua (2008) provides a grammar reference for teachers to teach both non-native and native students. She defines the "pure" modals as those that consist of only one form such as *should*, *can*, *could*, and *must*; whereas, *ought to* and *had better*, for instance, are considered semi-modals. Then, modals and semi-modals are presented according to eight semantic meanings: ability; permission or polite requests; possibility or probability; necessity or obligation; prohibition; advice or suggestion; expectation; and unfulfilled expectation or mistake. In each section, the author introduces a problem and then suggests ways teachers can follow to effectively explain the concept. Each explanation is followed by a short discussion about the learner's possible difficulties with the concept. Then, some practical activities are presented. The latter two features of this book make it different from the previous two reference grammars discussed above as it attempts to explain grammatical structures from the perspective of ESL/ EFL teachers. It also provides suggestions to help learners go beyond mastering the forms to understanding the nuances of their meanings and usages.

Another similar practical reference grammar is Ur's *Grammar Practice Activities*. Ur (1988) proposes four stages to teach grammar: 1) presentation; 2) isolation and explanation; 3) practice; and 4) test. These steps are meant to provide a flexible framework allowing for a vast variety of teaching methodologies. With regard to modals, the author introduces eleven interactive activities that cover modals of ability, possibility, permission, advisability, obligation, necessity, and polite requests. While the author does not go in detail explaining the different uses of modal verbs, she provides useful and engaging classroom activities. These game-like activities fuse grammar instruction with communicative language teaching, a challenge that many ESL instructors find difficult to overcome. Nevertheless, the book's lack of metalinguistic explanations of grammar structures should not be regarded as a limitation since it is intended to be a practical guide suggesting classroom grammar activities.

IV. An Analysis of Modal Verbs from the Lenses of ESL Grammar Textbooks

As mentioned previously, while most students can develop declarative knowledge of modals and master using the forms, the most considerable difficulties they have with modals lie in their pragmatic meanings and uses. Unfortunately, a number of ESL/ EFL textbooks place extra emphasis on the forms and little on the pragmatic usages. What follows will be an examination of three of the most popular ESL series of textbooks. I have purposefully selected different textbooks in terms of their focus. The Azar & Hagen's *English Grammar* series is a worldwide best seller that chiefly uses a grammar-based approach and only concentrates on grammar structures. The *NorthStar Reading and Writing* series is a skill-integrated textbook that teaches both reading and writing. Each unit of this book contains a grammar structure that is reinforced in reading and writing activities. Another skill-integrated textbook is the *Q: Skills for Success: Listening and Speaking*, which also includes a grammar section in each thematic unit.

First, The Azar & Hagen grammar series consists of three textbooks: *Basic English Grammar*, *Fundamentals of English Grammar*, and *Understanding and Using English Grammar*. The first modals and semi-modals are introduced in chapter 10 of the first book. These are used to express future plans, possibility, ability, necessity, requests, and suggestions. In the second book, either new modals or different uses of book 1 modal verbs are introduced. The new functions include expressing permission, prohibition, preferences, logical conclusions, and making suggestions. In the last book of the series, two chapters are devoted to modals. Similar to Swan's (2005) semantic categorization of modals, these two chapters somehow follow the same classification. The first chapter deals with modals that express obligation or freedom of choice. The following chapter is concerned with degrees of certainty. Overall, the entire series follows a pure grammar-based, drill-and-kill approach with few communicative mini-tasks especially in the latest edition. Thus, it provides ample practice opportunities for learners; however, it does not truly succeed at integrating meaningful, contextualized activities that allow students to use modals in authentic or even semi-authentic ways. At the macro-level of text, almost all activities are limited to the clausal or sentential level.

The *NorthStar Reading and Writing* is a five-level series that integrates reading and writing skills. Book 1 introduces making predictions with *be going to* and giving advice using *should*. Book 2 also touches on advisability and expressing future predictions and future plans, yet it introduces ability. Modals of requests are introduced in book 3. Book 4 expands on advisability and discusses obligation in the past. However, the last book of this series does not include any modal structures. It is important to note that integrated skills series such as *NorthStar* are divided into two stands: reading/ writing and speaking/ listening and do not include a separate textbook for grammar. Thus, ESL programs adopting such integrated skills series rely on the two strands to teach their students most useful grammatical concepts and structures; however, from the above brief investigation of what modals are included in the *NorthStar* series, it appears that several important functions expressed through modal verbs are excluded. In addition, the grammar sections contain only a few comprehension questions such as "Why did the writer use *should*?" and "What form of the verb follows *should*?" Then, what typically follows are fill-in-the-blank exercises and sentence writing activities using the grammar forms. Obviously, contextualization of the modal verbs is far from being hinted at in these grammar sections.

The third ESL textbook series examined here is the *Q: Skills for Success Listening and Speaking* strand. Similar to *NorthStar*, *Q: Skills for Success* is an integrated skills series. Since the textbooks follow a thematic organization, grammar structures are introduced because they either appear in the listening excerpts or the unit's topic calls for the use of certain grammatical form in speaking. However, the *Q: Skills for Success Listening and Speaking* strand can easily be criticized for not including sufficient opportunities to learn about modals in English. If we take book 4, for example, the only modals mentioned in passing are *could*, *would* and *might* while discussing past unreal conditionals. A difference between *can* and *can't* is drawn but only in terms of pronunciation. Whereas these integrated skills textbooks are supposed to furnish context-driven activities and meaningful, communicative interaction, they fail at making very common grammatical structures salient and do not represent their true frequency in authentic environments.

V. Solutions to Arab ESL Learners' Challenges with Modals

Returning to the main focus of this paper which is the difficulties that modals pose for Arabic speaking ESL learners, the students' level of proficiency can determine the type of challenges students face with regard to modals. At the lower levels, inter-lingual transfer is evident in constructions with *can*, *could*, *must*, and *should* as the learners tend to add the infinitive particle ***to*** after the modal. The addition of a particle after the modality word exists in Arabic. Let's consider the following two sentences:

-Arabic sentence: yajibu an yað-haba ila al-madrasa.
-Word-for-word English translation: must to (he) go to school.
-English translation: He must ***to*** go to school.*

Using two modals is also common at the lower levels and it is a form of inter-lingual transfer as in Arabic two modality phrases/ words can coexist in one sentence. The example below illustrates this type of L1 negative transfer:

-Arabic sentence: sawfa yumkinuhu aðahabu ila almadrasa.
-Word-for-word English translation: will can he going to school.
-English translation: He ***will can*** go to school.*

At higher levels of language proficiency, form does not remain a main concern. Rather, the challenge shifts to include more developmental types of errors such as misinterpreting the pragmatic usages of modals. For instance, the fact that possibility can be expressed using a number of modals (*will, may, might, could, can, must, should*) is oftentimes difficult to comprehend for Arab learners as this intricateness of meaning is not expressed through the use of a modal verb in their first language; instead, a number of linguistic categories can be employed to fulfill these functions. Although each utterance makes use of a different modal, the overall meaning is more or less the same, and nuances of meaning are what cause the confusion. Even when understanding the nuances of meaning happens, these nuances often do not become part of the learners' procedural knowledge and active, working memory. This leads them to avoid using modals entirely although they may understand most of their usages. Saeed (2009) investigated how well advanced Arab EFL learners, who have studied English for over 12 years, can use modals. The findings showed that the learners' performance in the recognition part of the study was much better than their performance in the production part in which less than 50% of the functions were used correctly.

Elenizi (2004) examined Arab EFL students' mastery of modals and conditionals in context. He argues that modals and modality are taught according to their grammatical function and not in terms of their pragmatic and socio-cultural role. In most study tasks, participants were unsuccessful at using modals and conditionals appropriately. The author attributes students' lack of pragmatic knowledge due to the way they are taught modals as most EFL instructors treat modals as "empty" grammatical structures with no social and pragmatic use. The same criticism can extend to several ESL contexts, given the fact that modal verbs are often only dealt with in grammar classes, which makes them seem inherently grammatical to the students. Ideally, they should be reinforced in speaking/ listening classes, used in reading and writing classes, and even taught through communicative language instruction in grammar classes.

Arab ESL students are driven by their cultural orality, a factor that should not be ignored. If taking into account the learning styles and needs of Arab students, it becomes lucidly clear that they learn better with oral-aural activities. Orality of Arab ESL students can surely help contextualize the usage of modals and help transcend their meaning recognition component to subsume their usages in pragmatic contexts. It can also allow for teaching modals beyond the clausal and sentential levels and include them in extended discourse. This orality has long been recognized in the research literature (e.g. Ong, 1979; Chafe, 1982; Abu Radwan, 2012), yet not a lot of research studies have attempted to use it as a learning feature for the students' benefit.

Communicative language instruction is adaptable to include useful and meaningful activities to teach modals in pragmatic contexts. The urgent need is to move ESL instruction beyond teaching declarative knowledge and focus more on productive skills. In fact, the advantage of teaching modals is that they allow for clarifying the usage of language in different registers. What modals can be used informally and which ones can be used formally or in academic contexts are examples of questions that ESL instructors should raise in their teaching practice. In the case of Arab ESL students, task-based instruction as part of communicative language teaching is preferable as it allows students to use language outside of the classroom and forces them to engage in authentic and meaningful activities. That, in turn, offers them ample opportunities to gain hands-on experience using grammatical structures such as modals when they need to. According to Richards (2006), the concept of "holistic learning" is a characteristic of communicative language teaching as it helps teachers contextualize grammatical structures by finding ways to use them in the classroom and outside, giving pragmatic meaning to what is taught. This combination can also enhance students' communicative competence.

With regard to what examples of activities to be used to teach modals to adult Arab ESL students, discourse-focused activities, collaborative tasks, and problem-solving tasks should be favored. First, discourse-focused activities are those that teach grammar through discourse and seek to improve students' discourse competence, which can be defined as students' ability to produce cohesive and coherent output. These activities stress learners' exposure to authentic input and also encourage them to use grammatical forms for real purposes such as talking to a native speaker on the phone or emailing someone regarding a real-life issue. Furthermore, collaborative tasks allow students to engage in meaningful give-and-take with their classmates. They emphasize students' production and negotiation of meaning. One example of a collaborative task that can be applied to teaching modals is having students give group presentations about modals. The concept of group work allows them to negotiate meaning in

English given that the group members' first languages are different. And it also helps them understand modals better as they are trying to somehow teach them to their audience. Finally, problem-solving tasks offer students abundant opportunities to use grammatical structures as they need to use those forms in order to solve a certain problem. In the case of teaching modal verbs, having students come up with practical pieces of advice for their peers' problems or having them write an academic essay where they explore options to solve the problem of begging in Morocco after reading a newspaper article are examples of activities that force students to use modals in meaningful and appropriate ways according to the given pragmatic contexts.

VI. Conclusion:

The aforementioned sample activities guide grammar instruction to move from the formulaic, sentence level toward more communicative instruction that places grammatical forms at the macro-level of text. This, in turn, enhances the learners' productive skills while still drawing their attention to form. As far as Arab ESL students are concerned, their orality and the inter-lingual features of their errors should be taken into account to direct classroom instruction. ESL instructors should use textbooks and activities that cater to the special needs of their students. As discussed above, three of the most popular ESL textbooks either focus more on form and disconnected exercises or do not enhance the saliency of common grammatical structures. It is essential that the teaching models advocated in ESL textbooks be changed to include communicative language learning and emphasize the learners' productive language skills.

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Saudi EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Role of Face-to-face Intercultural Communication in Enhancing their English

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Abstract

In the present global society, face-to-face intercultural communication has become inescapable and English has played a prominent role as a tool for this communication. This study aims to: (1) investigate the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing learners' levels in English, and (2) identify the role of other elements on the participants' perceptions of face-to-face communication and language learning. Using a questionnaire, 288 Saudi EFL learners from University of Bisha, Al-Namas Campus participated in this study. The results showed that the students positively perceived the influential role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing their English. This included motivating them to learn English, develop their speaking and listening skills, and build more vocabulary. Furthermore, they became more confident and less worried while communicating with others. They also showed respect and got more knowledge about others and their cultures. In addition, the results revealed that there were statistically significant and positive differences in the face-to-face intercultural communication scores for the variables of gender and university level. However, there were no statistically significant and positive differences in the face-to-face intercultural communication scores for the other variables of age, foreign friendship, using English, and visiting English-speaking countries. It is hoped that students should be sensitized to grasp every intercultural opportunity for developing their English.

Keywords: Intercultural communication, learning English, Saudi context.

Introduction

Language is the primary medium for human communication through which social relations are constructed and maintained in daily life. Human beings do not have the choice either to communicate or not. Rather, for us as 'social' beings, communication is inescapable as we are in a crucial need to convey messages, express our feelings and attitudes, build relationships, understand and share with others their values, norms, and behaviors, etc. Hence, one of the supposed benefits of face-to-face intercultural communication is that it can enhance students' learning of English. Bearing this in mind, it is believed that this supposition needs to be examined and tested as it is an up-to-date issue. Furthermore, up to now and to the very best of the researcher's knowledge no empirical study has been conducted to investigate this issue in this specific context, Al-Namas Campus, Saudi Arabia and within this specific time and participants. It is believed that filling this gap constitutes a valuable addition to the available literature.

The present study aims to: (1) investigate the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing learners' levels in English, and (2) identify the role of some other variables (gender, age, university level, foreign friendship, the frequent use of English, and visiting English-speaking countries) on the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing language learning. In order to achieve the aims of this study, the researcher concentrates on the direct intercultural contact (i.e., personal face-to-face contact that occurs directly between people from different cultures at the same time and in the same place) and its role in developing English learning. Furthermore, the researcher explores with whom and how frequently Saudi EFL learners communicate, what kind of attitudes and respect they display towards others and their cultures and their level of confidence and anxiety while communicating.

The researcher is motivated to conduct this study as the purpose of learning English language goes beyond passing exams, getting high grades, and receiving certificates; it is about using it successfully for communicating with others who are linguistically and culturally different especially those people who have immigrated to work in different countries. In addition, Saudi Arabia is a big and rich country in which there is a plenty of job vacancies for foreigners who have come from different countries. It is observed that many students experience daily intercultural contact with others who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Intercultural contact seems to work as one of the forces that motivate them to learn English as they are enforced to communicate with them using English, especially those who work in different governmental and non-governmental sectors like universities, banks, hospitals, companies, institutions, etc. This opens the scope for them to develop their language levels and hence become competent intercultural communicators. Moreover and despite the fact that Al-Namas Campus has three departments: Computer Science Department, Business Administration Department and English Department, most of the students join English Department in increasing numbers. They study English not only because they are motivated to learn it, but also because it is "an obvious and self-evident component of education in the 21st century" (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 89). Students are aware that mastering English can meet their immediate needs and the needs of the society as a whole.

Samovar and Porter (2001) clarify that "[e]ach human being is unique and shaped by countless factors, culture being but one of them" (p. 17). Therefore, in addition to the linguistic dimension, the researcher takes into account the socio-cultural dimension of language use in

which many people are interested in the lifestyle, art and artifacts of the target culture, as it is clear in their lifestyles of dressing, eating, haircut, and consuming cultural products in general.

It should be referred that the two terms of intercultural communication and intercultural contact are used interchangeably as they designate the same form of interaction. Moreover, the present study is limited to the personal intercultural communication that occurs face-to-face between communicators (not online communication).

Literature Review

Due to the trend towards globalization, English has emerged as a tool of communication and interaction with people worldwide. 'Intercultural speakers' use English as a shared language for interacting with others in daily life. Samovar and Porter (2001) emphasize that "shifting demographics and changes in transportation, information systems, political dynamics, and economics have brought people from diverse backgrounds into contact with each other with a regularity that is unique to this period of history" (p. 262). In the same way, Byram (1997) clarifies that English in general and intercultural competence in particular can be developed "through independent vacations or periods of residence, through exchanges whose main purpose is not pedagogical, for example in town-twinning. The learner who has acquired autonomy in learning can use and improve their intercultural competence through performance" (p. 65). People across the world experience increasing opportunities of intercultural contacts, which need to be as effective and successful as possible in order to meet the needs of the two communication parties. In other words, communicators need to understand and being understood by others. People in general and students in particular can exploit the enormous intercultural encounters for developing their learning of English.

As an unquestionable fact in the 21st century, there has been an unprecedented increase of intercultural contact between people who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Recently, intercultural contact has been the focus of many scholars and researchers among them Dörnyei and others (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh, 2006; Kormos & Csizér, 2005).

Dörnyei and Csizér (2005), for example, demonstrate that:

> intercultural contact is also a key issue in second language (L2) acquisition for at least two reasons: On the one hand, one of the main aims of learning second languages has traditionally been seen to establish meaningful contact across cultures, because L2 proficiency, by definition, creates the medium of communication between members of different ethno-linguistic communities. On the other hand, interethnic contact also creates opportunities for developing language skills and acts as a powerful influence shaping the learners' attitudinal/motivational disposition, thereby promoting motivated learning behavior. Thus, intercultural contact is both a means and an end in L2 studies (p. 327)

From a cultural perspective, Byram and Fleming (1998) find that such a contact with a member of another cultural group can enhance developing learners' cultural awareness, when they compare and appreciate similarities and differences, which help them to perceive cultural differences and they can have an objective view of their own native culture. Additionally, Kourova and Modianos (2013) highlight that the main objective of foreign language learning

"now expanded to include promoting and fostering the understanding and acceptance of other cultures" (p. 61). In the same vein of thought, Szaszkó (n.d.) points out that intercultural contact has "a more significant effect on communicative competence than on language learning motivation". Bearing the same point of view, Csizér and Kormos (2008) confirm that "intercultural contact, even if not frequently experienced, plays a far more important and complex role in language learning than previously assumed in studies of L2 motivation" (p. 4).

Similarly, Canale and Swain (1980) indicate that encounters with native speakers were not only seen as opportunities to develop linguistic competence, but also as a means to learn about the target language culture (socio-linguistic competence). Csizér and Kormos (2008) also mention two important reasons why intercultural contact is an important issue in second language acquisition: To be able to communicate with members of other cultures and to create good opportunities for developing L2 learners' language competence.

As a previous study, Kormos and Csizér (2005) conducted a study composed of 40 13-14 year-old Hungarian children learning English or German from various parts of Hungary. They found that intercultural contact could be rewarding due to a number of reasons. Their study also revealed that exposure to other cultures contributed to improving the students' linguistic and socio-linguistic competence, the increase of their motivation and the decrease of their anxiety in language use. Moreover, the participants noted that their attitude towards the target language speakers was positively influenced by experiencing inter-ethnic contact.

Concerning the role of intercultural contact in decreasing anxiety, it is proved that intercultural contact plays a great role in decreasing it. Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1994), for example, reveal that all aspects of inter-ethnic contact correlated negatively with English use anxiety, English class anxiety, and positively with self-evaluation of proficiency and self-confidence. Similarly, Noels, Pon, and Clément (1996) examined the relationship between contact and self-confidence in terms of identity and psychological adjustment. The results revealed that the students' interethnic contact with Canadians was positively related to their self-confidence in English.

Having a different opinion, Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh (2006) clarified that "the increased contact with foreign visitors and foreign cultural products . . . did not result in the improvement of the participants' language and intercultural attitudes but, to the contrary, most attitudinal variables, including the attitudes towards meeting foreign visitors, showed a significant decrease" (p. 118). With regard to the attitudes and motivation for learning the language, Gardner and Lambert (1972) concluded that language learning is strongly affected by motivations and attitudes towards other people and their cultures. Similarly, Tsai (2011) stated that "intercultural learning could affect participants' motivation to learn English which indeed facilitated their foreign language learning" (p. 164).

It is apparent that the frequent intercultural contact has an influential role on people's learning and a positive and encouraging role for being confident while communicating with others. Supporting this idea, Labrie and Clément (1986) investigated a bicultural milieu and concluded that negatively seen contact if frequent enough had positive impact on self-confidence, probably due to the fact that "experience in aversive contacts develops the

individual's expectations regarding the capacity to face successfully second language usage in such situations" (p. 279).

Based on the literature reviewed, it is clear that face-to-face intercultural communication plays an influential role in helping learners to develop and enhance their linguistic and nonlinguistic skills. In other words, the frequent face-to-face intercultural contact creates excellent opportunities for learners to increase their motivation, have positive attitudes towards others and their cultures, be self-confident, and decrease the anxiety in language use.

The Study

It is hypothesized that the frequent face-to-face intercultural contact with others creates good opportunities for learners to enhance and develop their English levels, increase their fluency and cultural knowledge, show respect towards others and their cultures, be self-confident, and decrease the language anxiety. This study mainly aims at investigating how the Saudi EFL learners perceive the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing and developing their English. In other words, it intends to highlight the expected interrelatedness of intercultural contact and students' levels in English. The present study addresses the following two questions:

1. How Saudi EFL learners perceive the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing their levels in English language?
2. Are there statistically significant differences in the role of face-to-face communication scores on language learning depending on the participants' age, gender, university level, foreign friendship, using English for communicating with others, and visiting English-speaking countries?

Methodology

The Characteristics of the Participants

This study is conducted at University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia among different-level students who are enrolled in English Department, Al-Namas Campus. To put it simply, the participants were homogenous in terms of their cultural background, major, and aim as all of them are Saudis and they are enrolled in English Department for receiving BA in English. Two-hundred ninety-three copies of the questionnaire were administered to the participants. Five cases were excluded due to incomplete and random answers. The valid cases were 288 from both College of Sciences and Arts - Boys and College of Sciences and Arts - Girls.

Table (1) shows the general information (gender, age, university level, foreign friendship) of the participants in frequency and percentage. With regard to the participants' university level, it should be mentioned that the Saudi university system considers each semester as a level (eight levels during the four-year university study).

Table 1. ***The general information of the participants***

Items	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	171	59.4
	Female	117	40.6
Age	18-20 years	130	45.1
	21-23 years	152	52.8

	24-26 years	6	2.1
University level	Level 1	30	10.4
	Level 2	70	24.3
	Level 3	19	6.6
	Level 4	38	13.2
	Level 5	20	6.9
	Level 6	52	18.1
	Level 7	10	3.5
	Level 8	49	17.0
Foreign friendship	Yes	134	46.5
	No	154	53.5

Table (2) summarizes the participants' intercultural communication background (frequency of using English for communication, visiting English-speaking countries, and the period of staying there).

Table 2. ***The intercultural communication background of the participants***

Items	Options	Frequency	Percentage
Frequency of using English for communication in their country	Always	23	8.0
	Usually	61	21.2
	Sometimes	174	60.4
	Never	29	10.1
Visiting English-speaking countries	Yes	22	7.6
	No	264	91.7
The period of staying in the English-speaking countries	less than one year	14	4.9
	1-2 year (s)	5	1.7
	3-4 years	1	.3
The frequent use of English in the English-speaking countries	always	8	2.8
	usually	9	3.1
	sometimes	4	1.4
	Never	0	0

Instruments of the Study

A researcher-designed questionnaire was used to collect the data of the study from the assigned participants. It consisted of three sections: Personal information with three categorical items, intercultural background information with five categorical items, and the main third section of face-to-face intercultural communication scale included nine items with a 5-point scale Likert scoring from *strongly agree (5* as the highest score of the item), *agree (4), not sure/neutral (3), disagree (2), to strongly disagree (1* as the lowest score of the item*).*

These items obtained data regarding the participants' perceptions of the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing their English levels (the main objective of the study under investigation). The questionnaire also included one open-ended question at the end in which the participants were requested to feel free to provide their own ideas, suggestions or

comments regarding face-to-face communication and its role in English learning. Furthermore, the direct observation and experience were used as instruments in this study.

As the questionnaire was designed by the researcher, reliability and validity of the questionnaire were tested. For the reliability of the instrument (checking the internal consistency of the questionnaire items), Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be very reliable ($\alpha = .847$) with the sample of this study, compared with the minimum Cronbach's .7 (see Table 3). This ensures high reliability of the items of face-to-face intercultural communication scale. For validity, on the other hand, prior to the actual distribution, the questionnaire was revised and reviewed by some experts and statistical analysts.

Table 3. ***Reliability statistics using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient***

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.847	9

With regard to the data collection procedure, the researcher first got official permissions from the deans of both colleges for collecting the data from the students (boys and girls). The data were collected in May during the second semester of the academic year 2014-2015. The researcher, with the help of his colleagues in College of Arts and Sciences (boys) and College of Arts and Sciences (girls), Al-Namas Campus, administered the printed questionnaire to the different-level students during the usual class time. The students were provided with information about the purpose of the study and were told that their answers would be kept confidential and had no relationship with their grades in any way. They were given sufficient time to fill in the questionnaire and to return it in class.

Concerning the data analysis procedures, the data were coded, entered and statistically analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 16.0 version. On the one hand, the descriptive statistics were run for preliminary analysis of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. They were performed first in order to get an idea about the participants' general characteristics. On the other hand, Pallant (2005) declares that the non-parametric techniques are "ideal for use when you have data that are measured on nominal (categorical) and ordinal (ranked) scales" (p. 286). Thus, two inferential techniques of non-parametric statistics of Mann-Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis Test were run. Specifically, as there are two different groups of participants in this study (males and females), the Mann-Whitney U Test was used to test the differences between the two categorical independent variables of (gender, foreign friendship, and visiting English-speaking countries) on a continuous measure of face-to-face intercultural communication. Additionally, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to identify the differences between the categorical independent variables with three or more options (age, university level, and using English for communicating with others) on a continuous measure of face-to-face intercultural communication. The responses to the open-ended question were subjected to content analysis method. In particular, the researcher went through the responses of each case, categorized and coded them, and integrated the data for supporting and/or making comparisons with the close-ended results. They were categorized based on general themes such as words, phrases, sentences or even whole paragraphs.

Results and Discussion

The role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing English

As mentioned before, the scale of face-to-face intercultural communication is composed of nine items. Table (4) shows the mean and standard deviation of each item and the total mean and standard deviation of all items as well. As the total mean of the nine items is (4.36), it was found that there is a high agreement to the statements of the questionnaire. This denotes that the participants have a highly positive perception of the influential and critical role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing and developing their English. This includes motivating them to learn English more efficiently, developing their speaking and listening skills, building more vocabulary, being confident and less worried while communicating with others, showing respect and getting more knowledge about others and their cultures. In this sense, the first study question was clearly answered and the hypothesis was accepted. This result goes in line with and supports the results of the previous studies conducted in this field (Dörnyei and others). Moreover, it was clear that the responses of the participants were clustered around 'strongly agree' and 'agree' options. Hence, students should do their best in order to get the benefits of intercultural communication for mastering the English language and being aware of the 'stumbling blocks' such as disrespect of others and their cultures, anxiety, and less confidence that may stand in the way of mastering the language efficiently.

Table 4. ***The mean and standard deviation of the items of face-to-face intercultural communication scale***

I think that face-to-face communication:	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
- motivates me to learn more English.	4.59	.708
- encourages me to show respect towards them.	4.15	.799
- lets me know more about their cultures.	4.33	.788
- lets me know more about their personality, behaviors, values, etc.	4.24	.796
- encourages me to show respect for their cultures.	4.07	.949
- helps me to develop my English speaking and listening skills.	4.59	.726
- helps me to build up more English vocabulary.	4.53	.791
- helps me to be more self-confident when communicating in English.	4.43	.896
- helps me to be less worried when communicating in English.	4.31	.928
Total	**4.36**	**.820**

Identifying the role of other elements on the participants' perceptions of face-to-face communication and language learning

As previously noted, the Mann-Whitney U Test and the Kruskal-Wallis Test were employed to find the differences between the responses of the two groups of participants. As shown in Table (5), there were statistically significant differences on the role of face-to-face communication scores in enhancing language learning for the variables of gender ($p = .002$) and university level ($p = .003$) as ($p < .05$).

Table 5: ***The significant differences between the participants in terms of the role of face-to-face intercultural communication.***

Variables	Sig.
Gender	.002
Age	.437
University level	.003
Foreign friendship	.381
Using English for communication	.103
Visiting other countries	.752

In particular, the Mann-Whitney U Test proved that there was a statistically significant difference between the male and female students in the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing their English levels. Based on the mean ranks of the two groups, it was found that males have higher perception of the effective role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing their English levels than females (see Table 6). Accordingly, it can be confirmed that the gender variable does make sense in this study with these participants. The two groups of males and females positively but differently perceive the prominent role of face-to-face communication scores in enhancing their language learning. More specifically, the male students perceive more that face-to-face intercultural communication plays a significant role in enhancing their English levels than female students do. This might be because male students have more intercultural opportunities to use English for communication with others than female students do, as they are free to meet and communicate with people from other cultures in different governmental and non-governmental sectors in Saudi Arabia. Conversely and due to religious and cultural restrictions , females in the context of the study are not allowed to build relationship and/or communicate with others out of their immediate small family .

In consistent with this idea and when analyzing the responses to the open-ended question, a great number of female participants were not interested in literature courses. Instead, they want speaking courses that help them to practice the language. In fact, literary works are of great significance to foreign language learners in order to get a better understanding of other cultures as they expose various cultural backgrounds. For developing their English levels, participants should read authentic materials such as foreign newspapers and journals, short stories, novels, plays and other types of literature works. They can apply what they have learned from these literary works to real intercultural settings.

Table 6. ***The sum of ranks of the gender and university-level items***

Item	Options	Sum of Ranks
The gender variable	Male	163.18
	Female	131.72
The university level	Level 1	194.92
	Level 2	131.31
	Level 3	124.87
	Level 4	144.79
	Level 5	123.78

	Level 6	136.97
	Level 7	97.95
	Level 8	165.81

Concerning the university level, the results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing English levels of the participants. As shown in Table (6) and based on the mean ranks of the eight different levels, it was found that level one participants have the highest perception of the effective role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing their English levels, while the level seven participants reported the lowest perception. Fortunately, the university-level variable does make sense in this study with these participants regarding their perceptions of the role of face-to-face communication in helping them to develop their English. In this sense, the Saudi students have the chance to pursue their university education directly after getting high school certificate. They can also select any course from any level except the courses that need prerequisite courses. This may be due to the knowledge they acquired from the university courses especially the advanced ones that include literature, translation and applied linguistics (rather than the language skills courses that are taught in the preliminary levels).

On the other hand, it was indicated that there were no statistically significant differences on the role of face-to-face communication scores in enhancing language learning for each of the groups of the variables of age (p= .437), foreign friendship (p= .381), using English for communication (p= .103), and visiting English-speaking countries (p= .752) as (p> .05). This refers that the different options of these variables do not make sense and are more or less the same for the participants of the study. With regard to the age of the participants, it is ensured that the four age groups do not differ significantly from each other when compared with the face-to-face intercultural communication scores. This might be because that more than half of the participants (n= 152, i.e. 52.8 %) fell in the second group (21-23 years). Moreover, the participants are homogeneous in terms of their cultural backgrounds, aim and possibility of joining the university directly after high school. Concerning the participants' foreign friendship, it was found that more than half of the participants (n= 154, 53.5%) do not have friends from other cultures. This might be because the students who have foreign friendship do not exploit this relationship for communicating and developing their language or that this relationship is with those who do not speak English (non-English speakers).

Regarding the use of English for communicating with others, people have a good chance to practice English face-to-face in their daily life as there are many people from different cultures who work in different places. People are supposed to exploit this opportunity for developing their language level, but unfortunately, they miss it. In accordance with this, most of the responses to the open-ended question revolved around the importance of practicing English in- and out-side the classroom through communicating with others who are different linguistically and culturally. In this case, some students suggested that there should be native English teachers to teach at the Saudi universities. They also recommended that the teachers should encourage and motivate them to use the language. Others, unfortunately, proposed that there should be Arabic-speaking teachers for helping them to understand the course content.

Moreover, a group of participants stressed on the importance of organizing English activities in the campus. These extracurricular English activities include conferences, meetings, theaters, open forums, and clubs even if they are out of the usual university time. What is understood is that they are aware of the importance of English language for communicating successfully with others who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Others said that English is the second language in the Saudi context but it should be activated and taught starting from the preliminary stage. Other respondents shed light on the importance and helpfulness of technology integration in language teaching and learning as in the UAE. They stated that the traditional education is no longer sufficient for acquiring the language. Another participant demonstrated that in order to live together peacefully, it is important to respect others and their cultures.

Visiting English-speaking countries plays no significant role in participants' perceptions of the role of face-to-face communication in helping them to develop their English levels. This might be because they did not get benefit of being there, lived with Arabic speakers, or the purpose of that visit was not educational. It also depends on the period of being there. Another point that should be mentioned is that only 22 (out of 288) participants visited English-speaking countries. Despite that and in the open-ended responses, some participants were willing to pursue their higher studies abroad and assumed that the language can be acquired well in its context. They believed that whatever they learn is still insufficient for acquiring the language, so being in the context of the language is better for developing the language and knowing about the target culture. Another participant suggested that studying abroad and living with English families should be an essential part of the university study. However, the question that should be raised is that if one cannot go where the language is spoken, can the online communication bridge this gap?

To conclude, it can be highlighted that many participants praised the importance of the 'up-to-date' topic of the study especially in this age of frequent intercultural contact between people from different cultures. As negative findings, some participants unfortunately misinterpreted the term 'study' in the open-ended question and wrote some comments related to their university study and teachers, instead of commenting on the study under investigation.

Findings

Face-to-face intercultural contact in Saudi Arabia is promising and encouraging in which students were found aware of its usefulness for developing their English levels and communicating successfully with others. The following findings were consistent with those of some studies (Dörnyei's and others'). Moreover, many of the open-ended responses were in line with the close-ended responses with regard to the crucial role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing English learning. They also acknowledged the importance of practicing English for mastering and using it proficiently. In the light of the results discussed throughout this study, the findings can be summarized as follows:

1) Face-to-face intercultural communication has an influential role in enhancing students' levels in English. This includes motivating them to learn English efficiently, developing their speaking and listening skills, building more vocabulary, being confident and less

worried while communicating with others, showing respect and getting more knowledge about others and their cultures. This implies that face-to-face intercultural contact creates many learning opportunities for English learners in this particular foreign language setting. It is the most frequent means for enhancing their English levels and gaining information about target language speakers and their cultures as well. In other words, out-of-class situations have more or less the same value as the in-class lectures and activities with regard to using the language and understanding the cultures of others.

2) The gender and university level positively affected and did make sense when measuring the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing the participants' English levels.
3) The factors of age, foreign friendship, the frequent use of English for communication, and visiting English-speaking countries were not significant and did not make sense with regard to the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing the participants' English levels.
4)

Conclusion

Face-to-face intercultural communication is of considerable importance as it creates a learning environment for people to practice the language. The current study mainly aimed to investigate how the Saudi EFL learners perceive the role of face-to-face intercultural communication in enhancing and developing their levels in English. Based on the above-mentioned results, it is recommended that this study could be replicated with a larger sample from different branches at University of Bisha and other Saudi universities, if possible, in order to get more details and elaborate conclusions. Moreover, further studies could be carried out on the role of online communication in developing students' English levels in order to compare its results with the results of this study (face-to-face intercultural communication).

This study is significant as it concentrates on the out-of-class activities for developing English levels. More specifically, it gives more attention to the importance of face-to-face intercultural communication for developing students' English levels and achieving greater success in their life. Hence, it is hoped that this study and its results contribute to the field of intercultural communication and its role in English learning in particular. In order to compete in the global society where English language is necessary in the job market, it is a joint responsibility of policy makers, English teachers and educational institutions to take the results of this study into consideration and sensitize students to the importance of gaining the maximum benefits from these attainable out-of-class activities for developing their English levels. Furthermore, there should be extracurricular English activities such as regular conferences, meetings, open forums, and clubs at universities in order to encourage the students to practice and then master the language. Since the true and fruitful investment is in human resources, the students should exploit such intercultural situations for developing their English levels.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Dear respondents,

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. It is part of a study entitled "**Saudi EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Role of Face-to-face Intercultural Communication in Enhancing their English".** The aim of the study is to investigate the role of face-to-face intercultural communication on the Saudi students' learning of English as a foreign language (EFL). Your answers will be kept confidential and used for academic purpose only. Please put a tick (√**)** next to the appropriate response and feel free to add your comments in the assigned place.

SECTION I: General information

1. Age: □18-20 years □21-23 years □24-26 years □more than 26 years
2. Gender: □Male □Female
3. University level: □ 1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □6 □7 □8

SECTION II: Intercultural communication background

1. I have friends from other cultures. □Yes □No
2. I …… use English to communicate with foreigners in my country.
   □always □usually □often □sometimes □ never
3. Have you ever visited foreign countries where people speak English?
   □Yes □No
   If **YES**, please answer items 4 and 5 and if **NO**, skip them.
4. I stayed there for ……
   □less than 1 year □1-2 year(s) □3-4 years □ more than 4 years.
5. I …… used English during my visit to that country.
   □always □usually □often □sometimes □rarely

SECTION III: Face to face communication with others

NOTE: "**others**" refers to those who have a different linguistic and cultural background (i.e., foreigners such as friends, teachers, workers in your country, or else).

	I think that face to face communication with others:	

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	motivates me to learn more English.					
2.	encourages me to show respect towards them.					
3.	lets me know more about their cultures.					
4.	lets me know more about their personality, behaviors, values, etc.					
5.	encourages me to show respect for their cultures.					
6.	helps me to develop my English speaking and listening skills.					
7.	helps me to build up more English vocabulary.					
8.	helps me to be more self-confident when communicating in English.					
9.	helps me to be less worried when communicating in English.					

If you want to add any idea, suggestion or comment related to the study, feel free to add it here.

……
……
……
……
……

Thank you for your help
The researcher

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Utilizing Facebook in Language Classrooms: Social Constructivist and Affective Filter Approaches

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Abstract

Interaction is a fundamental process in any learning environment for knowledge construction. However, not every interaction leads to increased or meaningful learning. When interaction influences learners' meaning-making, we can say that interaction is meaningful. Facebook, as an emerging social network educational tool, has been increasingly implemented in second/foreign language classrooms. This article aims to answer the following question: How can social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis re-conceptualize meaningful, collaborative online interaction through Facebook in second/foreign language settings? To explore the current state of research and inform future studies, this article reviews previous research on the use of Facebook in second/foreign language classes. All articles were accessed using Google Scholar, ERIC, and ProQuest databases. The researcher examines empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals from 2007 to 2014. This article argues that social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis can help to illustrate the ways that Facebook as an educational tool, can enhance collaborative learning and meaningful interactions in second/foreign language settings. The researcher provides pedagogical implications of Facebook, as a useful and meaningful learning environment for language learners that could support, enhance, and strengthen their learning process. The researcher also addresses potential research directions for Facebook use in second/foreign language settings.

Keywords: collaborative learning, Facebook, language learning, meaningful literacy, online interaction

Introduction

Interaction is an essential ingredient in any learning process; however, not all interactions are meaningful or lead to increased learning. The meaning of "meaningful" interaction is strongly related to the development of a particular learning environment. Today, the growth and popularity of online social networks introduces a new world of interaction and collaboration in language learning education. Many individuals around the world are connected with each other in creating, collaborating, and increasing their knowledge through the Internet. Despite the importance of online social networks in providing a meaningful learning environment, this article mainly focuses on online interaction through Facebook as an educational tool. The conceptual background that is used to examine meaningful learning in this particular online ecology constitute the social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis.

Social networks are changing the way people interact, and that inherently changes interaction in classroom environments. Research suggests that online interaction influences learners' meaning-making and increases learning outcomes. Online interaction includes responding, negotiating internally and socially, arguing, adding ideas, and offering perspectives with collaborators while working on a task. As a perspective of social constructivist theory, learners construct knowledge when interacting in an educational environment that provides collaborative activities. Muirhead & Juwah (2004) described interaction as "a dialogue or discourse or event between two or more participants and objects which occurs synchronously and/or asynchronously mediated by response or feedback and interfaced by technology" (p. 13). Thus, learners' affective filters, which explain the emotional variables associated with the success or failure of acquiring a language, are needed to be reduced in a learning environment. Indeed, this partially characterizes what online interaction through Facebook typically looks like. In addition, working collaboratively in an online learning environment would assist learners to be motivated to become active participants in their own learning process. This will also enable learners to construct knowledge by expressing themselves through drawing on their experiences, emotions, and their feelings, all of which lead to meaningful learning. Moreover, Hirumi (2002) mentioned how emphasizing the quality of interaction on learning can lead to meaningful interaction then to meaningful learning. Hirumi (2002) stated that meaningful interaction is not just sharing personal opinions; rather the interaction must stimulate the learners' intellectual curiosity, engage learners in productive instructional activities and practices, and directly influence their learning.

There are various forms of interaction in learning environments. These varied forms are based upon the participants' level of involvement in a specific learning opportunity, such as in a university course or in a language learning course, and the objects of interaction, such as other participants or content materials. More specifically, meaningful interaction should include responding to peers, negotiating and arguing with peers, adding ideas, and offering alternative perspectives in real life tasks. Today, technology provides new potential channels for interaction, especially in education. Online interaction offers new ways for meaning making and emerges modes of communication that suggest a significant change, and demand fresh thinking about different educational settings. In addition, the nature of interaction also depends on the contexts in which interaction occurs, whether it is a face-to-face interaction, as in traditional physical classrooms, or at distance settings, as in social networks.

This article presents Facebook as a useful and meaningful learning environment that could support, enhance, and strengthen learners' language learning process. In second/foreign language learning classrooms, instructors should use meaningful online interaction where learners can work collaboratively in a non-threatening environment. Even though research has been surfing about utilizing social networks in general, and Facebook in particular, this article pushes the research further. It aims to answer the following question: How can social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis re-conceptualize meaningful, collaborative online interaction through Facebook in second/foreign language settings?

Methodology

As this theoretical article focuses on applying social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis to using Facebook as an emerging educational technology tool in second/foreign language classes, academic and empirical research articles were selected for review. The researcher searched Google Scholar, ERIC, and ProQuest databases with keywords, such as Facebook, meaningful interaction, social interaction, collaborative learning, language learning, and second/foreign language classes. The researcher found a lot of related articles addressing the use of Facebook in language learning educational settings, including empirical studies and non-empirical studies. The researcher examined empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals on using Facebook in second/foreign language classes, dated from 2007 to 2014. Previous research was positively reported on using Facebook as an educational tool to enhance learners' collaborative learning and meaningful interactions, and this is aligned with social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis.

Since the purpose of this article is to provide implications for future research on the use of Facebook in second/foreign language classes with a lens of social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis, the researcher is interested in empirical research about using Facebook in second/foreign language classes. The researcher closely examined empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals, such as *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, *CALICO Journal*, *Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*, and *The Internet and Higher Education*. However, this does not preclude the value of non-empirical studies, which provide theoretical insights and/or suggest pedagogical implications. This article evidences that social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis can help illustrate the ways that Facebook, as an educational tool, can enhance collaborative learning and meaningful interactions in second/foreign language settings.

Application of Facebook in Language Learning Contexts

As this article focuses on implementing Facebook as a language learning tool, this section sheds light on its general usage in language learning contexts and the common practice of the Group feature in Facebook, in particular. Before explaining the application of Facebook as a social network site in language learning contexts and environments, an overview about it is appreciated. In 2004, Zuckerberg established Facebook, which today is considered one of the most popular platforms for online social networking. Facebook is defined as, "a social utility that helps people share information and communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers" (Facebook.com). By 2007, Facebook was reported to have more than 21 million registered users, generating 1.6 million page views each day (Mazman & Usluel, 2010).

Facebook enables users to interact with people whom they already know offline or to meet new people online. Facebook is a place where people can meet, interact, swap photos, videos, and other information. Facebook also helps a user to connect with friends, family, and coworkers. Facebook features provide a variety of means for its members to communicate and interact with each other to stay connected. Most features and activities are purely social, such as confirming friends and communicating with friends through writing on friends' walls or sending messages. Other features and activities are considered more formal, like joining and participating on Groups without being friends of other group members.

The Groups function is the most popular Facebook feature, where application of Facebook in language learning contexts can happen. Facebook Groups "are dedicated spaces where [a member] can share updates, photos or documents and message other group members" (Facebook.com). Groups make it easy for specific sets of people to connect. Joining Groups on Facebook, in which members can share similar interests, is a popular feature that can be useful as an online educational community to support language learners. Facebook members can join Groups that already exist or create new Groups based on their interests. Any member can create a group that can be open for any Facebook user or can restrict it to a selected audience. Therefore, it is very simple for an instructor to create a group associated with a particular course for his or her students. A group can be limited to members that have been invited by the course instructor only. Having a closed-group for a course creates an intimacy for students to write and share knowledge in a non-threatening educational environment. Students will then feel motivated then to contribute on a Facebook Group if they subsequently receive support and help from their peers. In this regard, a good number of research studies (Ekoc, 2014; Guamán, 2012; Lantz-Andersson et al., 2013; Mazman & Usluel, 2010) examined utilizing Facebook Groups as an educational tool in second/foreign language learning settings, as will be discussed throughout the paper.

A sense of community is necessary to sustain a dynamic and meaningful educational experience overtime. Facebook is a valuable asset to promote a higher level of thinking, and it helps in the construction of knowledge. Learners' interactions in Facebook, such as discussions in Groups, can facilitate a learner-centered approach to teaching, providing learners with opportunities to practice and learn knowledge and skills in a collaborative and encouraging environment. The traditional face-to-face classroom is a controlled communication environment where instructors and learners are required to be in the classroom at the same time for interaction to happen. However, in Facebook, instructors can communicate with learners outside of the controlled communication environment, classrooms (Ekoc, 2014). Facebook serves as a tool for learners as well as for instructors to connect, befriend and communicate with each other to extend the communicative activities of the traditional physical classroom to a virtual form (Wang et al., 2013). Godwin-Jones (2008) claimed that Facebook is a tool "that enhances communication and human interaction and can potentially be harnessed for language learning" (p. 7). In Facebook, learners can communicate and interact with each other at their own pace and whenever it is convenient to them. Learners can also take time to consider comments and responses to write, rather than having to act and react on the spot, as in the physical classroom. Some studies have concluded that a Facebook-supported educational community can offer a variety of opportunities for interpretive language use, cultural exploration and exposure, and rapport building (Mills, 2011). Also, Mitchell's (2012) study provided positive social impacts of using Facebook in language learning classes. Findings indicated that learners successfully

communicated with existing friends, learned English, and learned about the American culture through Facebook.

Moreover, interaction in Facebook Groups differs from traditional classroom writing settings in many ways. In traditional classrooms, the learner is the writing party and the instructor is the assisting party. In Facebook Groups, learners and their instructors can have informal interactions, besides learners' interactions with their peers. Learners can be more engaged in the learning process as active learners and collaborators. Authority will be distributed between the instructor and the learners, and learners will invest more in the learning process. (Ekoc, 2014). Also, Facebook could serve as an extended space for meaningful language learning activities when it is implemented in school practices. Lantaz-Andersson et al. (2013) studied how learners frame their interaction and accomplish tasks on Facebook Group when used in school contexts. In the Facebook Group, the study examined the nature of the interactions and investigations to know how the learners accomplished the communication upon the social constructivist perspective. The researchers followed and logged the learners' interactions in a closed Facebook Group, and they analyzed their activities as social practices. The results indicated that Facebook generated an extended space for collaborative language learning activities in educational contexts, where learners combine their school subject with their communicative use of language in their daily life. This showed that when learners are in command and take the space as theirs, they would use the target language for more meaningful and engaging interactions beyond regular school tasks. Thus, the learners' use of language will be more personal, they will process the target language, and make it their own, and learners will bend the language to their will.

One of the primary needs of language learners is to gain the opportunity to use the target language outside the classroom environment. Facebook Groups usage can help learners to socialize with other group members, to better express themselves, and to shape their social identity. Facebook Groups also lead to continuance developing and strengthening relationships with others. Undoubtedly, being a group member will enhance the sense of belonging, which is very important for language learners. In addition, such closed-groups will offer a constructive educational experience for learners while maintaining privacy and safety (Blattner & Fiori, 2009). Thus, Facebook Group pages can be commonly used as an educational tool, inside and outside classrooms, for language learning (Ekoc, 2014; Guamán, 2012; Lantz-Andersson et at., 2013; Mazman & Usluel, 2010).

However, although social networks, such as Facbook, are not complete learning environments, they are widely used for supporting learning. Social networks can be used to promote motivation, socialization, discussion, and sharing resources for language learners, as well as making learning the target language meaningful for them. Therefore, more and more instructors are implementing Facebook usage in classrooms, especially using closed Facebook Groups to facilitate learning inside and outside classes (Ekoc, 2014; Lantz-Andersson et al., 2013; Mazman & Usluel, 2010). Thus, this article argues that Facebook can act as an adequate educational tool for language learning in second/foreign language classroom settings.

Meaningful Literacy Learning

As this article focuses on utilizing Facebook as a meaningful online interaction tool, this section will highlight the meaningful literacy learning approach to define meaningful literacy and examine how Facebook can be used to encourage meaningful literacy in the second/foreign language classroom. As learning a language may be a life changing event, it is an event that involves the learner as a human being, rather than just focusing on intellectual abilities. As Hanauer (2012) stated, "… human beings are characterized by their ability to make sense of themselves and their surroundings" (p.107). Learning a language involves the learner and his or her relation to the world. Thus, to reposition and re-contextualize language learning, it has to entail a process where "the language learner's memory, experiences, feelings, beliefs, history and social environment are the context of the language use" (Hanauer, 2012, p. 109). Moreover, the moment when a language learner can express thoughts and experiences in a second language is very powerful. It can change the learner's perception of the new language as a tool to express personal expressions, and as a language that they own and use (Hanauer, 2012).

The word "meaning" is used widely in the learning process. Therefore, making the language learning process meaningful involves understanding world and making sense of it. Also, making the language learning process meaningful integrates one's personal history and future actions, more than just one's intellectual activities. Hanauer (2012) stated that to understand and to make sense of the world "… is a holistic activity that defines the self at the moment of understanding and a perspective and orientation towards the world" (p. 107). Kramsch (2009) explained that learning a language has many ramifications in how learners perceive their subjectivities as a result of knowing and learning about the world of bilingualism. Thus, learning a language involves the human being as a whole, including learners' experiences and emotions, beyond just intellectual abilities. However, the process of learning a language in classrooms is decontextualized. Widdowson (1998) has argued that language can only be pragmatically real, and thus, meaningful if it is reconnected and bonded with context of the same kind. Therefore, the real challenge in the language classroom is to provide an environment for learners where language is contrived to be engaged with and learned from, in which learners are at the center of the language learning process. Widdowson (1998) and Hanauer (2012) clarified that a major challenge in teaching a language is to find a way to make learning the language personally contextualized, and thus, meaningful for learners.

The language learning experience engages learners cognitively, emotionally, and morally (Kramsch, 2009). In other words, learning a language is an emotional experience, in addition to being a cognitive process. Learning a language is embodied individually in the physical, emotional and intellectual life of the language learner. Reid (2011) reported that as learners in the closed Facebook group expressed themselves, they drew on their diversity, identity, and culture. Also, learners' voices were heard, and their unique sense of self was illustrated. Reid explored language learning as a process of broadening ways an individual can understand, interpret, feel and express his or her personal and meaningful understanding to himself or herself in various social settings. Thus, integrating a meaningful literacy learning approach in language learning classrooms will form an instructional design that is rich with meaningful interaction for language learners.

Wan et al.'s (2014) research showed that interactive web 2.0, such as in Facebook, supports learners' meaningful English informal learning and provides life-long learning experiences. It helped them to express positive experiences and perceptions toward learning. It also enabled learners to adopt new learning behaviors, cooperative practices, and mutual engagement and responsibilities in such a virtual community. Furthermore, implementing Facebook in a language learning classroom can help learners socialize and maintain social relations, which all make the learning process meaningful for learners. In addition, Ellison et al.'s (2007) study findings showed a strong link between Facebook usage and helping learners to socialize and maintain social relations with people. The study suggested a strong association between the use of Facebook and the three types of social capital: bridging, bonding, and maintaining social capital. The Facebook usage was found to interact with measures of psychological well-being, suggesting that it might provide benefits for users, especially those users who have low self-esteem.

All these underpinning suppositions shape the learner's personal experiences, history, and social contextualization, where the individual learner is at the center of the learning experience. This approach will make the learning process in the class meaningful for each language learner, both personally and socially. It will also provide a sense of depth and ownership to the target language itself. The learner will be proficient in a language to the extent that he or she can process it, make it his or her own, and bend it to his or her will.

Meaningful Interaction from the Social Constructivist Theory Perspective

Social constructivist theory regards individuals and the social society as interconnected. It is asserted that learners grasp knowledge through participating in social practices of a learning environment, including collaborative and meaningful interactions. Thus, this section expands on meaningful interactions based on the social constructivist theory perspective. As social constructivist theory exerted an influence on education, in general, and on instructional technology field, in particular, the main focus is that learning is defined as meaning-making. Woo & Reeves (2007) stated, "according to social constructivists, learning requires the personal interpretation of phenomenon such as the construction of mental model representing complex phenomenon" (p. 17). Thus, when interaction in a learning environment is considered to enhance meaning-making, it will lead to having meaningful interactions, which are related to the social constructivist theory.

Knowledge relies on how the individual creates meaning from his or her life experiences. Woo & Reeves (2007) explained that social constructivist theory focuses on the assumption that learners construct knowledge when they attempt to make sense of their own experiences. This knowledge, which learners construct, consists of formative and constructed explanations by individuals who are engaged in the meaning-making process. Meaning-making, as Woo & Reeves (2007) defined, is the process of sharing various perspectives and experiences in communities of practice. Within the principles of social constructivist learning theory, it is stated that meaningful interaction is a learning approach that is designed to enhance meaning-making, where learners can share various perspectives and experiences in communities of practice, such as in social networks.

Social constructivist theory stresses the role of the learner and the learners' peers as they converse and negotiate meaning. When learners work in a group activity or any collaborative practice, they can grasp concepts and ideas that they cannot understand on their own. Also, weak learners, who struggle more than their peers in learning, can benefit from peers who are advanced in the meaning-making process than them (Suthiwartnartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012). Vygotsky (1978) underscored the effects of social interaction, language and culture in learning. He emphasized dialogue on the educational environment and argued that all cognitive functions originate in social interactions. Vygotsky (1978) also explained that learning is not the assimilation of new knowledge by learners only; instead, it is the process by which learners are integrated into a knowledge community, and focusing on learners' peers as they question, explain and negotiate meaning. Therefore, the abovementioned evidences that learning is occurring from rich conversations with peers or people who have similar or even different perspectives and opinions, all based on their own life experiences.

Furthermore, as a perspective of social constructivist theory, learners construct knowledge through participating in social practices of an educational environment, including collaborative activities and group work assignments, besides social practices outsides the classroom with their friends and family. Woo & Reeves (2007) stated that meaningful interactions in learning environments are designed to enhance meaning, sharing various perspectives and experiences in communities of practice. In addition, Shish (2011) explained that Vygotsky (1978) focused on the effects of social interaction, language and culture on learning. In his study, Shish's (2011) results were consistent with the principle of the social constructivist theory that meaningful interactions in a learning environment strengthened sharing perspectives, ideas, and experiences in online communities of practice. In an online learning environment designed on the social constructivist learning theory, meaningful interaction should include responding to peers, negotiating and arguing with peers, adding ideas, and offering alternative perspectives regarding real life tasks.

Humans are social beings by nature, thus learning a language is tied to social interactions. Woo & Reeves (2007) stated, "Learning is viewed primarily as a social product yielded by the processes of conversation, discussion and negotiation" (p. 18). Nowadays, many educators have come to see the value of implementing social constructivism in their classes as a more effective educational environment, especially for language learners (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2013). Learning is seen as an interactive process of participating in various social and cultural practices where collaboration occurs. Consequently, learning is seen as an interaction between learners and their peers situated in their practice. However, not all interactions, discussions, and negotiations occurring anywhere or anytime are meaningful for learners. Facebook Groups portray a community of practice, where learners can interact with their peers and work collaboratively, which is an important component of language learning in social constructivist theory. In addition, collaborative interaction promotes a non-threatening learning environment, where a learner's affective filter is reduced, as it will be discussed next. Such a Facebook property will strongly benefit language learners in their learning process.

Social Networks Reduces the Affective Filter

This section argues that utilizing Facebook in second/foreign language classroom settings reduces the learners' affective filter by offering a collaborative language learning environment,

where learners can interact meaningfully with their peers. This will enhance and strengthen learners' learning process and will also promote learners' language production. In terms of learning purposes, utilizing Facebook in a language learning environment promotes and endorses the affective filter hypothesis. A learner's affective filter, which attempts to explain the emotional variables associated with the success or failure of acquiring a language, is needed to be reduced in a learning environment, and this is what online interaction through social network usage can facilitate. Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi (2012) explained that the affective filter, which Krashen (1981, 1988) referred to, is an invisible psychological filter that can either facilitate or hinder language production in a second language. When the affective filter is high, learners may experience anxiety, stress, and lack of self-confidence that may hinder success in language production. On the other hand, a low affective filter facilitates risk-taking behavior in practicing and learning a second language, especially in a social vacuum. Also, the affective filter can be raised or reduced according to the environment that learners are in, and to interactions with peers and/or instructors.

One of the aspects that social networks provide is that users, such as in Facebook, do not have to use their real names, which can help in reducing the affective filter and eventually enhance motivation and risk-taking in learning a language. Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi (2012) mentioned that Krashen (1981) explained motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety as essential factors that affect language learning. Therefore, having high motivation, good self-image, and low levels of anxiety will lower the affective filter. This will lead to increasing the amount of language competence and comprehension. Thus, blending aspects of social network usage with Hananuer's (2012) meaningful literacy approach increases learners' self-efficacy, motivation, and this means reducing learners' affective filters.

In traditional face-to-face classrooms, many learners experience such problems of being considered as a fool, shy, or of having high anxiety levels. Learners may be overwhelmed with negative feelings in classroom, such as feeling anxious or panicked when speaking in front of a class. All off these elements will make the language learning class a threatening environment, and this will hinder the learning process. Therefore, an online environment, such as Facebook, will make the learner less anxious, and possibility more likely to write posts. In Facebook, learners can ask questions more freely without the fear of making mistakes or being judged, and by that, the affective filter will be lowered and learners will be able to understand and produce more knowledge. Ellison et al.'s (2007) study is an example in which its findings suggested that Facebook usage in classrooms benefits learners who are shy and/or have low self-esteem. Facebook usage helped learners to socialize and to produce language in a safe and non-threatening environment. Another recent study (Kabilan et al., 2010) argued the benefits of implementing Facebook for language learning, in that it increases learners' self-efficacy, boosts confidence, and enhances learning motivation. It also offers an ideal environment where it addresses diverse ways for cultural interactions to improve language learning. Thus, when the affective filter is lowered, learners will be motivated, less anxious and dare to communicate. Also, the amount of comprehensible input will be enhanced in the language learning process.

Studies, such as Shish (2011), investigated the effect of using Facebook as a medium for language learning and reported positive results. Shish (2011) indicated that Facebook not only effectively enhanced learners' learning competence, but it also built positive attitudes of learners.

Also, findings revealed that learners improved in paragraph organization, content, and grammar after Facebook was integrated in their learning. Moreover, Al-Shehri's (2011) study showed advantages of integrating Facebook in language learning classrooms. In this study, the participants were required to upload photos or videos, add descriptions, and post on Facebook. Results indicated that the learners preferred to collaborate in English on Facebook when they uploaded materials, and they found it interesting. Also, Facebook allowed them to stay connected with their peers and with other people. Using Facebook provided an opportunity where learners can upload materials and synthesize ideas from various sources of information. This study showed collaboration as a way of reducing a learner's affective filter. Al-Shehri (2011) reported that Facebook created a positive language learning environment, where learners were not afraid or shy to participate, and they developed the abilities to synthesize knowledge. Additionally, Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi's (2012) study used Facebook as a learning tool and reported positive attitudes of learners. The findings indicated that using Facebook provided the learners with a convenient and attractive means to be engaged in discussions with their instructor and other users who had better grammatical knowledge than them. Learners wrote meaningful contents in well-organized paragraphs. They had overcome their shyness and dared to ask people questions and negotiate on Facebook. This indicated that learners' affective filters were lowered; they were able to produce more knowledge and interact more effectively with each other and with their instructor. They wrote messages for their instructor and other users. Also, learners reported that they could practice their English writing before tests in a non-threatening environment.

In all, in terms of learning purposes, Facebook can promote and endorse the affective filter hypothesis, as well as the social constructivist theory. Offering a collaborative language learning environment, where learners can interact meaningfully with their peers and instructors, promotes learners' language production and learning. All previously mentioned findings, presented in this article, showed Facebook as an effective medium for language teaching and learning (Shish, 2011; Al-Shehri, 2011; Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012).

Facebook as a Social Collaborative Networking Community

This section mainly focuses on collaboration as a valuable language learning process as informed by social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis, and it argues that Facebook can be used as a successful tool to foster collaborative work and interaction among second/foreign language learners. Definitions of social networks in research literature usually focus on communication and collaboration. For instance, Bartlett-Bargg (2006) defined social networks as a "range of applications that augments group interactions and shared spaces for collaboration, social connections, and aggregates information exchanges in a web-based environment" (p. 3). Social networking communities offer users a great opportunity to participate easily in various communities of knowledge building and knowledge sharing. Social networks also offer easy ways to stay connected with other people. Most importantly, today, social networks are widely used as supplementary tools, giving learners independence in learning. Social networking communities encourage a wide range of expressive capabilities allowing learners to express their interests, emotions, and work collaboratively with their peers, as well as with their instructors (Mazman & Usluel, 2010). If learners were encouraged to express their feelings, experiences, interests, and emotions, this will gradually reduce their affective filter.

Learners will feel motivated and that such a learning environment is safe, which will promote their language production.

Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites, which allows users to post information, photos, links, chat with others, and collaborate with other users in various ways. With all its features, Facebook provides communication and data management resources that actively encourage different forms of collaboration and coordination of users. For language learning, Facebook could offer learners greater opportunities to collaborate with a large number of people from all over the world, where they can communicate and use the target language.

Collaboration could be defined as something a learner achieves through a joint and mutual negotiation in interaction with others, where sharing of group meanings is essential (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2013). More specifically, collaborative writing, such as in a Facebook group, is a collaborative learning process. As informed by social constructivism, which posits that learning is a socially constructed process through interaction, collaborative writing allows multiple writers to co-author and jointly produce a written text. In other words, it is known as plural authors producing a singular text. Therefore, Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi (2012) and Woo & Reeves (2007) stated that Vygotsky (1978) explained collaborative writing, either among learners or between learners and an instructor, is essential for assisting each learner in advancing though his or her own Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). ZPD is the gap between what the learner could accomplish alone, or what he or she could accomplish in cooperation with others who are more skilled or experienced in learning. In other words, ZPD is the range of abilities that a learner can perform with assistance, but cannot perform independently. Facebook can promote a social collaborative online interaction between instructors and learners through discussions, negotiations, comments, and questions. Instructors can post comments, photos, videos, and then sign learners to respond. Learners will then stay connected and will be more likely to benefit from collaborative learning on Facebook. Therefore, language and social interaction facilitate learning in the learners' ZPD, and will reduce learners' affective filter as well.

Wang et al.'s (2013) research revealed that the use of Facebook contributes to the level of learning engagement in the real world. Specifically, it assists learners in their social and academic lives. The study showed Facebook as a successful tool for fostering collaborative work and interaction among learners in a learning environment. As a tool for studying, learners can browse profiles, meet and communicate with new people, and participate in Groups. Thus, learners can construct new knowledge after interacting with other people on Facebook who they can share knowledge with. As Suthiwartnartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi (2012) stated, "When students receive comments and suggestions, they can use the information given to improve their language skills" (p. 195). Also, using Facebook features and activities, such as participating in Groups, could indirectly create a community of practice as an important component of learner education in social constructivist theory.

In Lantz-Andersson et al.'s (2013) study, a Facebook group was created, and teachers introduced the Facebook collaborative language activity to learners. Learners' interactions were logged, enabling analysis of their posts, interactions, and types of information shared. Findings indicated that there are possibilities for boundary crossing, which as it was reported, could generate extended spaces for collaborative language-learning activities in educational contexts

where learners combine their school subject of learning language and their communicative use of language in their everyday life. This means that collaborative language activities, such as the one in this study, offered by using Facebook, will help learners to learn the language through combining their school subject with their communicative use of language in their everyday life, which is more meaningful for them.

Learners learn better through a collaborative engagement with each other through interactions, especially when they are less anxious. Learners also take roles in contributing and participating with each other, while instructors simply support, facilitate, and guide their overall learning process (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2013). Working with one another provides useful insights for learners, in terms of the process, which is involved in negotiations. Facebook creates a non-threatening interactional collaborative space where knowledge is shared and negotiated. As many studies, such as Ekoc (2014) and Lantz-Andersson et al. (2013) reported, learners value connecting themselves with their peers inside and outside of the classroom, and as a result of their collaborative work and interactions with their peers and instructors, their connection to language learning practice strengthens.

Conclusion and Implication

In this article, the researcher examined previous empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals on using Facebook in second/foreign language classes from 2007 to 2014. The findings indicate that Facebook, as an emerging educational social network, has been increasingly implemented for second/foreign language instruction at different educational level, throughout the world. Nevertheless, this article uses a lens of social constructivist theory and affective filter hypothesis to emphasize the importance of utilizing Facebook, specifically the Groups feature, in second/foreign language settings.

Social interaction is the main objective of all online social networking sites. These social networking sites, such as Facebook, offer a place where people can share their personal stories in words, pictures, and videos with their friends. Social networks also connect users with their peers, especially through the Groups feature. Since language learning is a dynamic and a flexible process, and each learner learns differently, there is no one way of teaching it. Nevertheless, utilizing Facebook allows a flexible method of learning and offers a more individualized learning process. Instructors should be more aware of new implementations of language teaching, and they should use virtual learning communities as an important part in the development of their classes. In addition, instructors should keep in mind learners' interests and learners' different learning styles. Such a medium in a language learning environment could promote social presence, which is an important factor that determines learners' usage of Facebook. Using Facebook as a medium for language learning encourages a collaborative environment, builds positive attitudes, increases motivation and learners' participation in the classroom. It can also encourage learners to collaborate and work together in a non-threatening environment. If planned appropriately as part of a learning process, the technologies and features of Facebook would be able to facilitate and produce effectual and meaningful learning of English within an online community of second/foreign language learners.

Learners of this digital age should be more autonomous and independent. Learners should be able to locate and research new information on a continual basis to endorse authentic

and experiential learning. Thus, instructors should help learners access and research information using the Internet. However, the appropriate use of the Internet should, ideally, be maintained in a networked learning environment. Therefore, instructors should promote the use of social network communities, such as Facebook to allow learners to have different experiences by providing the with more contact and practice. This also leads to the most important implication, which was discussed: making the teaching of English meaningful. This implies showing learners that English, as the target language, can be used in everyday life for real purposes, not just as a school subject. Most importantly, instructors should clearly understand the nature of meaningful interaction, in regards to the social constructivist theory and the affective filter hypothesis, to increase the learning effects of a learner's lifelong meaningful literacy and interaction.

To conclude, since research into how language learners use social networks is in its infancy, the effect of age, language fluency, and computer literacy on motivation to join social networks, studies looking more closely at the content and structure of the language on social networks would be beneficial. Although instructors are starting to use technology in their classrooms, it should be used more since this is a digital age. A lot of instructors today are utilizing Facebook in their language learning classes. Still, they are not using all of its features. Also, some instructors are using it only few times in the semester, and others might not use it correctly. Researchers can set up qualitative and quantitative studies that examine the effects of using Facebook groups in the second/foreign language classroom for a specific language skill, such as grammar. Additionally, there is still a lack of research in the textual analyses of writing products that learners co-construct in Facebook groups. A close examination into linguistic, rhetorical, and discourse features of learners' posts on Facebook groups will contribute more to the research body of both collaborative writing and genre analysis, and will be useful in designing appropriate classroom activities.

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The Landscape of Translation Movement in the Arab World: From the 7th Century until the Beginning of the 21st Century

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Abstract
According to the 3rd Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) (2003), contemporary translation movement in the Arab world is "weak and chaotic". However, the Arab history witnessed astonishing eras of translation activities, productions, programs, and projects. This paper aims to trace translation movement in the Arab world and to investigate different aspects of this movement from the rise of Islam in the 7th century until the beginning of the 21st century. This study is divided into four main sections. First, it tackles the Arabic translation movement during the golden era and modern history. Second, it explores national and foreign translation programs and projects. Third, it investigates contemporary Arabic translation movement and current challenges. Finally, it looks at the Arabic machine translation (MT) systems and audiovisual translation. This paper closes with proposing general recommendations to enhance contemporary translation movement and translation activities in the Arab world for a knowledgeable Arab society in the globalized 21st century. The findings provide a better understanding of the changes that took place to the Arabic translation movement throughout different historical stages. As well, the findings uncover current shortcomings and challenges that encounter contemporary translation movement in the Arab world.
Keywords: Arabic translation movement, audiovisual translation, machine translation, translation programs, translation projects

Introduction

Many international reports (AHDR, 2003; Next Page Foundation, 2004; Transeuropéennes & Anna Lindh Foundation, 2012) indicate that contemporary Arabic translation movement encounters many shortcomings and challenges with regards to translations' quantity and quality, translation programs and projects, translators' profiles, MT systems, and audiovisual translation. However, translation played a vital role in transmitting knowledge to and from the Arab world since the pre-Islamic era to the rise of the Islam in the seventh century and afterward with the Abbasid era (750-1258 AD) when the Arabic translation movement witnessed a significant development. This study uses a historical comparative approach to draw the trajectory of translation movement in the Arab world from the rise of Islam in the seventh century until the beginning of the twenty-first century. The rationale behind choosing this approach is to examine the changes that occurred to the Arabic translation movement throughout different historical aspects, and to uncover current shortcomings and challenges that face contemporary Arabic translation movement in the twenty-first century.

This study is divided into four main sections. First, it tackles the Arabic translation movement during the golden era and modern history. Second, it explores national and foreign translation programs and projects. Third, it investigates contemporary Arabic translation movement and current challenges. Finally, it looks at the Arabic MT systems and audiovisual translation. As a result, this paper proposes general recommendations to improve contemporary translation movement in the Arab world and to overcome current shortcomings and challenges in the twenty-first century where translation plays a significant role in communicating and building human knowledge between different linguistic and cultural communities. It is worth noting that this study relies on data and statistics from various international and organizations and sources such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU).

The Golden Era of the Arabic Translation Movement

According to Prince (2002), translation movement in the Arab world has started during the reign of the Assyrians in the second century who translated their heritage into Arabic. Yet, the appearance of Islam in the seventh century was a significant turning point for the Arabic translation movement. In order to spread Islam, Prophet Mohammad
sent messages to various political rulers and non-Arabic speaking communities urging them to adopt the new religion. This pushed the prophet to look for translators to translate the messages from Arabic into other languages and encourage Muslims to learn other languages as well (Mehawesh, 2014, p. 685).

Baker & Hanna (2009) also mention that "[t]he rise of Islam in the seventh century is the most important event in the history of the Arab peoples; it changed the political, cultural and linguistic map of the area forever" (p. 328). By the same token, Abdo Rababah (2015) states that "Arabs have transferred knowledge from pre-Islamic civilization to the Islamic Civilization and later to the European or Western Civilization. This transfer of knowledge has taken place through effective and active translation movement" (p. 124).
Indeed, the Arabic translation movement witnessed a remarkable era in the time of Prophet Mohamad when the Arabs translated and communicated the messages of Islam to non-Arabic speaking communities such as the Assyrians, Persians, and Romans (Baker & Hanna, 2009). Afterward, the Arabic translation movement continued to develop during the Umayyad ruling era

(661-750 AD) when "[t]ranslation activity gained impetus during this period. There is a general agreement that the first translations carried out during this period were from Greek and Coptic into Arabic" (Mehawesh, 2014, p. 686). Baker & Hanna (2009) also state that many Greek and Persian books and writings on medicine, astrology, alchemy, literature, and Byzantine and Persian songs were translated into Arabic during the Umayyad ruling era.

The Abbasid Ruling Era (750-1258 AD)

The Arabic translation movement developed dramatically during the Abbasid ruling era. In fact, this historical period featured the development the Arabic knowledge and scientific research, and the evolution of the scientific Arabic language. It was also during the Abbasid era when the holy Quran was first translated into Persian and then into other languages (Mustapha, 2009; Mehawesh, 2014). In that sense, Mustapha (2009) says that the holy Quran was translated and printed in Europe in the sixteenth century, while the first translation into English appeared in the seventeenth century. Moreover, the second Abbasid Caliph Al-Mansur (754-775 AD) encouraged translating into Arabic many Greek, Syriac and Persian books in fields of science, philosophy, and literature.

Furthermore, translation activities witnessed a dynamic progression during the reign of Caliph Al-Ma'moun (813-833 AD) who sent translators to the East and the West to collect and translate books. Nevertheless, the establishment of the House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikma) in Baghdad under the reign of Al-Ma'moun had a substantial impact on the development of the Arabic translation movement. As a matter of fact, many translators translated many books in this vivid scientific institute. Several Greek scientific books, Aristotle's books, and philosophical books were translated by famous translators such as Youhanna bin Al-Batriq Al-Turjuman, Abu Yousuf Ya'qoub Al-Kindi, and Hunayn bin Ishaq (Baker & Hanna, 2009; Mehawesh, 2014). In 1258 AD, the House of Wisdom was burnt down when the Mongols invaded Baghdad, and most of the House's books and manuscripts were thrown into the River Tigris.

Ultimately, the Abbasids played a fundamental role in the development of the Arabic translation movement through translating books and works of different cultures such as Chinese, Persian, Indian, Greek, and Spanish. It is also relevant to mention that libraries during the Abbasid ruling era contained enormous collections of translated books and works. In that sense, the AHDR explains that the "objective of the translation movement was not to establish a scientific library to enrich the palaces of caliphs and princes, but to *fulfil the needs of scientific research*" (emphasized in the original, 2003, p. 43).

It is worth noting translation activities of the School of Translators of Toledo in Spain and its contribution to the development of the Arabic translation movement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The translation activity of this school was "fundamental to the transmission of scientific and philosophical knowledge to medieval Europe. The activity was centered on the philosophical and scientific achievements of the Arab world in medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and astrology" (Mehawesh, 2014, p. 688). In effect, the translations of the twelfth century were from Arabic into Latin, while translations in the thirteenth century were from Arabic into Spanish (Mehawesh, 2014).

As a matter of fact, translation activities that took place during the Abbasid ruling era and by the School of Toledo stimulated the development of all branches of human knowledge in the West, especially natural sciences and philosophy. Those translation activities transferred the Arabic scientific knowledge and achievements to Europe and contributed to the development of the western scientific knowledge in many fields such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and astrology (Baker & Hanna, 2009; Mehawesh, 2014). Later, the Arabic translation movement witnessed a major collapse in translation activities, and "[s]tarting with the late tenth/early eleventh century, the Islamic Empire began to experience a long period of gradual disintegration" (Baker & Hanna, 2009, p. 334). In fact, this collapse in translation activities was caused by many reasons such as the establishment of rival caliphates in Egypt and Spain, foreign invasions to the Arab world, and the rise of the Ottomans who ruled the Arab world until the twentieth century. During the Ottomans ruling era, most of translation activities were made from Arabic into Turkish to enrich the Turkish literature, and to promote the "Turkization" cultural policy.

The Arabic Translation Movement in Modern History

This paper attempts to investigate the aspects of the Arabic translation movement in modern history relying on data and statistics from many international and private organizations and sources. To begin with, Jacquemond (2009) divides translation movement in the Arab world into five chronological stages: the French occupation, the first half of the nineteenth century, the end of the nineteenth century, the end of the Second World War (WWII), and the beginning of the twenty-first century. During the French occupation, translation was used as a tool in the hands of the French forces to assert their control over the occupied Arab world. This period also witnessed translation of many sacred texts and religious books (e.g. the Bible), especially in Lebanon.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Arab political and intellectual elites used translation as a process tool for building and developing the nation. During this period, many Arab countries (e.g. Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia) established national translation programs and sent translators to advance their translation education and training in western countries. As an example and during Muhammad Ali's reign of Egypt in the first half of the nineteenth century, Rifa'a al-Tahtawi established *Madrasat al-alsun* (School of Languages) in Egypt in 1835 when he came back after finishing his translation education and training in France. As a result, al-Tahtawi trained the first Egyptian translators who translated into Arabic several books in history, geography, and applied sciences. In addition, the Egyptian translators in *Madrasat al-alsun* contributed to the formation of technical and scientific language, and the Arabic scientific terminologies (Jacquemond, 2009; Baker & Hanna, 2009).

A new pattern of translation emerged by the end of the nineteenth century with the development of the publishing industry. This new Arab translation pattern offered the Arab readers with better quantitative and qualitative translations that fit their new reading trends and tastes. In addition, the Arab Renaissance (al-nahda) in the nineteenth century witnessed a rapid growth in translation activities and publications in the Arab world due to the invention of modern printing press, especially in Egypt and Lebanon (Next Page Foundation, 2004).

Many national and foreign translation programs and projects were established in the Arab world by the end of the WWII, especially in Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria. The Arab national

programs aimed to promote the new "Arabization" cultural policy, and to protect Arabic from Ottoman's "Turkization". In addition, Jacquemond (2009) mentions that the national programs aimed to translate into Arabic the world most popular literature and thought, and "to make recent scientific developments available to the Arab readership and to contribute to the modernization of the Arabic language" (p. 24-25). Indeed, the League of Arab States attempted to organize and coordinate translation activities, programs, and projects in the Arab world in the 1970s and 1980s. For that purpose, the translation unit of the League conducted a number of translation studies and projects which resulted in proposing the National Translation Plan in 1982. Unfortunately, this plan was not implemented because the Translation Unit of the League was abolished in 1985 (Next Page Foundation, 2004).

Finally and according to Jacquemond (2009), the beginning of the twenty-first century period witnessed an increase in the number of national translation programs within an ideological and political context. However, the AHDR (2003) states that these programs have been dominated by a "crisis discourse"; a dilemma which is discussed later in this paper.

The Arab National Translation Programs

As mentioned earlier, a number of national translation programs and projects were launched in the Arab world in the second half of the twentieth century. Accordingly, the Egyptian A Thousand Book (Alf kitab) project was founded in 1955 by Egyptian writer Taha Hussein. This project translated and published more than 700 titles between 1955 and 1968. However, A Thousand Book translation project ceased in 1968 after the Arab-Israeli War in 1967 but it was re-launched again in 1986 under the name of The Second Thousand Book (Alf kitab al-thani). But Jacquemond (2009) mentions that the translations' quantity and quality of The Second Thousand Book project were not as reputable as those of A Thousand Book project. Furthermore, the Egyptian Supreme Council of Culture launched the National Project for Translation (NPT) in 1995 which aimed to translate major publications in the fields of humanities, social sciences, literature, and arts. This project also intended to produce one thousand translations; a goal which A Thousand Book and The Second Thousand Book failed to accomplish. Indeed, the Egyptian Supreme Council of Culture announced in a conference in 2006 that the NPT fulfilled its commitment. During this conference, Professor Jaber Usfur – the president of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Culture – asserts six principles to overcome the shortcomings and challenges that face the Arabic translation movement in the twenty-first century. Actually, Jacquemond (2009) mentions Usfur's principles which recommend that the Arab national programs and projects should focus on translating different source texts other than English and French texts. Second, translating the works that promote progress, rationalism and experimentation. Third, translating a variety of works rather than just translating classic literature and humanities. Fourth, translating directly from the original source text. Fifth, avoid indirect translating from target text or another translated text. Finally, translators should collaborate and propose recommendations to enhance translation activities in the Arab world.

By the same token, the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority in the United Arab of Emirates launched the "KALIMA" translation project" in 2005. As a matter of fact, "[e]very year, the *Kalima* project for Arabic translation publishes one-hundred translations of high quality works of literature, arts and sciences from several languages into Arabic" (emphasized in the original, Shureteh, 2014, p. 1381). Moreover, the Palestinian literary critic and poet Salma

Khadra al-Jayyusi founded the Project of Translation from Arabic (PROTA) in 1980 as an anthology project for Columbia University Press. PROTA's main purpose was to disseminate the Arabic culture and literature worldwide. For that purpose, PROTA translated into English and published two vast volumes of Arabic poetry and narratives. In addition, the Syrian Ministry of Culture established the national translation project in 1960 which translated and published more than 1400 titles of western classic literature and thought. Other Arab countries such as Iraq and Kuwait created their own national translation programs and projects which translated and published hundreds of books and titles. However, the Next Page Foundation's report (2004) evaluates the national translation programs and projects. The report mentions that most of those national programs emphasize the quantity rather than the quality of translations, and this "is reflected in the weak documentation of their translations work" (p. 34).

Foreign Translation Programs in the Arab World

The end of WWII period also featured a number of foreign translation programs as part of the international development aids, as well as to implement foreign cultural policies in the Arab world. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) program was among those foreign programs. The UNESCO's project translated into Arabic twenty-two books and edited ten titles of Arabic originals in bilingual versions between 1951 and 1998 (Next Page Foundation, 2014). The list of translated works included books of western thinkers such as Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz, Rousseau, and Voltaire on political theory, philosophy and sociology. According to the Next Page Foundation's report (2004), the translations of the UNESCO's project are accurate, consistent, and readable. The report mentions that the output of the translation project in terms of quantity may be considered modest, the performance in terms of quality remains one of the outstanding examples of contemporary translation into Arabic. This applies to the selection of titles as well as to the professionalism of translations and the quality of printing (p. 17).

Additionally, the United States was among the first foreign countries that promoted its western culture and values through promoting its foreign translation programs in the Arab world in the 1950s. For that purpose, the American administration founded Franklin Publications which encouraged translating into Arabic the American literature and principles of "dignity and freedom". In essence, the purpose of the American translation programs aimed to "reducing Arab ignorance, suspicion and resentment of the West and particularly the United States…, creating a realistic and comprehensive world view in which Arabs can see a secure and respected role for themselves…" (as quoted in Jacquemond, 2009, p. 22). The American embassy also created many translation programs in both Egypt and Jordan in the 1980s.

By the same token, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and French cultural missions to the Arab world generated a number of translation programs and projects in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and North Africa in the 1980s and 1990s. Contrary to the purpose of the American programs, the French programs translated the books which were "closer to the needs and/or expectations of the local markets. A clear indicator of this is the strong presence of titles that focus more or less directly on these countries (their ancient history, orientalist books, etc.)" (Jacquemond, 2009, p. 23). In addition to the American and French translation programs, the former Soviet Union created many translation programs in the Arab world which translated

hundreds of books between the 1960s and the 1980s. The list of translated titles include the Soviet literature and scientific manuals, as well as the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Contemporary Translation Movement in the Arab World

The following section examines many aspects of contemporary Arabic translation movement counting on data and statistics from many studies and reports. It is worth to mention the AHDR's (2003) findings although it was widely criticized by Arab intellectuals and officials because of its unreliable and unverified facts and statistics. In effect, the report represents contemporary Arabic translation movement as "static and chaotic" and "strikingly weak". It indicates that "only 4.4 translated books per million people were published in the first five years of the 1980s (less than one book per million people per year)" (p. 4). The report also states that the field of translation in the Arab world remains "chaotic" with regards to translations' quality and the shortage in translating titles on natural sciences and literature. In that sense, Galal (1999) says that

> In terms of quantity, and notwithstanding the increase in the number of translated books from 175 per year during 1970-1975 to 330, the number of books translated in the Arab world is one fifth of the number translated in Greece. The aggregate total of translated books from the *Al-Ma'moon* era to the present day amounts to 10,000 books – equivalent to what Spain translates in a single year (as quoted in AHDR, 2003, p. 67).

As for the translators' profile in the Arab world, the Next Page Foundation's report (2004) mentions that most translators possess a university degree in one or more foreign languages, especially English or French but they do not have an adequate translation training. The report adds that "the profile of translators in terms of their studies and professional training is a rather mixed one" (p. 30). Whereas, Transeuropéennes & Anna Lindh Foundation's study (2012) asserts that the "status of the translator in the Arab world differs considerably from that of the translator in Europe: he is not considered to be an author but as a technician offering a service" (p. 28).

In terms of translation activities in the Arab world, the Next Page Foundation's report (2004) indicates that the translated works between 1995 and 2002 were made from both English and French texts as dominant source languages. The report also states that the quality of most translations' during this period was inconsistent. Furthermore, Transeuropéennes & Anna Lindh Foundation's study (2012) explored the lists of translated titles into Arabic in Europe between 1985 and 2010. The study reveals that "[i]n numerous countries in the European Union, one in a thousand translations is of an Arabic book, and only rarely does the proportion reach one in a hundred" (p. 13). It also uncovers that the Arabic language represents 0.64% (1065 translated titles) of the translated works into French between 1985 and 2000, 0.23% (472 translated titles) in Spain between 1996 and 2010, and 0.11% (178 translated titles) in Italy between 1997 and 2008. Yet, Turkey was the first country that translated from Arabic (1161 translated titles) in the last 20 to 25 years followed by France (1065 translated titles) (p. 13).

Transeuropéennes & Anna Lindh Foundation's study (2012) add that most of translated works from Arabic into the languages of the EU are literary works of contemporary thinkers and authors. However, the study indicates that "[t]ranslations from Arabic have grown significantly

in the last 25 years, although unevenly from country to country" (p. 13). This significant growth is caused due to many reasons such as the growing number of private publishers in the Arab world, the establishment of new Arab translation organizations, and the foundation of national Arab translation programs and projects. The study also estimates around 35000 translated titles into Arabic in the last 20 years. According to the study, the majority of the Arabic translations were made from English which represented 95% of translations in the Arab Gulf States, 75% in Egypt, and 72% in Lebanon. It is worth noting that "[i]n the last fifty years there has been an explosion of translations of Arabic literature by a growing number of translators" (Freccero, 2013, p. 246). Freccero (2013) adds that translating from Arabic includes the works of many Arab writers such as Naguib Mafouz, Huda Shaarawi, Nawal El-Saadawi, and Ghassan Kanafani.

With regards to the academic translation programs and training courses, many universities in the Arab countries offer graduate and undergraduate translation programs and training. Some of those academic institutions are: Translation and Interpreting Institute at Hamad bin Khalifa University in Qatar, King Fahd School of Translation in Morocco, Graduate program in English-Arabic translation at Yarmouk University in Jordan, American University of Sharjah in the United Arab of Emirates, Lebanese American University and Saint Joseph University in Lebanon, King Abdullah Institute for Translation and Arabization and many more. Nevertheless, Al-Sohbani & Muthanna (2013) says that most of the academic translation programs are "ineffective". Similarly, Siddiek (2010) indicates that translation programs and courses in the Arab universities are "not that satisfactory, as there is no well designed syllabus to facilitate teaching this subject. The materials used are not that authenticated and a bit far away from the practical needs of the learner and the market's need" (p. 561).

In addition to the academic programs, the Arab world has many specialized academic journals which are devoted to publish translation studies and articles such as the Journal of Translation Studies (Turjuman) and Studies in Translation. Moreover, the Arab world hosts many translation organizations which to promote translation activities and production in the Arab world such as the Arab Organization for Translation which was established in Beirut in 1999. The main purpose of this specialized and international non-governmental organization is to provide the Arab readers with translations of human thought and knowledge, major scientific books, periodicals, and publications. It also organizes conferences and workshops in the Arab countries. Other Arab translation organizations include: the Arab Organization for Translation, the Committee of Arab Translators, and the World Arab Translator's Association (WATA).

Arabic Machine Translation

The emergence of computer-assisted translation (CAT) and MT systems in the translation process affects translation activities. This section sheds light on the status quo of MT systems in the Arab world as an essential aspect of contemporary Arabic translation movement. According to Zantout & Guessoum (2000), "research and development of Machine Translation and computational linguistics for Arabic has remained limited with almost no involvement of governmental institutions to support it" (p. 118). Though, various commercial companies such as Apptek, ArabTrans, CIMOS, ATA, and Sakhr produce Arabic MT systems (e.g. Transphere, Al-Nakeel & Al-Mutarjim Al-Araby) which are used to translate from either English/Arabic/English

or from English to both Arabic and French. Those MT systems can translate both general and specialized domain documents in different fields such as science, technology, and Oil industry. Many Arabic MT systems are produced and developed by foreign companies, while Arabic MT researches and studies are conducted and funded by academic and professional institutions with "the absence of Arab governmental institutions and Pan Arab institutions involvement in the efforts towards building such a vital area of technology" (Zantout & Guessoum, 2000, p. 135). It is worth noting that Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI) has collaborated with many local and international organizations to create a MT system of non-Arabic content such as news and scientific articles and to make it available for online access to the Arabic speakers. As well, the QCRI is working to produce an Arabic speech recognition and understanding in formal Arabic, in various colloquial Arabic dialects, and in mixture of these.

Nonetheless, the current Arabic MT systems suffer from serious shortcomings during the translation process and product. For example, the grammatical and linguistic tools of those systems produce inappropriate and inconsistent source-target equivalences. But overall, the Arabic MT systems can perform many important translation processes. Among those processes is the role that the Arabic MT systems play with regards to terminology standardization. In that sense, Raddawi & Al-Assadi (2005) mention that "MT can play an important role in this field among Arab countries, and contribute in the process of standardization of Arabic technical terminology. Consistency can be reached through MT software if this technical terminology is input online and widely accessed" (p. 76-77).

Audiovisual Translation in the Arab World

Gamal (2007) says that the late 1990s witnessed a growing number of satellite channels and broadcasting hours in the Arab world which "gave audiovisual translation a big boost and made it a promising career" (p. 80). But he posits that Arabic audiovisual translation "remains outside the scope of translation departments at a time when there is an obvious need to espouse the concept, localize the discipline and invest in the training of specialists in Arabic audiovisual translation studies" (2014, p. 1). As a matter of fact, audiovisual translation in the Arab world is practiced in forms of subtitling and dubbing of foreign films and programs. However, audiovisual translation in the Arab world does not pay attention to technical issues, software design, and professional training program.

Although the first screen translation program in the Arab world was launched in the American University of Cairo two decades ago, the academic and professional institutions in the Arab world still show little interest and investment in audiovisual translation. In fact, few Arab academic institutions offer audiovisual translation programs and training courses such as the Translation and Interpreting Institute at Hamad bin Khalifa University in Doha which recently started to offer a Master degree in audiovisual translation in 2014, the American University in Cairo, and the University of Balamand in Beirut. Gamal (2014) also mentions that there is "a technological gap between academia and practitioners on the one hand, and a generational gap between the professors and their students who are growing up with YouTube, Facebook and smart phones on the other" (p. 7).

Discussion

Although the Arab world has witnessed several translation activities and national translation programs and projects in the twenty and twenty-first centuries, contemporary Arabic translation movement faces many shortcomings and challenges on the threshold of the globalized twenty-first century with regards to the quality and quantity of translations, translators' profile, translation programs and projects, MT systems, and audiovisual translation. In that sense, Shureteh (2014) asserts that there is "a sharp contrast between an organized institutionalized past, and a feeble chaotic state stigmatizing the theory and practising of contemporary Arabic translation" (p. 1376). However, Shureteh (2014) says that Translation Studies as a new discipline in the Arab world "has developed in terms of theory and practising and is clearly to continue developing well into the twenty-first century" (p. 1382). Thus, she suggests that any attempt to evaluate contemporary Arabic translation movement should take into account "the contemporary valuable achievements and the big challenges that control the development of Arabic translation nowadays" (p. 1379).

A historical comparative analysis of the development of the Arabic translation movement from the rise of Islam in the seventh century until the beginning of the twenty-first century reveals the following insights. First and in terms of the quantity of translations in the Arab world, many reports and statistics show that the lists of translated titles in the twenty and twenty-first centuries include less number than the lists of translated titles during the golden eras of the Arabic translation movement (e.g. the Abbasid era). Second, the lists of translated titles in the twenty and twenty-first centuries lack translations on philosophy, literature, sociology, and natural sciences while the lists of translated works during the golden eras show a wide variety of translated titles. Third, translation activities and projects during the golden eras of the Arabic translation movement were institutionalized and state-funded while most of translation activities and projects in the twenty and twenty-first centuries are funded by private academic and professional institutions. Finally with regards to MT systems and audiovisual translation, the academic and professional institutions in the Arab world do not offer adequate programs and training. Also, the Arab governments do not involve sufficiently to support, fund, and develop MT studies and audiovisual translation. In most cases, MT systems and audiovisual translation research and projects are conducted and funded by private academic and professional institutions.

Towards a Knowledgeable Arab Society in the Globalized 21st Century

This study uncovers many shortcomings and challenges that encounter contemporary Arabic translation movement. For that purpose, it proposes general recommendations to overcome those outstanding shortcomings and to improve the translation process and activities for a knowledgeable Arab society on the edge of the globalized twenty-first century. The following are the proposed recommendations:

1. National translation strategy and governmental funding: the Arab League and Arab governments are invited to establish a national translation strategy and to fund translation activities and projects. The Arab governmental organizations should also fund research and projects in the fields of Arabic MT systems and audiovisual translation. Furthermore, the Arab professional experts and academic researchers in the disciplines of Translation Studies, Linguistics, and Computer Science should

collaborate with each other to improve translation as an academic discipline and as a profession.

2. Technology-based programs and training courses: in her article about the principle trajectories of research in Translation Studies in the coming decades, Tymoczko (2005) mentions that technological shifts and globalization have affected translation processes and products. Technological shifts include the use of information technologies and the media such as CAT and MT systems. In that sense, universities and professional institutions in the Arab world should implement the use of technology in their academic programs and training courses. In addition, they should create specialized translation programs and training courses such as media translation and audiovisual translation.
3. Systematic documentation of translation in the Arab world: the outcome of a systematic documentation of translation activities in the Arab world will result in compiling a scientific directory for contemporary Arabic translation literature. Instead of relying on foreign sources to obtain data and statistics about the Arabic translation movement, this systematic documentation assists academic researchers and translators in any inquiry about translation activities in the Arab world.
4. Translating from source languages other than English and French: the Arab governments, universities and professional institutions should encourage and funds projects for translating books and writings from source languages other than English and French, as well as translating works and titles from different disciplines and human knowledge literature.
5. Participating in international collaboration and conferences: because Translation Studies discipline has become more "internationalized" in the twenty-first century as Tymoczko (2005) says, Arab academic scholars and professional translators should engage and contribute to international collaboration, conferences and workshops. Nowadays, Translation Studies as a field and concept is moving beyond dominant western and Eurocentric perspectives and discourses which requires the contribution of the Arab scholars to elaborate on the definition of translation concept and theory.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to sketch the landscape of translation movement in the Arab world from the rise of Islam in the seventh century until the beginning of the twenty-first century. This paper have discussed many aspects of the Arabic translation movement during the golden era and modern history, and has explored national and foreign translation programs and projects. It has also looked at the Arabic MT systems and audiovisual translation, and has investigated contemporary Arabic translation movement and current shortcomings and challenges with regards to the quantity and quality of translations and translators' profiles.

In conclusion, the findings uncover that translation activities during the golden eras of translation movement were institutionalized and state-funded while most of translation activities in modern history lack sufficient funds. In terms of translations' quantity and quality, the lists of translated works in modern history include less translated titles than those lists during the golden era. Moreover, there is a noticeable shortage in translating books and publications in the twenty and twenty-first centuries on philosophy, literature, sociology, and natural sciences. In addition, most translators nowadays require an appropriate professional training in the field of translation. With regards to MT systems and audiovisual translation, the findings show an apparent shortage of

academic studies and programs, and training courses. Subsequently, this paper proposes general recommendations to improve many aspects of contemporary translation movement in the Arab world and to overcome current shortcomings and challenges in the twenty-first century. Moreover, the implication and proposed recommendations of this study open new venues for further studies with regards to the challenges that encounter the Arabic translation movement in the twenty-first century.

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Deconstructing the Dichotomy of Native and Non-Native speakers of English: An Analysis of Current Research

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Abstract

This paper deconstructs the dichotomy of native (NS) and non-native (NNS) speakers of English and their assumed roles as experts and novices, respectively, during interactions. The paper adopts a qualitative methodology inspired by the lenses of discourse analysis and social constructivism. In an attempt to discover how the identities of NSs and NNSs are being constructed by researchers, two types of studies were analyzed. First, studies that constructed the NS as a relative expert compared to the NNS were examined. Second, studies that deconstructed the notion of native as experts through various methods were analyzed. The author argues that NSs' linguistic experiences should not be the defining elements of expertise in these interactions; rather, individual characteristics and expertise must be factored into the equation. In conclusion, the social construct of the expert-novice identities among NS and NNS is unfair to both parties, especially to the NNS. Implications for teachers and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

Keywords: expert-novice, linguistic competence, native speakers, non-native speakers, peer-response groups

Introduction

Multilingual writers who use English as a second language (L2) have been categorized over the years as novices relative to their native-speaking peers for whom English is a first language (L1). The dichotomy of native (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) is normalized in research and educational settings because of the assumption that the goal of L2 writers is to achieve "native" proficiency in English. Although some researchers have started to deconstruct the concept of the native speaker (Radwańska-Williams, 2006), many others still perceive this construct as the norm. The construct of NSs versus NNSs of English suggests that NSs have more linguistic expertise than NNSs; therefore, they are the experts in any interactions in which English is used. For instance, when L2 and L1 writers are engaged in oral or written discussions, it is assumed that L2 writers are the novices in these interactions, and they have to learn from their L1 peers. The reverse is never considered.

The paper addresses this dichotomous notion from a social constructivist lens to analyze how participants position themselves in interactions and discussions with others. Since, "constructivist researchers often address the 'processes' of interactions among individuals. They also focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work" (Creswell, 2013, p.25). Accordingly, this paper argues that although NSs do have more experience with the English language, they cannot be assumed to be experts in all interactions with NNSs, who may have more experience with the topic or major under discussion.

Through discourse analysis, the goal of this paper is to deconstruct this dichotomy by exploring how it was constructed within the research and to illustrate the fault in assuming that the novice-expert roles are merely based on linguistic competence. To achieve this aim, the author will analyze relevant studies conducted over the past 15 years. Additional studies challenging this constructed dichotomy of native expert and non-native novice will be examined as well.

Defining Major Concepts

Before the analysis begins, some important concepts need to be defined. The first to be explained is peer response and groups, as they appear often in the examined studies. Peer response, according to Liu and Hansen (2002), is the following:

> The use of learners as source[s] of information and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing (p. 1).

Additionally, peer response could occur either between two individuals (a dyad) or a group, which, according to Ehrman and Dornye (1998), is "three or more interdependen[t] individuals who influence one another through focused social interaction" (as cited in Liu & Hansen, 2002, p. 59). Moreover, heterogeneous groups are defined as ones in which students have different interests, linguistic competencies, and proficiency levels (Liu & Hansen, 2002, p. 65). This definition applies to the peer response groups of L1 and L2 writers.

Some terms appearing in the analyzed studies could be considered slightly ambiguous. For example, Wong and Waring's (2010) interactional practices include any "verbal or nonverbal methods participants use to engage in social interaction" (p.12). In addition, sequencing refers to how participants connect two or more steps in responding to a request, while

repair practices refers to "the various ways of addressing problems in speaking, hearing, or understanding [speech]" (Wong & Waring, 2010, pp. 10–11). Finally, we address the idea of the "emic perspective," which Pike (1967) defines as "a way of looking at language and social interaction from an 'insider's' perspective" (p.6).

The Significance of Deconstructing the Native and Non-Native Dichotomy

The assumed expert-novice roles should be detached from linguistic competence as it affects all parts of the interaction negatively, especially for L2 writers or NNSs. It is important to analyze the conception of L2 and L1 writers' roles in peer responses and classroom interactions "because our underlying assumptions directly affect the ways we design peer response activities" (Hall, 2009, p.1). Additionally, by assuming only one individual is an expert, we are denying others in the group (i.e., the novices) the agency to participate equally within the group. Besides, the novice could sometimes agree with whatever the expert suggests without negotiation, which could affect his or her learning experience. Moreover, the native, expert speaker might feel that his or her novice peer is an inferior learner who is incapable of providing sufficient responses. Thus, both parts of this equation could be harmed by this dichotomy. Moreover, this matter should be of interest to teachers of multilingual writers who could design their curriculum and their peer response activities to overcome these false assumptions.

Methodology

The data collected for this study came from several research articles from journals as well as books in which the researchers studied the expert-novice identity constructions of native and non-native participants. This analysis focused on two types of studies: (a) studies centered on the situated learning framework (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which is based on the assumption that learning occurs when the novice interacts with an individual who is an expert within a community of practice; and (b) studies that attempted to reconstruct and deconstruct the dichotomy of native and non-native roles in interactions using various methods (Wegner, 1998). The studies are presented in chronological order; however, the first section also groups the studies according to the type of interaction examined. Two theoretical frameworks will be used in this analysis: social constructivism and discourse analysis. This analysis will further illustrate how some researchers have recognized the significance of deconstructing the expert-novice dichotomy and have started to explore and analyze it in their studies.

Research Constructing the Dichotomy of NS = Expert and NNS = Novice

Two types of interactions will be assessed in this paper: (a) peer response research that investigates mixed-group (NSs and NNSs) peer responses, and (b) Ordinary interactions or conversations between NSs and NNSs. In both types of interactions, expertise is attached to the NSs because of linguistic competence. Under this assumption, anyone who is learning English as an L2 will be considered a novice to any native speaker. I will further analyze this assumption in the next part of the paper.

Peer Response Between Heterogeneous Groups (NSs/NNSs)

The following studies concerning peer responses between NS and NNS students promote the notion of learning from the experts and of being exposed to native output. This notion instantly assumes the novice role belongs to the L2 writers, thus raising the L1 peers to a superior knowledge position. Wachholz (1997) gathered 11 students of different linguistic backgrounds in writing peer response groups. He believed his ESL students would benefit from

"observing superior writing" (Wachholz, 1997, p.7). However, the NS students were expected to show no gain or benefits. Consequently, after 10 weeks of classroom observations and interviews with students, the results showed that neither group benefited from this experience. In addition, the NSs were condescending to their peers and felt the need "to act superior" (p.12), while the NNSs struggled with and resisted some of their peers' comments. Thus, the failure of this peer response experience resulted from the participants' presumed inequality.

A subsequent study was performed under slightly similar, if not worse, assumptions. Matsuda and Silva (1999) designed a cross-cultural composition classroom that was supposed to be beneficial for both NSs and NNSs. However, most of the study was focused on the gains of the NNSs and how this class would make them more "prepared to work with NSs" (Matsuda & Silva, 1999, p. 249). Additionally, the researchers frequently constructed the ESL students' identities as deficient learners, which consequently made their native peers the experts (Matsuda & Silva, 1999). During the exit interviews, students from both groups had positive perspectives about this cross-cultural experience. Despite the positive outcomes the participants conveyed, the researchers' assumptions about the participants' roles helped to construct the NS-NNS dichotomy as well as the expert-novice roles.

Similarly, Zhu (2001) studied linguistically heterogeneous peer response groups. The researcher's assumptions about the identities of experts and novices in these groups were clear. He argued that peer response was challenging for the L2 writers and that the natives were better equipped and had more of an advantage in this interaction. The collected data illustrated that both groups of students complied with their assumed roles. The L1 writers took the expert role and interrupted and dismissed the L2 writers' comments on their papers. On the other hand, L2 writers acted like true novices by not initiating interactions and taking fewer turns during oral interactions. As in the previously mentioned two studies, the researcher's underlying assumptions constructed the natives as relative experts to their non-native peers.

Other researchers had similar assumptions with different results. Mackey, Oliver, and Leeman (2003) investigated how NNS students respond to feedback from NS students and fellow NNS students. The researchers emphasized the "advantages for learners" as being exposed to "target-like" input that would help them improve their "non-target-like output" (Mackey, Oliver, & Leeman, 2003, pp. 37–40). Although the researchers never explained what they meant by target-like output and input, it is clear from the context that they consider any NS to have target-like input. Accordingly, any NNS would have a non-target-like input. This false generalization represents a huge foundation for the constructed dichotomy of NS/NNS. However, despite their assumptions, the researchers found no significant differences between NNS's responses to feedback from the NS and NNS, which proves that their feedback was equally good.

The next study took a somewhat unorthodox approach to examining peer response among mixed groups. Ruecker (2011) explored the dual-language cross-cultural peer response by comparing Chilean students who spoke English as a second language with American students who spoke Spanish as a second language. The point of this specific grouping was to empower both groups of students by having them take turns being the NS and the NNS. The researcher explained his method as "pairing language learners with fluent speakers to ensure that each member [is] matched with [a] skilled partner" (Ruecker, 2011, p. 399). However, the data

illustrated the fault in assuming NS's expertise. This assumption made the NNS agree to whatever the NS said without negotiation because they felt they could not correct the NS. Additionally, the NS gave "overly positive feedback" to their NNS peers that appeared to be patronizing (Ruecker, 2011, p. 403). Although this method had many positive attributes, among which was combining students with similar language learning experiences, it still constructed the natives as relative experts, albeit unintentionally.

Similarly, Bradley (2014) incorporated a new method into the traditional peer review process with the same assumptions as the studies published in the 1990s. NS students are assumed to be the experts. Bradley (2014) conducted a mixed-group peer review through a wiki between American (L1) and Swedish (L2) students. The purpose of this peer review, as was the case in earlier studies, was to improve the L2 writers' skills by having them interact with "students of more expertise" (Bradley, 2014, p. 81). However, the students were of different educational levels. The L2 students were Master's students while the L1 students were undergraduates. Still, the researcher assumed the L1 writers were the experts in this interaction, so no gains were expected for them. Moreover, the L2 writers stated during interviews that although they received valuable feedback from the NSs, it was not always useful (Bradley, 2014). Therefore, the researcher's assumptions led him to assign the expert roles to the NS students based solely on their linguistic expertise, with little regard for the L2 writers' potential.

Interactions Between NSs and NNSs

Various other studies perpetuate the concept of NSs as experts, but in different kinds of interactions. Some of these studies not only showed the researchers' assumptions about the expert-novice roles in these interactions, but also highlighted how the L2 users positioned themselves in their socially constructed novice roles. The following analysis will demonstrate the depth of the expert-novice identity construct and its influence on L2 users.

Thonus (2004) exemplified the influences of this construct on a specific kind of educational interaction between NNS and writing center tutors in his report of five studies that analyzed the tutor-tutee discourse. More specifically, these studies examined the differences in the tutors' interactions with their NS and NNS tutees. Tutors treated NNS as novices by assuming more authority during the interactions and by rejecting the tutees' input. "Furthermore, tutors will often reject NNS self-evaluations and self-suggestions" (Thonus, 2004, p. 234). However, no claiming of authority or rejecting of tutees' suggestions occurred during the NS sessions. Moreover, the tutors were more involved in conversations with their NS tutees than with their NNS ones. During sessions with NNSs, tutors tend to focus on the discussed material. All in all, the findings suggested huge differences in tutor behavior regarding their interactions with NS and NNS students. These behaviors resulted from—and, at the same time, contributed to—the socially constructed identities of NNSs as novices and NSs as experts.

On the other hand, Chamberlin-Quinlisk (2008) unfairly distributed labels between his participants, which led to a faulty conclusion. The participants were divided into three groups: monolingual NSs, multilingual NSs, and non-native English speakers. He denied the non-native participants the right to be multilingual, although they clearly were. Thus, the researcher constrained his definition of multilingual to being a native English speaker with knowledge of other languages. He examined the intercultural adaptability of the three groups through surveys and found the multilingual NSs to be the most adaptable. Consequently, he concluded that this

resulted from their access to more than one language, regardless of the fact their non-native peers had the same access. Moreover, the non-native English speakers were identified in many places as language learners, even though their multilingual native peers who were also learning other languages received no such identification. Therefore, it is evident that this study promotes the superiority of NSs in addition to constructing the dichotomy of expert-novice in relationship to linguistic competence.

Jeong Ha (2009) discussed how L2 users adopt novice roles during online interactions with L1 users. In addition, this researcher illustrated the construction of expert-novice identities at the micro level of interactions during an online disciplinary discourse between NSs and NNSs of English. The aim of Jeong Ha's (2009) study was to analyze "computer-mediated discussions by non-native novice graduate students" (p. 11) and how those students negotiate their identities with "other experienced students" (p. 14). The results showed that NNSs acted as relative novices during the interactions, and they invoked the expert identities of their native peers by requesting clarifications or new information. Consequently, L2 users submitted to their socially constructed identities as novices by making little or no effort to refute their positions.

In the same way, a study by Vendergriff (2013) offered an important look at how NNSs constructed themselves as novices during interactions with NSs. He examined dyadic online interactions between NSs and NNSs to discover how both groups' identities were constructed through this interaction. The findings indicated that NNSs constantly positioned themselves as novices by making jokes about their errors and apologizing for their linguistic incompetence. Furthermore, NSs positioned themselves as experts by taking the role of the interaction manager who initiates and closes the sequences (Vendergriff, 2013). Thus, this micro-level interaction is representative of a macro-level construct in which the NSs are almost always assumed to be the experts when interacting with NNSs.

Giroir (2014) portrayed a broader perspective concerning this construct than the previous studies. His research provided an emic perspective of two NNSs about their identities in an English-speaking society. Giroir (2014) aimed to:

> [Address] this issue by looking more closely at the activities and interactions that take place at the periphery of communities of practice, conceptualizing that space as a dynamic site of struggle in which learners construct their identities through their ongoing discursive practices within those communities (p. 36).

After six months of data collection, Giroir (2014) found that the two students positioned themselves as outsiders, and they did not feel the need to merge into the host society. Their socially constructed novice identities resulted from the assumption that expertise is associated with native language speaking. These assumptions clearly deny L2 learners the opportunity to fully participate in their L2 communities.

Research Deconstructing the Dichotomy of NS= Experts and NNS=Novice

Over the years, several studies have discussed this issue of relating expertise to linguistic competence. These studies have succeeded in deconstructing the concept of native superiority and have proven that NNSs can indeed be experts in interactions. Furthermore, these studies have shown that "the constitution of expert-novice in dynamic interaction is a much more complicated, shifting, moment-by-moment reconstruction of self and other" (Jacoby & Gonzales,

1991, p. 149). Therefore, those identities cannot and should not be predicted or assumed beforehand. Moreover, the "labels of novice, basic, and remedial writers [do] not recognize NNS strengths" (Kibler, 2010, p.122). As such, these labels could limit L2 learners' participation and development. Thus, it is imperative to think of NNSs as equally competent partners who can affect NSs as much as they are affected by them. Much has been learned about the deconstruction of the expert-novice dichotomy in regards to linguistic competence.

First, Chen (2003) did a study on interactions between NSs and NNSs of English. He compared NS-NS interactions with NS-NNS interactions, and his findings indicated that when NSs and NNSs interacted, many positive connections emerged. NSs were more engaged and adaptable in their interactions with NNSs, and they used more words than with their NS peers. Chen (2003) reached "a conclusion that NS participants in NS-NNS conversations had a more active cognitive experience" (p. 200). These findings demonstrated the gains that NSs can have while participating with their NNS peers. Those gains had previously been neglected in previous studies that only predicted that NNSs would benefit from interacting with the experts.

Second, a study by Hosoda (2006) aimed at deconstructing the native categorization, attempting to show that it is irrelevant during most interactions between NSs and NNSs. Although the L1 in this study was Japanese, its findings are equally important. In his examination of the relevance of language expertise in ordinary conversation between L1 and L2 Japanese speakers, Hosoda (2003) noticed that "second language speakers engage in similar conversing practices as NS" (p. 29). Furthermore, L2 speakers usually invoked linguistic expertise during conversation. Nonetheless, Hosoda concluded that language expertise was merely a resource that was used as needed. It was usually summoned by the L2, and it did not dominate NS-NNS interactions. These findings exemplified the irrelevancy of linguistic competence during these interactions.

Correspondingly, Park (2007) continued his fellow researchers' path in deconstructing the native-as-expert notion. Park (2007) argued that:

> Identity is constructed through-during-interaction and is not a predetermined construct that is lodged within each individual mind…. Further, identity is viewed as a situated, emergent construct that arises from the contingencies of local interactions. Identity ascription is thus highly context-specific (p. 341).

In light of these statements, Park examined the interactions between two NSs and two NNSs and found interesting results. The constructed identities were found to be both dynamic and negotiable. In addition, some minor identities, such as the requestor-requestee and assessor-assessed, emerged through the interactions. The researcher proved that NS-NNS asymmetry was not fixed; therefore, it cannot be predetermined or assumed. Instead, it has to be negotiated among the participants. As a result, this study established many notions that aid in the deconstruction of NNSs as relative novices to their NS colleagues.

Vickers (2008) exemplified to what extent linguistic expertise can be irrelevant during NSs and NNSs' interactions through her investigation into "embodied experience in the world" (p. 237). She examined the interactions of two engineers (one NS and one NNS English speaker) as they worked on the same project. However, Vickers believed that "by assuming a priori that the NS is the communicative expert in interactions with the NNS, we may fail to see what [may]

interactionally unfold" (2008, p. 239). The data demonstrated that the expert among this group of engineers was, in fact, the L2 user. Although the L1 user had more expertise in English, he was the novice in this interaction about computer programming and its terminology. Thus, this study showed the fault in attributing expertise to NSs without considering other factors such as context specific knowledge.

In another study, Vickers (2010) examined the construction of expert-novice identities during NS-NNS interactions as well as the relationship between those identities and linguistic competence. Vickers collected data from interactions between NS and NNS students in an electrical and computer engineering course. She argued that "the construction, re-construction and co-construction of expert–novice occurs at the micro-interactional level as one individual takes control of the framework for understanding while engaged in practice with another person" (Vickers, 2010, p. 117). She also believed one's non-nativeness should not define the interaction. However, this study's results showed that NSs adopted the expert role in this interaction, leaving the novice role to their NNS peers. However, the NS's expertise did not result from linguistic competence; rather, it was due to the fact they had more access to the engineering teams and more familiarity with the way they talked than NNSs. Therefore, the expert role was not assumed based on linguistic expertise but instead on actual interactive experiences.

Crossman and Kite (2012) examined peer reviews between the members of a heterogeneous group in an MBA course, in which 70% of the students were NNS. However, the authors had no prior assumptions concerning how the groups would operate or who the experts would be in these interactions. Rather, all the participants were identified as just students, and their linguistic backgrounds were barely mentioned. Neither of these aspects seemed to affect the study's results in any significant way. Additionally, the participants were given a rubric to guide them through reviewing each other's business proposals. The results indicated that about 80% of the students benefited from this peer response experience. This was apparent in the quality of their revised papers. This research positively constructed NS and NNS students as equally competent interaction partners, and mutual gains were expected for both groups of students. This constructive and equal distribution of participant roles paved the way for positive outcomes and thoroughly deconstructed the native-novice dichotomy.

In the same year, Dings (2012) also found that the expert-novice identities of NSs and NNSs were just resources that were available if and when the participants needed them. The researcher examined six conversations between one NS and one NNS of English over the course of one year to examine the dynamic of expert-novice identities and how the two participants co-created them. The researcher believed that although "there is an omnipresent asymmetry in NS/NNS interaction to which the participants can orient at any time…it is not interactionally relevant at all times" (Dings, 2012, p. 1505). To test this statement, he analyzed the conversations of his participants to find out to what extent their identities were constructed based on their linguistic expertise. Consequently, Dings' analysis revealed that the NS and NNS participants did orient to their linguistic competence when the conversation needed to be repaired. In addition, the NNS requested the repair, which appealed to the NS's expert identity. Otherwise, linguistic expertise and the expert-novice roles were irrelevant during most of the conversations. Thus, this research confirmed the irrelevancy of the presuppositions regarding linguistic competence in NS-NNS interactions.

Similarly, Bae and Oh (2013) studied conversational repair between NSs and NNSs of English and how it related to the participants' identities by recording five sets of casual conversations between three NS Americans and eight NNS Koreans. The data analysis illustrated that the NS-NNS identities were only relevant when there was a miscommunication. Otherwise, these identities had no bearings on the interactions. Thus, English linguistic expertise did not define the participants' roles during the interactions and should not be made relevant until the participants deem it appropriate. Additionally, the expert-novice identities were dynamic and changed according to the specific participants involved.

Conversely, Jungmi (2003) and Reichert and Liebscher (2012) investigated interactions between NNSs of English. NSs were excluded from both studies because it was thought that more learning opportunities could occur in NNS-NNS interactions. Their arguments refuted the idea that language learning could only occur during NS-NNS interactions. Jungmi (2003) examined NNS-NNS interactions through computer-mediated communication. He argued that since there is an asymmetrical relationship between NSs and NNSs during interactions, the NSs should not be part of these communications. He justified the elimination of NSs in his study by arguing that he provided "a non-threatening forum within which to practice developing language skills and also an opportunity to receive input that learners could have made comprehensible through negotiation" (Jungmi, 2003, p. 190). In other words, he believed his NNS participants did not need to interact with NSs to acquire native-like proficiency. Accordingly, his findings indicated that the students were engaged in this interaction, and their engagement was apparent through many communicative strategies. However, no unequal relations existed between the participants, which created a higher likelihood for learning the target language. In this way, the study showed the irrelevancy of the expert-novice identities for L2 users for language learning.

Correspondingly, Reichert and Liebscher (2012) demonstrated that expert-novice identities do exist in the NNS-NNS interactions. Thus, they deconstructed the concept of the native as expert and demonstrated the capability of L2 users to be experts during interactions. When NNSs negotiate for the expert position, more learning opportunities occur. Using this argument, Reichert and Liebscher (2012) challenged "the fixed notions of expert and novice and highlight[ed] the roles of interpersonal context" (p. 599). Simply put, if NNSs can negotiate for expert roles with each other, they can do it in interactions with NS if they are encouraged to seek their true potential and are not overwhelmed by the construction of the NS as instant experts. Nevertheless, the researchers concluded that many opportunities for learning emerged during the students' negotiations for an expert position. As Reichert and Liebscher (2012) explained, "this trend contrast[ed] with teacher- student or NS–NNS interaction[s, in which] teacher or NS knowledge [was] largely taken for granted and seldom openly challenged" (p. 607). Additionally, Reichert and Liebscher's conclusion suggests that the learners were "interactively [creating] opportunities for learning through negotiation of information" (2012, p. 607). Thus, when the native-as-expert and non-native-as-novice conceptions are deconstructed, the NNS will be able to negotiate for the expert position with the NS, subsequently resulting in more learning opportunities.

Conclusion

In this paper, the author deconstruct the conception of NSs as relative experts in their interactions with NNSs of English to change the common conception "that the non-native

speaker is somehow imperfect and inferior in linguistic competence to the native speaker" (Radwańska-Williams, 2006, p.142). By the same construct, the native speaker is also considered to be an "author[it]ative and reliable source" based solely on linguistic competence (Radwańska-Williams, 2006, p.142). Therefore, inspired by social constructivism and discourse analysis, the method of examination was twofold. The first portion of this paper examined research in which NSs have been immediately constructed as, or are assumed to be, experts when they engage in interactions or peer response groups with NNSs. The second portion explored other research that has attempted to deconstruct the expert-novice dichotomy. By reviewing studies that both construct and deconstruct this dichotomy, it was hoped that the inequality inherent in some common assumptions about NSs and NNSs of English would be revealed. It is unfair to identify a person's role in an interaction based solely on the order in which they learned a language.

Hopefully , this analysis will help teachers of multilingual students design their curriculum and peer response activities based on what they know about their students' special characteristics and not just on their experiences with English. Additionally, this analysis should help researchers refine their assumptions about their (NS and NNS) participants' abilities and provide them with equal opportunities to claim the expert role in their interactions. Finally, more research is ought to be done to challenge these socially constructed identities, especially as the number of people learning English as a second language is rapidly growing. NNSs have the right to claim expertise as much as any NS of English they might encounter.

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Teaching Pronunciation: Revisited

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Abstract

This work investigates a controversial subject, viz. the teaching of pronunciation. Numerous works have been written about the subject with various views, objectives and theoretical stands. This work takes into consideration the conceptions of both English language teachers and students at college levels. Thirty-two subjects from three universities: Mosul, Duhok and Salahddin were asked whether pronunciation is teachable and at which level; whether to be taught separately as a subject, or in conjunction with other oral skills, and whether the objective behind teaching it is fluency, or accuracy or intelligibility and finally who is a good pronunciation teacher. The study hypothesizes that pronunciation is teachable, separately and in conjunction with other skills for at least two years for the sake of fluency, accuracy and intelligibility by qualified and experienced teachers. The results of the analysis validated these hypotheses in varying degrees. Teaching pronunciation is of paramount important in English language teaching; it could be taught separately but also integrated with listening , speaking skills , oral comprehension and grammar. Also it has been found that pronunciation should be taught at college level at one or more than one level; teachers of pronunciation should relate to the notions of fluency and accuracy achieving a balance of form and function. They are better qualified if they have majored in phonetics and English phonology.

Keywords: Applied Linguistics; ELT; English phonetics and phonology; fluency and accuracy; Iraqi universities; teaching of pronunciation; TESOL

Introduction:

One of the most complicated aspects of EFL teaching is the teaching of pronunciation. It is a central challenge in EFL teaching because in teaching pronunciation one has to strike the right balance between form and meaning. It is a challenge because repetitive practice, which enhances phonological learning and promotes fluency, is viewed as being incompatible with communicative principles (Isaacs, 2009). For that reason it has been considered the "Cinderella" of language teaching (Kelly, 1969). It is very important to realize that in the process of communication, pronunciation (both segmental and suprasegmental) is very significant since appropriate pronunciation cannot take place without accurate and fluent or correct pronunciation (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996). Correctness here does not mean adherence to native speaker norms or to BBC pronunciation in particular but to the dialect or accent that is common in this or that area or region.

Pronunciation has an important social value (Gelvanovsky, 2002). There have been studies involving speakers of various English accents in order to find out what values are generally associated with Received Pronunciation, or this or that dialect. According to the findings, those values were the same as the values perceived as indispensable for socio-economic, intelligence professional competence, persuasiveness or social privilege and so on (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994).

Definition of Pronunciation:

According to Nunan (2003, p. 113), pronunciation is the way certain sounds are pronounced that speakers of a language make while speaking and perceived by the hearer to be able to understand each other with relative ease. It is a filter through which others see learners and discriminate against them (Goodwin, 2001, p. 117, Rahimi, 2008, p. 55).

The Importance of Teaching Pronunciation:

Pronunciation is essential to the completeness of not only oral language development, but also for the skills of listening, reading and writing. Teaching pronunciation of a foreign language is a challenging task but it can also be a successful and enjoyable experience. Various authors among them Harmer (2004) and Kelly (2004) point out that there are two key problems with pronunciation teaching. Firstly, it tends to be neglected. And secondly when it is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being planned. Hearing a foreign language does not result automatically in good pronunciation (Lado, 1964, p. 71). Thus it is important to teach it. Pronunciation is important for full communication, as a model by a language teacher (Lado, 1964, p. 73). Learners of language face many difficulties in recognizing certain sounds and complain that they do not know how to get it right.

Greenwood (2002, p. 1-2) points out that pronunciation teaching should be an essential component in EFL classroom and in English language teacher education. The vowels and consonants of the target language have to be used correctly, because the lack of control over them makes some non-native English speakers be incomprehensible by anyone's standard and leads to total communication breakdown.

Psychologists and linguists have felt that language practice is more motivating for learners. Examination of categories like (1) establishing and maintaining social relations,

(2)expressing one's reactions, (3) hiding one's intentions, (4) seeking and giving information, (5) teaching others to do or make something, etc., helps to show why the oral approach is probably the most satisfactory in the teaching of English to adults. These categories have close affinity with spoken language or more broadly communicating.

Improving pronunciation can improve learners' confidence and motivation. Adults stand to improve their fluency and comprehension levels as well as learn to self-monitor and self-correct to improve their pronunciation (Thompson & Gaddes, 2005, p. 1). Both sound and meaning are important to be handled in the pursuit of the linguistic goals of students (Thompson & Gaddes, 2005, p. 2).By teaching phonological rules, teachers can help students become better equipped to listen to their own speech and catch their own mistakes (Thompson & Gaddes, 2005, p. 6).
EFL pronunciation should be viewed in the same light as the other skills of the English language, such as grammar, reading, writing, vocabulary and so on, since it is a crucial part of communication (Lado, 1964, p. 170). People need to use English for social, educational and professional reasons, locally and internationally. Thus it is essential for them to have a high level of intelligibility to communicate (Greenwood, 2002, p. 1). Intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence that can be achieved by exposing learners to a model.

Greenwood (2002, p. 6) argues that since the primary purpose of language is communication, using language to communicate should be central in all classroom language instruction. This brings renewed urgency to the teaching of pronunciation. He adds that learners are very unlikely to attain a native-like accent, but their intelligibility can be greatly improved by effective pronunciation teaching. Their pronunciation improves most through the gradual intuitive changes brought about by real interaction with native speakers.

Baker (1992) says that learners should pay attention to pronunciation from the beginning to avoid eradication from mistakes that may be repeated for years. Morley (1991, p. 263) says that "the question is not whether pronunciation should be taught but instead what should be taught in a pronunciation class and how it should be taught".

The Aims of Teaching Pronunciation:

Morley (1991, p. 296) advocated that the goal of teaching pronunciation should be changed from the attainment of 'perfect' pronunciation to the more realistic goals of developing functional intelligibility, development of speech monitoring abilities, and speech modification strategies for use beyond the classroom. The overall aim of these goals is for the learner to develop awareness and monitoring skills that will allow learning opportunities outside the classroom environment.

In teaching pronunciation, the goal is threefold: to enable students to understand and be understood, to build their confidence when engaged in communicative situation, and to enable them to monitor their speech based on input from the environment (Goodwin, 2001, p. 117).

Morely (1999) cited in Goodwin (2001, p. 118) has outlined four important goals for pronunciation instruction: functional intelligibility, functional communicability, increased self-confidence, and speech minority abilities. To gain confidence in speaking communicative skills,

teachers can design their materials around the situations learners will actually face, more carefully from controlled to free production in their practice activities, and provide consistent targeted feedback. By teaching learners to pay attention to their own speech as well as that of others, teachers help them make better use of the input they receive. Speech monitoring activities help to focus learners' attention to features in their courses and beyond them.

Theoretical Background of Teaching Pronunciation:

Nunan (2003, p. 112-114) says that the pronunciation teaching in the ESL/EFL classroom has witnessed periods of dramatic change over the past 50 years. Thus, three primary orientations can be identified:

- First orientation: 1940s-1950s – "Listen carefully and repeat what I say."
- Second orientation: 1960s-1970s – "Let's analyze these sounds closely to figure out how to pronounce them more clearly."
- Third orientation: 1980s and beyond (communicative and task-based language teaching) – "Let's start using these sound in activities as soon as we can while I provide cues and feedback on how well you're doing."

Recently, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-based Approaches have become the best ways of teaching pronunciation for being sensitive to learner's real world needs (Nunan , 2003, p. 126). Teaching English pronunciation is founded upon the combination of fluency with accuracy-focused tasks. For a long time, from the literature, pronunciation teachers were using conventional methodology for teaching English pronunciation rooted in drills and automatic exercises. The outcome of these divulges that many learners retain some critical deviant phonological forms which prove highly detrimental to successful communication in English (Luchini, 2005, p. 191).

Conventional approaches to teaching pronunciation emphasize studying phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, along with some structurally based interest in stress, rhythm, and intonation. From the pedagogic perspective, instruction mainly consisted in articulatory descriptions, imitations and memorization of patterns through drills and set scripts, with overall attention to correction, for learners to pronounce like a British native speaker. This concern for perfect pronunciation aimed at enabling learners to come to native-like accent – Received Pronunciation (RP). Under the notional-functional approach, the focus was placed mostly on meaning and not on form, to get learners to use the language for communication purpose (Luchini, 2005, p. 192)

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Pronunciation instruction, historically, emphasized the mastery of individual sounds. With the advent of CLT, the focus shifted to fluency rather than accuracy, encouraging an almost exclusive emphasis on supra-segmentals. However, just as EFL teachers have acknowledged that an emphasis on meaning and communicative intent alone would not suffice to achieve grammatical accuracy, pronunciation has emerged from the segmental/supra-segmental debate to a more balanced view (Goodwin, 2001, p. 117). Also that the more teachers try to control the language that students produce, the more learners are likely to be concerned with form rather than meaning, and the less task-like the activity becomes (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 14).

Aims of the Study:

The aim of this study is to explore university teachers' and students' conceptions of teaching pronunciation. Experience has shown that the departments of English do not seem to have paid due attention to the issue of teaching pronunciation. Their main concern has been to teach segmental phonology (the sounds) and little attention to supra-segmental phonology (stress and intonation). As a matter of fact, the normal practice in most English departments has been to talk ABOUT English phonology rather than talking phonology proper. There has not been enough effort to transfer the classroom pronunciation teaching materials into natural spontaneous communicative everyday practice. Pronunciation has been taught mostly as a separate subject and not connected to other language skills like speaking and listening and at times it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being planned.

Hearing a foreign language like English does not result automatically in good pronunciation. Thus, it is important to teach it. Overall, a key problem with pronunciation is that it tends to be neglected.

Hypotheses:

This study hypothesizes the following:

1. Teaching pronunciation is as significant as teaching any other skill in ELT courses at departments of English at college level.
2. Besides teaching it as a planned subject, pronunciation should be related to other subjects in classroom such as speaking, conversation, oral comprehension, grammar, spelling, etc.
3. Pronunciation should be taught at least at first and second years of study at college level, if not at more levels.
4. The criteria for good pronunciation are not only accuracy but fluency and legibility as well.
5. A good pronunciation teacher is one who is qualified in English phonology, fluent and has experience in teaching it.

The Subjects:

In order to explore teacher's and student's conceptions, twenty-four English language teachers and eight graduate English students from three universities: Mosul, Duhok and Salahddin, Iraq answered a questionnaire of five questions related to the teaching of pronunciation. The questions are:

1. Is pronunciation teachable at college level?
2. Should it be taught separately or in conjunction with other subjects such as speaking/conversation, comprehension, spelling,
3. Which level(s) should it be taught at? First year, second or third year?
4. What are the criteria for good pronunciation? Are they fluency, accuracy, legibility or what?
5. Who is a good pronunciation teacher? What is his background?

Analysis of the Data:

An examination of the five answers to the questionnaire above by teachers and students reveals a variety of attitudes and conceptions. With regard to the first question of whether pronunciation is teachable, all the subjects, teachers and students agreed that it is teachable. The majority answered with definiteness stating that it is "essential" and "of utmost importance".

Seven teachers suggested that teaching it systematically should start at pre-college level and at early school years since non-natives have had very little of it in earlier stages. Nine students expressed similar views stating that at pre-college level they were given long lists of words or some rules to memorize or "listen and repeat" practices.

Is Pronunciation Teachable?

There are some researchers (Suter, 1976, Purcell & Suter, 1980) who have cast doubt on the importance of pronunciation in EFL teaching. According to them, pronunciation practice in class has little, if any, effect on learners' pronunciation skills. In other words, the attainment of accurate pronunciation in a second language is a matter substantially beyond the control of educators. Pennington (1989), though, believed that teachers with formal training in pronunciation teaching, especially supra-segmental can make a difference.

Between these opposing views, Stern (1992, p. 112) says: "There is no convincing empirical evidence that could help us sort out the various positions on the merits of pronunciation training".

Experience has revealed that a great number of the EFL teachers at college level do not favour the teaching of pronunciation courses. They feel it is a waste of time. Perhaps this is related to changes in the concepts of language teaching and language learning in the past three decades or so with regard to concepts, materials and methodologies.

On the one hand, pronunciation should be taught if the desired objective behind teaching it is accuracy. On the other hand, if the desired objective is for the student to use spoken English for the sake of intelligible communication then it is more of learning English on the part of the student than only teaching it.

Not all teaching materials and methodologies that are available help students to be active. Actually they help them to be passive participants in the classroom. Often students are not to be involved in classroom activities because of the method of teaching followed and often because of their large numbers in the classroom. Often their involvement is monitored by the teacher (i.e. correcting the mistakes). Seldom does the teacher show them how to watch their own performance; and rarely are they evaluated systematically to give them an indication of their learning progress. Students often ask "Is my pronunciation good?" Teachers only impressionistically answer "Oh, yes, your pronunciation is much better" (Stern (1992, p. 84). This used to be the case in most pronunciation classrooms in departments of English at least in the universities mentioned earlier until recently. But times seem to be changing. Today, more and more teachers are encouraging active student involvement in the process of learning English as a foreign language. English teachers are involving students and also showing them what they are doing and how they are doing it. The students are made aware of how to observe their speech production and that of the others by giving first classes information about speech production using visual and auditory aids like CDs, computers and data shows to show video and audio segments of illustrations and conversational extracts. When a student demonstrates an ability to perform at a given level, the monitoring and correction, where necessary, shift back and forth between teacher and student in front of the students in the classroom.

Should it be taught separately or in conjunction with other subjects such as speaking, conversation, comprehension, spelling, …?

With regard to the second question of whether pronunciation should be taught separately or in conjunction with other subjects such as speaking, conversation, comprehension, spelling, etc. Or whether pronunciation should be isolated from other aspects of language practice, the subjects' response to the question is as follows:

8 subjects: 5 teachers and 3 students stated it should be taught separately. 10 subjects, among them 3 students, suggested that it should be taught in conjunction with other subjects. 14 subjects, among them two student, suggested it should be taught both separately in the first year at college and in conjunction with other aspects of language practice in the following years.

These answers coincide with the literature on the subject as the main concern is with a broader scope of language teaching and learning. There has to be some periods/courses of work on isolated elements of pronunciation such as the sounds and the supra-segmental features of the language.

But as one is concerned with a broader scope of language learning, one has to integrate other language aspects of practice such as listening and speaking. The goal of the listening/speaking class is to enable students to increase their listening/speaking accuracy and fluency in a variety of listening and speaking activities. Meaningful practice in context is the primary concern throughout whether the focus of the task is accuracy, fluency or legibility (Stern (1992, p. 84). "Careful training in the dynamics of speech production and the fundamentals of articulatory phonetics, specifically related to English phonology, are necessary" (Stevick et al, 1995, p. 81).

In addition to the listening/speaking function, other aspects of language practice can be integrated such as grammar, vocabulary building, sound/symbol correspondences and work on spelling patterns, oral reading, sentence dictation, and writing original dialogues and responses. Students have to be taught the principles underlying English orthography as well: rules for predicting where the stress falls, the alternation between long and short vowels, between full and reduced vowels, what the consonant alternations are. By this they will be able to use words in their spoken English which they may never have heard before.

> As everyone knows, English orthography is irregular. Consequently, at least for the adult and adolescent students, … we often use some guide to pronunciation … called broad transcription or special alphabet … to provide a regular way of correlating graphic units with phonological units, so that … every graphic unit has a consistent value and every phonological unit has a consistent representation (Kreidler, 1972, p. 4).

Eventually, however, the students will be on their own; they leave their classes and go out into the bigger English-speaking world. One hopes they have mastered the pronunciation and grammatical system of the language, though there is still a lot ahead of them to learn. But of course, it is hard to imagine that these students have learned from their teachers the pronunciation of all the words they need to know thereafter, or to suggest here that they will consult a dictionary to learn the pronunciation of every written word they encounter in the rest of

their lives. They will probably develop a skill, somehow or another of figuring out a pronunciation for new printed words they meet.

Which level(s) should it be taught at? First year, second or third year?

As regards the third question of which level(s) should pronunciation be taught at? First year, second year, third year …? 14 subjects, among them 6 students chose first year. 8 subjects, among them 2 students suggested the second year level. 2 subjects suggested third year level. One subject suggested more than one level: 9 teachers suggested that pronunciation should be taught at all levels. There is almost nothing in the literature about the subject "teaching pronunciation" and about which level should it be taught at the college level. However, the figures above are in agreement that pronunciation should be taught at one or more than one levels.

What are the criteria for good pronunciation? Are they fluency, accuracy, legibility or what?

As for the criteria for good pronunciation, and whether they are fluency, accuracy or legibility or others, 16 subjects among them 5 students suggested that all three criteria are essential for good pronunciation. 6 subjects among them one student suggested accuracy, 8 subjects among them 2 students suggested fluency. 2 teachers suggested that both accuracy and fluency are essential and they, in turn, lead to intelligibility.

This question is related to question 2 above of whether pronunciation should be isolated from other courses of language practice like, for example, listening and speaking, or should it be taught in conjunction with them and other courses/subjects like grammar and spelling. It all depends on the goal behind teaching such courses. One presumes that the goal behind teaching listening and speaking is to "enable students to increase their listening/speaking accuracy (linguistic form) and fluency (communicative function) in a variety of listening and speaking activities along an entire continuum of listening/speaking experience".

With regard to whether accuracy should precede fluency or the reverse, there has been two extreme positions which Rivers (1981, p. 25) has conveniently labeled "formalist" and "activist". The first are concerned with the forms of language: the rules for combining sounds to words correctly. The activists, on the other hand, are concerned with language as activity, not as something people know but as something people do, or how to use a language. For the formalists, the sentence is the major unit which most schools of linguistics have been concerned with describing. The activists, on the other hand, consider the utterance as the major unit of language; it is a unit of discourse. The distinction between the two groups is very significant for foreign/second language teachers. If the major goal that teachers set for the students is the production of well-formed sentences, the course will be very different from one in which the goal is the production of effective utterances in discourse.

In the past forty years or so, ESL/EFL has witnessed a shift from formalist to activist position. The shift has been, from Chomsky's grammatical competence (1965), a kind of competence which focuses on the forms and rules similar to the focus by the formalists to the notion of communicative competence which focuses on using language appropriately for genuine communicative purposes which is the view by the activists.

This shift brings to mind Brumfit's (1979) distinction between speaking or writing a language accurately and speaking or writing it fluently. Brumfit believes that any language teacher can relate to the notions of accuracy and fluency since they are practiced in the classroom, and they are part of classroom behaviour. Students get their meanings across or they do not, and when they do find the words, they either pronounce them and/or put them together correctly or they do not. Some students may make a few structural errors but they have trouble expressing themselves. Some students can go on and on but express themselves poorly. Language teachers must be equally concerned with both the fluency and the accuracy of their students' use of language. As an EL teacher, I feel that the shift has gone far in the direction of accuracy but not that far towards fluency in universities in Iraq, particularly the three universities under investigation in this work.

In relating form (accuracy) to function (fluency) teachers need better techniques and materials, but even without them a balance of form and function can be achieved by the following steps:

1. The forms for expressing basic notions in language must be introduced systematically.
2. These forms must be introduced in communicative contexts.
3. The students are expected to produce both appropriate discourse and well-formed sentences.

Who is a good pronunciation teacher? What is his background?

With regard to question no.5 in the questionnaire: Who is a good pronunciation teacher and what is his background? The subjects responses are varied. The main focus was on the teacher's qualification, i.e., he should have degree in phonetics and phonology. 14 subjects chose these characteristics for a good pronunciation teacher. 9 subjects chose "experience". 6 subjects chose methodology and 3 chose "a teacher with a native-like accent". Some subjects combined two or three characteristics together and some others combined fluency, accuracy with methodology, or with experience or with qualification.

What background knowledge about English phonology and pronunciation does an EFL teacher need most?

The most important concept a teacher needs to grasp is that of "system" (Stevick et al, 1975, p. 86); that phonological facts about English phonology and pronunciation are related and they are part of that system.

As one means of facilitating and understanding that system of English phonology, especially the segmental aspects of English phonology, the IPA chart is very helpful in teaching pronunciation. It provides useful contrasts about vowels, and other contrasts of voicing for the teacher when he explains pronunciations of, for example, the –s suffix and the –ed suffix. It is also useful when teaching the differences in the types of articulation, e.g. fricative vs. stop, or central vs. lateral. Points of articulation for all the segmental sounds can be easily added also.
Several authors among them Ur (1997), Harmer (2004) and Kelly (2004) point out that there are three areas a language teacher should know about in the pronunciation of English:

1. Phonology or the sounds of the language.
2. Stress and rhythm.
3. Intonation.

It is useful to be able to list and define the sounds or the phonemes of English by writing them down using phonetic representation or transcription because there is no one to one correspondence between written letters and spoken sounds.

English is stress-timed; that is to say, stresses occur at regular intervals within connected speech and the duration of an utterance is more dependent upon the number of stresses than the number of syllables. As a result, English speech rhythm is characterized by tone-units: a word or group of words which carries one central stressed syllable, other syllables, if there are any, are lightened (Ur, 1997). In many long words, there is both a main stress and a secondary stress, for example, "interpretation" where "ter" has the secondary stress and "ta" has the main stress. In addition, different varieties of English can often stress words differently (Zepeda, 2010), for example the word "controversy" and "advertisement" which can have two different pronunciation in British and American English.

According to Davies & Fraenkel (2003) and Roach (2003) there are some general patterns of stress that can be taught to students depending on their grammatical category of whether they are nouns, adjectives or verbs or when they are compound words. These general patterns can be taught to the students. Sentence stress patterns can be taught too. According to Kenworthy (1992) correct word stress patterns are essential for learner's production and perception of English. An English listener may have great difficulty in understanding words uttered by non-native speakers. So, stress can be important for intelligibility and comprehension. As for intonation, which refers to variations in pitch when we are speaking, it is a fundamental part of the way we express out own thoughts and it enables us to understand those of others (Kelly, 2004). The rises and falls in tone that make the "tune" of an utterance is an important aspect of English pronunciation, often making a difference to meaning or implication. A native speaker usually has little difficulty in hearing intonation changes in his own language; others, however, may not find it so easy. Intonation is often described as the music or melody of speech. Each language has its own melody or intonation; English intonation in English; Arabic intonation in Arabic; so a teacher of English pronunciation must teach English intonation to non-natives; in our case, Arab students.

According to Kenworthy (1992) rhythm is a product of word stress and the way in which important items are backgrounded by their occurrence on a weak beat. The rhythm of English is, then, mainly, a function of its stress patterns; these may also affect such aspects as speed of delivery, volume and the use of pause. The teacher has to take care of these aspects of English pronunciation.

Teaching experience shows that in speech not only sounds but supra-segmental features of stress, rhythm, intonation and pitch are equally important in achieving several communicative functions. Prosody or supra-segmental facilitates other dimensions of communication like focusing attention on important information, differentiating old from new information, signaling turns in discourse, etc. (Hargrove & McGarr, 1994).

A good pronunciation teacher also needs a background of practice in speech analysis, articulation analysis and error and contrastive analysis of both the phonotactics of English and Arabic. As for whether a pronunciation teacher should have native-like accent, it is hard to

decide on which model to teach. Today, English is increasingly being used as a medium of communication worldwide between speakers for whom it is not a first language. In the past, the preferred pronunciation model for teaching in Britain or among British teachers abroad, was Received Pronunciation (RP) or BBC English which is concerned with social status rather than geographical. However, the number of people who speak with an RP accent in Britain is currently estimated at about only 3% of the population and it is declining (Harmer, 2004).

Pronunciation language teachers are in disagreement over the model to use in the classroom. The best advice for them is to teach what they know and use and be informed as they can about the wide range of varieties and accents of English. They have to expose their students as much as they can about these varieties and allow them to choose their own target model as long as it is widely comprehensible and intelligible.

Conclusions:

The study has come up with the following:

1. Teaching pronunciation is of paramount importance in English language teaching. It is essential not only for the oral language development but also for the development of other language skills. It is a challenging task but can also be a very pleasant and successful experience. Pronunciation is definitely teachable. Teaching it is essential and of utmost importance. To ensure effective pronunciation teaching, there are certain factors that should be considered.
2. There has to be some periods/courses of work on isolated elements of pronunciation at college level such as the description and analysis of sounds and supra-segmental features of English, but one also has to integrate other language aspects of practice such as listening, speaking, oral comprehension and grammar.
3. Pronunciation should be taught at college level at one or more than one level.
4. Pronunciation teachers should relate to the notions of fluency and accuracy. They must be equally concerned with both. They should achieve a balance of form and function.
5. Good pronunciation teachers are better qualified if they have majored in phonetics and English phonology and if they have pursued a graduate course and obtained a degree in the subject. They should have background knowledge about English phonology and pronunciation, and have grasped the system behind English phonology, specifically with regard to English sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation among others. A background of practice and experience in speech analysis is combined with a pleasant, fluent and intelligible accent is what a good pronunciation teacher needs also.

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Gender Stereotyped Images of Occupations in Malaysian Primary English Textbooks: A Social Semiotic Approach

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Abstract
A number of researchers in the past have highlighted on portrayals of stereotyped gender roles in textbooks, but little has fully explored on how social semiotic meanings are used for identifying occupational gender roles. Social semiotics places an importance in this current research of images on textbooks due to how it visualises the existing society. The main objective of this study is to uncover images of gender-stereotyped occupations from primary school English textbooks and uncover gendered attributes from these images. Images in the textbooks are investigated based on how images with agentic and communal qualities reveal representational, interpersonal and compositional meaning. This activity of collecting images involved framing the gender with visual elements through connecting or disconnecting them to the illustrations. This study found 126 images represented in professional occupations and 81 images represented in non-professional occupations. Results showed that occupational images of males were linked to more self-assertive and agentic qualities while females were portrayed with more caring, communal qualities. Social semiotic analysis revealed that more males were shown as professionals such as architects, and doctors, whereas females were more portrayed with professional occupations such as nurses and teachers. Non-professional males were also included with agentic qualities, portrayed by farmers and firefighters. The implication of the study adopts a gender perspective to semiotic theory through tying meaning with gendered images, culminating semiotic and gender inclusivity in educational materials.
Keywords*: agentic, communal, gender-stereotyping, social semiotics, textbooks*

Introduction

Research in gender representations and stereotyping in the past, have suggested for gender balance to be included in textbooks. This did not exclude textbooks that were used apart from the English language textbooks. A study of sex bias in physics textbooks (Walford, 1981) found that male characters appear more frequently in illustration as well as in text. In the 1980's sexism among Malaysian children was prevalent with males and females being described as total opposites. Males were perceived as strong, cold and intelligent while females were perceived as weak, warm and unintelligent (Ward & Williams, 1985). With this pattern of sexism in the past, there is no wonder that the sexist approaches towards textbooks curriculum persisted in the 1990's until a decade after the millennium.

This research concurs with Lakoff's (1975) 'dominance' approach on male domination and female subordination which is prevalent in gender-differentiated linguistic behaviour. This move has been addressed in the Western sphere, and it must be noted that any changes towards gender equality in Malaysia still needs new approaches. This is particularly true especially when gender characteristics of Malaysian males and females still remain strongly influenced by traditional beliefs and practices (Bahiyah, Mohd. Subakir et al., 2008; Mohamad Subakir, Bahiyah, Yuen et al., 2012; Rosniah & Bahiyah, 2013; Ward & Williams, 1982). Many related studies on textbooks analysis conducted in Malaysia (e.g. Bahiyah et al., 2008; Liew, 2007; Saedah, 1990), have shown researchers' concern towards equal treatment for both genders in children's textbooks. Both analysis of gender in linguistics and visual analysis have been previously examined taking into account the nature and amount of frequencies these gender representations appear stereotyped. This would raise the concern among educators especially when children's understanding of gender is stereotyped since childhood when on the other hand, children need a positive representation of males and also females (Smith, 1995) at this early formative years until adulthood.

The first research problem is that females have been stereotypically portrayed in the domestic sphere as homemakers. This portrayal has previously been biased, highly one-dimensional. Such as treating women as uninteresting and irrelevant, and making them subordinate to males (Rosaldo, 1974). This is because some portrayals have shown women being depicted indoors, through orienting women in the domestic sphere while on the other hand; males are shown in the bigger, 'public' domain (Bahiyah et al., 2008; Bahiyah, Yuen et al., 2013; Jariah, 2002; Saedah, 1990; Yuen, Mohd. Subakir et al., 2008). In view of this earlier finding, what needs to be examined is whether females who are portrayed as housewives, are not only being stereotyped into their roles, but also being shown as inferior, weak and unimportant. It is rarely highlighted that it is through the strength of the mother in bringing up her children that it is possible to build the progress of a nation in generating a productive work force, and it is not possible if one is weak.

The second research problem is how more females are stereotyped in teaching and nursing roles while males are given more decision-making roles. Based on this study by UNESCO (Sundal-Hansen, 1984), the findings reported that more females were identified as teaching in primary schools, while more males were in the leadership positions (headmaster, principal). The patterns tended to reflect what people did in daily life, and this resulted in a guide to identify and eliminate sex stereotypes through intervention in schools. The study identified

schools as socializing agents and the changes in the roles of men and women had to be acknowledged in order to fit the new norms and behaviour (Sundal-Hansen,1984: 11). Based on social role theory, Eagly & Steffan (1984) classified this as applying social structural analysis to people's beliefs about gender. This follows the stereotyped belief that males have the urge to lead or master (agentic quality) while females are thought to be selfless and concerned with others (communal quality). Or as previously stated by Epstein (1976), women's roles are regarded as expressive, nurturant, service and ancillary as opposed to male roles that are instrumental, dominant, and goal-oriented.

The third problem addresses how females are usually portrayed in more restricted roles than males (Bahiyah et al., 2008; Bahiyah et al., 2013; Mohamad Subakir, Bahiyah, Zarina et al., 2012; Rosniah & Bahiyah, 2013). In an effort to investigate depictions of male and female images in textbooks, a corpus linguistic analysis of nine primary school textbooks has contributed to textbooks research through investigating the occurrence of linguistic sexism in lexical items (Nadia, 2010). Through linguistic analysis, this study also confirmed that the occupational roles assigned to females were more restricted and less varied compared to males. Males were given more roles (such as shoemaker, mayor, fisherman, headmaster, policeman, scientist, driver, and cobbler) compared to females (model, florist and nurse).

This paper reports on a study undertaken to uncover the semiotic modes that are in play and the interpretations that are revealed from the primary school textbooks. The research objectives for the study are as follows:

1. To explore images in occupations that are represented in gender-stereotyped roles.
2. To identify how images of professional males and females are portrayed the semiotic acts that they are performing (*representational meaning*).
3. To identify how male and female occupational images are represented in social interactions (*interpersonal meaning*).
4. To identify how male and female occupational images are arranged in the semiotic space in the textbooks (*compositional meaning*).

Gender Stereotyping In Textbooks

In the 1980's sexism among Malaysian children was prevalent with males and females being described as total opposites (Bahiyah et al., 2008; Mohamad Subakir, Bahiyah, Zarina, et al., 2012; Rosniah & Bahiyah, 2013). Males were perceived as strong, cold and intelligent while females were perceived as weak, warm and unintelligent (Ward & Williams, 1985). With this pattern of sexism in the past, there is no wonder that the sexist approaches towards textbooks curriculum persisted in the 1990's until a decade after the millennium. Mills (2008) also added that this kind of stereotyping is a noticeable form of behaviour which may have occurred within a community and is afforded prototypical status (2008:126). Mills also argues that these assumptions that society holds at times clash with our own perceptions of ourselves (2008:127). These are stereotypes that have been affirmed within a society and is 'mapped out' within the household walls and into the workplace and is still maintained actively within society (Sunderland, 2006).

Earlier studies on gender stereotyping have expressed worldwide concern towards equal access to education and equal representations of males and females in textbooks (Bahiyah et al.,

2008; Jariah, 2002; Saedah, 1990). Furthermore, there has been a decline in education for women in countries across the world. This decline in education includes a high drop-out rate among girls and a low percentage of girls entering and graduating from higher educational establishments. Moreover, with low levels of literacy among women in India, and with lack of female teachers that encourage girls to attend school (Velkoff 1998), women continue to be marginalized. Related studies on textbooks analysis conducted in Malaysia (e.g. Bahiyah et al., 2008; Liew, 2007; Saedah, 1990), have shown researchers' concern towards equal treatment for both genders in children's textbooks. Both analysis of gender in linguistics and visual analysis have been previously examined taking into account the nature and amount of frequencies these gender representations appear stereotyped. This would raise the concern among educators especially when children's understanding of gender is stereotyped since childhood when on the other hand, children need a positive representation of males and also females (Smith, 1995) at this early formative years until adulthood.

These gender ideologies are prevalent in educational resources and they existed in these school textbooks. Studies from other countries reported some discriminatory results towards gender portrayals in textbooks. Abeer (2005) studied on gender stereotyping in textbooks in Jordanian high schools. It was found that more males (70%) were represented in the textbooks as compared to women (25%). Na Pattalung (2008) also conducted a similar study and found sexist language being used and supporting patriarchy in Thailand. These ideologies may be reinforced in each of these types of books through gendered behaviour patterns and characteristics (Stewart, Cooper et al., 2003). Such examples of these depictions have presented distorted representations of gender and reinforced gender stereotyping.

Evidence of these sexist portrayals have persisted some of these gender gaps, whereby girls still consider a narrower set of careers than boys and girls continue to experience risks to their health and development such as sexual harassment and abuse pregnancy, substance abuse and delinquency (Stewart et al., 2003). This finding from children's artwork had concluded that in the boys' schemes, they associated girls with stereotyped indoor activities (*dancing, playing with dolls, shopping*), associated girls with stereotyped objects (*flowers, butterflies, unicorns, bunnies*) and with specific behaviours such as (*love, romance, love for shopping*). Generally, the boys viewed girls as passive or static, objects of gaze rather than doers (Kress & vanLeeuwen, 1996). This study found that "boys saw girls as objects of beauty with interests in love and romance while girls saw boys as doers" (Albers, Frederick & Cowan 2009: 253).

Images in Textbooks

Using the semiotic perspective in the teaching and learning of language means children learn how signs are represented, and that any possible change in representation makes new insights possible (Hoffman, 2006). This also implies that to consider interpreting images from a semiotic perspective means to take a genuine interest in the meaning of signs and its representations. The famous semiotician, Charles Sanders Peirce has termed the otherwise known as generic function of sign (Greenlee, 1973) as 'signification' and adopts the 'sign' to designate anything which signifies. The study of images have been researched within varied function of signs, whether it is in websites or online documents (Harrison, 2003), an advertisement (Beasely & Danesi, 2002) or an architect's house design (Kress & vanLeeuwen, 2001).

Other theorists have argued for a social semiotic theory in contrast to the traditional semiotic theory (Halliday, 1978; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Jewitt & Kress, 2003). Jewitt & Kress (2003) states that social semiotics view the agency of socially-situated humans as central to sign-making. From a social semiotic perspective, people use the resources that are available to them in the specific sociocultural environments in which they act to create signs, and in using them, they change the resources. In other words, signs are viewed as constantly newly made, in a process in which the signified (what is to be meant) is realized through the most apt signifier (that which is available to give realization to that which is to be meant) in a specific social context (10).

One key concept with social semiotics involves the consideration of the role of the sign maker as well as the reader of the signs. Within the classroom that advances the idea of social semiotics, students, for example, read the world and name the world based on the understanding of particular concepts in relation to their own lives. The self-creation of linguistic or visual representations can bear greater meaning for the students as they bring the internal world of their own knowledge and understanding together with the outer world through self-representation and communication through self-selected modes of expression. Although the chosen sign might be pre-existent, the intention of the sign maker is the relevant issue as the sign represents the agency, albeit a restricted agency, of the sign maker. Only a few have analysed children's books and the analysis of images in the texts.

Methodology

This research procedure firstly involves collecting and gathering the textbook data through making an inventory of textbook images. This comes from van Leeuwen's (2005) explanation on what semiotic inventory – collect, document and systematically catalogue semiotic resources. The first activity involves identifying the gender of these male and female images. The semiotic potential of these images included 'inventorizing the different material articulations and permutations' (van Leeuwen 2005: 4), such as identifying the kinds of clothes and attire that these images are shown in. After this is identified, the images are described its semiotic potential, which indicates the types of meanings that these images afford. The stages in identifying gender-stereotyped images consisted of semiotic inventories that were taken from the concept of social semiotic multimodality (Kress, 2010; Kress & vanLeeuwen, 1996).

This activity of collecting involved framing the visual elements through connecting or disconnecting, segregating or separating to look at its similarity and contrast (van Leeuwen 2005). The disconnected elements included elements of visual composition such as frame-lines, empty spaces between the images and colour discontinuities, whereas the connected elements that were identified included images that showed similarities of colour, shape and also any compositional elements that belonged to the image. The disconnected elements are read as separate and independent, while connected elements are understood as belonging to each other. Van Leeuwen (2005) described 'framing' in visual composition as semiotic work when the image has semiotic potential, including seeing their meanings as similar and different. Framing in these images has the potential to make parts of the images more connected or disconnected to the picture than other parts.

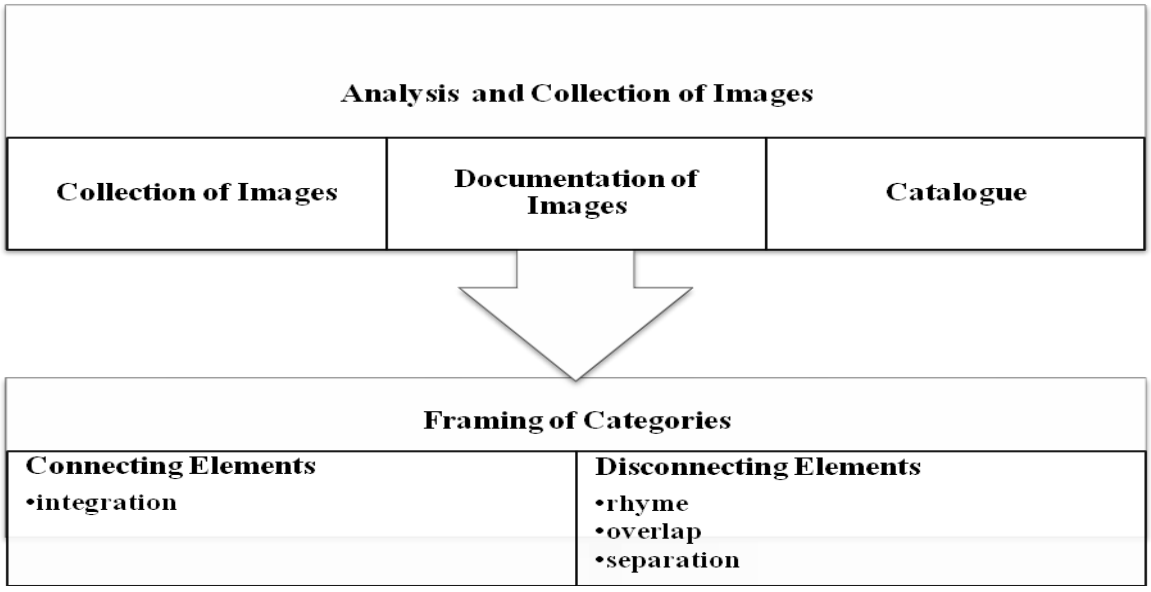

Figure 1. **Stages in Identifying Images**

The images collected are analysed based on meanings about gender stereotyping, through looking into the representation in semiotics through the identification of modes (Kress, 2001). Three metafunctional meanings are examined to distinguish stereotyping of gendered occupations. Representational meanings are distinguished by appearance, behaviour, and attire of represented participants (RPs henceforth) based on grammatical system of images. These images are shown in classificational representations that place the RPs as sharing a certain commonality and are shown in a classification or group. On the other hand, when two characters represent the RP in the image, it would involve dominant and subordinate RPs known as a transactional structure. This involves a 'reactor' as a subordinate and a 'phenomenon', shown as a superior.

Images of RPs are also depicted through interpersonal meanings that portray males and females images through elements such as focus and distance in close and long shots. A system that conveys RPs through gazes and smiles is identified through 'image acts' and 'gazes' that allows viewers to relate to the communicative function and imaginary relation that exists between the reader and the RP in the image. Images that are investigated in compositional meanings are based on three interrelated meanings to express the involvement of the RPs – informational value, salience and framing.

After identifying the RPs within the aforementioned three metafunctions, the first stage involved examining male and female roles in the occupational structure in these textbook images. The analysis is determined through the characters in the images. The images were identified, codified and classified based on social semiotic framework, and involves occupational images that are classified as based on the Malaysian Standard of Occupations (MASCO 08).

Findings

Analysis of Representational Meanings

This section aims to answer the first research question, which is, how are male and female images portrayed in their visual element of occupational roles?

The image below reveals the classificational representation of professional occupations through working people in uniforms. There are images of 5 males than 2 females, with only the nurse greeting with a smile. The officer, nurse, doctor, architect, police officer, soldier and firefighter represent working people in uniforms and formal attire. In this case, all RPs are classified as working people that share a commonality, which is, being helpful but at the same time, sharing agentic qualities with their male counterparts. This process according to van Leeuwen & Kress (1996) tends to relate the participants to each other in a certain classification or relation to the same category. For instance, in the figure below, the RPs are arranged in a classification, as professionals with the neutral background and are understood to belong to members of the same class or social structure.

Figure 2. **Classificational Processes**

(Source: English Year 3, 2004: p. 73)

A similar character of the RPs in Figure 2, is that the subordinates are of the same size, standing at an equal distance. From the images, classificational structure places the RPs as equals. The RPs that are put in the same syntagm and is identified as being in the same classification and are judged to belong to the same group.

As reiterated by Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) there is symmetry between how the images are arranged and the way the viewer/reader must relate to them. The point of view is imposed upon the RP for the viewers to react towards these portrayals. From Butler's argument that gender is not something a person has, but rather something a person does, therefore, this image of nurse and police officer as working people has pigeonholed females as working alongside their male counterparts, and having of equal importance. The ability for females to be of equal importance concurs with Maccoby & Jacklin's (1974) argument that there is no clear evidence that women are more nurturing than men. However, this is not to conclude that females have equal importance, as shown in Figure 2, as females are only portrayed by a nurse and a police officer. As reiterated by Levy, Sadovsky & Troseth (2000) and Blakemore (2003), nurses are perceived as a female profession.

Non-professional occupational roles analysed included the most portrayed occupation in this category such as the farmer, the lollipop man, grocer, stall keeper, garbage collector and firefighter. The images analysed show agentic qualities that portray characteristics with analytical behaviour and having good problem solving skills. One male farmer says to the other, "I have to sell these old animals. They are not useful anymore." While the other farmer replies,

"We will go to the market to sell them". Such engagement with business deals are linked to the images of males as being assertive, independent, competitive and self-confident (Eagly 1987) in which they are often associated with. The farmers are shown in displays of self-assertion (Eagly & Steffen, 1984) and decision making, such as discussing about selling livestock (farmers) in Figure 3. These discussions are commonly associated with males as farmers, whereby men have commonly been linked to decision-making abilities. This concurs with Eagly & Steffen's (1984) argument that beliefs about men resemble employed persons, whereby decision-making abilities are closely related with agentic qualities that are more stereotyped with male attributes.

Figure 3. **Farmers**
(Source: English Year 3, 2004: p. 44)

This also presupposes that males are more assertive and confident due to males being given more portrayals as farmers and simultaneously, being depicted in negotiations. This image acts as a socializing agent (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974) for children, as an indication of overt sexism (Mills, 2008) that can be directly identified through males being given more agentic qualities.

Figure 4. **Female as a Farmer**

(Source: English Year 4, 2004: p. 40)

Nevertheless, only one image of a female farmer is found in the textbook. The image of this female farmer, however, does not have a speech bubble, and the female farmer is shown selling fruits. The involvement of females as farmers is only identified with the headscarf, and articulated on the women's body (Talbot, 2010), as a depiction of the female form. The female form shows that the farmer is a female, but at the same time, this image can also be regarded as

androgynous, by being feminine and at the same time masculine at work (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003). Portrayals of masculinity are also prevalent among the images of fire fighters.

Analysis of Interpersonal Meanings

The second research question is; how do male and female images portray occupational roles through communicative semiotic acts?

The interpersonal meaning of these images are identified through patterns of experience, encoded as representation (Guijarro & PinarSanz, 2008) and with the processes that the RPs are associated with.

***Figure 5*. Professional male and female**
(Source: English Year 3, 2004: p. 82)

In the images of the female doctor, the presence of females as doctors shows that females can also be doctors as much as their male counterparts. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, p. 122) stated that these images that are drawn in illustrations are "to be read as a piece of objective, factual information and set into motion the actual process of learning". These images that represent occupations have an important role to represent the society within the community. The visual images that signify meanings between the signifiers are analysed for how the images are communicated through relations between the represented participants or RPs. The way the images represent social interactions needs to be made explicit through the image acts and gazes that imply focus and distance. The communicative function of these images would tend to communicate related functions such as the visual form and the image act that demands a reader to react.

It can be seen from figure 5 that the image of the "professional" female is often shown to be working among males, while the image of the male "professional" is also often shown to be working among females. The images of females working among males can be seen from Figure 5. These images are categorised under helping and aggressive behaviour (Eagly, 1987).

a. being in a supportive surrounding (helping)
b. carrying or portrayed with object/gadget/things (aggression)

When both female images are portrayed in the same professional roles, it is represented with images that are supportive and caring for another. These images are derived from the data

exploration technique that produces output files to show the images that are from the selected quoted codes. Female images as doctors are classified as professionals due to their respected position in society. These images of female doctors are shown treating patients and tending to their needs. The following image in figure 6 is discussed and arranged based on the illustrations of images that are featured as non-professionals.

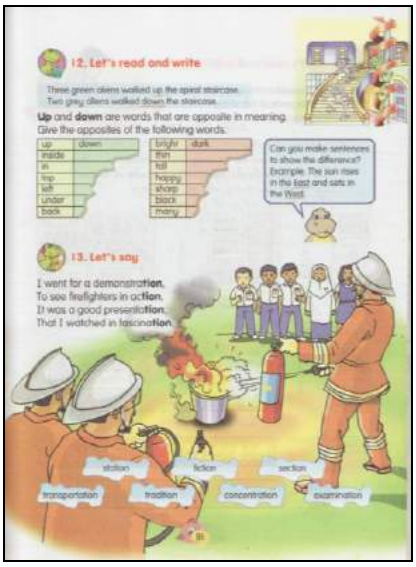

Figure 6. **Firefighter with Bravery**
(Source: English Year 4, 2004: p. 81)

A similar sign of courage is also shown in images of fire fighters. The image of the fire fighters in Figure 6 is given higher modality, emphasizing their uniforms and actions of putting out the fire during a school demonstration. The colour of the fire fighter's orange uniform is given more value that in return, become 'motivated signs' (Kress & vanLeeuwen, 1996, p. 154). The sign of the fire fighter has become the image that is given more emphasis than the image of the pupils. The pupils have become less realistic in comparison with the fire fighters, and this tends to give the image of fire fighters higher modality. The image of the fire-fighters are given a masculine physical attribute, with the pants and the fire extinguisher in their hands, the image is presumably male. The symbol of the RP in pants is mostly understood to be associated with the male image. The image is also identified through agentic qualities by its ability to use the extinguisher. This is also one of the determining beliefs about gender stereotyping based on Eagly and Steffen's argument that men are given agentic and women communal qualities. The display of bravery and self-assertion gives out the agentic quality, which are ascribed to men.

Analysis of Compositional Meanings

The third research question is; how are male and female images arranged in the visual spaces that are represented within their occupational roles?

Compositional meanings in these images are also aimed to reveal aspects such salience, framing, which indicates involvement and/or absence of social distance between the RPs. The image of the doctor in Figure 7 shows a doctor attending to a patient in a clinic or a hospital. The male doctor, who is in a white coat, is pictured as being helpful, and caring while treating his patient. The doctor on the left looks down on his patient, portrayed by the boy lying down on the

bed. The more image of the doctor is given high salience and the image of the male gender is associated with this highly respectable job of treating and caring for a patient. This depiction of the doctor by the male image allows the occupation to be treated as a 'masculine job'. On the right of the page there is an image of a patient, which is the focus of the page, or the page that contains the key information.

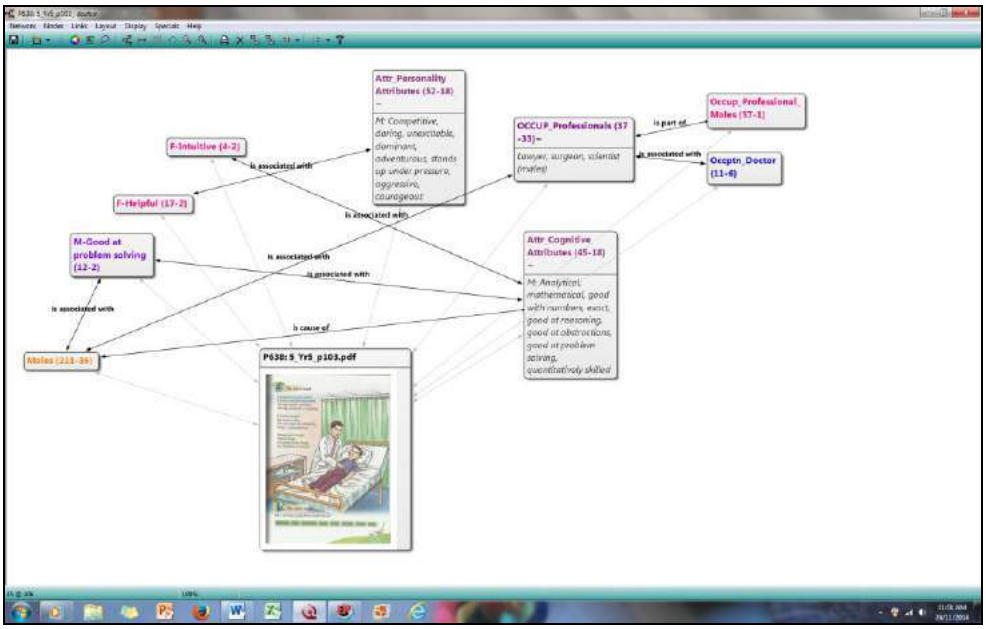

Figure 7 **Doctor as a Professional**

The results revealed that the images of occupational roles in the textbooks were gender stereotyped and that the representation of the professionals favoured males. In addition, the results also revealed that when the non-professional images were shown, the male images were shown with more objects and gadgets while the females were portrayed with animals and children. Moreover, the non-professional roles also depicted males with more challenging, brave and dangerous roles, and while some portrayals of professional females were present, they were illustrated in more masculine features.

The results also showed that the images of RPs in textbooks not only favoured showing more males in more occupational roles, but also leaned towards portraying more males being more professional than females. On the other hand, more females were shown in more maternal and compassionate social roles, through suggesting that a woman's domain is rooted in the household. Indirectly, this supports stereotypic differences in gender roles because it fits into society's expectation about male and female behaviour and characteristics (Eagly, 1987). Eagly posits that expectations of different gender roles implicate social roles to normative behaviour (1987).

The images that are represented as non-professionals below are visually represented with objects that are normally associated with them. Analysing this from the interpersonal metafunction, the modes are associated in the semiotics system of the Malaysian culture.

The non-linear text in Figure 8 reveals a different reading path than what is commonly used as linear text in the textbook. In this pattern, the pupils are free to choose their own way of reading the given incident, which means that they can navigate the text to their own liking. These non-linear texts, according to van Leeuwen & Kress (1996) impose a paradigmatics. This means that readers would tend to select some elements and present them based on a 'paradigmatic logic'. The illustration shown above decodes a reading path that is not chronological but is structured in the dimension of centre and margin.

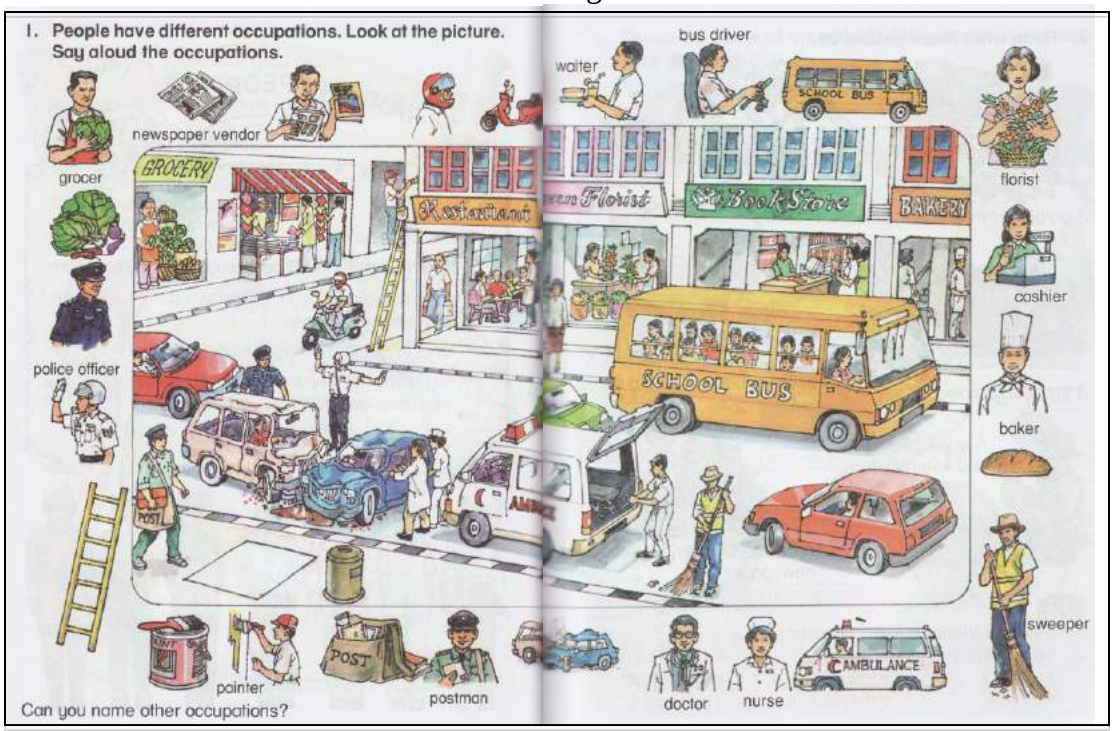

Figure 8. **Non-linear text**
(Source: English Year 3, 2004: p. 74-75)

The image makes emphasis on the centre, through making significant use of the centre with the margin consisting of guides for learners to use as a guide to the occupations shown in the centre. The centre of the image that portrays an accident that is appearing to be in progress has a few occupations that are gender stereotyped along sexist concepts of social roles. The female role in this non-linear text that is also a book spread, suggests that the female role agrees with the aspect of helpfulness (nurse) and sex-typed skills (florist, cashier) (Eagly, 1987). This explains how the image construction is drawn around social roles that are acceptable among society's expectations and appropriate behaviour even when depicting occupational roles.

As shown earlier in Figure 8, non-professional occupations were also depicted in a non-linear text that suggested different events shown on one centrespread page. The occupations that are portrayed in this double-page spread show the various occupations that function in the portrayal. The gender display in this type of framing shows two scenes divided with lines, supposedly disconnecting the two elements. The elements of the image are shown through the display of occupations through *informational value* of *centre* and *margin*. While reading of texts in the English language adheres to the basic left-right structure, the pictures in this non-linear text uses central composition through portraying the accident in the centre margin of the spread. The doctors and nurses in the centre show them helping the victim of a car crash with the

ambulance standing by. The image of the doctor is shown as male and nurse as female, in addition to the traffic police and policeman portrayed as males. This gender stereotyping of the occupations seem to repeat the stereotyping of those portrayals – providing the image of females as florist and cashier, while males are shown as bus driver, newspaper vendor, waiter, baker, sweeper and postman. To generalize, this gives more credence to males as employed workers while subconsciously marginalizing females.

Discussion

From the results of the findings, this study confirms Eagly's (1987; 2000) theory that stipulated the role behaviour of men and women shape gender stereotypes through evidence that the portrayals of males and females in occupations are represented in gender-stereotyped behaviour. The results revealed that the images of occupational roles in the textbooks were gender stereotyped and that the representation of the professionals favoured males. In addition, the results also revealed that when the non-professional images were shown, the male images were shown with more objects and gadgets while the females were portrayed with animals and children. Moreover, the non-professional roles also depicted males with more challenging, brave and dangerous roles, and while some portrayals of professional females were present, they were illustrated in more masculine features.

The results showed that the images of RPs in textbooks not only favoured showing more males in more occupational roles, but also leaned towards portraying more males being more professional than females. On the other hand, more females were shown in more maternal and compassionate social roles, through suggesting that a woman's domain is rooted in the household. Indirectly, this supports stereotypic differences in gender roles because it fits into society's expectation about male and female behaviour and characteristics (Eagly, 1987). These expectations of different gender roles implicate social roles to normative behaviour (ibid 31). In the attempt to create an egalitarian environment in the school system, it has somehow failed to recognize some features of gender equality particularly in the materials that the pupils study. The textbooks that serve as guidelines are not helping to promote the full potentials of young boys and girls.

A more gender-equal solution would be to give children a wider range of portrayals of men and women in order to communicate gender norms to children (Diekman & Murnen, 2004). Males and females are not randomly distributed across this social life, and recognizing these differences would shape children's experiences (Wharton, 2012) and expose children to the actual roles that adults are ascribed to.

Conclusion

This social semiotic analysis is able to unveil how meanings are made in this visual representation. The results of this analysis can be useful for textbook publishers, textbook designers and illustrators through understanding how to create representational, interpersonal and compositional meanings in texts. This study revealed that the English language textbook images that are used in school contain gender-stereotyped images. Implicitly, the representation of these gender-typed images that are shown from the textbooks do affect behaviour (Cameron, 2008). The readers can emulate images that show gender-stereotyped behaviour. This finding needs to

be challenged and cannot be ignored. Findings have shown how gender stereotyping is still prevalent. Thus, this implies that gender stereotypes should be minimized or hopefully eliminated and how a more equal treatment of gender should be inculcated and expressed through illustrations presented in the textbooks. Though guidelines for sex role stereotyping in the Malaysian textbook curriculum may include substantial reminders for eliminating gender, cultural and racial discrimination, the curriculum still needs research and clearer guidelines towards achieving gender-neutral goals in curriculum in which could serve as an exemplary guideline for future efforts on curriculum change nationwide. An addition to setting up a gender-fair curriculum, is also adding to a semiotics-based curriculum as championed by Suhor (1984). Suhor suggests that semiotics provides a useful framework for conceptualizing curriculum in the language arts and that it can be embedded in specific instructional activities. If it is possible for a semiotics-based curriculum to be conceived through including a gender-fair curriculum in this model, this requirement for such model would include a clearly constructed semiotics-based programme that would involve a range of linguistic skill that would take into account gender sensitivities. In other words, it would involve a constellation of interdisciplinary study that would, in return, produce better-rounded pupils who are critical and independent in their thinking.

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Tripartite Cycle Model (TCM): an Alternative Solution for Translating Novels from English into Indonesian

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Abstract

Translating novels is a very complicated and hard job because it has many crucial aspects in the forms of language and contents of message. It is full of specific cultural items that have deep meanings which are difficult for translators to render. This research tried to search the novel translation problems in translation documents, translator' experiences during translation process, and novel translation readers' responses, especially on the problems of translating idioms, metaphors, similes, and personifications. This research used a qualitative study with Holistic Criticism Approach (Sutopo, 2006) that focused on novel translation documents (*Objective factor*), novel translators (*Genetic factor*), and novel translation readers (*Affective factors*). The research instruments used were translation documents and interview guides. The data were analyzed by using *contrastive analysis* (James, 1998) and *Interactive Model* (Miles and Huberman, 1984). The data of idioms, metaphors, and personifications were analyzed based on the translation strategies that covered translation techniques, methods, and idiology. The research results showed that the translation products were not accurate, natural, and readable yet. Finally as the solution, *Tripartite Cycle Model* (TCM) was formulated and designed for novel translators in order they can produce good quality of translation products.

Keywords: Novel translation, Tripartite Cycle Model, Holistic Criticism Approach, Content Analysis, Interactive model

Introduction

Translating novels has a striking difference when compared to translate non-literary texts. Translating texts is not as complicated science to translate literary works (Purwoko, 2006, p. 19). Literary work contains aspects that are unique and rather difficult to translate. Literary works have different text structures and linguistic characteristics that are different from the non-literary works. Thus, translating the work has its own difficulties and complexity (Soemarno, 1988, pp. 19-21).

Literary text itself is the work of containing the message and style. Messages containing connotative meaning and style forming the aesthetics and poetics mechanism are parts of literature characteristics. Literature itself is a series of papers that describe the history of a community, containing artistic and aesthetic value, as well as to read as a reference (McFadden in Meyer, 1997, p. 2).

A literary translator would face numerous difficulties, such as difficulties associated with meaning, such as lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, contextual and situational meaning, textual meaning, and socio-cultural significance. There are two types of meanings, firstly the meaning that is easily to translate or translatable and secondly the meaning that is very difficult to translate or even untranslatable. Furthermore, if an interpreter is already well aware of his or her role, he or she will produce a good translation, the translation quality results, easy to understand, natural and looks like not the result of translation as well as useful as a source of information (Kovács, 2008, p. 5).

The novel as a work of fiction is one genre that is read and told much both oral and written. Novel itself contains the values and the cultural content of a community. Type a lot of text read by the students as a medium of entertainment and instructional materials. This is supported by the Indonesian current curriculum in the secondary schools, particularly which include the novel as one of contemporary literary works as teaching materials. Novel is the source of reading and teaching materials which is used as reading materials. For the purposes of teaching and learning in teaching English as well as in order to disseminate information about the cross-cultural (Cross-Cultural Understanding) between Indonesia and other countries around the world, the English novels need to be translated into Indonesian accurately, acceptably and in accordance with the character of the Indonesian nation. This effort is part of the conservation of cultural heritage and national character value, namely the conservation of the culture of spoken and written speech.

Therefore, to produce good Indonesian translation novels, the quality translation must be in accordance with Indonesian readerships. It is therefore necessary to formulate a model of translation that will be expected to provide the best solution to produce a good translation product that is adaptive to the value and character of the Indonesian local culture.

Literature Review

Previous Studies

Here are some previous research that into consideration or the starting point for new research plan as a continuation of previous research studies.

The first study is a research on the analysis and evaluation of novel literary translations done by Suryawinata (1982) in his dissertation entitled "Analysis and Evaluation of Novel Literary Translation the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn from English to Indonesian". In his research, Suryawinata (1982) attempted to analyze: 1) the legibility, 2) literature that includes a theme and event, the atmosphere, the fabric of the story, characterization, 3) linguistic, 4) grammar, and 5) stylistics. Suryawinata's research more dominantly analyzed objective factors alone. He was more likely to assess the accuracy and errors from the translation of the novel in general. The study only analyzed the novel document translation, did not reveal the background of the novel translator, and the reader of the translation products, so the research was not holistic. Suryawinata (1982) focused on the translation of the anatomy of prose fiction, the theme and the event, the atmosphere, interwoven stories, and characterization. The issues referring to Suryawinata's stilistics was the style of the novel author that in general exposure to story content, not style (figures of speech).

The second study is a study conducted by Crespo (1998), the research on the problem of translating "The New York Trilogy" by Paul Auster from English into Spanish. "The New York Trilogy" is a literary work published in 1988 by Paul Auster consisting of three headline stories: "City of Glass", "Ghost" and "The Locked Room". In his research, Crespo (1998) analyzed the translation of the names, rhymes, a play on words (wordplay), idioms, allusions, and everyday expressions (colloquialisms) from English into Spanish. From his research, he discovered that the units of these translations were translated using the technique of synonyms and paraphrasing.

The third study is Hu's research (2000). He examined the problem of translating the novel by thrusting a solution to reduce the problems and difficulties in translating the novel. He researched the translation of prose fiction with sociosemiotic approach as a solution. Based on the results of his research, he argued that sociosemiotic approach could help translators of prose fiction do optimal translation because with such an approach, literary translator was equipped with the basics of translation theory and practice of translation intensively. According to the study, Hu (2000) did not analyze the problems relating to the translation of the novel translation products. Similarly, he did not examine the novel interpreter and the readers' response. He merely examined how the sociosemiotic approach can help translators produce an accurate, natural, and acceptable translation, so that the translation can be internalized by readerships as the original.

The fourth is a research study conducted by Traore (2005). He conducted the research on the English translation of the novel "Translating a Swahili novel into 'Kizungu': to the Italian" Separazione, the Italian Edition of Said Ahmed Mohamed's Utengano ". In his research, Traore (2005) analyzed only translation of words and phrases, and idiomatic expressions and proverbs that contained cultural values, such as the names of food, drink, clothing, household utensils, other objects and a day-to-greeting day from English to Italian.

The fifth is a research done by Newell and Tallentire (2006) on translation of scientific fiction (science fiction) by Judith Merril "Kaributsu Ba'asan" from Japanese to English. In this study they focused only on the analysis of the translation of 'when will' (Future Tense) is quite problematic from Japanese to English because the Japanese does not know 'when' that is associated with the event or events that will come (lack of the future indicative tense). If the

terms of the factors they studied, Newell and Tallentire (2006) only examined the problem of translation sentences containing future tense, while the factor regarding the difficulties faced by the translator was not studied.

Once observed, five studies above have different focuses, for example: 1) Suryawinata (1982) only accentuated the objective and affective factors alone, he only viewed the criticism of formality and emotional meaning. Objective factors examined include literary aspects (theme and event, the atmosphere, the fabric of the story, characterization, aspects of language, grammar, stylistics, whereas affective factor is the readability level of the translation, 2) Crespo (1998) examined only objective factors (criticism of formality), i.e. the translation of the names, rhymes, a play on words (wordplay), idioms, allusions, and everyday expressions (colloquialisms) and translation techniques, 3) Hu (2000) only proposed a solution for the translation of the novel using Sociosemiotic Approach which is considered as the most effective way to help translators translate the novel, 4) Traore (2005) targeted only on objective factor alone (criticism of formality) that is the translation of words and phrases, and idiomatic expressions and proverbs that contain cultural values, as well as methods and techniques of translation, and 5) Newell and Tallentire (2006) examined only a small portion of objective factor (criticism of formality, which focuses on the translation of sentences using the future tense and genetic factors, namely the difficulties translators.

From five previous studies above, it is known that they have not studied literary works holistically. It means that they have not researched the translation work of three factors as a whole, namely the formal conditions of work of translation, the translator of historical factors, and factors of an emotional condition of the readers of the translation work (Sutopo: 2006). They more researched on criticism of formality, namely the formal conditions of the work of translation only. In addition, only a few of them examined the background of the translator (criticism of historicism), although they only revealed the difficulties faced by the translator of literary works. This has become an important issue in the study of translation of literary works today because the research still shaped partial critique, not holistic criticism. Therefore it is a necessity to conduct research that can close loopholes previous studies.

In this research the researchers did novel translation analysis based on a holistic criticism, namely focusing on the synthesis of historicism criticism, criticism of formality, and emotional criticism that will generate a novel collaborative model of translation, namely *Tripartite Cycle Model*. It can be an alternative solution that provides a significant contribution in the world of translation novel.

Theoretical Review

Novel Translation

Translating literary texts is different from translating non-literary texts. A translator of literary texts should have the linguistic knowledge sources (SL) and the target language (TL), SL and TL cultural understanding and deep appreciation of literary works translated. As cited by Suryawinata (1996), a literary translator must have proficiency in the field of linguistics, literature and aesthetics, and social culture, so in this case it can be said that if a translator of literary works do not have these factors, he or she would have difficulties in translating literary works (p. 173).

Translating literature is not just diverting the message or just looking for the equivalent of the source language into the target language (TL), but translating the ideas and goals of the author (author), so that the original message (message) and the purpose of the writer's message (intention) itself goes up to the readers (receiver) (Nord, 1997, pp. 80-84). Furthermore, it can be said that translating literary works (prose fiction in particular) is more difficult than translating types of non-literary texts as if translating literature, a translator must not only have the ability of bilingual but also have insight both sociocultural resources and sociocultural goals.

In connection with this, Hu (2000) asserts that translation of fiction is much more complicated than the translation of other genres, as it offers section not only with bilingual, but also bi-cultural and bi-social transference (p. 1). From this opinion, it can be concluded that the translation of fiction, in this respect also the novel, is more difficult and complicated than translating other types of works, for translating fiction is not only translating two languages which have different systems but also transferring meaning from two different sociocultural contexts. It is true because the novel is a fiction or essay that reflects a life and meaning in the form of language that require high interpretations, symbols in the form of cultural and social background and character that requires a deep understanding.

Furthermore Newmark (1988) adds that the novel contains idiomatic expressions that are not owned by the texts of non-literary (p. 170). Phrases in the dialogue that are often in the form of implicature and meaning are based on the users in certain sociocultural contexts so that translators should have a high ability of interpretation to seek the equivalent of implicatures accordance with the sociocultural contexts and target readers. Similarly, idiomatic expressions or phrases have the connotative meaning, so that the translator must accurately search for equivalents in accordance with the social and cultural context and readerships.

In addition Reiss (in Nord, 1997) adds that a literary translation orients itself towards the particular character of the work of art, taking as its guiding principle the author's creative will. Lexis, syntax, style and structure are manipulated in such a way that they bring about in the targeted language covering an aesthetic effect is analogous to the expressive individual character of the source text."

From the above it is known that literary translation orients itself towards the nature of literary works in accordance with the will of the creative writer. Lexis, syntax, style and structure are bridging aesthetic effects in the target language as an analogue of expressive individual character in the source language. This means that the translation of a literary work must be in accordance with the principle, idea, purpose of the authors of literary works and aesthetic value as an expression of a character contained in the literary work.

Furthermore, it can be said that the translation of the novel is different from the translation of non-fiction text. Novel translation requires precision, clarity and fairness remarkable because the translator must be able to transfer, from a text source (ST) into the target text (TT), not only the meaning or message contained in the form of connotative language, but also all the meanings that are in symbols or forms of cultural and social in the story presented. This means that a translator must have language skills at least two languages, two cultures and the knowledge of

society, the theory of translation, literary theory and appreciation, motivation and tenacity as a capital to do the translation. Translating a novel should be like of telling back (retelling) story content to others, so that the translation was not seen as a translation, but a fairy tale and readable natural or heard (Hoed, 2009).

Wang (2009) says that it is very hard to translate literary works, to think both in the same time, the first you make the meaning you are closed into the target language. The second you maintain the original flavor. That's very hard to do. It's not just rendering but replacing. It is very hard to do, so that what people say is rewriting process to be creative in that way.

Translating literary works is very difficult, therefore the translator can take several steps, the first example, searching for meaning as close as possible to the source language. The second, the translator must maintain a sense of values that exists in the source text. Two things can be tried if rewriting is still considered difficult to do. If the translator translates the image or symbol, he must understand it first. Then he or she associates it with cultural elements and the language of the target user community he knew.

Rules of Novel Translation

Hilaire Belloc (in Bassnett-McGuire, 1991, p. 116) suggests six novel translation rules as follows:

(1) The translator should not 'plod on', word by word or sentence by sentence, but should always 'block out' his work. By 'block out', the translator should consider the work as an integral unit and translate in section, asking himself 'before each what the whole sense is he has to render'.
(2) The translator should render idiom by idiom 'and idioms of their nature demand translation into another form from that of the original'.
(3) The translator must render 'intention by intention', bearing in mind that 'the intention of a phrase in one language may be less emphatic than the form of the phrase, or it may be more emphatic'.
(4) The translator warns against *les faux amis*, those words or structures that may appear to correspond in both SL and TL but actually do not, e.g. demander–to ask, translated wrongly as to demand.
(5) The translator is advised to 'transmute boldly' and it is suggested that the essence of translating is 'the resurrection of an alien thing in a native body'.
(6) The translator should never embellish.

From the six proposed rules Belloc (in Bassnett-McGuire, 1991) above it can be seen that a translator should not determine the pace just to translate word-by-word or sentence-by-sentence. He should always takes into consideration the whole work, either original works or works of translation. Firstly, the translator must take the original text as a whole integral unit, although at the time of translating, he works part-by-part course. Secondly, the translator should translate idioms into idioms anyway. Idioms in the source text (ST) should be homologized in target text (TT) idioms, though the words used are not exactly the same. Thirdly, the translator should translate intents with intents as well. The intention in this case means the charge emotion or feeling contained by a particular expression. ST emotional charge in the expression could have been more powerful than the emotional charge of the equivalent in TT. Instead, specific expression was more fitting in the ST, but it will be awkward in TT, if it is translated literally.

Fourthly, the translator should be wary of words or structures that appear similar in the ST and TT, but it is actually very different (similar but not identical). Fifthly, the translator should dare to change the things that need to be changed from ST into TT firmly. Activities of translating fiction are like resurrecting a foreign life in the figure of the indigenous body. The definition of a foreign soul is the meaning of the story in the SL, while the indigenous body is the target language (TL). Sixth, the translator should not embellish or embroider on the original story with decorations that can make a story in ST it was worse or more beautiful once. Translator task is to revive foreign life before, not beautify, moreover it worse.

The rules above can help translators prose, especially the novel, to determine the practical steps in the process of translation in general, for example, pay attention to the overall cohesion within the meaning of the content of the novel, watching the equivalent idiom, emotional charge, the structure of the language, approaches and strategies of translation and fidelity to the message of the original author. However, according Taryadi (2000) the rules above is not enough to deliver a person becomes a translator novels tested in the field as it is one of the results of the relative translation (p. 1).

Novel Translation Approach

Nida in Hu (2000), as an American translator having deep experiences in translating a wide variety of literary works, suggests that a novel approach to translation is considered to be highly applicable for translators prose fiction in translation process (p. 6). Translation approach is a sociosemiotic approach. Sociosemiotics on this is very positive and gives enlightenment to the world of prose fiction translation (of which the novel). Nida in Hu (2000) says:

> "Perhaps the most pervasive and crucial contribution to understanding the translation process is to be found in sociosemiotics, the discipline that treats all systems of signs used by human societies. The great advantage of semiotics over other approaches to interlingual communication is that it deals with all types of signs and codes, especially with language as the most comprehensive and complex of all systems of signs employed by humans. No holistic approach to translating can exclude semiotics as a fundamental discipline in encoding and decoding signs." (p. 7)

From the above statement, sociosemiotic approach can help translators understand the meaning of words and sentences, as well as structures with better discourse. In addition to this approach translators can reveal the nature of the symbol of two different meanings, namely denotative (designative) and connotative meaning (associative).

The basic theory of this approach is the theory of Halliday's sociosemiotics, namely the theory of sosiosemiotic language. Halliday stressed the unity of the text, the context of linguistic and non-linguistic, and social structures. He also noted that the language is a unique marking system with a social function that is able to express the meaning of the whole system other marks. Newmark (1988) gives the classification of language functions into six functions, while Halliday in Hu (2000) just splitted into three categories. Three categories of language functions according to Halliday in Hu (2000) are the ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function. The six functions of language according to Newmark (1988) include: 1) expressive functions is the function of language that essentially covers the idea of the author of the original

text, the angle of view of his world and the purpose of writing prose fiction, 2) informative function is the function language which essentially covers the external situation, the facts of the topic, the reality outside of language, for example, ideas or theories in prose fiction, 3) function vocatives is the function of language that essentially includes readers and social consequences of the expected of the literary work in question as an idea of the author, 4) function aesthetic is the function of language designed to create a sense bases, sense of literature, and entertainment through a wide presentation of the figure of speech, symbol, design flow, and others, 5) phatic function is that language functions relating to speech and dialogue in prose fiction aimed at maintaining a relationship of familiarity and hospitality with the viewers than just convey information, and 6) metalingual function is namely language skills or a set of symbols used to decipher the language itself although the language of the latter function is rarely associated with the language of fiction.

The essence of this approach is the semiotic approach of Morris (Hu, 2000), i.e. semiotic approach to meaning. Morris presents that a sign is a trinity (a tripartite entity) and divide into three-dimensional meaning: semantic, syntactic and pragmatics, the referential meaning (designative meaning) that shows the relationship between the verbal language to its referents, linguistic meaning (linguistic meaning) which shows the relationship between signs and pragmatic meaning (associative meaning) that shows the relationship between verbal language with interpreters.

The Study

The research method used in this study is Qualitative Evaluative Research Based on Holistic Criticism Approach (Sutopo, 2006). The types of data used are only primary data that consist of idiomatic expressions and figurative languages (metaphor, simile, and personification) taken from the original and translated novels, interview records with the novel translator, and questionnaire results from target readers. The data were gathered by using documentation, interview, and questionnaire techniques. The data were analyzed by using contrastive analysis (James, 1998), and interactive analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Objective factor was categorized and analyzed contrastively. Genetic and affective factors were categorized and each category was compared componentially. All data were analyzed in the cycle of interactive analysis: data reduction, analysis and discussion of data (display), and verification (Hartono, 2012).

Findings and Discussion

Objective Factor (Novel Translation Documents)

The followings are results of the research that cover three main findings of document analysis (*Objective factor*), interview results (*Genetic factor*), and readers' responses on translation.

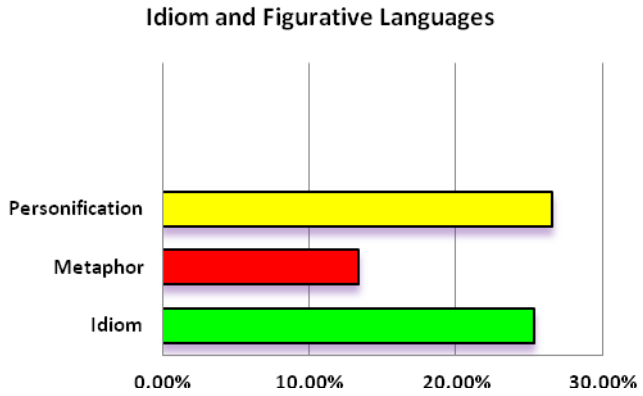

Figure 1. **The analysis result of novel translation**

All objective factors were analyzed by means of contrastive analysis. Each category, namely idiom, metaphor and personification was analyzed based on techniques, methods, and ideology in translation. Here are the examples of translation products:

Data 1 (Idiomatic Translation)

ST : *They never took anything off of anybody, they* **get along** *on what they have. They don't have much, but they* **get along** *on it."*

TT : Mereka tidak pernah mengambil apa pun dari siapa pun, mereka merasa ***tercukupi*** dengan apa yang mereka punya. Mereka tidak punya banyak, tapi mereka men***cukup***kannya."

Based on the text above the idiom 'get along' is translated into 'tercukupi'. Based on the technique of translation, this idiom is translated by using Established equivalent technique because it is an equivalent word in Bahasa. It means that this emphasizes on the idiomatic method and the translator tends to the domestication ideology in her translation process.

Data 2 (Metaphor Translation)

ST : *"***Cecil Jacobs is a big wet he-en***!"*

TT : "***Cecil Jacobs induk ayam baa-saah!***"

According to the text above the ST *"Cecil Jacobs is a big wet he-en!"* is translated to Indonesian metaphor "Cecil Jacobs induk ayam baa-saah!". However, this metaphor is translated based on the literal technique. It means that this technique emphasizes on the literal method and the translator tends to the foreignization ideology in her translation process.

Data 3 (Personification Translation)

ST : **The cats had long conversation with one another, they were cunning little clothes** *and lived in a warm house beneath a kitchen stove.*

TT : ***Kucing-kucing itu bercakap-cakap panjang lebar, mereka memakai baju-baju indah***, dan tinggal di rumah hangat di bawah kompor dapur.

Based on the text above it is known that TT is translated into ST by using literal technique because all phrases in this sentence are translated by using denotative meaning though the TT meaning is the same as the ST meaning. Both have to personification meaning. Thus this

technique of translation emphasizes on the literal method and the translator tends to the foreignization ideology.

The following table is a description of each category with a description of the number and percentage of data.

Table 1. ***Idiom Translation based on the Techniques, Methods, and Ideology***

Translation Data	**Ways of Translation**			**Number of Data**	**Percentage**
Idiom Translation *(N=47)*	Technique	Single	Transposition	3	6,4%
			Literal	15	31,9%
			Established Equivalent	2	4,3%
			Modulation	3	6,4%
		Duplet	Transposition + Addition	2	4,3%
			Transposition + Literal	5	10,6%
			Transposistion + Reduction	2	4,3%
			Transposition + Modulation	3	6,4%
			Established Equivalent + Literal	5	10,6%
			Established Equivalent + Modulation	1	2,1%
			Established Equivalent + Transposition	4	8,5%
			Literal + Modulation	1	2,1%
			Literal + Adition	1	2.1%
	Methods		Word-for-word	1	2,1%
			Literal	17	36,2%
			Semantic	1	2,1%
			Free	6	12,8%

	Idiomatic		22	46,8%
Ideology	Foreignisation	Word-for-word	1	2,1%
		Literal	17	36,2%
		Semantic	1	2,1%
	Domestication	Free	6	12,8%
		Idiomatic	22	46,8%

The total number of utterances of data containing the data idiom is 47 (N = 47). Based on the results of data analysis, it was found that idioms translated using a single translation techniques and duplet. Single translation techniques used by the translator are transposition technique (3 units = 6.4%), literal technique (15 units = 31.9%), a technique commonly equivalence (2 units = 4.3%), and the modulation technique (3 units = 6.4%). Then duplet translation technique is the technique of transposition + addition (2 units = 4.3%), transposition + literal (5 units = 10.6%), transposition + reduction (2 units = 4.3%), transposition + modulation (3 units = 6.4%), prevalent + literal equivalence (5 units = (10.6%), equivalence modulation prevalent (1 unit = 2.1%), transposition of equivalence prevalent (4 units = 8.5%), literal + modulation (1 = 2.1%), and the literal + adducts (1 unit = 2.1%). Of the many single and duplet translation techniques are used, the more dominant translators using translation techniques indirectly (Indirect translation technique) as much as 98%, which is dominated by transposition technique, common equivalence, addition, reduction, and modulation. Thus, that the translator was in favor of the target language and prone to domestication ideology.

Table 2. ***Metaphor Translation based on the Techniques, Methods, and Ideology***

Translation Data	**Ways of Translation**		**Number of Data**	**Percentage**
Metaphor Translation *(N=25)*	Technique	Single	Transposition	1	4%
			Literal	10	40%
		Duplet	Transposition + Addition	2	8%
			Literal + Modulation	1	4%
			Literal + Addition	5	20%
			Literal + Borrowing	1	4%
			Literal + Reduction	1	4%
			Description + Addition	1	4%
			Modulation + Addition	1	4%

		Modulation + Reduction		1	4%
	Triplet	Literal + Adition + Transposition		1	4%
	Method	Literal		20	80%
		Semantic		1	4%
		Free		4	16%
	Ideology	Foreignisation	Literal	20	80%
			Semantic	1	4%
		Domestication	Free	4	16%

The total number of utterances of data containing the data metaphor is 25 (N = 47). Based on the results of data analysis found that the metaphor is translated using a single translation techniques, duplet, and triplet. Single translation techniques used by the translator is a transposition technique (4%) and literal technique (10 unit = 40%). Then duplet translation technique is the technique of transposition + addition (2 units = 8%), literal + modulation (1 unit = 4%), literal + addition (5 units = 20%), the literal borrowing (1 unit = 4%), literal + reduction (1 unit = 4%), description + addition (1 unit = 4%), modulation + addition (1 unit = 4%), and modulation + (1 unit= 4%). The technique is literal technique that consists of triplet adduct + transposition (1 unit = 4%). Of the many single translation techniques, duplet, and triplets are used, the more dominant translators using translation techniques directly (Direct Translation Technique) as much as 76% which is dominated by literal techniques, borrowing. Thus, the translator was in favor of the source language (SL) and inclined at foreignization ideology.

Table 3. ***Personification Translation based on the Methods, Techniques, and Ideology***

Translation Data	**Ways of Translation**			**Number of Data**	**Percentage**
Personification Translation *(N=42)*	Technique	Single	Transposition	1	2,4%
			Literal	23	54,7%
		Duplet	Transposition + Addition	1	2,4%
			Transposition + Literal	5	11,9%
			Transposition + Reduksi	1	2,4%
			Literal + Modulation	2	4,8%
			Literal + Addition	3	7,1%
			Literal + Reduksi	1	2,4%
			Modulation + Addition	1	2,4%
		Triplet	Literal + Addition + Transposition	2	4,8%
			Literal + Reduksi + Pure Borrowing	1	2,4%
			Literal + Transposition + Pure Borrowing	1	2,4%
	Metode		Literal	37	88 %
			Faithful	2	4,8%

		Semantic		2	4,8%
		Communicative		1	2,4%
	Ideologi	Foreignisation	Literal	37	88 %
			Faithful	2	4,8%
			Semantic	2	4,8%
		Domestication	Comunicative	1	2,4%

The total number of utterances of data containing the personification of the data is 42 (N = 42). Based on the results of data analysis above, it was found that the personification was translated using a single translation techniques, duplet, and triplet. Single translation techniques used by the translator is a transposition technique, only 1 unit (2.4%) and literal technique, 23 units (54.7%). Duplet translation technique is the technique of transposition + adducts, 1 unit (2.4%), transposition + literal 5 units (11.9%), transposition + reduction, 1 unit (2.4%), literal + modulation, 2 unit (4.8%), literal + adducts, 3 units (7.1%), literal + reduction, 2 units (4.8%), modulation + adducts, 1 unit (2.4%). The technique includes a technique literal translation of triplet adduct + transposition, 2 units (4.8%), literal + reduction + pure borrowing, 1 unit (2.4%), and literal + borrowing purely as 1 unit (2, 4%). Of the many single translation techniques, duplet and triplets are used and dominantly the translator used the direct translation technique as much as 77.5% dominated by the literal technique. Thus, the translator was in favor of the source language (SL) and inclined at the foreignization ideology.

Genetic Factor (Novel Translator)

Presentation of data in this section is different with the presentation of data on objective factors. The data found from genetic factors revealed on the background, experience, competence, and a novel strategy translator. All findings in this section have contributed and correlation with the findings obtained from objective factors. Here are the findings of a study of genetic factors obtained by interview.

Table 4. ***Interview Data from the Translator***

Novel Translator	Educational Background	Non-formal translation education
		Not English scholar
		Self-study
	Experiences	Part timer translator
		Novel series translator
		Translating more than 30 novels
	Competency	Not paying attentions to idioms and figurative languages translation
		Depending on her basic English for translating the novel
		Having good grammar mastery
	Translation Strategies	Reading more books of translation theories
		Doing collaborations with the novel translator when the translation process

	Doing discussion with the novel translation when facing the problems of translation Using the internet browsing to find out difficult terms Composing her own thesaurus Using monolingual dictionary when translating the novel Taking part in seminars and conferences of translation Doing cultural research Editing the translation products Using idiomatic translation method Using faithful translation method Using word-for-word translation method Using literal translation method Using transposition translation technique

Affective Factor (Translation Readers)

The following table describes about the research finding taken from the affective factor.

Table 5. ***Readers' Response on Translation Products***

	Assessment Level	**Idiom**	**Metaphor**	**Personification**
Affective Factor (Target Readers of Translated Novel	Accuracy Level	Accurate (59.5%)	Inaccurate (36%)	Less accurate (54.7%)
	Naturalness Level	Natural (61.7%)	Less natural (80%)	Less natural (66.7%)
	Readability Level	High (48.9%)	Middle (52%)	Middle (59.5%)

Based on the tables above the research findings state that 1) idioms were translated generally by using idiomatic translation method, 2) metaphors and personifications were translated by using literal translation method. Then, idioms were translated by using indirect translation techniques, while metaphors and personifications were translated by using direct translation techniques. So, it indicates that the novel translator oriented to the source text (ST) and kept the domestication ideology for translating idioms, oriented to the source text (ST) and kept the foreignization ideology for translating metaphors and personifications. Based on interview with the novel translator, it is found that the translator used idiomatic translation method and transposition technique for translating idioms and used word-for-word, literal, and faithful translation methods for translating figurative languages. Then, based on the target readers' responses, it is found that idioms were translated accurately, while metaphors and personifications were not accurate yet. Based on the naturalness level, the translation quality of idioms is natural, while metaphors and personifications are not natural yet. The translation quality of readability level indicates that idioms get high level of readability, while metaphors and personifications are on the middle level of readability (Hartono, 2012).

Solution

Tripartite Cycle Model

To anticipate the problems of translating a novel in general, I try to introduce an alternative solution that is called *Tripartite Cycle Model of Novel Translation*. This model will be effective for all translators if they want to translate a novel from English into Indonesian or vice versa (Hartono, 2012, p. 367).

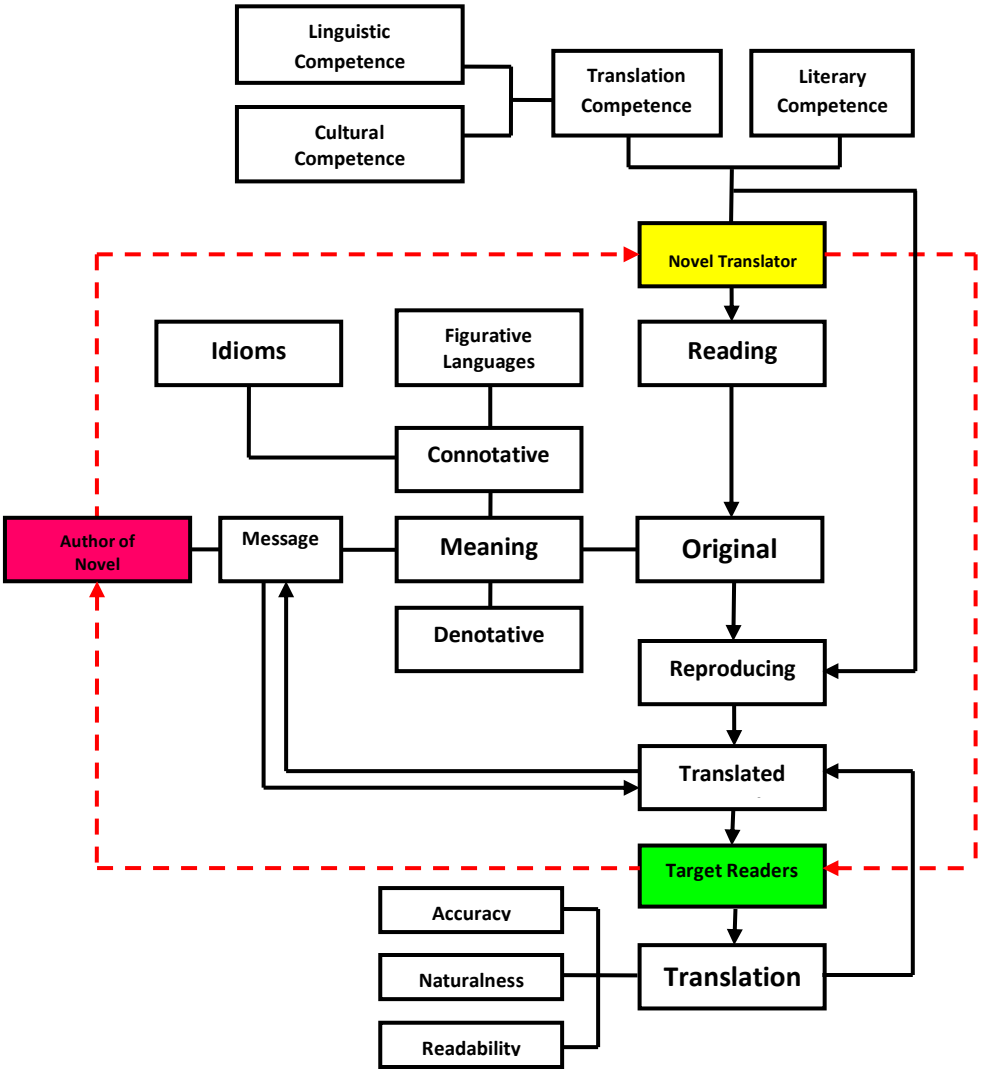

Figure 2. Tripartite Cycle Model of Novel Translation

Conclusion and Recommendation

From the discussion above it can be concluded that firstly there are many mistakes occurred in the translation of the English novel into Indonesian, particularly in the style of language translation of idioms and expressions. Secondly, the translators still have difficulties in

translating the novel from English into Indonesian considering many elements and cultural terms are difficult to translate.

Based on the problems mentioned above, the *Tripartite Cycle Model* can be an alternative translation model that can accommodate the problems and practical solutions in translating the novel from English into Indonesian in particular and all translation from one language to another in general. It can be a model of collaborative translation to facilitate the traffic between the ST author, translator, and readers.

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"I Like Adventure but I Don't Like Writing": A Case Study of a Digital Native Fifth Grader in an ESL Classroom

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Abstract
Evident in classrooms today, it is not uncommon to have young learners skillful as technology users and game players who enjoy the hardship of taking part in challenging games and competitions, paradoxically, unwilling to deal with the challenges of the writing game. Perhaps it is logical to assume that the most convenient means to engage this group of learners in the writing process is to present them with instructional practices that they deem interesting and stimulating. To put this into practice, this study reports on the work with a digital native in an effort to develop a more positive attitude towards writing and with the ultimate aim of improving his writing performance. The foci of this study is three-fold: it explores the qualities that this learner has and brings to light the challenges he faces in the writing process as well as it looks into potential strategies and methods that might motivate him to become a better writer. Further implications and recommendations are suggested for teachers to engage such kind of learners in the world of writing.
***Key words*:** ESL, instruction, motivation, writing, strategies

Introduction

In this globalized world of today, written English has become the predominant medium of international communication. In accordance with this view, developing students' writing skills has become a key target in various educational fields and disciplines (Liu, 2011). In the realm of language teaching, for instance, emphasis is not merely placed on the development of the spoken language but learning good writing skills is now regarded central (Matsuda et al, 2011). This change in the nature of instruction was in fact powered by recent trends in the teaching writing in ESL environments.

Second Language Writing and Writers

The field of second language writing has received much attention in the last few decades. Many recent publications have added new perspectives on our understanding of "good" writing and instruction (Matsuda et al, 2011). Engaging students actively in the learning process entails creating a writing pedagogy in a vibrant and lively environment. It is possible to say that this happens when students, as the center of instruction, write about topics of their own selection, share their experiences and use their competencies: academic, linguistic and sociocultural to create a better world (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). Perhaps more important is another perspective that is evident in Bartholomae (1985) critique of some practices in teaching of writing. According to his viewpoint, the main goal of the writing instruction should no longer be to get students to produce error free pieces of writing, "a basic writer is not necessarily a writer who makes a lot of mistakes" (p. 522) but a successful essay is the one that has a discourse which is "natural, smooth and tidy" (p. 519) and has "the necessary syntax to glue the pieces together" (p. 523). Viewing content as the essence of the writing instruction, Matsuda et al (2011) take this further and elaborate on the kind of content most effective for second language learners in particular. Given that language learners come from diverse language and cultural backgrounds carrying with them different literacies, instruction need to be built on students' competencies taking into account the existing literacy practices (Matsuda et al, 2011). This appreciation of students' funds of knowledge and the acknowledgement of their intellectual capabilities (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994) would boost their confidence in writing and have a positive impact on their attitudes towards writing.

Motivation

In addition to employing learners' competencies and literacies, several other methods can be used to increase students' interests and involvement in the writing task as well. Baker (2001) lists a number of effective strategies for motivation that can be used with second language learners. Students' need analysis is ought to be the base where decisions about the syllabus are to be made. The use of authentic materials and multimedia technology is crucial to increase the effectiveness of course content. Another point is about selecting varied and challenging activities. In fact, the element of the choice of challenging activities is also consistent with Gee's principals of what creates good learning. In his research to study what engage players in video games, Gee (2007) suggests that schools need to incorporate elements that make instruction, similar to playing good video games, motivating and entertaining. In a learning environment, students need to feel a sense of agency when they explore, think, rethink and find solutions to problems. Therefore, teachers have the responsibility to understand the background and the experiences of learners and develop instructional practices to meet their needs (Matsuda et al, 2011).

The Purpose of this Study

The overall purpose of this study was to explore the characteristics and the interests of a struggling second language writer and to suggest instructional strategies and methods that could assist him to overcome and cope with the challenges of writing.

In the course of working with this participant, the researcher of this study was interested to find out how attitude and motivation towards writing have an impact on writing practices and development. She was also interested to examine the characteristics and interests that this participant has and value and analyze them to suggest strategies that could help him to be more willing to write. Yet, it is worthy to note that the individual is the most integral part in the learning process and that every learner has unique qualities and challenges that cannot be understood detached from their own perspectives, characteristics and interests.

Data Collection

Toward a more inclusive understanding of the participant characteristics and interests and his writing attitude and practices, several resources were used to gather data. These included semi- structured interviews and informal talks with the participant in the classroom and at home. The researcher also conducted interviews with the participant's parents. Through these interview, she wanted to know his educational background before he came to the United States and his parents' contributions if any in his writing practices at home. The data collection included looking at his writing in class notebooks, audio-recording and collecting information in individualized writing lessons as well as taking field notes of practices during writing tasks. These methods: interviews, observations, written documents helped in understanding the participant's motives, attitudes, interests and writing practices.

Participant's Characteristics and Needs

This overview of the participant's characteristics guides our understanding of the learner and reveals the unique challenges that he faces in writing. The participant of this study, Adam (a pseudonym), was a fifth grader, ten years old, in an elementary schools in the United States. Coming from an Arabic speaking country, this *elective bilingual* (Valdes, 2011) had been in the host country for the last six months before the start of this study. Interesting is the fact that Adam had a strong oral fluency in English, yet, his writing skills were limited. His parents mentioned that in previous school reports, he used to get 'A's in most subjects at end of terms except for English. In parent-teacher conferences, the English teachers had always expressed their dissatisfaction with his writing skill (Parents, personal communication, February 2015). When was asked about his feelings towards writing, he said that writing was "boring" and "hard" because he often did not know what to write (Adam, interview, February, 2015).

Looking closely at Adam's writing reveal a number of observations. His writings showed that he lacked basic skills in writing evident in the recurrent mistakes he made. Punctuation marks were usually missing especially capital letters and frequent misspelled words were also apparent. The writings were short and lacked coherence. Very often he wrote very quickly and did not like to check what he wrote.

The writing and interest inventory (see Appendix A) revealed interesting information as well. Like many of his peers, Adam enjoyed playing and talking about a wide range of competitive activities and games. He loved adventure and proudly expressed that he was good at video games, soccer and card tricks. At school, if he had had the choice of a project, he would have created a poster about soccer, a new game device or improve some existing ones. The only time Adam felt good about writing was when he wrote freely in his "genre". When given a choice, he would prefer to write about fiction because he could be imaginative, "you can make up anything and it doesn't have to be real". He remembered one of the stories he had written in the past and said that his family liked it because it was "descriptive, long" and he had used many "advanced words" (Adam, interview, February, 2015).

His perspectives on ideal writing lessons provided valuable insights about his learning style. Three things he wished teachers would do in writing lessons: (1) reading interesting books and telling students to write about, (2) getting students to write stories in pairs, (3) having writing competitions at the end of each month where students read their books to the whole class. For him, writing would be good if he could think of ideas really fast and when he wrote using a computer or an iPad.

In the light of his interests, writing needs and his ideas about the ideal writing exercises, a lesson plan was built to report to what extent such a plan could help him to be engaged in writing. The following section gives details about the lesson and evaluates and reflects on the tutoring experience.

Lesson Plan and Tutoring Experience

The idea of this lesson was triggered by Adam's interest in writing about the importance of video games. He shared in an earlier conversation that his parents did not encourage him playing video games and always asked him about what he got by spending hours playing video games. We agreed to have this topic for the lesson as it was authentic and Adam would have a real purpose in writing it.

Once the topic was decided upon, it was time to carefully plan the lesson: objectives, methods and procedure. Taking into account that the most difficult challenge that Adam faced was his perception of writing as a "hard" task because as he could not think of ideas, this lesson focused on the prewriting phase of process writing: brainstorming of ideas and organization. To meet this expectation, the plan included free writing to assist him with fluency (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013) and using graphic organizers such as essay maps to help him organize content so he had some input before writing. Furthermore, organization and focus in terms of keeping a list or notebook of ideas and using graphic organizers in writing is one of the Language Arts standards (5.4.1) for fifth graders according to the State standards.

Motivation was an important factor that needed to be taken into account in cases like Adam who did not like writing. The purpose was to engage him in writing for content and postpone dealing with accuracy for future lessons. Research reveal that "good writers concentrated on ideas first rather than on correctness." (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013, p. 256). Another aspect that was considered to further motivate Adam was the use of electronic devises in the lesson. This was because Adam shared in the interest inventory that he found writing more

fun when he wrote using an iPad. Therefore, four activities in this lesson were to be completed by employing the iPad: freewriting, watching a video, completing an online essay map and writing the essay in Google Docs.

The lesson was framed on the basis of four objectives. It was expected that by the end of the lesson the learner would be able to discuss ideas prior to writing which would pave the way to freely write and generate ideas related to the topic. To organize these ideas, the learner needed to be able to complete an essay map to create a framework for the essay. With the purpose of engaging the leaner and to arouse his curiosity and interest, appealing materials and resources were used. These included iPad with Internet access, a sample of an essay (persuasive essay), the essay map of the sample essay, a TED talk video about importance of video games and blank essay maps (online interactive tool) retrieved from www.readwritethink.org.

The lesson started by an opening activity (10 minutes) which was targeted to lead the learner in the lesson. Because he liked talking about video games, a good start was to involve him in a discussion about best video games and why he liked to play them. This was followed by getting him to freely write on a blank document on his iPad whatever comes to his mind about the topic without worrying about order, punctuation or spelling. Stimulation (15 minutes) took place by showing an interesting TED Talk about the same topic. A discussion about the new/interesting points that he got from the video was conducted.

The main teaching phase lasted for twenty minutes where the learner was given a sample essay and was asked to identify (underline and label) the different parts: introduction, body, conclusion, topic sentences and supporting details in each paragraph. The concept of mapping was introduced by giving an overview of the idea of essay mapping. This was strengthened by getting the learners to look at the essay map of the sample essay. In the practical part, the learner was given five minutes to complete electronically a blank essay map in www.readwritethink.net using the information from his free writing. He was reminded that he needed to select the key ideas and that he did not need to include everything.

In the closure (5 minutes) the learner was asked to talk about the components of the essay map that he completed. A discussion was followed with regard to how this framework could be used in writing the essay. Besides, he was provoked to talk about how practical he thought freewriting and essay mapping in assisting him with ideas and organization and that whether he would use this tool in class writing. Several activities followed this lesson. The learner was asked to try freewriting and mapping the topics that would be given to him in class by providing him with printed copies of blank essay maps from the same site. Moreover, as this was the first phase of process writing, the remaining phases were completed in the subsequent meetings. After this lesson, the learner was encouraged to write the first draft of the story by himself in Google Docs which was later edited and improved. The content of the essay was further improved by looking at strategies that could be used in persuasive essays.

The evaluation of the progress was completed in two ways. Informally, the achievement of the objectives were measured in the lesson by direct observation of the completion of the essay map. By oral discussion and free writing, the amount and range of ideas that he produced could be measured. Further evaluation included learner's identification of the components of the

essay and the ones needed further development. The formal evaluation took place after the completion of the essay and could be seen in the learner's ability to free write and map other topics.

Adam enjoyed the lesson as it was mainly about a topic of a great interest to him. He found essay mapping useful in helping him to plan the content of his writing. The least interesting part for him was brainstorming of ideas (free writing). He thought that the oral discussion prior to writing would be adequate in planning the content. Furthermore, noticing how excited Adam was in writing using the iPad, therefore, most activities in future lessons would include the use of iPad or other electronic devises or resources.

Instructional Recommendations

Prompted by current perspectives of teaching writing to second language learners and that writing activities need to be contextualized, authentic, engaging and should be based on accessible content (Reid & Kroll, 2006), the following could be thought of as potential strategies to motivate Adam to engage positively in writing. Though the attempt here is not to generalize but several other digital natives share some of Adam's interests and writing practices, therefore, these could be some practical strategies to involve such students actively in the writing process.

Planning Topics

As the first hurdle for Adam is to come up with ideas, it is important to equip him with strategies for the prewriting stage in order to help him step into the world of writing with more confidence. His future teachers could encourage him to use mapping to help him in generating and planning ideas for writing (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). As he is fond of technology, a good resource could be using electronic essay maps. These are interactive graphic organizers that help in outlining the components of an essay: introductory statement, main ideas, supporting ideas and conclusion. Liu (2011) points out that in addition to helping learners with organization, the mapping process helps learners "facilitate and provoke top down and bottom up thinking, and enhance recall and memory as well" (p. 2556). Another strategy could be thinking of ideas by responding to a series of prompts. For instance, in a persuasive essay, he could write a complete essay by answering three questions: "Tell what I believe!" "Why do I believe this?" and "Do I have good reasons?" (Harris et al, 2006, p. 298).

Teaching Rules and Conventions

Explicit instruction about writing conventions, process and craft would be very effective in the case of Adam. This could include teaching a range of techniques and crafts, for example, showing not telling (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013) and conventions like quotation marks and sentence structure as well as analyzing model stories and essays. A further strategy could be showing him the "tricks of the trade" (Brame, 2011, p. 43) which are strategies used by proficient writers. Examples of these techniques could be derived from authors' biographies, interviews in magazines and publications like Peter Elbow's books about free writing. In these lessons, teachers could help the learner discover the strategies employed by proficient writers in the process of writing such as creating a writing space, drawing inspiration from nature, and crafting the texts. Presumably, showing him authentic writing experiences of successful writers would have a profound impact on his attempt to writing. As a math prodigy according to his teachers and parents (parents, personal communication, February, 2015) and an adept game player, he

becomes more engaged and creative when he is aware of the secrets and rules of the game (Gee, 2007) played by the professionals.

Journal Writing

Because most of the writing tasks in schools require formal writing, journal writing could be effective. This could be a good space for him to release his knowledge, talents and creativity in topics such as video games and soccer that are often not discussed in the classroom. Lewison et al (2015) point out that teachers should begin with personal in the writing instruction. Writing in journals would serve as an extended conversation of the literacies he is engaged in, histories and aspirations. Journals also show what he already knows, understands and believes (Lewison et al, 2015) which could be the basis by which decisions on the content and materials for the subsequent lessons be made.

Adam, who enjoys using electronic devises, would be more motivated in journaling when technology is integrated. Lin et al (2014) assert that blogging a journal did not only improve students' writing skills but developed more positive learning attitudes. Since Adam uses google docs for his writings, this tool could be used for journaling too. I recommend using dialogue journals because as a fan of video games he becomes more engaged in interactive activities (Gee, 2007). In order to encourage him to continue writing, teachers' responses need not to focus on form but on content and positive aspects (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). It is also important to know that Adam likes authentic purposes for negotiations. Posing questions that are critical with regard to his writing challenges and insights would most likely interest him. Examples of comments could be like asking him to reflect on the reasons of why he thinks so, the consequences of continuing to have the same belief system and the solutions that he could offer to develop his writing experience. Also, as Duffy (2014) argues, he needs to be aware of his own identity as a writer. This can be achieved by asking him in journal writing, for example, to reflect on the reasons to write, what kind of writer he wants to become and how he can use writing in his future. By directing his attention to think of the underlying assumptions that he holds about writing, he could become more conscious of the decisions that he makes with regard to his reaction to writing (Canagarajah, 2015).

Conclusion

Teaching writing to second language learners is not only about challenges but creating opportunities for the development of competencies. Deeply associated with this perspective is the use of students' current literacy practices as a foundation for teaching (Matsuda et al, 2011) aiming to result in instructional practices that are more compatible with learners. In this view, also, the selection of strategies for individual learners should take into account their abilities, needs, interests and learning styles. To borrow Canagarajah (2015)'s terms "Blessed in my own way", students would be more motivated when their competencies and funds of knowledge are valued.

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Appendix A

The items on this inventory are taken and modified from different internet sources

Informal Interest Inventory

1. What do you like to do in your free time?
2. Name 3 things you do pretty well?
3. What do you like to do on the internet?
4. What kind of books do you like to read?
5. What do you find interesting at school?
6. School would really be great if……
7. If I had any choice of project, I would make or create…….
8. Three things I wish teachers knew about me……

Writing Interest Inventory

9. Why do people write?
10. Is writing important to you? Why or why not?
11. What makes a good writer?

12. How do you feel about the writing that you do at school?
13. If you know someone was having trouble writing, how would you help that person?
14. What would the teacher do to help that person?
15. If you were a teacher, how could you have made writing more interesting for students?
16. Three things I wish teachers do in writing lessons…..
17. Writing would be really good if……..

18. How do you feel about yourself as a writer? Do you think you are a good writer? Why?
19. What type of writing is your most favorite and why?
20. What type of writing is your least favorite and why?
21. What is the easiest thing about writing? The hardest?
22. When you are writing in English and come to a point where you are having trouble, what do you do? Do you ever do anything else?
23. What do you think is good about your writing?
24. What I like about my writing….

25. Do you write at home?
26. Where do you get your ideas from?
27. Where is your favorite place to write?
28. I like to write

-Quickly	-slowly.
-with noise around.	-in a quiet place.
-anytime.	-at a special time.
-anyplace.	-in a special place.
-with a pencil or pen.	-on a computer.

29. What is the best thing you have ever written? Why do you like it?
30. What improvements would you like to make in your writing?
31. What would you like to learn to do better as a writer?
32. Do you see yourself as a famous writer in the future?

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Self-Corrected Comprehension of Near-Synonymous Verbs via Comparative Visualizations

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Abstract

Building from previous studies, this paper explores the nature of English conceptual structure of state differentiation for the holding/carrying near-synonyms in random and paired sessions. To test for such conceptual differences, Imai & Saji's (2013) instrument was adopted where 56 monolingual English speakers were asked to name the holding/carrying near-synonyms in random and paired sessions. In each session, the order of stimuli presentation was manipulated. In random session, the stimuli was randomized in a way that a holding action may or may not be successively followed by a carrying action; whereas, in the paired session, the stimuli was paired in a way that a holding action must be successively followed by a carrying action. The qualitative data were coded to indicate multiple cognitive categories as to how state and manner distinctions were perceived for further quantitative analysis. Overall, the results demonstrated that native English speakers have a differentiated conceptual structure for the state of holding and carrying near-synonyms and that structure is sensitive to the order of stimuli presentation. Implications for such results were discussed in terms of near-synonymous difficulty and pedagogical recommendations for L2 English learners.

Keywords: conceptual structure, conceptual distinctions/differentiations, cosslinguisticcross linguistic differences, near-synonyms.

Introduction

Languages differ in the level of lexical and conceptual distinctions they make in a specific domain (Bowerman, 2005; Choi & Bowerman, 1991; Imai & Saji, 2013; Saji, et. Al, 2011). Choi & Bowerman (1991), for example, noted that the English verb 'put on' for clothing is further differentiated in Korean. Korean language differentiates between different types of putting. *Ssuta* is used for putting on for objects like glasses, face mask, and umbrella). For putting on the trunk or legs, Koreans use *ipta* (e.g., coat, pants, shirts, and skirts). For putting on the feet, they use *sinta* (e.g., shoes, roller skates, socks). Also, for putting on their waist or wrist, they use *chata* (e.g., belts or bracelets). Moreover, Bowerman (2005) noted that the Japanese language represents different conceptual distinctions. Japanese use *kaburu* for putting on the head; they use *kiru* for upper torso and *haku* for lower torso (Bowerman, 2005). In the domain of consumption, English speakers differentiate between solid food (e.g., eat), liquids (e.g., drink), and tobacco (smoke) (Bowerman, 2005). However, German has similar differentiation but it distinguishes between human eating (e.g. essen) and animal eating (e.g., fressen). Moreover, Tzeltal Mayan language uses different verbs of eating according to what is eaten. They use the verb (*ti*') for meat; they use (*we*') for grained-based food and tortillas and (*lo*') for soft things like bananas (Brown, 2001).

On the other hand, Saji & associates (2011) investigated how Chinese children undergo the conceptual development of near-synonymous verbs for the domain of holding and carrying. Mandarin Chinese makes finer conceptual distinctions in the manner of these verbs than English does; there are 13 Chinese verbs of carrying/holding that represent different denotata in the real world. For example, an action of carrying/holding on one's head is denoted by 'ding', whereas carrying/holding an object on one's shoulder is 'kang'. Moreover, carrying/holding with two arms is denoted by 'bao' whereas if the object was held with one arm at one side of the body, this action is denoted by 'jia'. Other Chinese verbs such as (*na*), (*ti*) , and (*lin*) can refer to carrying/holding actions by the use of one hand; whereas some other verbs rely on the shape of the hand that holds the object. Although all of these actions are conceptually distinct in Mandarin Chinese and given 13 different verbs, they are conceptually indistinct in English and given two verbs only 'carrying/holding', as to whether the doer of the action is moving (then, carrying) or standing-still (then, holding). In a follow up study, Imai & Saji (2013) were interested in how L1 Chinese children learners and adult L2 Japanese and Korean learners of Chinese learn the near-synonyms of the carrying/holding verbs and develop their meanings to resemble adult Chinese native speakers. They were concerned with the way the naming verb patterns of adult L2 Japanese and Korean learners of Chinese was done in comparison with the Chinese children learners and, whether they both follow the same word learning mechanism. However, although the main assumption was tested across Mandarin Chinese, Korean and Japanese, this assumption was not tested for English to provide an empirical evidence for the state differentiation.

Research Objective

The study seeks to figure out the conceptual representations of the holding/carrying domain for monolingual English native speakers.

Research Questions

For the purpose of the study, two research questions were constructed:

1. Do Monolingual English Native Speakers (MES) have a differentiated conceptual structure in terms of the state of holding/carrying near-synonyms?
2. Do Monolingual English Speakers (MES) have a constant conceptual structure in terms of the state of holding/carrying near-synonyms?

Research Design

Method

This research adopted the psycholinguistic-intersubjective approach to the study of cross linguistic influence where cross sectional design had been employed. The psycholinguistic-intersubjective approach was adopted because it concerned the investigations of the internal language processing and representation of language users where the main emphasis is directed to a large scale and well defined groups of language users (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008).

Sampling

Sixty questionnaires were distributed to Monolingual English Native Speakers (MES). After data filtration (e.g., empty & incomplete questionnaires), the response rate for MES was 93% (e.g., 56 participants), which is considered statistically acceptable (Sekaran, 1998). The Monolingual English data were collected from different places in Palestine and Malaysia (e.g., Marna House, Gurney Plaza, & Dynamic Language Center) based on accidental sample.

Procedure

Monolingual English speakers were asked to name the verb actions in their L1 English. The visual stimuli used in the questionnaire were twenty six video-clips, where thirteen video-clips represented the action of holding and another thirteen represented the action of carrying (see table 1.0 below). The main assumption underlying the stimuli was that the domain of holding and carrying was differentiated among native English speakers according to whether the doer of the action is standing-still (henceforth, holding) or moving (henceforth, carrying) whereas the manner in which the action was performed was not important (Saji & Imai, 2013).

To test such assumption, the researcher divided the data collection into two sessions to ensure that any observed differentiation is systematically motivated by differentiated conceptual structures and not by the order of presentation. That is, because differentiation can occur as a result of the order of presenting the stimuli (e.g., online recognition for the difference between 'hold' and 'carry' if they were presented in successive order) (Malt, 2013), the researcher followed two sessions of data collection: random and paired presentation of stimuli for all the two groups. For the random session, the researcher presented the stimuli (e.g., 26 video-clips: 13 video-clips represented actions of holding & 13 video-clips represented actions of carrying) in a randomized order where the participants were asked to name these actions. Such randomization ensured that the participants were going to provide a naming pattern that was not affected by the order of presentation. For the paired session, the researcher presented the same stimuli (26 video-clips) in a paired presentation (13 video-clips represented actions of holding & 13 video-clips represented actions of carrying) where the participants were asked to name them. In sum, while the random presentation of stimuli eliminated any influence of task effects on the data, the paired presentation of the stimuli ensured whether the participants differentiated the stimuli if they were presented in successive order.

Validity and Reliability

Different considerations were taken to maintain the various types of validity and reliability. To maintain construct validity, the researcher adopted an established instrument (the stimuli for Saji & Imai's 2013) for measuring the construct in interest. To maintain face validity, the researcher used visual stimuli examples (e.g., three pictures) before conducting the actual study because participants seemed unfamiliar to such instrument. Furthermore, the researcher had taken different procedures to maintain internal validity. First, the researcher had matched the groups of participants on the same English proficiency level so as any differences in L2 English performance cannot be attributable to differences in the proficiency level. Second, the researcher took into consideration a quiet location for collecting the data in the research. Third, the researcher ensured that the surveys employed have clear task instructions and questions. The researcher ensured that the test instructions and questions are clarified to participants by showing them examples of similar actions presented on three pictures to describe. The first picture showed a boy riding a bicycle, the second a girl eating an ice-cream, and a rabbit eating a carrot. The participants were told that the description sought in the actual study was to describe the actions themselves and not the individual objects presented in the stimulus. Fourth, to maintain external validity in relation to the type of sampling being used, the researcher included biodata information for the readers so as they know to which group of adult L2 English learners the findings would be generalizable. Moreover, biodata information was also included for replication purposes so as other researchers can replicate the findings and make judgments about their generalizability.

Research Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were developed for the study:

1- Monolingual English Speakers do not have a differentiated conceptual structure in terms of the state of holding/carrying near-synonyms?
2- Monolingual English Speakers have a constant conceptual structure in terms of the state of holding/carrying near-synonyms?

Data Analysis

For the Monolingual English speakers (MES), there were 2912 responses (56 participants multiplied by 52 video-clips equaled 2912). Because the participants' responses were qualitative in nature, they were to be coded for quantitative statistical analysis. Basically, the whole data were coded in terms of semantic, stative and locomotive levels where certain and consistent criteria were considered at each level. The data were coded in a way that it can be testable for the conceptual structure of holding/carrying in terms of state and manner differentiations. For the semantic coding, the basic criterion was semantic interchangeability. That is, if two answers were semantically interchangeable in a flexible manner, they were coded under the same code but if they were non-interchangeable, they were coded under two different codes. The first procedure for semantic coding was to give codes (letters & numbers) for the same answer and a different code for a different answer. Specifically, after the data entry process was complete, where the columns represented the video-clips and the rows represented the number of students, the researcher gave the letter (e.g., C) to stand for the carrying actions and the letter (e.g., R or P) to stand for the random or paired session), while the numbers were used to stand for different semantic meanings. Similarly, the researcher gave the letter (e.g., H) to stand for the holding actions and the letter (e.g., R or P) to stand for the random or paired session), while the numbers were used to stand for different semantic meanings. For stative coding, the basic criterion was to

indicate the state of the action of holding and carrying. It was assumed that the domain of holding and carrying was differentiated among native English speakers according to whether the doer of the action is standing-still (henceforth, holding) or moving (henceforth, carrying) whereas the manner in which the action was performed was not important (Saji & Imai, 2013). Therefore, the letter (e.g., S) for the state of action and individual minus and plus symbols (e.g., -/+) or a combination of them were used to indicate the state of the actions vis-à-vis the semantic codes across the four naming patterns. Stative coding enables the researcher to test such assumption across the participant groups. Finally, for the locomotive coding, the basic criterion was to indicate the manner of the action of holding and carrying. It was assumed that the domain of holding and carrying was differentiated among native English speakers according to whether the doer of the action is standing-still (henceforth, holding) or moving (henceforth, carrying) whereas the manner in which the action was performed was not important (Saji & Imai, 2013). Therefore, the letter (e.g., M) for the manner of action and individual minus and plus symbols (e.g., -/+) or a combination of them were used to indicate the manner of the actions vis-à-vis the semantic codes across the two naming patterns. Manner coding enables the researcher to test such assumption across the participant groups.

Results

As noted earlier, the main research objectives were to test whether (MES) have a differentiated conceptual structure in terms of the state of holding/carrying near-synonyms and whether such conceptual structure is constant or dynamic. To test for state differentiation in terms of standing-still or moving, the correct and incorrect responses in relation to each action (e.g., hold or carry actions) and session (e.g., random or paired) were counted for their percentages and tested for their statistical significance. First, to test for standing-still differentiation in the random session, the mean of percent for the correct responses (e.g., the use of holding words for the holding actions) was 47.25 % whereas to the mean of percent for the incorrect responses (e.g., the use of holding words for the carrying actions) was 25.82%. In other words, the mean of percent for the correct responses for holding actions in the random session was 47.25 % and the mean of percent for the incorrect responses for the holding actions in the random session was 25.82%. To test for any statistical differences for the responses, the means of percent for correct and incorrect responses were tested by related Samples T-test where the t value equaled 4.346, and the significance level equaled 0.000. This means that there are statistical significant differences at 0.05 level between mean of percent of correct use and mean of percent for incorrect use for holding actions and these differences equaled 21.43%, favoring the correct responses, which indicated that the correct responses were significant in the data. Second, to test for the moving differentiation in the random session, the mean of percent for the correct responses (e.g., the use of carrying words for the carrying actions) was 54.4 % whereas to the mean of percent for the incorrect responses (e.g., the use of carrying words for the holding actions) was 35.16 %. In other words, the mean of percent for the correct responses for carrying actions in the random session was 54.4 % and the mean of percent for the incorrect responses for the carrying actions in the random session was 35.16 %. To test for any statistical differences for the responses, the mean of percent for correct and incorrect responses were tested by related Samples T-test where the t value equaled 4.195, and the significance level equaled 0.000. This means that there are statistical significant differences at 0.05 level between mean of percent of correct use and mean of percent of incorrect use for carrying actions and these differences

equaled 19.24 %, favoring the correct responses, which indicated that the correct responses were significant in the data.

Third, to test for the standing-still differentiation in the paired session, the mean of percent for the correct responses (e.g., the use of holding words for the holding actions) was 72.53 % whereas to the mean of percent for the incorrect responses (e.g., the use of holding words for the carrying actions) was 20.88 %. In other words, the mean of percent for the correct responses for holding actions in the random session was 72.53 % and the mean of percent for the incorrect responses for the holding actions in the random session was 20.88 %. To test for any statistical differences for the responses, the mean of percent for correct and incorrect responses were tested by related Samples T-test where the t value equaled 9.039 and the significance level equaled 0.000. This means that there are statistical significant differences at 0.05 level between mean of percent of correct use and mean of percent of incorrect use for holding actions and these differences equaled 51.65 %, favoring the correct responses, which indicated that the correct responses were significant in the data. Fourth, to test for the moving differentiation in the random session, the mean of percent for the correct responses (e.g., the use of carrying words for the carrying actions) was 77.47 % whereas to the mean of percent for the incorrect responses (e.g., the use of carrying words for the holding actions) was 24.73 %. In other words, the mean percent for the correct responses for carrying actions in the random session was 77.47 % and the mean percent for the incorrect responses for the carrying actions in the random session was 24.73 %. To test for any statistical differences for the responses, the means of percent for correct and incorrect responses were tested by related Samples T-test where the t value equaled 9.378, and the significance level equaled 0.000. This means that there are statistical significant differences at 0.05 level between mean of percent for correct use and mean of percent of incorrect use for carrying actions and these differences equaled 52.74 %, favoring the correct responses, which indicated that the correct responses were significant in the data.

Discussion

This study was motivated by two main objectives. The first objective was to test Saji & Imai's (2013) assumption regarding the state differentiation for holding/carrying near-synonyms for native English speakers. The second objective was to test whether state differentiation of near-synonyms differs as a function of order of stimuli presentation. The results have demonstrated that native English speakers have a differentiated conceptual structure for holding/carrying near-synonyms in terms of state differentiation. In other words, native English speakers differentiate or recognize a difference for holding/carrying near-synonyms as to whether the action is standing-still or moving. The results supported Saji and Imai's (2013) assumption that the defining conceptual criterion for the near-synonyms of hold and carry verbs was the state differentiation. Unexpectedly, however, the state differentiation was fully represented in the data, meaning that not all native English speakers were able to differentiate near-synonyms of hold and carry verbs. Such result came in line with Jarvis' (2007) theoretical observation that even native speakers show differences in language use and do not necessarily have to show a full agreement on object naming. The mean of percent for the correct responses for the holding actions in the random session was 47.25 %, which reached significance level, whereas the remaining percent was for the incorrect responses. Similarly, the mean of percent for the correct responses for the carrying actions in the random session was 54.40 percent which reached significance level, whereas the remaining percent was for the incorrect responses. That

is, although correct responses for either holding or carrying actions reached significance level, the data demonstrated that there was not unanimous agreement among native English speakers for synonymous action description. This disagreement of action description indicates that correct near-synonymous description are still difficult for native speakers, where such difficulty might be due to the ostensible similarity of near-synonyms themselves. Interestingly, however, there was an increase of the mean of percent for either holding or carrying in the paired session as compared to the random session. That is, the mean of percent for the correct responses for the holding actions in the paired session was 72.53 %, indicating an increase of 25.28 %, whereas the remaining percent was for the incorrect responses. Similarly, the mean of percent for the correct responses for the carrying actions in the random session was 77.47 %, indicating an increase of 23.07 %, whereas the remaining percent was for the incorrect responses. The increase of the mean of percent for either holding or carrying actions in the paired session indicated that the conceptual structure of state differentiation is not constant and can be changeable as a function of stimuli presentation order. When two actions that shared the same manner but differed in state as to whether the doer of the action was standing-still or moving were presented in successive order, the conceptual differentiation of state increased. This increase of conceptual distinction recognition designated an important implication for the teaching and learning of near-synonyms. In the paired session where every holding action was visually presented with its corresponding carrying action in successive order and comparative manner, participants were able to recognize the state difference as a defining conceptual criterion between the near-synonyms of hold and carry. This increase of conceptual recognition was due to the comparative order of visual presentation. This result comes in line with the generative theory of multimedia learning (Mayer, 1997, 2001) and with many empirical studies that investigated visual aids and vocabulary acquisition and comprehension (Al-Seghayer, 2001; Chun & Plass, 1996; Jones & Plass, 2002; Plass, Chun, Mayer, & Leutner, 1998; Yanguas, 2009; Yeh & Wang, 2003; Yoshii, 2006).

In conclusion, this study demonstrated that comparative visual aids (e.g., video-clips) can motivate and even enhance self-correction, leading to a better near-synonymous descriptions because participants were sensitized to the differences visually in a comparative manner. Therefore, as the result indicated, comparative visualizations are recommended teaching method for better use of near-synonyms.

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Appendixes

Table 1.Action Stimuli Videos

		Random Session		Paired Session	
Manner	Object	Carrying	Holding	Carrying	Holding
An object in both arms	Stuffed animal	Vid. 26	Vid. 10	Vid. 2	Vid. 1
An object on the back	Rucksack	Vid. 19	Vid. 8	Vid. 4	Vid. 3
An object on the top of head	Wooden bowl	Vid. 6	Vid. 20	Vid. 6	Vid. 5
An object horizontally level with both hands	Glass bowl with water	Vid. 13	Vid. 18	Vid. 8	Vid. 7
An object under one arm	Square bag	Vid. 9	Vid. 14	Vid. 10	Vid. 9
An object by lifting the object over the head	Square box	Vid. 23	Vid. 24	Vid. 12	Vid. 11
An object on the shoulder	Pipe	Vid. 2	Vid. 5	Vid. 14	Vid. 13
An object, hanging it on the shoulder	Tote bag	Vid. 22	Vid. 17	Vid. 16	Vid. 15
An object, dangling it with one hand	Plastic bag	Vid. 1	Vid. 16	Vid. 18	Vid. 17
An object with one hand	Plastic bottle	Vid. 25	Vid. 3	Vid. 20	Vid. 19
An object cautiously in both arms	Bouquet	Vid. 15	Vid. 11	Vid. 22	Vid. 21
An object, dangling it around the arm	Handbag	Vid. 7	Vid. 12	Vid.24	Vid. 23
An object in the palm(s)	Tray	Vid. 21	Vid. 4	Vid. 26	Vid. 25

Table 2. T Test for the differences of mean of percent for state differentiation in the random session

Use	**State**	**Mean**	**SD**	**T-Value**	**Sig.**
Correct Use	Hold on Hold	47.25%	25.89%	4.346	0.000
Incorrect Use	Hold on Carry	25.82%	22.46%		
Incorrect Use	Carry on Hold	35.16%	20.68%	4.195	0.000
Correct Use	Carry on Carry	54.40%	29.84%		

Table 1.1

Table 3. T Test for the differences of mean of percent for state differentiation in the random session

Use	State	Mean	SD	T-Value	Sig.
Correct Use	Hold on Hold	72.53 %	19.83%	9.039	0.000
Incorrect Use	Hold on Carry	20.88 %	28.21%		
Incorrect Use	Carry on Hold	24.73 %	19.50%	9.378	0.000
Correct Use	Carry on Carry	77.47 %	27.28%		

Table 1.2

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Reticence among Jazan University students: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

For Universities in Saudi Arabia, standards in language learning from the onset have suffered tremendously. Students for the most part have not been able to excel in English language courses largely due to student reticence. At Jazan University, students are no stranger to this predicament. This study focuses on a critical analysis of factors that engender reticence among level 1 preparatory year students at Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. This ushers the question, what are these factors are that engender reticence? The research was conducted by questionnaires and group interviews. There were many salient factors that were of relevance, namely role of teachers, anxiety, lack of motivation, attitudes, curriculum development, culture and classroom environment. A needs analysis was also conducted so as to advance recommendations for educators, administration and policy makers. This study supplies a ranking of these factors as well.

Key Words: anxiety, Saudi, reticence, language, learning

Introduction

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is home to many schools, colleges and Universities. As a state actor in international relations and trade, the need for the English language as a lingua franca has been realized to a large extent in the Kingdom. All Universities offer courses in English for their preparatory year programmes. Elementary to secondary schools also offer courses.

This study will focus on a critical analysis of the factors that produce student reticence amongst preparatory year level 1 Jazan University students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in a predominantly Arabic Language Context. It ushers the question "What are the factors that engender reticence among level one preparatory year Engineering College students of Jazan University?" The researcher conducted a concise needs analysis so as to put forward recommendations for educators as well as administrators in this area of endeavor. In this original work, I also do a juxtaposition of seven universities with Jazan University in the Kingdom, namely, Tibah, King Saud, King Abdul Aziz, Najran, Effat and Northern Border. There are also references to King Khalid University. I do this to ensure that some of the phenomena related to student reticence are pervasive in the Kingdom.

Student Reticence

Reticence denotes that students prefer to remain silent in the classroom. There are many factors for this condition such as anxiety, lack of motivation, learning environment, role of teachers and personal attitudes. Confidence is another contributing factor. Many of these factors will be discussed in further detail later in this paper. Williams and Burden stated that behavior of students in second language learning "depends on a complex set of interacting factors, such as motivation, anxiety and personal attitudes …" (Williams & Burden, 1997, cited in Alhmadi, N., 2014, p. 49) Many preparatory year level 1 Engineering students are faced with the same fate. All of the above factors are omnipresent in many of these students. Furthermore, Arnold also found a connection in different personal attitudes such as motivation and anxiety. Alhmadi (2014) also notes that students in Tibah University lack both knowledge and confidence, especially when speaking English. This will hinder students from performing effectively and may even lower self-confidence levels. My observation in the preparatory year context of Jazan University was essentially exacted by Gardner (2001) in the following passage,

> the majority of students studying the English language feel very motivated and anxious in beginning. He explained that when they come to class and the teacher involves them in speaking activities due to their lack of self-confidence. (Gardner, 2001, cited in Alhmadi, N., 2014, p. 49)

Henceforth, one can conclude that the burden of language learning and acquisition can be drawn from personal traits and characteristics of the student. Having noted this, a customizable needs analysis is indispensible. Educators should be aware of them and make careful observations from the onset. Language practitioners should be inquisitive as to why learners are learning English and they should also be duly concerned with students who are privy to reticence. Concerning this matter, Alhmadi (2014) notes that teachers should continue to employ teaching methods and textbooks but not to the neglect of enhancing speaking skills. There are many remedies for student reticence that should be noted here. These procedures should prompt

students who are reticent to have better learning outcomes, especially in terms of oral communication.

According to Khan (2007) cited in Alhmadi (2014), obstacles that confront students are manifold. Among them are pedagogical, personal, psychological, parental, motivational, social, cultural and attitudinal. (Khan, 2007, cited in Alhmadi, N., 2014, p. 46) Rogers (1987) is of the view that such factors become "integrated with student's attitudes to learning" and academics should work with other departments to rectify these roadblocks. (Rogers, 1987, cited in Alhmadi, N., 2014, p. 46) Ezza (2012) noted some of the factors that influence Saudi students' attitudes in universities and colleges. Some of them are social and others can be seen as environmental. The following are some factors stated: anxiety about learning the curriculum, coping with the course text, lack of motivation, peer pressure and negative attitudes towards the university or college. (Ezza, 2012, cited in Alhmadi, N., 2014, p. 49) Students are also forced by attendance policy to attend full days of classes, not only in Jazan University and Tibah University, but across the Kingdom. A new attendance policy was enforced in Tibah University that is not present in Jazan University. Once students attend the first class, they have to attend the rest of the day. Otherwise they are rendered absent for the whole day. This decreases the number of students that attend classes. (Alhmadi, N., 2014, p. 49)

Method

This study will be held on the new campus of Jazan University The target group will be conducted with semester 1 level students in the Engineering College of preparatory year. I taught all of these students. Purposive sampling was the method employed instead of convenience sampling. Medical, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Engineering and Arts students hold the best command over English than other faculties ie Science, Education and Business Administration. Students holding the best grades enter these colleges. The Engineering college results can be representative of the faculties with exceptional students who can excel with both Medical, Dental and Pharmacy colleges and also have lower grade students to match Science, Education and Business Administration.

1. Participants

Seventy students were selected from four level 1 preparatory year groups from the Engineering College between the ages of 18 and 21. All students were fresh graduates from secondary school.

2. Data Collection

Each of the seventy students were handed Likert scale questionnaires. A questionnaire "...measures opinions and is probably the single most widely used research type in educational research." (Wiersma, 1995, p. 113). The survey was conducted in English with minimal oral Arabic translations as students were expected to have some command over English. According to Wallace (1998), a pilot project should be conducted with five students. I however chose to follow the University of Sunderland course manual on interviews for ELTM03 and have 10 in each focus group. (Barnett, J. et al., 2005, p. 16) Convenience sampling was employed here by selecting my most astute students. They were asked to supply feedback on how to improve the questionnaire. Categories were then formulated according to background research that I conducted. From the literature reviewed, I came across some common themes related to this

subject-matter such as beliefs and attitudes, motivation, student reticence and curriculum development. This study will supply a ranking of these factors. Thereafter, I asked students from these 7 groups of 10 to engage in group interviews as closed ended questions from the questionnaire were not adequate alone. This method produced higher response rates. Interviews "can reach the parts that other methods cannot reach… allowing a researcher to investigate and prompt things that we cannot observe like interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, feelings and perspectives." (Al-Harthi, S., 2014, p. 75)

The purpose of this discussion was to encourage students to elaborate on the results of the data collected in the questionnaire. I asked students to speak in English and use Arabic only when necessary. Unstructured interviews were used so that I can probe student's attitudes. Confidentiality of students was strictly observed in the questionnaire and interview phases of this study. Each group interview lasted between 5-10 minutes in duration.

3. Limitations of the Study

The study was restricted to the groups that I taught at Jazan University. A larger sample size for this survey may have rendered the results more conclusive. Perhaps these questionnaires and class discussions could have been coupled with personal interviews instead of arranging groups. Some students may not have felt comfortable expressing varying perspectives among their peers, especially in the Saudi context. Furthermore, diversifying the questionnaire to avoid response set should have been observed. Moreover, students from other colleges should have been surveyed. To some extent, this study may have fallen into the domain of convenience sampling in that only Engineering students that I taught were chosen. Albeit the motivation was purposive sampling which the author feels was done successfully for reasons already noted above.

Results

Table 1. Factors that contribute to student reticence

	Attitudes	Anxiety	Beliefs	Classroom Environment	Curriculum	Motivation	Role of Teachers
Strongly Agree	**28**	**41**	**19**	**9**	**33**	**19**	**37**
Agree	**25**	**12**	**22**	**31**	**16**	**37**	**20**
Neutral	**2**	**3**	**8**	**11**	**7**	**10**	**3**
Disagree	**8**	**8**	**11**	**10**	**4**	**2**	**8**
Strongly Disagree	**7**	**6**	**10**	**9**	**10**	**2**	**2**

Table 2. Factors that contribute to student reticence (percentage)

	Attitudes	Anxiety	Beliefs	Classroom Environment	Curriculum	Motivation	Role of Teachers
Strongly Agree	**40**	**31**	**27**	**13**	**47**	**27**	**53**
Agree	**36**	**50**	**31**	**44**	**23**	**53**	**29**
Neutral	**3**	**10**	**12**	**16**	**10**	**14**	**4**
Disagree	**11**	**4**	**15**	**14**	**6**	**3**	**11**
Strongly Disagree	**10**	**4**	**14**	**13**	**14**	**3**	**3**

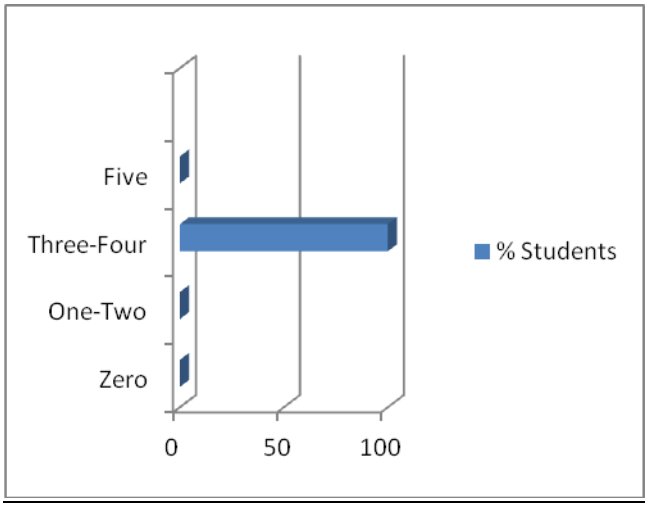

Figure 1. Hours of Instruction per week in middle and secondary schools

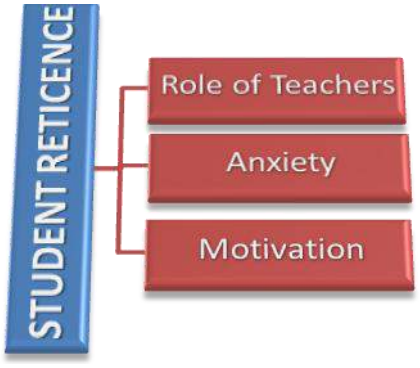

Figure 2. Top 3 factors that provoke reticence

Discussion

The results of this study corroborate many of the findings from other studies done in the Kingdom. Many of them have been referenced above in the literature review. The statistics formulated for this study were predominantly inferential and in some cases descriptive from nominal data. Categorical variables were employed.

1. Role of Teachers

The needs of students can be etched out from the factors that render students in a state of reticence. Figure 3 displays the top 3 factors that induce reticence. Among them, the role of teachers ranked as the number one reason for student reticence. This was somewhat surprising given that in many studies students and not teachers are culpable for reticence. The data from the chart in figure 1.2 showed that 82% of students either strongly agreed or agreed to this sentiment. A nominal 14% either strongly disagreed or disagreed. In general, a teacher's skill set should generally include professionalism, punctuality, learner-focused teaching, knowledge of the context, fervor for teaching, understanding of content and at the very least language proficiency.

From my observations in Jazan University, teachers are assigned by skill, either listening, speaking, reading or writing. Henceforth they teach one skill to 3 or more different groups. Students essentially see each teacher 5 hours per week. This removes some possibility of monotony. In other universities however, there is one teacher assigned to a group for a whole semester. This was referenced above in the literature review. From the group interviews, the other problem that may be common to all Universities in the Kingdom is the representation of non-native teachers. Many of them, particularly in Jazan attempt to import grammar translation methods that do not work in the Saudi context. They may have been educated in English from these methods and hence the reason for its usage. Students generally prefer relevant education to their cultural setting. This was a common concern expressed by students. Albeit, many students were also silent on the matter due to fear of deduction of marks or calling into question the status quo on policy development in the education sector. Another problem that students spoke about was the nature of non-native teachers in fostering a culture of slave-master binary between teachers and students. They felt that this is an obstacle to learning English. They remarked that most native speakers were pragmatic and befriended students so as to make learning a symbiotic relationship. Lessons were customized and made more relevant to their needs and context. They also felt that native speakers were easier to understand from their exposure to Hollywood movies. On this wavelength, the more astute students even argued that they were not teaching them English properly per se. They had many errors in their speech and writing. Personally, I have observed that many non-native teachers in Jazan University make such errors frequently in pronunciation, syntax, grammar and even in spelling. According to Shah et al, they also possess a tendency to

> Feel unequipped to handle certain pedagogical and socio-cultural issues which crop up during the learning and teaching process. In this way, the crucial role of socio-cultural context determines the teacher-learner relationship and the success of pedagogical process (Shah, S. et al., 2013, p. 105)

From my observation, an understanding of the socio-linguistic realities of the Gulf and particularly Saudi Arabia is essential for effective teaching. The other factor that prompts some

level of bewilderment among teachers and learners is that fact that students, teachers and textbooks all emanate from different socio-linguistic backgrounds in many cases. The teachers cannot relate to the students and vice versa. Students cannot understand textbooks and teachers may also have problems relaying information from texts that defy their method of teaching. Perhaps there should be more cultural awareness before teaching in the Kingdom. Shah notes that the classroom cannot be separated from the sociocultural context." (Shah, S. et al., 2013, p. 106) Candin and Mercer argue that "Since language teaching is tied to its social context, teaching and learning cannot take place in a classroom which is removed from the experiences and personal engagements outside the classroom." (Candin and Mercer, 2001, cited in Shah, S. et al., 2013, p. 107)

In this light, many students are experiential learners. Customizing lessons on this basis may enable students to gravitate towards language learning. The cultural traits are not part and parcel of the curriculum and nor are they emphasized by educators. According to student expectations, teachers should supply full cooperation on this matter. It should be noted here that students do not fully understand their teacher's cultural attributes either. This dynamic erects barriers in this teacher-student binary. In addition, many teachers in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere are not independent to select course content. They are somewhat confined by the Ministry's policies as well as social conventions. This may impede the creativity of an educator in respect to conducting a lesson.

Furthermore, there was not sufficient attention reserved towards English in their schooling system. English was taught from middle to secondary school for 3-4 hours per week. This is corroborated in figure 2 above. The hours of instruction offered now are unprecedented at all levels. It is also worth noting that the medium of instruction generally was in Arabic. The grammar translation method was also used. Thus, opportunities to learn English essentially went in vain. Furthermore, students also spoke of irregular attendance on the part of many of their English teachers in the schooling system.

On another note, students argued that technology serves their cause to a great extent. However, according to students, many teachers lack diversification in their lessons and resort only to technological aids. In essence, their role as a teacher is veiled by electronic devices.

2. Anxiety

The next factor that affects student reticence is anxiety. 81% shared this viewpoint by either strongly agreeing or agreeing. 8% either strongly disagreed or disagreed. This is an indication that many students are confronted with this problem. From my last 3 years as an educator in Jazan University, many students fear mockery on the part of other students. This prevents them from speaking in class or asking questions that they may have in respect to lessons covered in class. They are in some way or rather traumatized by their inability to excel in English. From the focus groups, I ascertained that many students yearn to learn the language but they feel that their lack of proficiency prompts them to improve in their language skills. In other words, they feel English for them is a lost matter. This evokes them to procrastinate and become tardy. They will make every effort to just barely pass English in levels one and two so that they can meet the minimum requirements for graduation. Some students disagreed with the above sentiments. They felt that communicating in English credits them as educated and an asset to

society. Some students also expressed that they do use English at the mall with clerks or with English instructors at college for practice.

3. Motivation

Motivation or the lack of it ranks next in the factors that affect student reticence. Students generally devoid of this factor will undoubtedly exhibit characteristics of reticence. Related to the study, 80% of students either strongly agreed or agreed that students lack motivation. Another 6% either strongly disagreed or disagreed to this data. Therefore, the majority of students feel that students can be privy to reticence due to a lack of motivation. From the focus groups, most students have proven to be either extrinsically motivated or amotivated. They appear extrinsically motivated for graduation and acquiring employment. From the class discussion, students held that the reason for this response was that English is imperative to take part in international markets. Many of them plan to pursue post-graduate degrees abroad ie. Masters Degree. Some of them desire to travel to parts of the West for tourism. Others wanted to understand English used in Hollywood films. In Saudi society, it is those with fluency in English that "possess economic, social, cultural and political power and status" (Talbot et al., 2003, p. 274). Many students who travel abroad for post-graduate education require English as a prerequisite. TOEFL and IELTS require a decent command over English. Some careers may also require interaction on an international stage. English is indispensable for these prospects. Candidates who are less fluent may not pass the interview process. Henceforth, English supplies students with "linguistic capital" (Bourdieu, 1976, 1997; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, cited in Talbot et al., 2003, p. 275) which "like other forms of capital (e.g. cultural, human, economic, political) has exchange value in a market economy" (Talbot et al., 2003, p. 275). From my class interviews, each group acknowledged the need of English for graduation and promotions. Some felt however that they could be successful Engineers without it. This was not a question in my survey so there is no data available on it.

There is ample evidence that English is a language in demand in Jazan and across the Kingdom. From the group interviews, students attested to the fact that institutions that teach English such as *Direct English* and *Wall st.* reach full capacity on a weekly basis.

Some of them were amotivated and just preferred to barely graduate with nominal results, seek employment without upwards mobility and watch English movies with Arabic subtitles. Furthermore, they felt that many teachers were also not motivating them and fulfilling their cause. Many, if not all of these factors are somehow interrelated. Here the role of teachers plays an instrumental role in the motivating students. Perhaps the educator may have the aptitude to even assist students in becoming more intrinsically motivated. Moreover, these students generally end up repeating English multiple times. As Liton (2012) noted the progress has been slow.

Another reason for this is that students are not regular in terms of attendance. Exposure to English lessons for many students is necessary to learn the language. A few astute students may have the talent to understand course content from textbooks alone. The attendance policies instituted may also have some impingement over amotivation among students. Educators are mandated to complete the curriculum with half of the class absent in many cases. One teacher from another Saudi University remarks,

> If the student is absent for 18 or 20 hours, he is not supposed to take the exam and repeat the course. However, that's always not the reality. In some cases the student can take the exam and get promoted to the next level even if he exceeds the absence limit. Students take advantage of this leniency (Shah, S. et al., 2013, 116)

In my observation from Jazan University, the attendance policies are rigorously adhered. I am yet to see a deprived student admitted to take part in an examination. However some other Universities may have arbitrary exemptions as noted above. The fact is that many students who only attend enough classes to be eligible to write the exam will not learn properly from course content.

4. Attitudes

Attitudes were the fourth factor that inspired reticence among students. Students generally had positive attitudes towards English as a language. From the class discussion, students felt that cultural hegemony of the United States and other nation-states in the West via popular culture has shaped their views of the language. Competing entertainment industries have not rivaled Hollywood by way of example. Attitudes towards English were largely positive. They were however negative in the context of the classroom as per the questionnaire and follow up interviews. 76% of students strongly agreed or agreed that they possessed negative attitudes towards English. Only 21% strongly disagreed or disagreed to this sentiment. Again one of the contributing factors was the role of teachers. Perhaps this is the reason it was the most detrimental factor for reticence among students. Many of the students have expressed a lack of understanding in accents and fluency that are not on standard with native speakers of English. They were not motivated for sociolinguistic reasons as well. Some of them told me that words such as 'cancel', 'print' and 'okay' are used with their daily Arabic. Therefore they all speak some level of English. Others felt that these words were later integrated into Arabic so they can be factored into the Arabic language. Also from the discussion, participants did not necessarily have any contempt per se with English like some Saudis of the previous generation. English is rarely used in their interaction with their family and friends, in the education system and at work. Furthermore, there was not sufficient attention reserved towards English in their schooling system. Outside of school, they also feel embarrassed communicating in English for fear of stigmatization from members of their communities. In contrast, some students disagreed with the statements above. They felt that communicating in English credits them as educated and an asset in society. Some students also expressed that they do use English at the mall or with English instructors for practice.

5. Curriculum Development

The curriculum was the next area of improvement. In fact, 70% of students strongly agreed or agreed that the curriculum should be related to and cater to needs of students. 20% either strongly disagreed or disagreed. According to the focus groups, some students felt that the curriculum is too intensive for them. They felt that the curriculum should be simplified and taught to allow them to supply basic communication in speaking and writing as well as reading and listening. They do not see the utility for it in their setting other than rare usage in the workplace. Other students would not remark on the matter or elaborate on their selection on the likert scale. Perhaps the reason for this is that the culture or jurisdiction may not welcome reproach in an academic setting or any other context for that matter unless otherwise requested.

Some students were of the view that the success of the curriculum is proportional to the aptitude of the teacher in delivering it. Again a recurring matter resurfaced about the role of teachers.

6. Beliefs

Beliefs followed in the next ranking of factors. Some of them shape the way students view English. Other factors such as attitudes and motivation are provoked by it. For example, beliefs can be motivated to be positive by some external factors. It also has a role In the development of attitudes. 58% of students either strongly agreed or agreed that beliefs shaped their understanding of English. 29% strongly disagreed or disagreed to this a factor.

As we saw before, some students had favourable beliefs about English but their sentiments about learning English in the classroom context was not as favourable. Strangely enough, if beliefs are essentially the impetus to motivation and are intertwined with attitudes, there seems to be a discrepancy with the results. They should be complimentary with that of attitudes and motivation. I asked my focus groups about this apparent contradiction. They agreed that it may seem to be the case but not exactly. Their beliefs are essentially ideas inherited or some beliefs that may be present in their communities. Some of these sentiments are that English is a threat to their language and culture. These have been inherited by parentage or even found in the culture.

7. Classroom Environment

The last factor that affects student reticence is classroom environment. 57% either strongly agreed or agreed to it. Another 26% either strongly disagreed or disagreed to this view. The classroom discussion should be set up in such way that is conducive to language learning. The seating arrangement relative to the instructor is integral for communication. It is also dependent on the type of lesson conducted. For example, a class discussion with students facing the teacher may not be amenable to this arrangement. Perhaps students seated in a circle may be more fitting. The arrangement should also be adjusted on a weekly basis so as to remove homogeneity from the lessons. Furthermore, infrastructure such as laptops, projectors, speakers, smart boards, white boards should be equipped for the lesson at hand. Jazan University is equipped with state of the art infrastructure. Unfortunately, the maintenance is very poor. In many classes, the equipment malfunctions are common. The switch for air conditioners is located beyond my reach in many of my classes. So the classroom becomes extremely hot. This can be a roadblock to learning.

Conclusions

A review of my hypothesis is necessary for the conclusion of this study: The aim is to critically analyse the factors that produce student reticence amongst level one Preparatory Year Jazan University students in a predominantly Arabic Language Context.

After analyzing the data from the questionnaire and classroom discussion, the evidence suggested that the factors of reticence among entry level preparatory year students in Jazan University towards English were prevalent.

The results of this study produced a ranking of the factors that provoke student reticence. Among them were role of teachers, anxiety, motivation, attitudes, curriculum development, beliefs and lastly classroom environment.

The survey showcased that all students were taught English in Arabic. Many respondents preferred Arabic over English for this very reason. The poor level of education coupled with weak teaching methods and a curriculum that is not relevant in many cases are obstacles to communicating in English.

Recommendations

From my needs analysis, the following recommendations were put forward:

-Seminars and Manuals on cultural awareness should be supplied to educators so as to inform them how to adapt to context

-Selection of useful resources according to contextual demands is imperative

-There should be use of libraries, language labs, discussion clubs and field trips arranged during class hours to encourage learner's participation

-Teachers should also not feel threatened in the classroom. Observations should be conducted by an external body that is impartial and qualified. There should be a separate body of trainers who can take on the task of holding seminars for teachers who are in need of improvement. Trainers should conduct one-on-one workshops after observing the context of both students and teachers.

-Teachers should be granted greater autonomy over education of students. Compliance to institutional policies and procedures may be detrimental for these purposes. Henceforth personal initiative and responsibility should be underscored.

-Competence of students should be developed by the implementation of curricula that promote self-regulated learning. When students are grades-oriented, they tend to be more teacher-dependent. They want to satisfy the required course coverage so that they can score amicable results on the examination. These students show no interest in subject matter beyond it.

-The classroom culture should steer away from grades. The focus should be on learning. For example, announcing grades or identifying a student merely by his grades will inevitably breed a culture of amotivation.

-Activities that stimulate critical thinking and decision-making faculties should be emphasized. Examples include games, simulations, role-playing, interaction with peers and experiments.

-An upsurge of teaching standards is necessary in the Kingdom from the seven Universities referenced in this paper. As such, the recruitment process must be tweaked and adjusted so as to supply students with an optimal education.

-Teachers can help students as Al Harthi (2014) notes to develop images and expectations of self- image connected to the language community. Holding a role in this community may supply students with a sense of purpose.

- Language audits are integral to measure the needs of students on a larger scale. Jazan University can employ external agencies for this purpose.

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Difficulties of Saudi Arabian Female Students Studying English Abroad

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Abstract
Research on the difficulties of international students has dramatically increased in the last few years. However, there has been very little research on the difficulties of Saudi Arabian females studying abroad. The purpose of the present study is to identify difficulties of Saudi female students studying abroad. The findings clearly indicate that interaction with and the presence of male students in classes is the greatest difficulty for Saudi female students studying abroad. It also shows that family sources are the preferred method used by students to seek assistance to overcome the anxiety of studying with male students in foreign countries. Further research is needed for identifying and suggesting the remedies to overcome the difficulties faced by females coming from conservative backgrounds while studying in western countries. I have used the results of interviews and a questionnaire conducted on Saudi female students who have experience of studying in a foreign country.

Keywords: Culture, English language Motivation, Saudi Arabian female students , studying abroad

Introduction:

The study on the difficulties of international students has increased dramatically in recent years (Alhazmi, 2010; Dorres 2007). Subsequently, there has been a large amount of empirical research directed at identifying these specific cultural difficulties, which has led many educational institutions to adopt an approach to ensure that a strong and positive relationship between educators and international students is formed upon the latter's arrival.

Most research agrees that living in a new culture or country can have an effect on international students and is related to the degree of contact with native speakers, which may occur as a result of this transition (Novera, 2004) or other language challenges. Students must in turn adapt themselves to overcome these problems in order to succeed academically.

Research by Kampman (2011) focused on Saudi female business students, data was specific to a United States environment and specific to students who were already enrolled in university courses. She notes "the presence in the classroom of members of the opposite sex is a hurdle for Saudi students to overcome in order to achieve success in US universities." Students in Kampman's study were more successful in dealing with this difficulty due to the fact that they had interacted with men before through experiences while travelling abroad and understanding the importance of learning to interact with men in the business world.

This study, therefore, investigates female students from Saudi Arabia specifically studying in an English as a second language program. It is the first to investigate females who have not had any previous interaction with men due to the fact that they have never travelled outside Saudi Arabia and belong to a very conservative region in KSA.

Motivation:

1- The significant increase in the number of Saudi students studying at universities abroad.
2- In recent years, research conducted on the difficulties faced by international students studying English abroad has increased dramatically and widely. However, there has been very little research that particularly focuses on Saudi female students' concerns while studying English abroad.
3- Saudi female students grow up in an environment where their friends and teachers are of the same gender. (Saudi female students are unlike most international students who do not come from a sex-segregated educational system).
4- The researcher has studied in different universities, in the UK and Australia with Saudi female students in class and noticed two things. Firstly, since Saudi female students have been kept away from male students and teachers, they lack confidence and feel uncomfortable in co-educational environments. For instance, sometimes when they have problems at the airport, university, or anywhere else, they use their first language. Secondly, it is not easy for Saudi females particularly those from conservative areas to socialize and adjust themselves in a totally new academic culture. To support this argument, Alhazmi (2010, P.11) indicates in his article that “Saudi students need to be prepared for the mixed gender experience.

Aim of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the difficulties that Saudi female students face in studying abroad. Moreover, this study also tries to identify the support and assistance needed for female students to succeed in their life abroad.

Literature review:

Cultural , social and religious norms have a very strong impact on the demeanour of Saudi women. While studying in a foreign land where co-educational classes are common, they face hindrances like not participating in class room activities and remaining silent most of the time due to the presence of male classmates. Altamimi, A. (2014) in her study found Saudi females in the class are unaccustomed to co-educational classes and male teachers. She proves that Saudi women are expected to defer to males. As such, the presence of males in the classroom causes Saudi women to remain silent. She emphasises that Saudi women are not expected to interact outside the home, or with males due to cultural differences. Consequently, Saudi females prefer to socialize only with Saudi women and do not have the exposure of an English speaking environment .

The research carried out by Gassama (2012) entitled "*New comers: The difficulties they encounter learning the target language and possible solutions*", points out that ESL students find it very hard in adapting to a new culture . He reiterates that the difference in attitudes and values is one of the main sources of problems in foreign language learning. "…Culture shock, or lack of cultural adjustment, can prevent students from acquiring the target language" (Buchanan, 1990, p. 83). Another researcher Lopez Rua (2006) has pointed out that in the UK, Asian women, unlike Asian men, are often homemakers and do not have the opportunity to interact with many people in English every day. This happens as a result of carrying one's cultural beliefs into a different country. Similarly, Saudi women in Saudi Arabia tend to stay at home in their free time (Al-Otaibi, 2004).

Insecurity and lack of confidence can hamper the second or foreign language learning. Al -Sibai, (2005) points out that second language learners have a fear of losing face , to be insecure and to lack confidence. According to her such causes can potentially lead to lowered success in a L2 classroom. Such characteristics would more likely prevent students from participating to their full potential in oral communication activities in the classroom (Al-Sibai,2005). Consequently, that would reduce second language use outside the classroom which would in turn, possibly further inhibit classroom participation. The result would be less participation and diminishing language acquisition.

Nervousness of the foreign or second language learners, particularly of women, can negatively affect their performance in the speaking skill class. Al-Sibai (2005) studied Saudi female students in Saudi Arabia and found that many women in L2 classes were afraid or nervous when answering a question orally than while using other language skills like reading and writing.

Whilst broad similarities occur in research around concepts of isolation and loneliness of students, difficulties faced by international students are the result of multidimensional factors and issues, which differ according to culture and the host country involved.

A study by Blake (2006) of students who study abroad suggests that living in a new cultural environment causes individuals to experience language anxiety, frustration and helplessness. Andrade (2006), Shaw (2009) and Shehry (1989) find that international students are placed under pressures which include; financial instability, social difficulties, speaking, writing, homesickness and difficulties dealing with universities.

Regarding financial pressure, research has also shown that students who have scholarships to study abroad face additional stress when their academic performance on IELTS is not sufficiently high enough to maintain the scholarship (Poyrazli, Arbona, Bullington, & Pisecco, 2001). In contrast, a study by Gauntlett (2006) of Saudi students argued that those who have a scholarship do not pay attention to their studies.

Another key factor was discussed by Robinson (1992) who stresses the importance of host universities assisting international students in language adjustment. He emphasises the importance of educating students to enhance their understanding of culture providing opportunities to develop essential skills for university work, and developing necessary skills and knowledge for their academic classes. This was supported by a study by Barker, Child, Gallois, Jones, and Allahadad (2010) who found that international students of Asian backgrounds faced difficulties when participating in lectures, tutorials and seminars.

Lin (2011) indicates that many Chinese students face problems in conversational English and class discussion, but in their written English they perform well. Most studies recommended international students to use English inside and outside of the class so that they can learn faster which will help them succeed academically. Al-Sibai (2005) urge the international students to adjust rapidly to learn quickly in classroom

Novera (2004) stressed the importance of international student advisers in helping students in their difficulties. In contrast, research by Zhai (2004) suggested that participants preferred to seek help from family or friends rather than from academic advisers, faculty members, classmates, or colleagues to solve personal problems.

This was supported by research from Johnson (1993), who suggested that most students preferred to ask friends and relatives for advice because they did not think the international student services staff would understand their problems.

A key difficulty was proposed by Alhazmi (2010), who found that the biggest problems facing Saudi students in Australia relate to the transition from gender segregated environments in their home country to co-educational institutions in the host country. Most students face problems when they want to learn a second language as a result of their own fears and a slight problem in class will stop them from learning the new language, which is why students frequently avoid conversation in classes that leads to a lack of developed language processing skills. Robertson et al (2000) conclude in their research that most international students feel unhappy in their oral performance while studying in Australia. They indicate that language issues were the main problem still faced by international students.

Additionally, research has identified issues relating to student support, with Saudi females who are studying abroad completely dependent on their husbands for support, both financially and emotionally (Midgley, 2009 & 2011).

In this study, I will focus on conservative culture and how it affects language acquisition by female students whereas previous studies have focused on both males and females. For example, studies by Alhazmi (2010) focuses on both male and female students. Altmimi (2014) studies language acquisition by Saudi women, however, her study concentres on women from all over the country including more cosmopolitan cities such as Jeddah , Riyadh and Dammam where women have more exposure to Western culture. The aim of this study is to focus on the problems faced by women in one of the most conservative areas of Saudi Arabia .

This study aims to further this research and identify difficulties faced by Saudi female students studying abroad. This study will use quantitative methods to determine which of these difficulties is of most importance. Due to time constraints, information will be collected from a survey while using a more detailed interview format. Research by Andersen (1999) suggests that the use of surveys minimises research duration without sacrificing reliability of results.

Research question:

This study will attempt to answer the following research question:

What are the most significant difficulties for Saudi females studying abroad?

The background of the research:

Before going into the hypothesis, it is necessary to say that certain aspects of the Saudi woman's cultural identity, like covering her head and avoiding interaction with men, can impose difficulties on her learning a second language. At the same time, there are regional cultural differences in Saudi Arabia that need to be considered. Female students from Jeddah (in the southern part of Saudi Arabia) and Dammam (located in the eastern part of Saudi Arabia) are more likely to interact with Western society. Through travelling outside Saudi Arabia, the people of Jeddah and Dammam encounter foreigners from America, Britain, and elsewhere. This situation contributes to building strong conversational language skills in English. Consequently, when they go abroad to study, they may have less difficulties learning academic English and interacting with men in a classroom.

Why Al-Qassim Province ?

Al Qassim, (located in the central region of Saudi Arabia) is an extremely conservative region whose inhabitants are predominantly farmers. Women from Qassim have very limited contact with foreigners. The rural culture is not an open one. Qassim is quite a distinct region regarding gender attitudes and learning. Le Renard (2008) found that central regions of Saudi Arabia are much stricter and more conservative about the enforcement of restrictions surrounding sex segregation than the Eastern Province. Moreover, Hamdan (2005) believe that the role of women in Saudi Arabia is determined more by culture than by religion .

In 1963, girls' education was widely accepted elsewhere in more cosmopolitan areas of Saudi Arabia, like in Riyadh, Dammam, and Jeddah but Qassim presented an entirely contrasting picture.

King Faisal decided to open a school for female students in Qassim, but the conservative religious scholars in the region continued to pressurize society to prevent the girls from attending. The general public also indicated that a Saudi woman's place is in her home. According to Lacey (1981) and Alexander (2011), in September of 1963 the government had to send official forces to break up demonstrations in the city of Buraydah, where much of the opposition to girls' education took place. The citizens of this town had to be forcibly restrained from demonstrations. King Faisal's wife, who pushed enthusiastically for the education of women in Saudi Arabia, wished that women be allowed to learn science, language, and other subjects. Based on the unique situation faced by female students in Qassim, it is expected that these difficulties will be worse for them.

Hypotheses:

The hypotheses of this study is based on the research conducted by Woodrow, (2006) which indicates that passing the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) is the biggest difficulty for international students. The first hypothesis is that the greatest challenge faced by Saudi female students trying to pass the IELTS, results from interactions with male teachers and students in the class due to cultural differences. These differences dictate and limit interactions with male peers. The second hypothesis is that the majority of Saudi female students studying abroad have not been exposed to males before nor are males exposed to them. Additionally, it is hypothesized that time spent studying abroad will have a negative correlation with the severity of these challenges. That is, the longer a student spends time studying abroad, the less intense these challenges will be.

Significance of the Study:

It is expected that the outcomes of this study will be relevant to the Saudi public school system and generally be useful to universities and other institutions in Saudi Arabia, Saudi embassies, and international universities elsewhere.

Method

Participants

The participants in this study are thirty female postgraduate students from Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. Ten participants were interviewed, and twenty participants responded to a questionnaire. The age of participants are between 25 and 35. All of them have had the experience of studying abroad. Additionally, all participants studied in gender segregated environments inside the Kingdom . All participants in this study received scholarships from the Saudi Government for tuition and living expenses, and all participants are married. The study was carried out in Al-Qassim province, which is a religiously and culturally conservative place.

Materials

The research will collect data through an interview and questionnaire. Harris,

Brown (2010) indicates that the aim of questionnaires and interviews are to "confirm results despite differences in methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation".

Firstly, telephone interviews were conducted with ten female students to determine things that obstructed them from learning the English language in their classes. They were asked the following questions: "Would you prefer to have a female or male teach you?", "Do you feel nervous when teachers ask you to speak to male students in the class?" "Do you think that the international students' office helped you solve your problems?" Secondly, the questionnaire was given to twenty participants who completed their studies and graduated abroad.

A demographic sheet has also been provided to show data regarding length of time studying abroad as well as the age of participants.

Design

This study utilises a within-groups design to determine the relationship between difficulties faced by participants and the correlation with the length of time they have studied abroad.

Procedure

Students were contacted through their husbands. The questionnaire and demographic sheet were submitted by the researcher, and students were able to complete them in their own homes. The interviews were conducted by telephone, and the female secretary of the women's college helped the researcher conduct the interviews.

Results

In this section, we are going to discuss the results of the survey based upon interviews and the questionnaire. Saudi female students who had studied abroad gave their feedback on their experiences of studying in an environment where they had to study in mixed gender classes. They suffered from anxiety, which affected their language learning efficiency.

Interview :

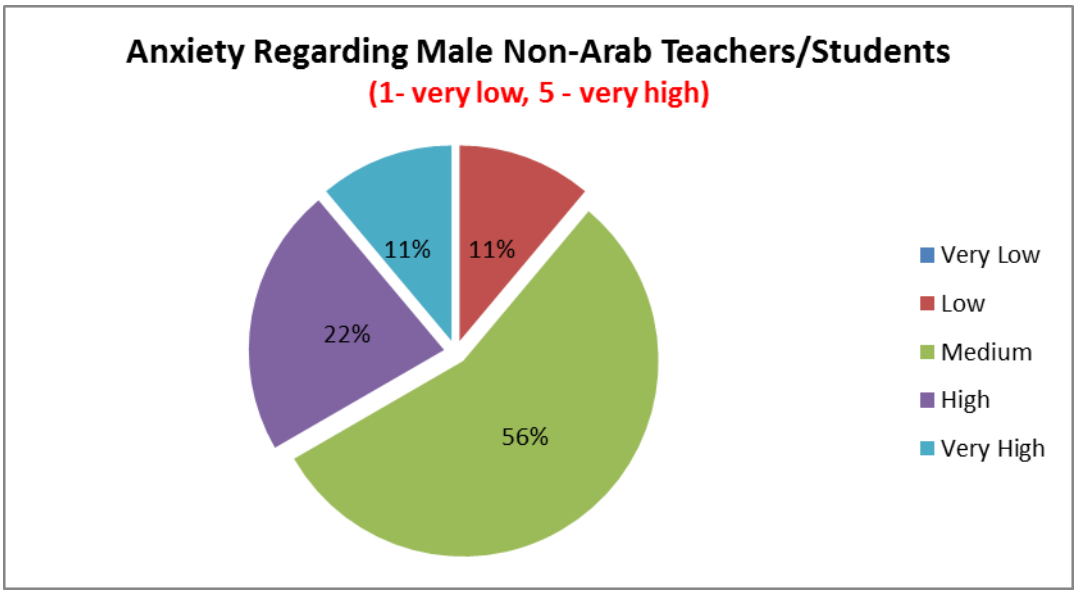

***Figure 1*. Anxiety Regarding Male Non- Arab Teachers/ Students**

Figure 1 shows that the Saudi female students studying in co-education classes feel more anxious when their class fellows are Arab males. However, in case of non-Arab male classmates, their anxiety level is lower than when they are studying with Arab classmates. The above chart clearly indicates the scenario of a co-education class where non-Arab male students are studying with Saudi female students. With non-Arab males their anxiety level is not as high as with Arab male students. Finally, there is proof that Saudi female students studying abroad feel more comfortable and relaxed with non- Arab male teachers and classmates.

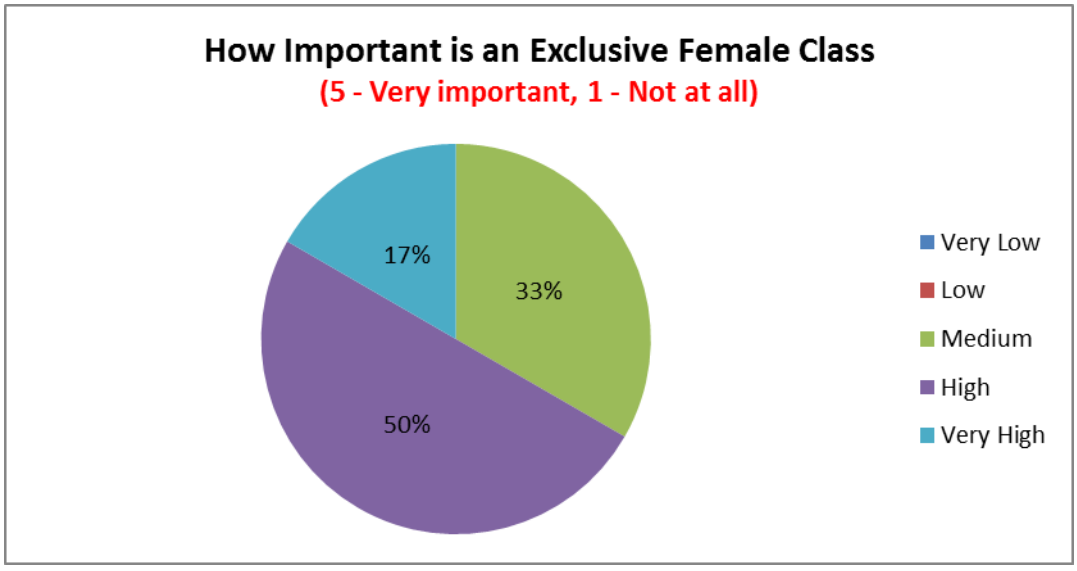

***Figure 2*. How Important is an Exclusive Female Class**

As compared to the previous chart, Figure 2 shows that the Saudi female students studying in co-education classes accompanied by a relative in class feel less anxious. The presence of a relative makes her feel secure socially and culturally. During one of the interviews a female interviewee also stated that "studying in a group of three or four Saudi females makes me more comfortable and relaxed than studying alone." The above chart clearly indicates the scenario of a co-education class where non-Arab male students are studying with Saudi female students while being accompanied by a relative. Their level of anxiety is much less, either because of being accompanied by a relative or because of studying with students of the same gender.

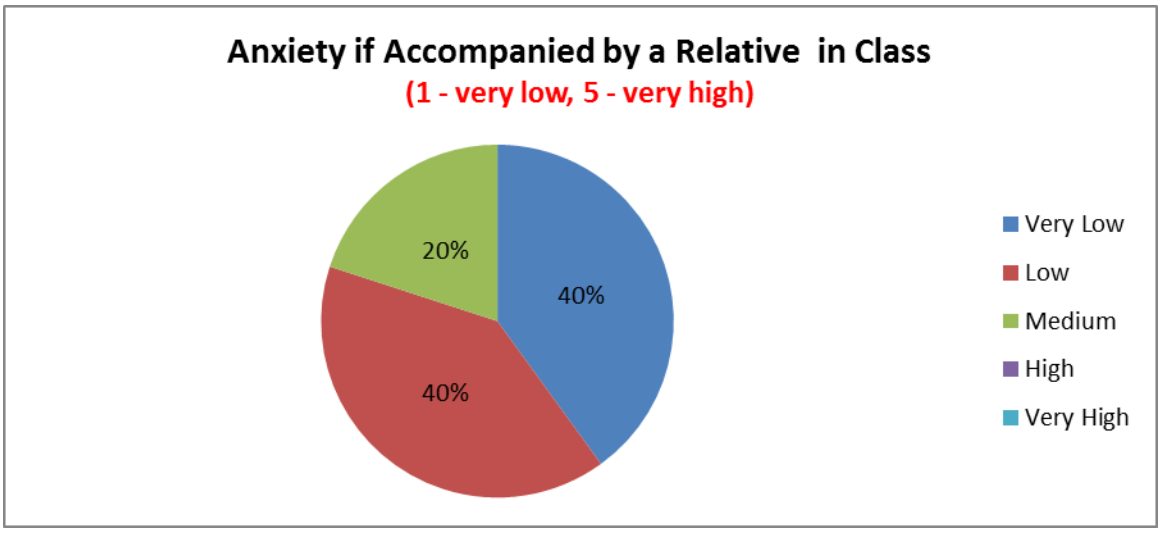

Figure 3. **Anxiety Accompanied by a Relative in Class**

Figure 3 shows another significant factor regarding the importance of studying in a class that is exclusively a female class of Saudi students while studying abroad. In this case, their comfort level is very high (50%) and participants of the survey said that they were extremely happy and relaxed.

Questionnaire:

This section shows the results of the questionnaire. The findings show trends that prove the point that the longer Saudi female language learners stay in a foreign environment, the more adaptable they become to the new environment. Here the focus is on the comfort level of female Saudi students studying in an environment where male classmates and teachers are present. Their very presence affected the learning of the female Saudi students who had come from a conservative environment which restricted male/ female interaction.

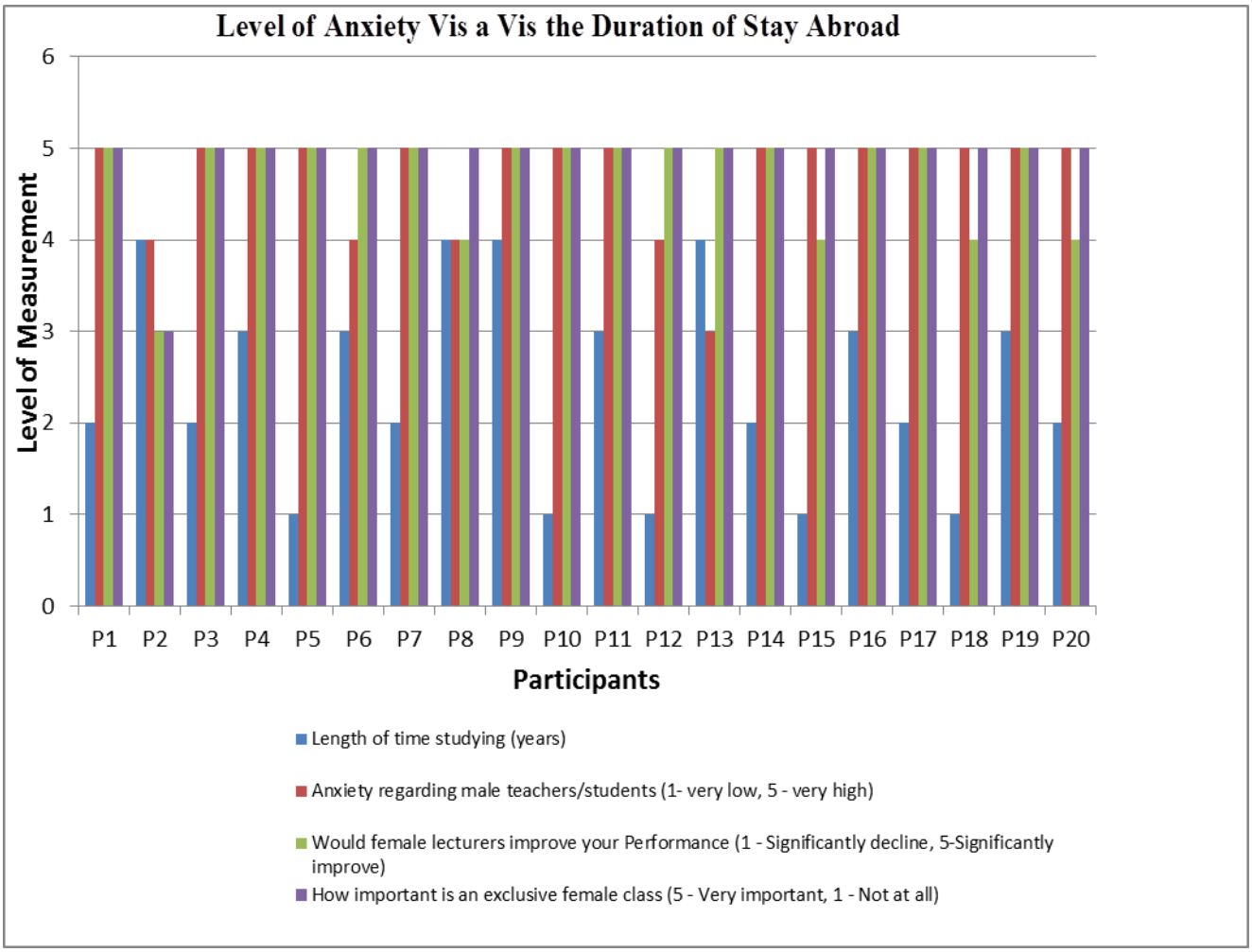

Figure 4. **Level of Anxiety Vis a Vis the Duration of Stay Abroad**

Six of the twelve questions related to interactions with male lecturers and students, and a comparison of the data with the length of time studied abroad supported the hypothesis that the longer a female student studied abroad, the less significant the issue of different gendered colleagues became. We are now going to explain the results in detail.

Participant No. 1 in the above chart spent two years studying abroad. Her anxiety level regarding male teacher/students was very high. She thought that female lectures would improve her performance significantly. She also felt very comfortable while studying in an exclusively female class.

Participant No. 2 shows a different picture altogether, i.e she spent four years studying abroad. As a result, she became more comfortable in the new environment . Her anxiety regarding male teachers was not as high as that of participant number one. Her preference for exclusively female lectures was also low. Her liking for exclusively female classes was less than participant number one. This shows that the longer Saudi female students spend studying abroad, the more confident they become. With time, they feel less anxious while studying with male classmates or being taught by male teachers.

Participant No. 3 shows the same result as that of participant no 1.

Participant No. 4 displays that the student in question spent three years studying abroad , but her anxiety level while studying with male classmates was still very high . She felt that female teachers would

improve her performance. Her comfort level with female students was also very high. This shows that even after spending three years studying in a different social and cultural environment, she was still shy with male classmates and teachers.

Participant No. 5 in the above chart spent only one year studying abroad, and she did not feel comfortable in the class where she had male classmates and male teachers. She liked to be taught by female teachers. This shows that she was still under the influence of her social and cultural background.

Participant No. 6 spent 3 years in a foreign environment, but unlike participant no. 5, her anxiety level decreased with the passage of time. This means she is an individual who possesses more flexibility in her character. Upon closer inspection, it came to be known that this participant had attended an international school where she had exposure to a co-educational environment at a very early stage of her life.

Participant No. 7 spent two years studying in a foreign country, and her anxiety level regarding male teachers and classmates was very high. Similarly her comfort level with female lecturers and female classmates was also very high. This means she was still under the influence of her native cultural, social and religious background.

Participant No. 8 spent four years outside the kingdom for her studies. Her anxiety level decreased because of spending more time in a foreign environment where she was exposed to the cultural values of the foreign country. Consequently, she became more confident and flexible in adapting herself to being taught by a male lecturer. Still, her preference for an exclusively female class was very high.

Participant No. 9 spent four years in a foreign country studying English, but surprisingly in all the three categories she still felt uncomfortable in an environment where the male element was either dominant or a part of her educational pursuit.

Participant No. 10 spent only one year abroad while studying English. Her anxiety was at the peak regarding the presence of male students and teachers around her, and her comfort level was also very high with female lecturers and students.

Participant No. 11 spent three years in the same environment, but had no effect of three years exposure to studying in a foreign environment. In all the three categories, she was at an extreme high level of anxiety.

Participant No. 12 spent only one year outside the Kingdom. Remarkably, her anxiety level regarding male teachers and students decreased during that one year which is unlike the majority of the other participants. This is not a general trend of the survey. Special individualistic or psychological reasons can be attributed for this character trait of participant no. 12.

Participant No. 13 spent four years outside the Kingdom while studying. Consequently, her anxiety level regarding the presence of male teachers and classmates decreased. This correlates with the hypothesis that the more time you spend in a foreign land, the more adaptable you become to foreign conditions. However, in the other two areas under consideration, she did not show any flexibility or adaptability. This reiterates the point that social and cultural values can stay with a person for quite a long time.

Participant No. 14 spent two years studying in a foreign land, but in all the questions under discussion, the graph shows that she touches the peak. Her anxiety level regarding the male teachers and classmates was very high. Similarly, the level of her comfort regarding improvement of her performance

while studying in an exclusively female class and being taught by female lecturers was very high. This proves the hypothesis that the less time a Saudi female student spends in a foreign environment, the more uncomfortable she will be with male teachers and classmates which will negatively affect the performance of the student in question.

Participant No. 15 spent only one year studying English in a foreign country. Her anxiety level regarding the presence of male classmates and male teachers was very high. However, she showed a remarkable deviation in her attitude regrading the second factor under discussion i.e. female lecturers would improve her performance. In this category, her score is 4 instead of 5 which means she was willing to accept male teachers as well. However, her comfort level of studying in an exclusively female class was still high.

Participant No. 16 spent three years abroad, but her shyness from males touches the peak. Her three years exposure to the foreign environment did not affect her in any of the areas under discussion. She was still shy, felt uncomfortable studying with the males and preferred the exclusive female classes and female lecturers.

Participant No. 17 spent two years studying in a foreign environment where co-education was in vogue. Her anxiety level of studying in the company of the male students and being taught by male teachers is at the peak. This shows that she is still under the influence of her native culture. Consequently, her performance in the class room was affected. Since we are considering the impact of such a scenario on learning English as a foreign language which is difficult in itself, the students' performance is definitely affected in a negative way.

Participant No. 18 studied abroad in a new class room environment where she studied with male classmates for one year. Her anxiety level regarding the presence of male teachers and classmates was the highest, but surprisingly her preference for female lecturers was not as much as the other participants' in question in this survey. However, her preference for an exclusively female class was the highest.

Participant No. 19 spent three years studying in a foreign environment where she had to study with male classmates. Her anxiety touches the highest point . Similarly, her preference for female lecturers and an exclusively female class was also the highest. This indicates that she is still under the influence of her native culture and feels uncomfortable while studying with male classmates.

Participant No. 20 spent only two years in a foreign environment where she had to deal with male teachers and classmates. This was, of course, in contrast to her upbringing in her native land. Naturally, her anxiety level was very high and her preference for an exclusively female class was also the highest. However, her comfort level at being taught by male lecturers was not that bad.

Discussion

The following section will discuss the most significant challenge faced by the participants while studying abroad in their interaction with male classmates. Altamimi (2014) in his research mentions that the reasons which make females unable to perform their studies are: they are unaccustomed to co-educational classes and male teachers, they are expected to defer to males, and they are not expected to interact with men outside the home. The participants under discussion are Saudi female students who studied abroad in a different environment i.e. they were subjected to studying in co-education system with male teachers and students. This was an altogether new experience for them that created a lot of hindrances on their path to achieve academic success in the field of learning English as a foreign language. Students' active participation in a foreign language learning class helps them in achieving language proficiency more easily and effectively. In the presence of male class fellows, Saudi female students were reluctant to participate actively in class room activities. Hence, their anxiety level was very

high in such an environment. Since the participants of this survey are from the Qassim region, which is particularly known as a very conservative area and rigid in terms of their interpretation of Islamic values, customs and traditions, the anxiety level of the participants can easily be understood. Here in Saudi Arabia, religious teachings are the basis of Saudi culture. However, Hamdan (2005) believes that the role of women in Saudi Arabia is determined more by culture than by religion. The researcher slightly disagrees with them on the grounds that culture alone is not the only factor but religion also plays a very important role in determining the social behaviour. This means, Saudi female students from the conservative region of Qassim studying English in foreign countries face problems like lack of confidence and hesitation in class room participation, which is mainly due to their cultural and religious background. The major factor behind this lack of communication in a foreign language learning class by the Saudi female students, was their inability to adapt to cross-cultural interaction. The impact of their native culture is so strong that it hinders their communication in an environment where male class mates and teachers are present. A very interesting point noticed in the survey was that three of the students interviewed were all from Onaizah (a neighbouring town of Buraidah). Buraidah is the capital city of the Qassim province and is under greater influence of cultural and religious restrictions headed by the Mutawa (the religious Islamic Scholars). On the other hand, Onaizah is inhabited by people who are more exposed to interacting with the world abroad. The participants of this study from Onaizah all showed less anxiety than the participants from Buraidah while studying abroad with male students.

Three participants out of twenty showed different results i.e. they spent more time studying abroad, but their anxiety was still high. Discussing research on language anxiety, Cheng and Erben (2011,p.16) note that, "students with the highest levels of foreign language anxiety tended to have at least one of the following characteristics: older learners, higher academic achievers, and those who had never visited a foreign country." As the students responding to the questionnaire had never been in a foreign country previously, and were somewhat older and more conservative in outlook than students in their late teens who were coming to the USA etc. to study for a bachelor's degree, this adds to the fact that the more conservative background a Saudi female comes from, the higher her anxiety would be of studying in a mixed class with male classmates and male teachers.

Limitations:

Several methodological concerns exist with the study , a key concern being the sample size. As such, the results cannot be generalised to the wider population. Additionally, due to existing cultural restrictions, it was not possible for the male researcher to meet directly with participants and, as a result, this research relied heavily on self-reporting, with no additional experimental controls.

Conclusion:

The findings clearly indicate that studying with male classmates and being taught by male teachers is of the greatest difficulty for Saudi female students. Hence, the anxiety level in the students under consideration is high. This anxiety naturally hampered their proficiency in learning English as a foreign language. Active participation in a language class by the language learners is of prime importance in improving language proficiency, but in this case the major impediment was the reluctance of the female language learners to take an active part in the language class due to the presence of male students. The husband is a preferred source to seek help from . Female students feel more confident and protected in the presence of their husbands in a foreign environment. Further research is needed, however, before the use of such materials can be recommended for all students in all subject areas at all levels.

Recommendations :

Future studies should include wider geographical units to improve reliability and validity of results. Additionally, further questions regarding academic performance and data of academic achievement could be included in research to improve both validity and reliability.

To avoid the cultural shock that many first year Saudi female students experience at a foreign university, a key recommendation from this study is for universities to provide better quality assistance to new students to support their induction process. Hellstén (2002) believes that international students have a clear expectation that they would be "taken care of" by their host culture and their university. This may include gender segregated environments on arrival although the researcher acknowledges this would be logistically difficult. Alhazmi (2010) suggests that Saudi Students need to prepare for mixed gender classes. This can be done by setting up an advice hotline for Saudi females or by encouraging them to join university societies, which inevitably will improve their social skills and thereby their English language proficiency.

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The Role of Individual Differences in Second Language Writing Corrective Feedback

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Abstract

As can be deduced from current research on the effects of written corrective feedback (CF) on raising the accuracy level of the second language (L2) writers, there seems to be a gap in the literature, namely that individual differences have not received careful investigation as they may affect the usefulness of CF. This article examines the most recent studies in L2 written CF and individual differences with the intention of building an intersection between the two fields. It suggests that the contradictions in the findings of the effectiveness of different types of CF can be attributed to individual differences. Given the limited scope of this article, only aptitude and working memory will be discussed. Although individual variations in aptitude, motivation, working memory, and L2 proficiency have been proven to be useful in Second Language Aquisition (SLA) research, it would appear that these differences have been overlooked by researchers in the field of written CF in L2 writing. Based on the most recent studies in L2 written CF and individual differences, this paper hypothesizes that direct metalinguistic correction would benefit learners with higher aptitude than those with lower aptitude. It also assumes that learners with higher working memory capacity will benefit more from different types of CF than learners with lower working memory capacity.

Keywords: aptitude, corrective feedback, individual differences, second language writing, working memory

Introduction

In 1996, a specialist in the field of second language learning and teaching by the name of Dr. John Truscott threw a large stone into the pond of second language writing. The thrown stone was his claim that grammar correction in L2 writing is not useful. Not only that, he also added that such correction might even be harmful to L2 writers. This assertion created waves in the field of L2 writing, waves that have roiled the field until this day. These waves represent different ideas, applications, and approaches by other specialists in the field of L2 writing. Some of these waves intersected with each other, some moved in the same direction, and some clashed with each other. While Truscott's work in this area began in 1996, the topic has remained interesting and significant to this day. Articles and books continue to be published on the matter of corrective feedback (Bitchner & Knoch, 2010; Farrokhi & Sattarpour , 2012; Frear, 2010; Kassim & Ng, 2014; Lee, 2010; Li, J., et, al. 2015; Shintani & Ellis 2013) by major journals and presses (Arab World English Journal, ELT Journal, International Journal of English Studies, Journal Of Second Language Writing, TESOL Quarterly). The reaction to Truscott (1996) has influenced specialists in L2 writing to study various types of corrective feedback.

As can be deduced from previous research on the effects of written CF on raising the accuracy level of L2 writers, there seems to be a gap in the literature, namely that individual differences have not received careful investigation as they may affect the usefulness of CF. These individual differences include aptitude, motivation, working memory, anxiety, attitude, gender, age, and many other variables. Thus, some researchers in the field of L2 writing have called for further examination of the effects of these individual differences (Sheen, 2007, 2011; Ferris, 2010). Also, Flashive (2010) observed that "few studies have been undertaken in the L2 writing literature whose primary focus is individual differences" (p. 135).

The aim of this study is to address this gap in the written corrective feedback research in L2 writing and individual differences to provide a starting point for future studies. To that end, rather than examining different feedback treatments on groups of learners using more controlled methods, this study will highlight the relationship between various types of CF and two individual differences variables: aptitude, and working memory. The current article reviews studies in both fields published from 2005 until 2014. The following research question will guide the investigation:

1. How might individual differences such as language aptitude and working memory influence L2 learners' ability to benefit from corrective feedback in their writing?

Corrective feedback in L2 writing

Corrective feedback is defined as the information given by teachers or peers to L2 learners in regard to linguistic errors that they have made (Sheen, 2007). "Corrective feedback can take place either in classrooms, where it is provided by language teachers or other students, or in naturalistic settings, where it is provided by native speakers or other non-native speakers." (Sheen, 2011). In this section, different types of written CF will be presented based on the current literature. Discussing these diverse types of CF will provide ideas regarding how researchers approach these types of studies in attempts to prove that one type of CF is more useful than another type. However, considering individual differences as a variable that might affect their research outcome.

Types of corrective feedback in L2 writing

Inspired by Truscott (1996), a number of different researchers have undertaken new programs of investigating the different effects of diverse types of CF. The main, diverse types of corrective feedback addressed in L2 writing CF studies have ranged from direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistics CF, focused CF, and unfocused CF to electronic CF (Ellis, 2009). The following section addresses these different types of CF.

Direct and indirect CF.

One focus of research is the effectiveness of direct versus indirect CF on raising the written accuracy level of L2 students. CF is considered direct when the teacher clearly provides the corrected form of the error. Indirect CF, however, is when the teacher merely indicates the error with a mark or by coding, making the student the one responsible for determining the correct form.

To date, the research into CF has not settled the debate as to whether indirect CF is more effective than direct CF or vice versa. Bitchener & Knoch (2008) claim that indirect CF may promote deeper language processing by requiring the student to engage in guided learning and problem solving, which will result in long-term acquisition (p. 415). Therefore, indirect CF might be more useful for L2 students at higher proficiency levels due to their rather advanced linguistic knowledge and their ability to relate the feedback they have received with the knowledge they have about the second language.

On the contrary, Bitchener (2012) claims that direct CF might be more useful than indirect CF because it "reduces confusion," provides students with information to "resolve more complex errors," and is "more immediate" (p. 355). For this reason, direct CF might be more useful for learners at lower proficiency levels, as they have fairly limited linguistic knowledge. However, in response to other research (van Beuningen, De Jong & Kuiken 2012; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010) claim that direct CF has a more significant long-term effect on grammatical errors than indirect, Bitchener (2012) suggests that further research is still needed.

Also, van Beuningen, De Jong & Kuiken (2012) have expanded the understanding of the effects of direct and indirect CF by comparing them to both lower proficiency and higher proficiency L2 students. The results of their study showed that "Direct correction is better suited for grammatical errors, and indirect correction is better suited for non-grammatical errors," and "Only direct CF has the potential to yield long-term grammatical gains" (van Beuningen et al., 2012, p. 33). Also, this study did not find a significant interaction between the effectiveness of the two types of CF and students' educational level (p. 33).

It seems possible that the disagreements among current research findings might be the result of methodological issues, or that individual differences among L2 students, as appears likely, are playing a role in the uncertain outcomes. Individual differences present themselves as a possible cause because none of the previously discussed studies considered individual differences as a variable that might play a role in the effectiveness of direct or indirect CF. The debate continues, and more research is needed to understand the relationship between direct and indirect CF on one hand and individual differences on the other.

Metalinguistics CF

As defined by Ellis (2009), "Metalinguistic CF involves providing learners with some form of explicit comment about the nature of the errors they have made" (p. 100). Metalinguistic CF is coded, encoded, or grammatically explained. Ellis (2009) mentioned that the use of error codes is the most common form of explicit comments. These codes label the different errors, and they are placed above the error or in the margin. Also, Bitchener et al. (2005) mentioned that a code indicates coded feedback that points to the exact location of an error and the type of error involved. While the encoded feedback involves a teacher showing the location of errors by circling or underlining them, it becomes the student's responsibility to diagnose and correct the mistake. This form of correction is also considered to be indirect metalinguistic feedback. Another form of metalinguistic feedback is brief, grammatical explanations of the errors, i.e. the teacher numbers errors and writes a grammatical description for each numbered error at the end of the text. This is time-consuming and, also, calls for the teacher to be able to write clear and accurate explanations for a large variety of errors (Ellis, 2009).

It is also important to know that metalinguistic feedback comes in oral and written forms. Written metalinguistic feedback requires that the teacher provides explanations on each student's paper while oral metalinguistic feedback can be provided in the form of a short lecture to a whole group of students (Bitchener et al. 2005, Bitchener 2008).

There are a number of studies that demonstrate the significance of metalinguistic feedback. For instance, the study by (Bitchener, Young & Cameron 2005; Sheen 2007; Bitchener 2008) in which they compared different types of direct CF, and particularly metalinguistic feedback, on second language student writing. Sheen (2007) compared direct error correction with metalinguistic feedback. Three groups were in this study: a control group and two treatment groups. The first treatment group received only direct error correction while the other treatment group received metalinguistic feedback. The results of the study showed that the group that received direct metalinguistic feedback outperformed both other groups in the delayed post-test.

Following the above study, Bitchener (2008) investigated the effects of metalinguistic feedback on improving accuracy in the use of the English article (the/a). The participants were divided into four groups. The control group received no feedback. The first experimental group received direct CF together with oral and written metalinguistic feedback. The second experimental group received direct CF but just written metalinguistic feedback, and the third group received only direct corrective feedback. The results showed that the group that received both oral and written metalinguistic feedback in combination with direct error correction and the students who only received direct feedback outperformed the students in the control group. This means that oral metalinguistic feedback did not make a difference when used with written metalinguistic feedback.

Research on metalinguistic feedback has shown some valuable findings. However, a firm conclusion cannot be drawn regarding oral or written metalinguistic feedback. This could be achieved if research compared the effects of oral and written metalinguistic feedback separately. None of the studies mentioned above has compared a group in which the students received only written metalinguistic feedback with a group receiving only oral metalinguistic feedback. In addition, and as a reflection of this paper's focus, only Sheen (2007) has studied the effect of

direct metalinguistic feedback in relation to one significant variable of individual differences: aptitude. Again, the limitation of research calls out for more investigation on how individual differences might play a role in the success or failure of different types of metalinguistic feedback.

Focused and unfocused CF.

Another concern of research is the comparison of the effectiveness of focused versus unfocused CF. Focused CF targets only one or a few error types while unfocused CF targets many or all error types.

On one hand, Bitchener (2012) claims that focused CF may be more useful for students at lower proficiency levels. Such students might be more likely to notice and understand corrections targeted at only one or a few categories. On the other hand, for learners with higher proficiency levels, Bitchener (2012) claims that unfocused CF may prove more useful as it would enable such students to attend to a larger range of linguistic concerns (p. 357). However, Bitchener indicates, "It is clear that the jury is still out on whether focused or unfocused CF is more effective," and further research is needed (p. 357).

Van Beuningen (2010) criticized the findings of positive effects of focused CF in recent studies (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Sheen, 2007), mentioning that most of these studies targeted only a narrow range of grammatical features selected for maximum simplicity, primarily that of English article usage. He posited that generalizing these results to cover other grammatical and linguistic errors is questionable (van Beuningen, 2010, p. 15).

Moreover, Hartshorn & Evans (2012) claim that if teachers only target, for example, mistakes concerning the use of subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs in student papers, their students may just choose to avoid constructing sentences that employ such grammatical forms. (Hartshorn et al. 2010; Beuningen, 2010) favor unfocused CF because it helps in improving all aspects of writing simultaneously. In addition, Hartshorn & Evans (2012) cite several studies (Anderson, 2010; Ferris, 2006) that indicate L2 learners express a clear preference for unfocused over focused CF (p. 5).

Most of the studies reviewed in this section conclude that focused CF is more beneficial than unfocused CF. It can be assumed that focused CF is better used for L2 beginners and a mixed approach of focused and unfocused CF is better suited for more advanced levels. The reason for such an assumption is that beginners still have a lot to learn about the target language, which will naturally cause them to make many more errors than advanced L2 learners. A large amount of CF might raise students' anxiety, which could reflect negatively on their attitude toward CF.

Electronic corrective feedback

The use of computers and other technology has become common in educational contexts and is often preferred by students and teachers of L2 writing (Hyland, 2010). Nowadays, it has become common for teachers of writing to require students to submit their papers electronically, and teachers will also provide CF on student papers electronically in online chatrooms, forums, or by using word-processing software. Studies on CF in L2 writing and computer-assisted

language learning (CALL) use the term electronic feedback (e-feedback) to refer to any comments about student writing delivered electronically via a computer by teachers or students' peers.

The current research on teachers' e-feedback is limited. There would appear to be no research that comprehensively describes its use and the impact on students' writing by skilled teachers. A few studies analyzed e-feedback strategies provided by tutors in written interactions with L2 language learners in discussion forums. Martin-Beltran & Chen (2013) conducted a case study of one tutor's feedback on two graduate ESL students in an online forum discussion. They analyzed 47 comments in which the tutor used a variety of speech acts. The feedback, formulated as interrogatives, hedges, and indirect CF, led to most revisions, and the results reported an increase in the students' awareness of language and revisions. Samburskiy & Quah (2014) studied the online written interaction of tutors with college-level English learners and found that most of the feedback provided by the tutors focused on meaning rather than form. The study also found that lexical errors were more frequently targeted than grammatical errors.

As mentioned, the research conducted on e-feedback so far is scarce, even though most scholars believe teacher feedback is more useful than peers' e-feedback. Also, like many experimental studies on written CF, most CALL studies on e-feedback either pick and choose the type of feedback that is analyzed or neglect individual differences and their role in students' reactions to CF. Importantly, more attention has been focused on written responses from discussion forums rather than essay-writing improvement as a result of e-feedback.

This section of the paper examines the various options for correcting students' written work. While feedback is a central aspect of L2writing programs across ESL writing classrooms, the existing literature produced inconclusive results regarding the role of different types of CF in L2 development. See Table 1 below for a summary of the different forms of feedback.

Table 1. ***Different Types of CF in Recent Studies***

Type of CF	Description	Studies
Direct CF	Gives an indication of the error and provides the correct form.	Santos et al. (2010), Shintani & Ellis (2013)
Indirect CF	Gives an indication that an error has been made by: • underlining the error • indicating the number of errors in the margin • inserting error codes in the text	Bitchener and Knoch (2008), De Jong, and Kuiken (2012)
Metalinguistics	To provide some kind of a metalinguistic clue as to the nature of the error by: • Use of error code • Brief grammatical descriptions	Shintani, and Ellis (2013), Mansourizadeh, and Izwan Abdullah (2014), Ferris (2006), Sheen (2007), Ferdouse (2011)
Focused CF	To select one or two error types to correct.	Bitchener (2008), Bitchener & Knoch (2009), Bitchener et al. (2005), Ellis et al.

		(2008), Farrokhi & Sattarpour, (2012), Ferris (2006) Sheen (2007), Sheen et al. (2009), Ferris et al. (2013)
Unfocused CF	To correct all of the students' errors or at least a large number of them.	Van Beuningen (2010), Van Beuningen et al. (2012)
Electronic CF	The teacher indicates an error and provides a hyperlink to a concordance file that provides examples of correct usage.	Hyland, 2010, Martin-Beltran and Chen (2013), Li, J., et, al. (2015)

L2 written CF research and individual differences

The literature in the field of L2 writing CF has focused mainly on answering "how" rather than "why" one approach of CF is more efficient than the other. As for Ferris et al. (2013), several authors in the field of L2 writing have recently called for more attention to individual differences in investigating the effects of CF (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Ferris, 2010). Moreover, Flahive (2010) observed that "few studies have been undertaken in the L2 writing literature whose primary focus is individual differences" (p. 135). Based on these calls, the author of this study might assume that individual differences may serve as a useful direction for future second language writing research. As shown in Table 2, there have been few attempts in previous studies to identify possible individual differences variables that might explain student variation in responding to written CF.

L2 learners' utilization of written CF for improvement is impacted by individual differences (Ferris, 2006). Sheen (2011) explored some individual differences in L2 writing CF but focused only on anxiety, aptitude, and attitude. In contrast, individual differences in the field of SLA have been the center of so many studies for a long time. SLA research on language learning motivation has found that integrative motivation significantly correlated with learning outcomes while learners with higher proficiency tend to adopt more to language learning strategy (Dörnyei, 2005).

Since individual differences, such as motivation, strategy and L2 proficiency, have been found important in SLA, the way they play a role in learners' responses to written CF deserves to be explored.

Table 2. ***Summary of studies, which include Individual Differences as Variables in Written CF***

Study	Individual differences	Aim of the study
Li, S., & Li, P. (2012)	motivation, strategy, and L2 proficiency	A multi-case study exploring individual differences that impact learners' responses to WCF.
Sheen (2007)	aptitude	To examine the differential effect of two types of written CF and the extent to which language analytical ability mediates the effects of CF on the acquisition of articles by adult intermediate ESL learners of various L1 backgrounds.

Sheen (2011)	anxiety, aptitude, and attitude	Sheen explores whether and to what extent individual differences influence the effectiveness of CF. She sheds light on this under-researched field of research and presents insightful findings from her doctoral study, thus making a timely and useful contribution to the wider research community.
Kormos (2012)	Aptitude, motivation, working memory	Review of the most important individual difference factors that might explain variations in L2 writing processes and discuss the influence of these factors on how L2 learners exploit the language learning potential of writing tasks.
Ferris et al. (2013)	attitude, confidence	A longitudinal (16-week semester) multiple-case study exploring the ways L2 student writers (specifically ‘‘Generation 1.5’’) describe their strategies for applying feedback to existing texts after receiving focused, indirect, explicit WCF And the different individual and contextual factors that might influence L2 student writers’ ability to benefit from WCF?

Individual Differences and CF

The importance of considering individual differences in SLA has been widely explored with considerable attention in many language-teaching studies. It is undoubtedly the case that students, as different individuals, come to class with different characteristics. The study of individual differences has a long history that even precedes the beginnings of the SLA field of study (Ellis, 2008).

Dörnyei (2005) defines individual differences as “enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree” (p.4). In other words, this means that an individual difference is a variable, shared by all, but which makes each individual distinct from others. As shown in Figure 1, Ellis (2004) pointed out four categories that are responsible for individual differences in SLA. The first category is abilities, which has three factors: intelligence, working memory, and language aptitude. The second category is propensities; this consists of five factors: learning style, motivation, anxiety, personality, and willingness to communicate. The third category is learner cognition about L2 learning; this refers to the student beliefs. The last is student actions, which includes learning strategies as the only subdivision. As shown in Figure 2, Dörnyei (2005) listed the different factors of individual differences that have an impact on SLA. He divided them into major factors and peripheral factors. The primary factors are personality, language aptitude, motivation, learning cognitive styles, and language learning strategies. The peripheral factors are anxiety, creativity, willingness to communicate, self-esteem, and learners’ beliefs.

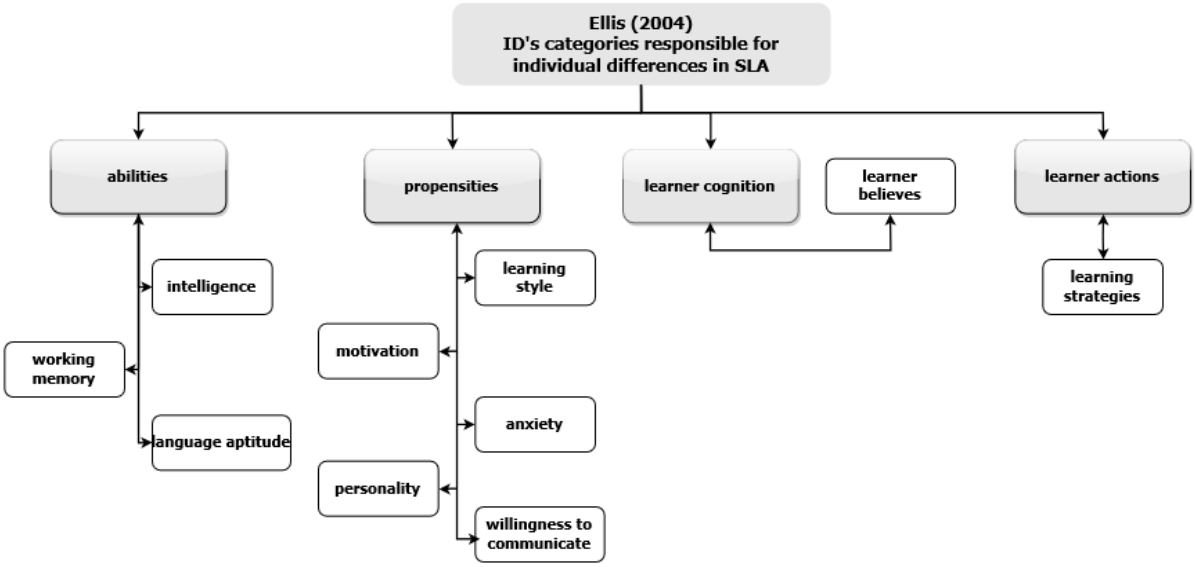

Figure. 1. **Categories Responsible for Individual Differences in SLA**

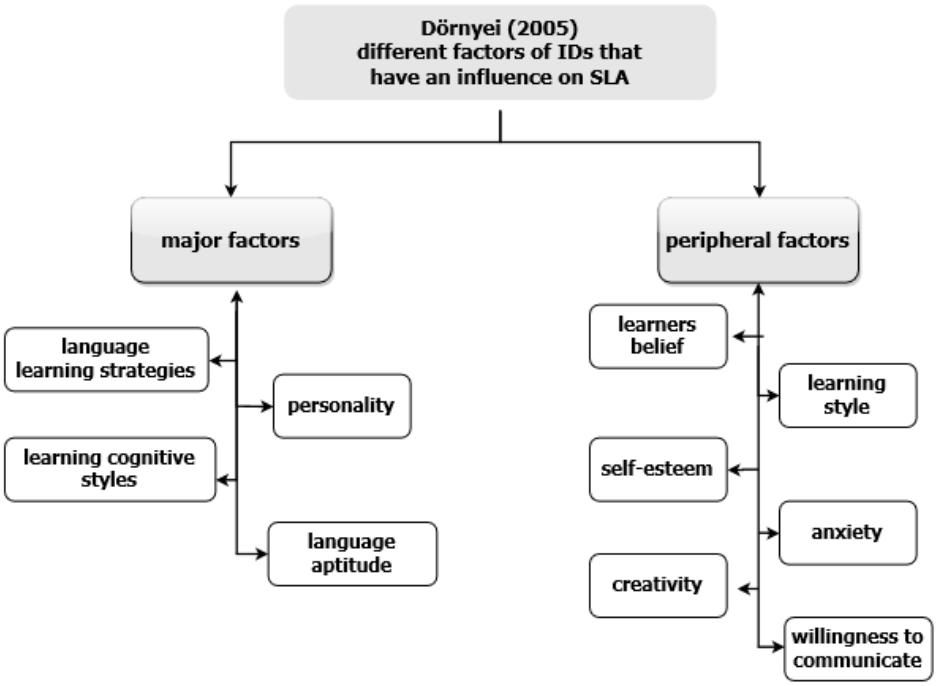

Figure. 2. **Factors of Individual Differences that have an Impact on SLA**.

The research in SLA has shown that these many individual difference factors play a significant role in the success of acquiring a second language. Based on (Dörnyei, 2005; Ellis, 2008), "Language learning motivation" research has found that integrative motivation is positively associated with learning outcome, while "language learning strategy" research has shown that learners with higher proficiency levels tend to adopt more and deeper language learning strategies. Based on such findings, these factors might well play the same role when it comes to L2 writers' utilizing different types of written CF. Sheen (2011) explored some

individual differences in written CF in detail but only focused on anxiety, aptitude, and attitude. The results showed that the effects of different types of CF are mediated by learners' analytical ability; anxiety and attitude towered CF (Sheen, 2011. p. 155).To provide useful corrective feedback, teachers should look at their students as different individuals and try to understand why some learners may or may not respond to some types of corrective feedback (Bitchner, 2010). In order to understand such variation of student responses to any given feedback, it is important to look closely at individual differences among our students. There are personal factors that influence students' engagement in the teacher's corrective feedback. In the following, due to the limitation of this paper, only language aptitude, and working memory are being analyzed in relation to the different types of CF.

Aptitude and CF in L2 writing

Robinson (2005) defined aptitude within a cognitive information processing paradigm by saying that "second language aptitude is characterized as strengths individual learners have in the cognitive abilities information processing draws on during L2 learning and performance in various contexts and at different stages." This means that language aptitude refers to an individual's potential for learning languages. This potential is often measured by the use of various aptitude tests, which claim to predict the degree of success the individual will have with a new language. A list of different aptitude measurement tests is listed in Table 3.

Table 3. ***Aptitude Measurement Tests.***

Measurement	Description
Modern Language Aptitude Test	mainly used by government and military institutions to select and place employees for language training
Defense Language Aptitude Battery	developed and used by the United States Department of Defense to select candidates for jobs that will require them to attain fluency in a foreign language
Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery	used to assess the language learning aptitude of students in grades 7 to 12
Modern Language Aptitude Test – Elementary	appropriate for children in grades 3 to 6
Cognitive Ability for Novelty in Acquisition of Language	uses a new concept of language aptitude as a theoretical base

According to Sheen (2011), aptitude consists of three different abilities:

1- Auditory ability: enables an individual to discriminate and retain sounds for deeper processing and analysis.
2- Language analytic ability: the capacity to understand rules of language and make linguistic generalization.
3- Rote learning ability: engages memory to make associations between L1 lexis and L2 language items.

"Auditory ability" and "rote learning ability" are more relevant to how learners process oral CF while "language analytic ability" seems more germane to how learners process written CF. This is because most of the recent research in written CF has focused on the effect of different types

CF on one or only a few grammatical features. Sheen (2007), Skehan (1998) claim that grammatical sensitivity and inductive language learning ability are the components of "language analytic ability." (p. 259).

To date, only a few studies have explored the role of aptitude in the efficiency of CF, in general (Kormos, 2012, p. 390). DeKeyser (1993) found that learners with high language aptitude and low anxiety benefited more from CF (Kormos, 2012, p. 393). Similarly, according to Kormos (2012), Havranek & Cesnik (2001) claimed that students with a positive attitude toward error correction and strong language ability are likely to benefit more from CF. However, these two studies examined language aptitude as a whole and did not investigate the effects of language aptitude on different types of CF targeting particular linguistic structures. This raises the question whether various types of CF are affected by differing language analytical ability.

It can be assumed that learners with different aptitude levels might benefit to varying degrees from different types of CF. It would seem that only Sheen (2007, 2011) has investigated the relations between written corrective feedback and language learning aptitude. Sheen (2007) analyzed how language analytical ability is associated with uptake from direct correction with or without metalinguistic feedback. Her findings show that students with strong language analytical ability benefit more from CF than students with lower levels of metalinguistic skills. Also, the results indicate that high aptitude learners will benefit more from metalinguistic CF. Sheen's (2007) findings also suggest that a high level of language aptitude assists students in acquiring L2 knowledge through CF. Additionally, the results also show that students with high aptitude benefit more from focused CF. Even with these findings, the question remains regarding the possibility of generalizing such results among all L2 learners, especially that all Sheen's participants in this study were attending the same American Language Program at the same community college. The limitation in generalizing such results calls for further investigation of the nature of the relationship between language aptitude and CF in L2 writing.

Working memory and CF in L2 writing

Zhao (2013) described working memory as a cognitive construct that temporarily stores and processes the information required to perform complex cognitive tasks. Similarly, as cited by Mackey & Sachs (2012), Baddeley (2003) described working memory as "an integrated system for temporarily storing and manipulating information." In other words, working memory is a temporary storage system that utilizes short-term memory and links it with prior memory so that an individual can effectively process new information as quickly as possible. Working memory is also measurable with the use of different tests, as listed in Table 4.

Table 4. ***Working Memory Measurement Tests***

Table 4. ***Working Memory Measurement Tests.*****Measurement**	**Description**
Working Memory Rating Scale (WMRS)	developed for educators to facilitate easy identification of children with working memory deficits.
Working Memory Test Battery (WMTB-C)	provides an accurate assessment of working memory in 5 to 15-year-olds.
The Rivermead Behavioural	designed to predict everyday memory problems

Memory Test (RBMT)	in people with acquired, non-progressive brain injury and monitor change over time.
The Speed and Capacity Language Test (SCOLP**)**	sensitive to slowing of language and cognitive functioning that often occurs following brain damage.

According to Cowan & Nelson (2008), working memory consists of subsystems that store and manipulate visual images or verbal information. A central executive coordinates these subsystems. It consists of a visual representation of the possible linguistic moves and awareness of the flow of information into and out of memory, which is stored for a limited amount of time. This complex system must play an significant role; however, that role, how different learners process written CF, has not yet been explored.

Based on Mackey & Sachs' (2012) study of task-based interaction with feedback, Mackey et al. (2002) found that learners with higher working memory capacities show better lasting L2 learning benefits than those with lower working memory capacity. In a more recent study by Mackey et al. (2010), the results showed a positive relationship between working memory and L2 production in response to interactional feedback. This suggests that learners with higher working memory capacity may show such benefits in relation to an enhanced ability to allocate attention toward reformulating their utterances. The relationships among L2 written CF and working memory may differ from one learner to another. Unfortunately, to date, little research has empirically explored this relationship. Although learning opportunities through CF in writing are less constrained by time pressure due to the off-line nature of writing, it can be hypothesized that, similar to speaking contexts, L2 writers will also show variation in how they respond to feedback, depending on their working memory capacity.

Conclusion

As discussed earlier, and as the literature shows, the inconclusive findings in written CF research are not only the result of research methodology but also a result of individual differences among L2 learners. One type of CF might be helpful for one individual but not so useful for another. Each student is unique; there are no two students who are the same in their methods of receiving and processing feedback. It is reasonable to hypothesize that learners with high aptitude will be better able to engage in the kind of cognitive comparison that is required if CF is to result in learning. It can be further argued that direct metalinguistic correction will benefit learners with higher aptitude than those with lower aptitude because analytically strong language learners would likely find it easier to use metalinguistic information. It could also be assumed that learners with higher working memory capacity will benefit more from different types of CF than learners with lower working memory capacity. L2 students come to classrooms with individual differences that might be a result of learning style, aptitude, motivation, anxiety, working memory, attitude, or educational background. It is necessary for teachers as well as researchers to consider most if not all of these factors by always keeping in mind that every student is a different individual and that these differences can enhance the learning experience of the entire group.

The present paper provoked more questions than it has provided answers. Considering the complexity of research on individual differences in the classroom, future studies can benefit

from the findings of already advanced studies on individual differences and their effect on SLA. One of the major implications of this paper is that future investigation of the effectiveness of written CF on L2 learners' writing needs to take into account individual differences as an important factor that is highly likely to affect how students process feedback in an L2 writing class.

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Focusing Teacher's Practices, Learners' Attitudes and Study Skills Through Action Research

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Abstract

Teaching English to first year students at university is quite challenging. After nearly a decade of the adoption of the LMD (Licence/Master/Doctorat) in Algeria, teachers have been putting focus on classroom practices and designining appropriate curricula. In this action research, the author focused on the learners' attitudes towards their teachers and towards their teahers' practices. To achieve these aims, classroom observations, collaboration with teachers teaching first year students and a set of interviews to cover the various teaching practices teachers adopt during the academic year 2013-2014 were used. The paper relied also on the analysis of the students' journals, questionnaires and interviews while learning study skills in their Methodology of the University Work's Subject. Results showed that first year students had positive attitudes towards their teachers and their teachers' practices. In addition, the majority of learners could develop their study skills' abilities, but still face difficulties in spakeing, writing and vocabulary. Teachers, on their hand, argued that their students face problems in the productive skills although they have very good interpersonal relationships with first year students. The paper suggests at the end that teachers should use new methods to develop learners' competences and invlove learners in the decision-making process.

Key words: action research, attitudes, methodology of university work, study skills, teacher's practices.

Introduction

During at least the last six decades, there was a proliferation of teaching methods in the field of foreign languages. Their vital aim and elementary objective has been to ensure a methodical and efficient learning of the target language they are exposed to. These methods focus mainly on the materials to be used, on the aspects of the language to be learned and the skills that foreign language learners are expected to learn. In the Algerian context, there is tendency to encourage openness towards EFL. In addition, the LMD reform encourages the development of foreign language teaching methodologies in order to fit globalisation needs. In this paper, we try to shed light on how ELT practices influence learners' practices focusing first year university students of English while dealing with study skills. The researcher at hand was among the staff that launched the LMD system and was engaged in all the changes, the challenges and the developments of its functioning in a decade time. Additionally, the suggested syllabus of the Methodology of the University Work (Idri, 2013) put focus on study skills and this started right from 2004/2005 when the LMD system started in Bejaia University. This paper takes three groups out of six as a sample of the action research (i.e. 50% of the whole population of first year students in the 2014/2015 university year).

I. Context and Problem

I.1. Introducing First Years LMD Programmes

To begin with, it is essential to make comparisons with the programme launched when the LMD system started in Algeria and the new one required by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in 2013. The programme was sent by the Ministry and neither teachers nor administrators were prepared to get started with a new programme.

Within the prgoramme, there were many changes regarding the subjects to teach, the number of hours to teach each subject, the type of sessions to teach. From 2004 until 2013, teachers used to cover a diversity of subjects. These were: *writing, speaking, morpho-syntax, origin and evolution of language, linguistic trends and concepts, phonetics, initiation to cultures of language, initiation to literature, ESP (English for Specific Purposes), methodology of the university work, German or Spanish (student's choice), ICT(Information and Communication Technology) (optional,) and human and Social sciences (optional).*

However, the 2013 programme came to change the overall content and form of studies as a whole. It is a common programme that comes to fix teaching contents in foreign languages in the two first years of the LMD system in all Algerian universities (MESRS, 2013, article 1). The objective behind is to create homogeneous learning and equal opportunities for learners. The first semester of the year is made up of eight lectures (*writing, Speaking, Grammar, initiation to Culture/civilization, initiation to linguistics, initiation to literary texts, human and social sciences,* and finally *methodology of the university work*). Additionally, six group sessions are also available that are: *phonetics, speaking, French, grammar, writing,* and finally *methodology of the university work.* During this academic year, this programmed was covered by 13 full-time teachers (who cover mainly lectures), 10 part-time teachers (who cover mainly group sessions and tutored by full-time teachers) and two associate teachers. The 2013/2014's section encompasses six groups. This paper is concerned with groups 4, 5 and 6 that makes 86 students.

Comparing these two programmes remains important since many subjects disappeared, mainly *ESP* and *ICT* that constitute a pillar of the LMD system whereas less importance is given to *phonetics* (Mammeri, 2014) whose weekly teaching hours diminished and its oefficient shifted from 3 in the first programme to 1 in the new one.

I.2. Research Methodology: Teaching Context

In the Algerian university, the debate about teaching curricula is still on about what to teach in the research methodology classes (Hamada, 2014; Idri, 2013); a subject that appears at all levels in the BA (Bachelor of Arts, the L of the LMD system) and at the two years level of Master degree as well. Some of the most common and challenging problems that teachers encounter with learners is how to develop learners' academic skills, how to use research skills and make efficient bibliographic research; how to reach positive and satisfactory academic achievement via writing research reports, dissertations and theses. In this work, focus is put on the first year of the LMD system. The syllabus highlights teaching study skills. The aim behind is trying to minimize the problem of inappropriate research methods' use, help the learner cope with long and numerous texts for reading, avoid poor note taking, and help the learner achieve good academic written results.

In Bejaia context, although theoretically the subject has been allotted much time and weight in the programmes, but still learners find difficulties to write academically when asked to do so. One can in no way discuss all the years of study that is why the paper takes one sample; that is, teaching study skills to first year university students of EFL. Given that EFL is based on language skills and that new teaching methods require more from the learner, we estimate that the university learner should first develop his study skills or research methods' skills at the first stage. This implies developing the students' learning strategies and then being more autonomous when they advance in the training. For this, Hamada (2014) suggested that teachers need to:

- improve language proficiency through the four skills,
- use autonomous, strategic learning,
- vary access routes to information and data collection, analysis and interpretation of results.

In a study day held in Bejaia on May, 13th, 2014 about evaluating the LMD system in Algeria after a decade period, presenters could make comparisons between the two universities that piloted the system: Bejaia University and Constantine University. Focus was put on English mainly. Prof. Hamada (2014) emphasized the programmes teachers agreed upon in Constantine for all the levels. The first year syllabus was presented as follows:

- **Objective.** Raise students' awareness about language learning strategies and study skills make them act as active learners, using different intelligences for various reading purposes.

- **Content.** Prof. Hamada presented the following content:

- Learning principles and strategies; using affective and meta-cognitive strategies
- Discovering and using multiple intelligences
- Developing critical thinking
- Setting reading purposes, and;

- Note taking, skimming, scanning, paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting

As one might notice, focusing study skills and learning strategies is shared by both universities (Bejaia; **c.f. appendix 01** and Constantine as presented by Prof. Hamada). However, the difference is that in Constantine, there is an explicit teaching of learning strategies. Learners are also taught such strategies and, then, will be accustomed to the technical terms related to the competences they are supposed to develop. In Bejaia, however, study skills are taught explicitly but learning strategies are meant to be developed implicitly without offering the technical terms related to what learners should develop.

II. Literature Review

In this paper, the author based the analysis on four main concepts; learners' attitudes and beliefs mainly towards teachers, teachers' practices, study skills and action research.

To begin with, interest in learners' beliefs and attitudes has increased since the 1980s. Learners' attitudes can be related to the learner himself, the class or the teacher. In language learning, the learner is the central of this process. Hence, all what happens in the foreign language classroom and all what the teacher does or should do in his practices should respond to this learner's needs. First, learners' perceptions refer to perceptions of themselves. These have often been defined as how students understand and make sense of themselves and their own learning (Liskin-Gasparo, 1998). Learners' perceptions of the learning situation have included how students experience and understand aspects of the classroom. In the present action research, focus is put on how learners perceive their level in terms of language skills and towards their teachers of study skills. When dealing with language skills, speaking comes at the top of the learners' difficulties; either really or as perceived by the students themselves. In general, and as Horwitz (1988) found in her study, foreign language learners were found to believe that they should be able to speak with accuracy and with an excellent accent. With such beliefs, they certainly think that they should be fluent and speak the foreign language without committing mistakes. In addition, mistaken or uninformed beliefs about language learning may lead to dependence on less effective strategies, resulting in indifference toward learning, poor cognitive performance, classroom anxiety and a negative attitude to autonomy (Victori and Lockhart, 1995). In addition to language skills, study skills are concerned with developing strategies as well as academic skills in EFL learners. If learners hold negative beliefs about these skills or about their ability to develop them, they are more likely to fail in doing so. For this, the author assumes that the teacher's role is paramount in this case.

Since the paper's aim turns around teachers' practices, instructors need to admit and respect students' attitudes, beliefs, and expectations and help them overcome any damaging perceptions and blocks (Mantle-Bromley, 1995). Moreover, instructors need to enhance students' awareness of their personal weaknesses and strengths and of their task/strategic competence, since beliefs differing from those of the teacher can lead to frustration, dissatisfaction with the course, unwillingness to perform communicative activities, and lack of confidence in the teacher (Mantle-Bromley 1995; Peacock, 1998).

In the Methodology of the University Work's subject at Bejaia University, emphasis is put on teaching study skills to first year university students. The objective behind is to develop in the learners a number of competences they need in their learning in general and research in

particular. The role of study skills is based on research methods skills, library skills, information skills, information handling/retrieval skills and so on. In EFL, teaching accentuates language skills, use of dictionary and online resources, note-taking techniques and many other aspects that can help the learner develop his academic skills. Wray and Lewis (1997b) identified a number of study skills required from the learner namely: identifying known information; identifying needed information; defining a subject and a purpose for the research; locating and selecting possible sources of the information; recognizing text type or types and how to read them to obtain the information; locating information in the text; and interacting with the text in the most effective manner; monitoring the understanding of the text; and using appropriate strategies if there are parts that are not understood; selecting and extracting relevant information; organizing and recording the information either in writing or electronically; evaluating, interpreting, integrating and interrogating the information; using processes for remembering what has been learnt; and finally presenting or communicating findings or points of view. Hence, teachers should be careful about their practices to succeed in developing such competences in their learners. The course at hand aims at developing all these skills to facilitate reading scholarly publications and write academically.

Yet, in order to succeed in making learners' attitudes positive towards the course, the classroom and the teacher, the author applied action research to develop teaching skills. Allright (2005) pointed out that action research is a model for classroom research. When attempting to link action research to teacher research, we just share Dick's (2005, p. 137) definition that 'action research is action and research' on the one hand and that the teacher should also conduct research in order to develop and change. It is simply because teacher research is in itself a systematic inquiry into practice so as to improve the quality of teaching and learning' (Vieira, Barbosa, Paiva & Fernandes, 2008, p. 221). For Dick (2005, p. 140), action research involves both learning and change. Hence, teacher research when employed as action research is more likely to make changes in both learning and teaching practices. As one can notice, efficient and effective teaching cannot be totally separated from research since the instructor needs to be in constant contact with his learners. In this, Allright (2005) commented on action research:

> "It simply repeated the demand on them to develop research skills taken from the academic repertoire and to run classroom research projects that would be essentially parasitical on both their normal working lives as teachers and the lives of their learners. the relationship between academic researchers like me and classroom teachers, and that proposed the term exploratory teaching for what I had in mind."(p. 355)

Additionally, when teaching changes from theory consuming to theory building, teachers will then develop new ways of teaching and use different techniques. Thus, teaching can be based on evidence teacher research produces. In this, Biesta (2007, p. 1) pointed out that teaching should be or become an evidence-based profession as it has recently come to prominence in several countries around the world.

III. Participants

III.1. Learners

The target population in the present study was first year EFL students at Bejaia University enrolled in the academic year 2013-2014. They represent 164 students divided into six groups and each group carries 28 students. The present action research takes three classes (84 students) as a sample.

III.2. Teachers

The author worked with instructors teaching first year students the same year. Five teachers were interviewed and four others provided feedback regarding teaching practices. They are all full-time teachers. Their experience varies from four to twelve years of university teaching. They were all females.

IV. Data Collection

IV.1. Written Journals

This tool was used twice during the acdemic year. The first written journal was used in the first session in October, 2013. Its aim was to evaluate the learners' entering behaviour. The teacher asked learners to introduce themselves, describe their language proficiency in terms of language skills and write about what they expect to learn from the subject of "Methodology of the University Work" that students attends for the first time . We could receive 60 copies. It should be noted that classes generally contain less during the first sessions because a number of students was not registered due to changing the discipline, changing the university or changing the faculty.

The second journal was used at the end of the year; three sessions before stopping lectures (i.e. journals due on April, 21st, 2014). The number diminised dramatically and we could get only sixteen answers from the students. This period was characterized by students' absenteeism since there was a break due to national events (on April, 17th and 20th). The teacher asked learners to write about what they learned, what was difficult, what would they need to emphasize in the last two remaining sessions. The session was also devoted to question-and_answer since learners faced problems in practice at that stage. The journal required from the learners their general feedback on their first academic year at university.

IV.2. Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to get more details about the learners' attitudes towards study skills, language skills and their level of proficinecy after one academic year according to their own view. The questionnaires were administred on April, 2014.

IV.3. Interviews

Interviews were used during tutoring sessions to accompany learners. The author's tutoring sessions were scheduled on Mondays from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on a weekly basis. Hence, only learners who felt the need to have a talk with a tutor were envolved in this method. The students were 10 in number. They were interviewed individually. It was an unstructured interview for each learner since tutoring is meant to suit the learner's need and should be guided

accordingly. Teacher's role was more listening and guiding the learners. Interviews were seperately held and in different periods of the academic year.

IV.4. Online journals

A set of questions was sent to the majority of teachers who were teaching first year students during the academic year 2013/2014. From nine teachers, the author could have five answers.

V. Findings

During the whole academic year, the teacher-researcher tried to adopt diverse teaching tools, materials and diverse means of data collection in this action research. The author was aware that for students, attending university courses for the first time can be challenging. We can illustrate from Student K. H. who wrote in his interview: *"university is something different from other levels. I think that it's hard to adapt. I mean it's heavy for someone new".* As part of teaching, teachers tend to start the first session with a self-introduction and the introduction of the subject at hand. The subject of the Methodology of the University Work is new for the learner as its name suggests. Hence, preparing the learner for a new subject is quite evident. Although its content might be easy to grasp, but developing the competences needed from the learner is the end. The objective of the subject is to train beginner learners develop their learning strategies and help learners be able to locate information, organize information and reconstruct information. This is simply because all EFL learning has to do with information gathering and practice.

Findings are displayed according to the three main points; learners' attitudes and experiences, studi skills' teaching and teachers' practices.

V.1. Learners' Attitudes and Experiences

A Question-and-Answer method was used during the 21st of April's session. This was done to encourage the learner share his learning experience with the lecturer. Students were overt towards this discussion and many of the students revealed that they need more practice in terms of study skills. Students requested from the lecturer to transform the lecture into a group session and do the activities with her. They also asked from the lecturer to speak less fast. Students revealed their negative attitudes towards the university year and said that they did not learn much new things except for research methodology since it was totally new for them.

As for the journals, we can summarize the findings in terms of attitudes. Some of the learners have positive attitudes towards all teachers and university courses as a whole. We can illustrate through the student who wrote:

> **St Z.N. (Female):** *"with such pleasant, diverse, active and intelligent teachers, all things will be simple".*

We asked the participants to report in their journals their experience in the Methodology of the University Work's subject which was covered through lectures and group sessions alike.

Here, we noted 8 frequencies (out of 16) about good impression students had towards the lecture compared to 2 views that were negative.

Cases in points are the following quotes (one is positive and the second is negative)

St K.A. (Male): *I much appreciated both the lectures and the workshops. The professors are good. They do their job well. That's why I appreciated to attend and be present".*

St S. I. (Female): *"I see the module of methodology was very difficult. Sometimes I do not understand what the teacher says either in the course or the group session".*

For group sessions, students find them quite positive and 6 students expressed this overtly. Students find them helpful since methodology is a matter of practice. In this, a student said:

St N. O. (Female): "*by basing my opinion on my own experience in methodology, I can conclude that we understand methodology more with research and practice".*

As for the methodology courses, we used the end of the year's journal where only 16 students were present, we could summarize the results in terms of the learners' attitudes towards the methodology subject and content used during this academic year (see **Table 01**).

The present table shows the overall frequencies for learners' attitudes towards the taught subject.

Table 01: ***Learners' attitudes towards the methodology of the university work's subject***

	Difficult	**Interesting**	**Good**	**Total**
Methodology Subject	**5**	**7**	**6**	**18**
Content	**1**	**8**	**7**	**16**

According to table 01, one can read that students' attitudes seem positive as a whole. Some learners find that the course is difficult (5 in number) and only 1 student considers the content as difficult. For the others, who form the majority, find the subject either interesting (7 students) or good (6 students) whereas 8 students considered the content interesting and 7 others that it was good. To illustrate, one student wrote:

St M. Y. (female) "*Unlike the other modules, methodology tends to be the most important one because it helps to acquire the method to learn the other modules and even it aids the learner to use his skills to learn. I think that methodology is the essence of learning"*

In the coming lines, results from the questionnaire completed by students in one of the classes where all students were present. We focused on study skills here. When asking learners about whether they faced difficulties in their courses during the acdemic year, 54 students out of 84 replied poistively (i.e. 64.28%) whereas 35.71% said that they did not face difficulties. Our aim is not just to see how many students face difficulties; though the rate is quite important, but

we need to diagnose these difficulties in order to remedy such problems in the future. When asking them to enumerate the difficulties they face, we could get sixty answers summed up into six sources. These difficulties are summarized in **Table 02**:

Table 02: ***Learners' difficulties in English courses***

Options	**Number**	**Percentage**
Insufficient information.	16	26.66%
new and 'amotivated' Teachers	13	21.67%
Difficulties to ask questions	11	18.34%
Vocabulary Gaps	09	15%
Note-taking Challenges	07	11.66%
Insufficient allocated time	04	6.67%
Total	**60**	**100%**

As one might notice from Table 02, learners' most frequent problems are first related to content and information, and to teachers. In addition, learners face a problem in the target language since they feel unable to ask questions (18.34%) either because of the classroom atmosphere that is not appropriate (teachers problem that makes 21.67%) or due to linguistic difficulties (knowledge that makes 26.66%; or vocabulary gaps that represents 15%). Technical issues are considered here by the learners like inability to take notes for 11.66% or absence/lack of time management strategies for 6.67% of the learners. To comment on these results, learners seem to object on a number of teachers they evaluate as less experienced and less motivated. It is indeed a fact in the Department of English at Bejaia since full-time teachers are few and have extra-load in their work. This is more likely to influence their performance negatively. Although many part time teachers and associate teachers provide help and to the Department, but the problem of lack of teachers working full time remains problematic. What seems quite significant is that after months of training, we have a number of learners who could not develop their note-taking skills and time management strategies. These are few in number but we consider this important since we aimed at developing such skills in the learners to prepare them for academic work.

V.2. Study Skills' Teaching

To pursue discussing the main findings, we asked questions about learners' proficiency in general and about their proficiency in the four language skills particularly. Findings from the journals are reported in Table 03:

Table 03: ***Learners' perception of their proficiency in the four skills***

Difficulty Perception / Skill	**Difficult/bad**	**Average**	**Easy/Good**	**Total**

	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
Listening	7	17.95	1	2.56	31	**79.49**	**39**	**100**
Reading	1	2.44	4	9.76	36	**87.80**	**41**	**100**
Writing	12	**28.57**	8	19.05	22	**52.38**	**42**	**100**
Speaking	23	**48.94**	8	17.02	16	**34.04**	**47**	**100**
Total	43	25.44	21	12.43	105	**62.13**	**169**	**100**

If we consider the learners' overall perception, it is positive since high rates are generally noticed in the easy/good column of the language skills (62.13%). We can notice from the results that the productive skills are the most challenging for learners with 28.57% for writing and 48.94% for speaking. Then, learners claimed to have listening difficulties and they represent 17.95%. In their journals, a number of the respondents commented on the lecturer's speed in speaking that cause problems in understanding for some and taking notes for others. We can illustrate through student S. N. *"To be honest, I would understand in your lectures more if you were speaking slowly"*. This is an important aspect of teacher's talk. The teacher is more likely to consider his talk's pace to fit different levels of learners and guarantee more understanding.

Other details appeared along the journals where four students mentioned their problems in vocabulary and two others in pronunciation.

In order to get more evidence about language skills, Table 4 summarizes the participants' perception of difficulty for each skill as reported from the short questionnaire used in the classroom:

Table 04: ***Students' perception of skills' difficulty***

	Number	**Percentage**
Speaking	48	57.14%
Writing	20	23.81%
Listening	11	13.10%
Reading	05	5.95%
Total	**84**	**100%**

As one can notice, results from the questionnaire confirm the journals' results and skills are ordered the same way in terms of difficulty. Speaking is the most challenging skill (57.14%) and writing follows with 23.95%, then listening with 13.10%. Reading seems the less challenging skill for the learners who participated in the action research. Hence, efforts should be made to develop speaking and writing through practice; a task that should be made by both teachers and learners alike.

V.3. Teachers' Practices

For teachers, online journals were used through five items (Appendix 02). In addition, and face to face discussions were used to get more details about teachers' practices. As a summary of the teachers' answers and views, **Table 05** is presented:

Table 05: ***Teachers' Attitudes towards Learners, Programme and Their Classroom Practices***

Variable / **Teacher**	**Taught Subject**	**Attitudes towards the Learner**	**Attitudes towards the New Programme**	**Teaching Practices**	**Interaction Patterns**

T1*	Cultures/ Civilization	Good level	Cultures/ Civilization, media education and ICT are important in the LMD system but removed	Discussion about cultural issues.	Communication: I motivate them to speak, to discuss and to ask questions
T2	linguistics	Good and acceptable level	quite acceptable	explaining, demonstrating, asking questions, evaluation	it is a lecture, the kind of interaction is question/answer
T3	Literature	No change	/	Studying and analyzing texts.	more motivated than the previous students of last year.
T4	Written Expression	Good	Based more on speaking and writing and less on phonetics and literature	* Giving assignments to the learners and identifying the skills they need to complete their tasks. *Guiding them through their writing activities. *Encouraging pair collaboration and group work.	It is a high, effective student-instructor classroom interaction
T5	introduction to human sciences	I really enjoyed working with them; they are highly motivated and disciplined.	Rich but ESP should be back	Lecturing, concept elicitation,	good relationship and the interaction was always possible, were really confident, very kind atmosphere

* T refers to Teacher

When dealing with teachers' online guided journals, results showed positive attitudes toward the 2013/2014 year's group and toward their level as well. Teachers claimed that they had very good interpersonal relations with their learners and interaction was with them was so frequent. When teachers interact with their learners even in a lecture either by discussion or question-and-answer, this implies good and positive teaching practices that make the learning-teaching process easier.

When asking the participants in the interview about their learners, they agreed on an average level and that students face problems in the productive skills: writing and speaking. This result is also compatible with what was found in the action research through journals and questionnaire. Hence, teachers diagnosed the problem of productive skills and students were conscious of this difficulty. In this, teachers related the problem in language production to the students' limited vocabulary and their low motivation. We can illustrate from one teacher who said:

> *Teacher: Insufficient vocabulary knowledge imposes limitations on students' abilities to use English both orally and in writing. These results are largely due to the students' low motivation.*

VI. Reflections

First of all, the positive feedback, that a teacher provides, affects students' learning. In that, a teacher who provides an encouraging feedback and values students' responses is more likely to get students motivated to learn and to participate in the classroom conversation and will help them to create a warm, social climate in the classroom. The aspect of interaction and good relations was also evoked by both teachers and learners as to be successful.

The problem of productive skills mainly speaking was an important challenge for both teachers and learners. The problem may be in the appropriate decision teachers should make. That is, when teachers try to find teaching methodologies to diminish this problem, they are less likely involving learners in this important decision-making process.

Since most of the participants' skills problem occurs in speaking, writing and vocabulary. The author recommends using extensive reading in EFL classes to develop learners' vocabulary, be more accustomed to academic style and adopt it in writing. In this, Hamada (2014) suggested putting focus while teaching research methodology on typical genre types (articles, essays, term papers and dissertations). We also suggest introducing vocabulary teaching for first year students (Hamadi, 2014) since it has never been taught explicitly at university.

In addition, since learners according to the findings find problems in the lack of practice, we find it necessary to devote more time for workshops in the Methdodology of the University Work's subject and create space for out-of-class practice through projects. Using the Project-based Approach is more likely help the learner be more creative, more autonomous and more engaged in learning. This will make learning based on learning-by-doing.

We can also suggest the following implications for classroom practice:

- Use of cooperative learning in group sessions to maximize students-student interaction
- Give equal opportunities for students to Present-Practice-Produce (PPP); one of the principles of task-based learning.
- Diminish the number of students (28 in our case per class is huge compared to the time devoted for the session; it is not possible for all students to take part in the classroom tasks).
- Assess students' perceptions towards their sessions, their classes and their teachers regularly to respond to their needs in a continuous manner. In addition, while doing so, teachers can diagnose possible problems and remedy them.
- Use technology in teaching research methods skills.
- Use interactive tasks and activities to help students improve their language production.
- Involve learners in the decision-making process in the classroom.

Conclusion

All along the last subject, we have gone through the four basic skills of a language which are unavoidable in the process of learning a foreign language. Of course, their importance is in no way a matter of discussion though their order is. The Methodology of the University Work provided learners with study skills materials to develop their research methods skills via note-taking, signal words, key words, main ideas, supporting ideas and the like from the materials needed for a learner to be successful, autonomous and professional in the future. However, through years of teaching this subject, the teacher-researcher met difficulties to reach this aim. That is why; we opted for adopting action research continuously to diagnose our learners' problems.

After the results we could reach, our next step is working on reinforcing our syllabus mainly in speaking and writing. We shall, then, for next year prepare more activities based on practice. As Prof Hamada (2014) concluded in his paper, we do not need to teach research methodology but design activities based on research skills to develop critical thinking in our learners.

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Appendices

Appendix 01. Methodology of the University Work Syllabus

UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA **DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**
FIRST YEAR LMD: (Section 02) **LECTURER: Dr. Nadia AHOUARI-IDRI**

Teaching Unit: Methodology of the University Work

Part A: Study Skills

I. Tips on Studying a Foreign Language
II. Note-taking Tips
III. Note-taking Symbols and Abbreviations
IV. Listen for Signal Words/Sign Posts
V. Dictionary Use, Using the Library and Online Search Engines
VI. Listening
VII. Reading
VIII. Writing
IX. Speaking
X. Introduction to Research
Needed Vocabulary and Further Readings

Appendix 02. Online Interview Items for First Year Teachers

1. What is the subject you teach for first year LMD students this year? Specify whether you teach a lecture, a group session or both.
2. What is your attitude towards this year's group?
3. What is your attitude towards the new suggested programme for first year students?
4. What are your teaching/classroom practices you use while teaching your subject matter?
5. How do you manage to equilibrate between new first year students and repeaters this year?
6. What is the nature of the interaction and relationship with your first year students this year?

Appendix 03. Things Learners are Required to Do in the Project

- Defining a subject and a purpose for research related to learning EFL.
- Locating and selecting possible sources of the information (Two to Three Resources)
- Recognizing textual clues, and how to read them to obtain the information (Using the taught reading strategies).
- Locating information within the text
- Assessing and selecting relevant information
- Organizing and recording the information.
- Evaluating, interpreting, integrating and interrogating the information and recording the information.
- Presenting or communicating points of view (writing academically, paraphrasing, summarizing strategies are needed)

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The Effect of Subtitling on the Enhancement of EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension

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Abstract

In Egypt most foreign-language audiovisual materials are viewed in the original audio version with the Arabic subtitles. With the increasing access to audiovisual material, EFL learners are more exposed to oral input in English than ever before. However, what has unfairly remained unresolved is the use of subtitles. Thus, the present study represents an effort to empirically examine the effect of feature movies with and without subtitle on listening comprehension of Egyptian EFL learners. The participants of this study were randomly selected from a larger pool of 180 fourth year students from the Department of English Language, Minoufia University, Egypt. 104 participants were randomly chosen and then randomly assigned to the two experimental groups and the control group. The first experimental group viewed the movie with English subtitles (ESG), the second group viewed the movie with Arabic subtitles (ASG), and the control group viewed the movie without subtitles (WSG). After screening the 14 excerpts from 8 movies, 14 multiple-choice listening comprehension tests were administered in order to evaluate their listening comprehensions. Then, each group was asked to complete a questionnaire in order to know their opinions about the way the movie was presented. In the last session, all participants sat on the listening section from the TOEFL test. The results of the data analysis revealed that for Multiple Choice tests, the subtitles groups outperformed the WSG, and ASG performed better than the ESG; however, on the TOEFL test, the analysis of groups' performance revealed a better mean score for the ESG compared to other groups.

Keywords: Arabic Subtitles, EFL learners, English subtitles, Language Learning, Listening Comprehension, Movies

1. Introduction

English has been well recognized as being an important language for international communications. A teacher of English as a foreign language (EFL) faces a great challenge that students do not utilize English authentically in the setting in which they live. Learners do not have many natural opportunities to be exposed to the language or use it in any authentic interaction. Therefore, learners find it easier to have access to authentic material in printed form; however, the situation becomes worse when it comes to developing oral comprehension and production skills (Stempleski, 1992). It is additionally estimated that learners listen to the foreign language they are studying approximately twice as much as they speak it (Nunan, 1999); consequently, teachers perceive that they should give more attention to this receptive language skill to fulfill the learners' good oral language production. Furthermore, it is important to refer that listening is used daily nearly twice as much as speaking and four to five times as much as reading and writing (Van Duzer, 1997).

Knowing the refreshment and recreation they provide and the impact that they have, EFL teachers in Egypt have begun, in recent years to use movies in their classes at different levels. However, what has unfairly remained unresolved is the use of subtitles in movies. Teachers of English are sometimes in a dilemma whether they should show a movie with or without subtitles and in what language, and above all, which way will benefit their students most in relation to listening comprehension (Robin, 2007). Studies regarding the use of subtitling in EFL classroom teaching are still very limited in Egypt. Therefore, the present study aimed to find out which of the following was more beneficial for the Egyptian EFL learners in developing their listening comprehension: a) movies with; Arabic subtitles with English dialogues (standard subtitles), b) English subtitles with English dialogues (bimodal subtitles) , or c) English dialogues without subtitles. In order to achieve this, after viewing 14 excerpts of the seven movies, 104 participants were asked to complete 14 comprehension tests immediately after viewing the excerpts. The second test administered in this study was the listening section from the TOEFL test as a pre and post-test in order to measure the development achieved by the participants after one month experiment.

1.1. Research Question

1. To what extent do movies with or without subtitles enhance the listening comprehension ability of Egyptians EFL learners in general?

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Theoretical Background

Movies are profoundly useful resources in the English classroom for a number of ends. It has been proposed that movies can be used to increase students' critical thinking skills (Eken, 2003), their awareness of pragmatic usage (King, 2002) and their motivation (Ryan, 1998), and to promote comprehension-based learning (Swaffar & Vlatten, 1997), fluency, etc. Feature movies, alongside other authentic materials, are contextually rich sources of authentic material which can be used in the language classroom. Through movies learners see how people communicate in real life in distinctive conversational contexts since movies help bring the outside world into the classroom (Tomalin, 1986). Sherman (2003, p. 2) also notes that learners can benefit from films in terms of comprehension of the target language as they are presented

with all kinds of voices in all kinds of situations, with the visual dimension being a particular advantage for comprehension and in understanding the pragmatics of dialogues.

The receptive skills reading and listening used in input processing share similar cognitive processes and represent two different sources of input. The relationship between receptive skills and productive skills in language learning as a whole is clearly elucidated in Krashen's input and output hypotheses; as has widely been recognized, comprehensible linguistic input will gradually become intake - i.e., comprehended, reusable input; much of the mental processing of input to become intake has to do with the quality and quantity of this comprehensible input. Krashen believes that the best activities for the classroom are those that are natural, interesting and understood. (Krashen, 1985)

Baltova (1999) mentioned that in watching audio-visual material, there are three channels of information available to the viewer all conveying the same content: the auditory channel (sound), the verbal visual channel (subtitles) and the nonverbal visual channel (visuals). He added that the combination of the three channels combined should create a better environment for learning than exposure to videos without subtitles or written text accompanied by visual information.

Danan (2004) added that "audiovisual material enhanced with subtitles is a particularly powerful pedagogical tool which can help improve the listening comprehension skills of second-language learners. Subtitling can increase language comprehension and leads to additional cognitive benefits, such as greater depth of processing" (p.67)

2.1.1. The Effect of Subtitles on the listening comprehension skill

According to Reich (2006), subtitling is a branch of translation called audiovisual translation in which viewers can read statements of dialogues on the screen as well as watch the images and listen to the dialogues. Subtitling is most known for its purpose of translating the oral dialogue from films or television programmes into text. This often involves viewers who have an L1 that is not the same as the language in the spoken dialogue and are given subtitles so that they can understand the action on the screen. This type of L1 subtitling is what we normally find in English speaking videos on Egyptian and Middle Eastern television, where Arabic subtitles are provided for the viewer.

Many studies have suggested that far from being a distraction and a source of laziness, subtitles might have a potential value in helping the learning process by providing learners with the key to massive quantities of authentic and comprehensible language input (Vanderplank, 1988). They also maintain that the proponents of subtitles contend that subtitles may help develop language proficiency by enabling learners to be conscious of language that they might not otherwise understand.

Stewart & Pertusa (2004) also stated that with the aid of the first language subtitles, learners can understand, possibly with relative ease, the listening input and the visual clues through the translation. The L1 subtitles have been considered to make movies intelligible by many instructors.

Bianchi & Ciabattoni (2008) argue that the reason for this is that native language subtitles are automatically processed, whereas target language subtitles require a more advanced

knowledge of the language in order to be processed without interfering with other involved cognitive processes such as listening and taking stock of the visual content. Bird & Williams (2002) claim that it remains unclear whether subtitles lead to better or worse listening comprehension. They argue that although some studies suggest that subtitles have some beneficial effects, it may be only that text presents the easiest path to comprehension.

2.2. Empirical Studies on Subtitling

Markham et al. (2001) found that the L1 subtitles were more beneficial. The researchers examined 169 intermediate native English learners of Spanish. The learners wrote a summary in their L1 and completed an L1 multiple-choice test after viewing native and target subtitled and without subtitles TV episodes. The results indicated that the L1 subtitle group outperformed the other two groups.

Zanon (2006) investigated the contribution of computer-based subtitling to language learning and concluded that subtitling could motivate learners to appreciate the huge amount of content of the movie that doesn't reach the audience when it is presented to them dubbed. Moreover, Guichon & McLornan (2008) studied 40 intermediate native French speakers. An experiment was designed to compare the understanding of an authentic BBC audiovisual recording, which was presented to four groups of French undergraduate students. They examined the effectiveness of being exposed to four different conditions - the sound only; the sound and images; the sound, images, and the texts of the L2 subtitles; the sound, images and the texts of the L1 subtitles. The learners watched a BBC news recording and completed a detailed written summary in English with the assistance of their notes. The results revealed the superiority of L2 subtitles and indicate that comprehension improves when learners are exposed to a text in several modalities.

Hayati & Mohamadi (2009) studied 90 intermediate native Iranian speakers. They examined the effectiveness of using Documentaries about nature with and without subtitles. The material consisted of six episodes of a DVD entitled 'Wild Weather'. The students viewed only one of the three treatment conditions: English subtitles, Persian subtitles, no subtitles. After each viewing session, six sets of multiple-choice tests were administered to examine listening comprehension rates. The results revealed that the English subtitles group performed at a considerably higher level than the Persian subtitles group, which in turn performed at a substantially higher level than the no subtitle group on the listening test.

Alkhatnai (2010) investigated the effectiveness of subtitles in aiding English comprehension of nonnative Saudi speakers. Research was carried out in a qualitative manner, and participants were 12 Saudi students pursuing their studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Participants in the study were asked to compose a narrative after viewing a 5-minute movie segment, both with and without subtitles. Their responses were then analyzed, and results indicated that subtitles improved the participants' listening comprehension.

Selim (2010) investigated the effects of SLS (Same-Language subtitling) on content comprehension and vocabulary acquisition of MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) as L2 at the intermediate level. Twenty seven students of AUC's ALI program with English as their mother tongue were chosen for the study and divided between a control group (without SLS) and a

treatment group (with SLS). Both groups watched an authentic 3:11 minute documentary twice after completing an individual background questionnaire and taking a multiple choice vocabulary pre-viewing test. Post-viewing, participants took the same vocabulary test, then wrote a summary in L1 based on their notes taken during/and in-between the viewings and completed a questionnaire/questions related to their experience with and -/out subtitles. The results showed that the SLS group outperformed the control group.

Winke, Gass & Sydorenko (2010) investigated the effects of subtitled video on listening comprehension in foreign language learning. The participants were Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and Russian language learners as second language at a college. The analysis was conducted with t-tests and two-way ANOVA, it showed that subtitles were more effective than without subtitles. According to the interview following the experiment, the various foreign language learners commented that they used subtitles to increase their attention, improve processing, reinforce previous knowledge, and analyze language.

Latifi,et al (2011) included 36 Iranian intermediate learners in their study, then assigned them into three groups: Bimodal-Subtitles Group (BSG), Standard-Subtitles Group (SSG) and No-Subtitles Group (NSG). Each group viewed 12 excerpts from a movie entitled 'Alvin and Chipmunks.' After viewing the movie, a Multiple Choice (MC) Comprehension test was given to the learners. The results of the data analysis revealed that for MC tests, the subtitles groups outperformed the NSG, and SSG performed better than the BSG. In the last session, all participants sat on an IELTS test, the same as the one the participants took in the first session. On the IELTS test the NSG performed significantly better than the SSG, and there was no meaningful difference between NSG and BSG. Overall, the analysis of groups' performance revealed a better mean score for the NSG compared to other groups. This shows that movie subtitles only boosted the immediate comprehension of the participants. But in the general listening improvement test and its long term effect, the subtitles groups were outperformed by No subtitles group. This was attributed to the fact that reading the subtitles merely enhanced the comprehension, not their listening ability.

Some of the reviewed studies revealed the positive effect of using authentic materials on listening comprehension and help to develop a learning environment with content-rich contexts and a motivating atmosphere. They tended to support watching films with the use of subtitles regarding listening comprehension (Markham, 2001), and others have obtained conflicting results (Taylor, 2005). The results tended to be inconclusive due to the fact that some studies suggested the presence of L1 subtitles assist learners' understanding of the target language films while others found the L2 subtitles more beneficial (Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Markham et al., 2001; Stewart & Pertusa, 2004).

Besides, which subtitled language is more beneficial for learners to acquire the target language remains unclear.The results of these studies show that there is a controversy concerning the best way to present movies with the target language subtitles, the native language subtitles or without subtitles. The existing literature addresses the effectiveness of subtitling on learners' listening comprehension, but none of it addresses the effectiveness of subtitling on specific listening comprehension skills of Egyptian EFL learners.

Moreover, the previous studies did not attempt to address the effect of the exposure to the different types of subtitling over a certain period of time and whether this enhances EFL learners' listening comprehension or not. Vandergift (2011) writes that

> the consensus of research conducted on the usefulness of subtitles for listening comprehension is that L2 subtitles facilitate comprehension', but that it is still not clear how well it fares for long-term effects of learning, in the case of listening improvement and vocabulary learning (p.462).

Research in this field is still limited in Egypt compared to that conducted in other countries. To the best of the present researcher's knowledge, there have not been any previous attempts to investigate the use of subtitling in movies in Egypt using both, Arabic and English subtitles. Moreover, all the previous studies on this topic attempted to investigate the use of languages like Spanish, Russian, English and Iranian as native languages, but not the Arabic language. This is a serious gap in the literature that the present study will attempt to fill up. Besides, most of the studies did not focus on the examination of learner's listening comprehension. They focused on the effect of watching movies on certain elements like verbatim retention and the use of vocabulary in proper context.

Therefore, the present study intended to uncover which mode (watching movies without any subtitles, with the L2 subtitles or with the L1 subtitles) is more beneficial for understanding the actual language presented in movies and the enhancement of EFL learners' listening comprehension. The main goal of the present study is to examine whether subtitles can improve actual listening comprehension. Moreover, it was hoped to find out the extent to which movie subtitles influence the long-term improvement of actual listening comprehension skills of L2 learners after viewing the excerpts of the movies for four weeks, the issue that was not adequately addressed in the previous literature.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Participants

One hundred and four participants were randomly assigned to the two experimental groups and the control group, each one consists of 40 participants. The first experimental group viewed the movies with bimodal subtitles (English subtitles). The second group viewed the movies with standard subtitles (Arabic subtitles). The control group viewed the movies without subtitles. In order to ensure that all the learners had similar background knowledge of the movies, the participants were asked each session if they viewed any of the movies before, the results of those who confirmed viewing any of the movies were excluded.

3.2. Pre-test and Post-test

The listening part from a comprehensive English Language Proficiency Test was used in order to determine the participants' baseline knowledge of their listening skill prior to the exposure to the excerpts of the movies. The test results were used as the basis to determine the learners' current listening proficiency and to provide grounds of comparison between their proficiency level before and after the exposure to the movies for four weeks. Only the listening part of the test was administered to the learners due to the fact that watching movies basically

requires listening abilities. The experiment lasted for six weeks, the participants took the pre-test in the first week and at the end of the experiment, they took the same test they took in the first week as a post-test in order to see if viewing movies for four weeks affected the participants' listening comprehension.

3.3. The 14 Excerpts from 7 Movies

The researcher selected seven movies that were produced in 2013 and 2014 in order to make sure that they were not shown on TV yet and minimize the possibility that the participants watched them before. Moreover, the researcher didn't inform the participants of the movies they were supposed to watch so that they couldn't watch them before the sessions. Although there is no conclusive opinion about the length of a movie that should be shown to learners in class, five to ten minute extracts of movies are found to be preferable for most researchers (John, 1995). Therefore, each excerpt ranges from 6 to ten minutes.

3.4. Comprehension Tests

In order to examine the participants' understanding of the movies, 14 comprehension tests were constructed. The questions were phrased in English and the focus of the comprehension tests was to elicit the main ideas of the passage and the inference of context-based meaning. The questions were designed according to the main three sub-skills of the listening comprehension skill according to Brown (2007): listening for main ideas, listening for details, and making inferences.

3.5. Procedures

1. A consent form was distributed to the participants. Then, the participants received a training session on taking the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) ITP (Institutional TOEFL Program) during the fall semester, 2015.
2. One hundred and four participants were chosen and then randomly assigned to the two experimental groups and the control group. The participants were then asked to take the listening part from a comprehensive English Language Proficiency Test in order to determine the participants' baseline knowledge of their listening skill. The Listening section of the test is a pre-test and at the end of the experiment, the participants took the same test in order to see if there is any progress in their listening comprehension skill.
3. Then the three groups viewed the 14 parts of the movies over 4 weeks in three different conditions: Experimental group 1 viewed the scenes with Arabic subtitles, Experimental group 2 viewed the scenes with English subtitles and the control group viewed the scenes without subtitles. Each time the participants viewed four to three scenes.
4. Immediately after screening the parts of the movies, multiple-choice listening comprehension tests were administered to the students in order to evaluate their listening comprehension and provide grounds for comparison. The same procedure was followed for each group for all the 4 consecutive sessions.
5. Finally, in the last session, each group was asked to complete a questionnaire in order to know their opinions about the way the movie was presented and whether it is beneficial for them to view subtitling in movies. The questionnaires were distributed over the three groups including the control group.

3.6. Data Analysis

The multiple choice comprehension tests' results were analyzed as follows: In the comprehension tests one point was assigned to every single item which means the total score for each test would be 8. Then, the subjects' performance was analyzed. There were 14 scores for each participant, since, there were 14 tests. To extract a total number, all of the scores were added up. The sum score was considered as the final score of the individuals on the multiple choice tests. Thereafter, the performance of the three groups was analyzed using a One-Way ANOVA and a post hoc Bonferroni test. The results of the comprehension tests and the sub skills of listening comprehension were analysed statistically using also analysis of variance (ANOVA). The second test administered in this study was the TOEFL listening test as a pre and post-test. The obtained scores were then analyzed using Paired Samples T-test.

4. Results

4.1. Results of the Total Score of the Listening Comprehension Tests

Table 1. ANOVA of the total listening achievement of the three groups

Scores					
	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	25555.902	2	12777.951	115.448	.000
Within Groups	10957.471	99	110.682		
Total	36513.373	101			

Table 1 illustrates the results of the one-way ANOVA for the total listening comprehension achievement of the participants. As can be observed, there is a difference among the performance of the three groups (.000) [F=115.448, $p<0.05$]. And it shows that the difference between the three groups was significant. This means that the type of subtitling had a significant effect on the immediate comprehension of the learners. In order to determine which group is superior to the other, a post hoc Bonferroni test was run.

Table 2. Post Hoc Tests, multiple comparisons of the total listening achievement of the three groups

Multiple Comparison **Total Scores** **Bonferroni**						
(I) Groups	**(J) Groups**				**95% Confidence Interval**	
		Mean Difference (I-J)	**Std. Error**	**Sig.**	**Lower Bound**	**Upper Bound**
WSG	**ESG**	-23.94118*	2.55160	.000	-30.1552	-17.7272

	ASG	-38.38235*	2.55160	.000	-44.5964	-32.1683
ESG	**WSG**	23.94118*	2.55160	.000	17.7272	30.1552
	ASG	-14.44118*	2.55160	.000	-20.6552	-8.2272
ASG	**WSG**	38.38235*	2.55160	.000	32.1683	44.5964
	ESG	14.44118*	2.55160	.000	8.2272	20.6552
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

According to the data presented in Table 4.3., it can be observed that:-

1- There is a statistically significant difference between the ESG and the WSG. The mean difference between the scores of the ESG and WSG is (23.94118) in favor of the ESG. The level of significance was set at 0.05; therefore, the difference is significant (0.000). This shows that the general listening ability of students who viewed the movies with English subtitles achieved higher listening comprehension than those who viewed the movies with no subtitling.

2- There is a statistically significant difference between the ASG and the WSG in favor of the ASG. The mean difference between the scores of the ASG and WSG is (38.38235). The level of significance was set at 0.05; therefore, the difference is significant (0.000). This shows that the general listening ability of students who viewed the movie with Arabic subtitles achieved higher listening comprehension than those who viewed the movies with no subtitling.

3- ASG showed a better performance than ESG. The mean difference between the two groups is (14.44118) in favor of the ASG. The difference between the ESG and the ASG is significant (0.000). In the mean section in the descriptive statistics, the participants of ASG got a higher mean than ESG, and WSG (84.3529). The participants who viewed the movie with Arabic subtitles showed higher listening comprehension proficiency than those of the ESG and WSG.

4.2. Results of the Pre-test and Post-test

In order to know whether different learners benefited distinctly from the listening practice, the paired-sample t-test was run to measure whether the three groups made any significant development from pre-test to post-test. The paired-sample t-test was run independently for each of the three groups firstly. According to the results presented in Table 3, it can be said that the difference between the pre-test and the post-test of the learners reached significant level in the three groups (p=0.000). The mean difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the WSG is (3.14706), the ESG (3.70588), and the ASG (3.67647). The mean difference results indicate that the ESG achieved the highest difference between the pre-test and the post-test, followed by the ASG, and then the WSG. This gives strong evidence that the use of movies

(audiovisual material) with the three conditions either with or without subtitles helps in the long term improvement of EFL learners' listening comprehension.

Table 3. Paired samples statistics of students' scores on the pre-test and the post-test of the three groups

			Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
						Lower	Upper			
WSG	**Pair 1**	**POSTTEST-PRETEST**	3.14706	4.46625	.76596	1.58871	4.70541	4.109	33	.000
ESG	**Pair 1**	**POSTTEST-PRETEST**	3.70588	5.21379	.89416	5.52506	1.88671	4.145	33	.000
ASG	**Pair 1**	**POSTTEST-PRETEST**	3.67647	4.55086	.78047	5.26434	2.08860	4.711	33	.000

The paired sample t-test indicated that each of the three groups performed significantly different in the post-test than the pre-test. The researchers conducted further analysis to see if one of the groups improved significantly better than the other. Therefore, a One-way ANOVA was used for this purpose. Table 4 illustrates the results of the One-way ANOVA for the results of the pre and post- test. As it can be observed, there is no significant difference among the performance of the three groups on the pre-test [F = 1.100, p = 0.470 (hence >.05)]. This proves that the three groups were homogenous and have similar background from the beginning of the study as there is no significant difference between the scores of the three groups as far as their general proficiency was concerned. Besides, the results show that there is no significant difference among the performance of the three groups on the post-test [F = .760, p =0.337 hence >.05)]. This means that the treatment was effective equally in favor of the three groups. There is no significant difference between the enhancements achieved by the three groups.

Table 4. One-Way ANOVA for the pre and post-test

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
POSTTEST	**Between Groups**	112.137	2	56.069	1.100	.337
	Within Groups	5047.235	99	50.982		
	Total	5159.373	101			
PRETEST	**Between Groups**	70.255	2	35.127	.760	.470
	Within Groups	4573.118	99	46.193		
	Total	4643.373	101			

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. *The Effect of Subtitling on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension*

Based on the results reported in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the type of subtitling is an effective factor influencing listening comprehension. Participants who watched the excerpts from the movies with subtitles (L1 Arabic, L2 English) performed significantly higher than those who watched them without subtitles. This shows that both English and Arabic subtitling have a positive effect on the listening comprehension ability of the participants and in this way the results indicate clear short term effects of the two types of subtitles.

The facilitative effect of the subtitles is in line with the conclusion made by Baltova (1999) that the combination of auditory, verbal visual and nonverbal visual information creates a better language learning environment. This is also in line with previous studies which suggested the positive effects of subtitled videos in language learning (Markham et al, 2001; Taylor, 2005; Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Hayati & Mohamadi, 2009; Alkhatnai, 2010; Winke et al., 2010).

In agreement with Markham et al. (2001) and Latifi,et al (2011), the first language subtitling group outperformed the other two groups when general listening comprehension ability is concerned. The combination of L2 dialogue and L1 subtitles, served as a powerful device for learners to work out video materials pronounced in L2. This shows that this kind of subtitling generates significantly better results than bimodal subtitling and significantly better results than without subtitling. The reviewed literature shows a considerable number of works revealing the positive effect of subtitling.

The superiority of the Arabic subtitled could be attributed to the fact that Egypt is a subtitling country, where any kinds of videos with the English language shown on TV are presented with the Arabic subtitles. Moreover, the participants were fourth year students and their proficiency level in terms of the listening skill was high enough.

In this way, learners are able to get the gist of the spoken L2 easily from the L1 text. This prepares the students for the upcoming flows of messages and releases the spare language-processing capacity (Vanderplank, 1988). The existence of the L1 subtitles enabled the participants to pay extra attention to the context of the videos for the details. In other words, subtitles provide an opportunity for learners to take advantage of their mother tongue.

It can be argued that the immediate improvement of the learners in the present study on the comprehension tests could be due to the fact that reading the subtitles enhanced the comprehension, not the listening ability. It seems that the participants in the ASG have to perform an additional process and that is translation. With L1 (Arabic) subtitles, Egyptian EFL students grasped the meaning by reading L1 subtitles and simultaneously translated the L2 (English) information for chunking the flow of L2 audio.

Stewart & Pertusa (2004) also stated that with the aid of the first language subtitles, learners can understand the listening input through this mode of subtitling. The L1 subtitles have been considered to make movies intelligible by many instructors. The reason for this is that native language subtitles are automatically processed, whereas target language subtitles require a more

advanced knowledge of the language in order to be processed without interfering with other involved cognitive processes such as listening and taking stock of the visual content (Bianchi & Ciabattoni, 2008)

However, the results of the present study contradict those of other studies. Unlike Hayati and Mohamadi (2009) who examined the effectiveness of using Documentaries about nature with and without subtitles and their results revealed the superiority of the target language over the native language subtitles, the present study came up with different results. Unlike the present study, most of the studies reviewed in the literature supported the use of subtitles, mostly the target language one (Baltova 1999; Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Tsai (2009); Tsai & Huang 2009; Alkhatnai, 2010; Winke et al., 2010). This may be due to the different language that was being investigated.

5.2. Long-term effect of subtitles

In terms of the long-term effect of subtitles, the findings of the present study are in conflict with all the mentioned previous studies. Few researchers like Latifi,et al (2011) and Aurstard (2013) tried to investigate the effects of subtitling in terms of the long-term listening comprehension enhancement. In their study, Latifi,et al (2011) produced the opposite results to the present study, they concluded that the analysis of groups' performance revealed a better mean score for the No Subtitles Group compared to other groups. The difference in the results could be attributed to the fact that the participants in their study were exposed only to 12 excerpts from the same movie; each one's duration was only 2 minutes. Moreover, the participants of the study were 36, 12 for each group, therefore, the results of the study wouldn't be considered very reliable.

According to Aurstard (2013), the results indicated that subtitles have only short term effects with the Norwegian subtitling group and the English subtitling group in the comprehension questionnaire and they have no effect on the long-term. The possible explanation for this difference could be due to the fact that Aurstard's (2013) utilized research instrument in order to measure the gains was by considering the word definition task and the lexical decision task on the post test. However, the better performance of the English subtitles group is more likely to be attributed to memorization as the subtitles helped the participants throughout the four week exposure to the movies for recognition of more words from the subtitles as they were reading them and hence aided them in their listening comprehension improvement.

In general, in terms of the long-term listening comprehension enhancement it was found by the present study that the three treatments proved to be effective. This proves that learning listening skill through videos is effective in increasing most students' long-term listening abilities significantly. This may imply that the videos as a teaching tool was good for helping students enhance listening abilities. This is consistent with King (2002) who supported that movies have several advantages; one of them is that they contain visual elements. That might be the main factor to help student increase their listening abilities.

This implies that students perceived information through both their eyes and ears; this helps them in gaining most of the presented information, not only verbal but also non-verbal features

and culture as well. With the visual elements, they could quickly and easily understand the information presented to them.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study were that subtitling proved to be more effective in enhancing participants' general listening ability and their listening sub-skills. Moreover, based on the previous researches and the present study we come to conclusion that the role of subtitles in boosting listening comprehension especially Arabic and English subtitling is crucial and not to be neglected. According to Markham et al. (2001) and Stewart & Pertusa (2004), the presence of learners' L1 language, learners may rely on it instead of paying their attention to the target language. Hence, learners' L1 dominate their cognitive processes and influenced their L2 acquisition. Therefore, Markham et al. (2001) suggested in their conclusion that watching the same movie with the following procedure may yield better results. They recommended learners to watch a movie first with the L1 subtitles, to watch the same film again with the L2 subtitles, and finally to watch it again without the subtitles.

This sequence allows learners to use their stronger native language reading skills first, followed by using their emerging but more or less weaker target-language reading skills. Finally, learners would be ready to rely totally on their much weaker target language listening skills. In sum, the findings of this study imply that the use of L1 and L2 subtitles can be more effective in assisting learners' comprehension of the aural language presented in a movie. Subtitling proved effective in developing the skill of identifying the main idea in 14 excerpts of the 7 movies. It proved even more effective in developing the skill of identifying specific details regardless of the difficulty of the text.

Besides, movies turn out to be an effective teaching tool to develop the EFL learners' listening skills. It is important to mention that after each session; most of the participants often personally express their great interest in the movies selected for them and the ways they were presented to improve listening skills. Concerning their responses to the questionnaires, most students were positive to the usage of subtitles in an educational setting, especially English subtitles. Previous research in the area of subtitling and comprehension showed that subtitles do help comprehension. On the whole, the researcher has received encouraging feedback from the participants and therefore suggests that movies should be utilized in the teaching of EFL listening because of their pedagogical advantages and English teachers should be encouraged and trained to use movies more efficiently and effectively in their classes.

As it was stated earlier, the role of subtitled movies in classroom in enhancing listening comprehension has not been considered seriously in Egypt. The findings of this study can be beneficial to everyone, engaged in language program including curriculum and course designers, teachers and students. These findings might encourage learners to devote more time to watch subtitled movies, cartoons and news in order to improve their overall language skills. To sum up, the findings of this study and other related researches should encourage professional developers in Egypt to update methods of language teaching in a way that multimedia in general and subtitled movies in particular are included in teaching and learning programs.

7. Pedagogical Implications

For a long time subtitling has been acknowledged to be pedagogically beneficial. This study confirms the positive role of subtitling mode in the learning outcomes. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to include subtitled movies in class activities. Based on the results of the present study, it is suggested that when the teaching goal is the enhancement of listening comprehension, subtitled movies can give great help to Egyptian EFL learners. With regard to listening comprehension immediate achievement, the present study found that the use of subtitles can help EFL learners in this ability. Subtitles, in general, can be used as valuable authentic materials in EFL classroom settings. It may be suggested that by using movie subtitles for while-listening, the listening input may be processed more easily and deeply and EFL learners can automatize their knowledge of language.

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Moroccan Female Rural Students' Attitudes towards Learning English

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Abstract

Investigating female rural students' attitudes towards learning English is a substantial need to identify EFL learners' perception of English and provide language teachers and textbook designers with research evidence. For this reason, numerous studies have been conducted to determine the correlation between learners' background and their language learning attitudes. However, very few research studies have targeted female rural students' language attitude to determine whether there is a correlation between their socio-economic background and language attitude. Therefore, this study was conducted on a sample of 90 female rural students of two high schools located in two small Moroccan villages to identify whether they held a positive or negative attitude towards learning English and to specify the variables that shaped their attitudes. Participants were randomly selected and filled in a five likert scale questionnaire. The significant findings of the study include the participants' preference to study English rather than other foreign languages at high school; they displayed high motivation and frequent classroom participation in the English class, strong desire to improve their English communicative competence, negative attitude towards the culture used in the English textbook, and positive social value to a person who speaks English. Thus, this study concluded that there was no correlation between female rural students' socio-economic background and their positive attitude to study English.

***Key words*:** attitude, language attitude, Moroccan female, socio-economic background, motivation

Introduction:

Although the Moroccan government made schooling compulsory in 1963, education in the rural areas is still lagging behind. According to Sadiqi (2011) the great majority of illiterates in Morocco are women "40% of them being in urban areas and around 60% in rural areas" (p. 26). Many factors lay behind the dreadful schooling conditions in the rural areas such as the scarcity of and far-located schools in addition to the socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds which may extensively have a bearing on language teaching and learning in the rural areas.

Socio-economic conditions have affected education in the rural areas. In a study conducted by Gardiner (2008) on education in the rural areas of South Africa, it was concluded that learning and education are influenced by socio-economic conditions. Poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment are basic factors that discourage parents from sending their children to schools. Because of the rural living conditions and constraints, a number of female pupils are pulled out of school to help in the family workload or in farming. Parents often send their sons rather than daughters to schools when they cannot afford education for both, thinking that daughters are destined to marry and cater for children. In this respect, Randell & Shirley (2009) state that "if the financial expenses of education force parents to choose whether to send their son or daughter to school, they will choose the son because sons are seen as a higher economic investment for the future of the family" (p. 4). Education, unfortunately, has been regarded as a profitable investment for the future of family. That is, some parents in the rural areas invest in educating their sons who will be the breadwinners of the family. Thus, the number of illiterate girls in the rural areas has increased (Sadiqi, 2011). There has been a huge gap in female and male educational opportunities especially in the poor families.

However, recently, the Moroccan government has doubled its effort to fully integrate girls in education especially in the rural areas where illiteracy rate is high. Thus, the Moroccan government has built a number of public schools in the rural areas and boarding schools for female students who are far-located from schools, offered transportation means for those who daily commute, and importantly, financially supported the poor families by handing them a monthly amount of money which depends on the number of each family's enrolled children in school. In addition to the persistent interest of the Moroccan government to raise the enrollment rate for rural girls, some foreign institutions and organizations such as World Bank have had effective roles in enhancing girls' education through donations. Therefore, rural girls have had more educational access than before.

The international relation between Morocco and the global governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations, especially the ones that aim at promoting education in rural areas, made the stakeholders develop foreign language interest in the public and private schools. Accordingly, the Moroccan educational system has encouraged the learning of foreign languages, particularly English due to its 'lingua franca' status and the future prospects it offers to Moroccan students. New curricula were designed and new teaching materials were introduced to produce a keen interest in foreign languages learning. English was introduced in high schools, secondary schools and even private primary schools. This governmental language interest may be culminated with a positive impact on the learners' attitudes towards learning foreign languages.

Nevertheless, based on the gender bias in the educational opportunities for rural girls which is still a persistent fact in some rural areas because of the uprooted cultural gender discrimination, the attitude of female rural students might be influenced by the previously discussed socio-economic conditions. Previous research has determined that there is a correlation between students' socio-economic conditions and their language attitude. It was pointed out that rural students developed a negative attitude towards foreign languages which was referred to their socio-economic and socio-cultural backgrounds (see Gardiner, 2008; Gajalakshmi, 2013; Sobia et al., 2015; Ghazali, 2008; Tsuda, 2003).

However, while much focus has been placed on education in rural areas in a more general sense, female rural students' attitudes towards learning English is still under-researched. Therefore, the scope of the present study is limited to providing research evidence about the attitude of a sample of female rural students towards learning English and exploring the variables that shape their perceptions as well as the correlation between the participants' social background and their attitude towards studying English.

Attitudes of female pupils towards learning English:

Definition of attitude and language attitude

Attitude is one of the concepts that are difficult to define accurately due to its abstractness. Although people in everyday interaction tend to say they have a positive or negative attitude towards something, the concept of attitude is a very complicated one (Eiser 1986; as cited in Bergroth, 2007, p. 29). No matter how difficult it seems to be defined, the concept of attitude is commonly used among people to show their opinions towards different objects or people. Therefore, attitude, as one of the simplest definitions, refers to people's opinion or way of thinking that reflects one's state of mind or behavior. Furthermore, the subjectivity of this concept is questioned by researchers since it almost reflects people's individual experience. Eiser (1986) contends that "what most researchers agree upon is that attitudes are subjective experiences, involve evaluations of different kinds of attitude objects, and are related to behaviour"(as cited in Bergroth, 2007, p. 29). Much of what people believe in may be a result of their life experience.

The term language attitude, in simple terms, refers to the opinions towards language. It may also refer to "attitudes towards different languages, varieties of one language or the speakers of a language" (Fasold, 1984, p. 148; as cited in Bergroth, 2007, p. 29). From a mentalistic perspective, attitude is defined with reference to the person's way of thinking of something. Allport (1935) provides a concise definition of attitude as "a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (as cited in Bergroth, 2007, p.30). In the mentalistic view, the concept of attitude is regarded as unobservable internal abilities.

However, in this paper, the term attitude was studied from a limited perspective. It was assessed from a set of questions answered by female rural students. Specifically, female students' attitudes towards learning English was measured by asking them whether they preferred English to other languages, how they perceived the foreign culture presented in the English textbook, how often they participated in the English class, how they socially valued a person who speaks English, and how motivated they were in an English class. Based on their responses, their attitude towards learning English was identified as positive or negative.

***Previous studies on language attitudes**:*

Previous research has shown that EFL learners have positive and negative attitudes towards learning English language. In a study conducted by Abidin (2012) on Libyan secondary school students, it was concluded that the participants had negative attitude towards learning English which was apparently obvious when they did not feel relaxed whenever they had to speak in the English class. Similarly, Al-Zahrani (2008) found out that most of the participants displayed a negative attitude towards English which was due to a negative reaction to the instructional and traditional techniques used by some of the English language teachers. Research has also demonstrated that EFL learners were confused and nervous when they spoke English in front of their classmates (Shams, 2008), and instead displayed a positive attitude when Arabic was used as a facilitating tool in English classes (Al-Nofaie, 2010).

According to Abidin (2012), the findings included gender variable. Results indicated that the attitude of female secondary school students towards English was slightly higher than that of male ones. Tsuda (2003) also investigated language attitude of first and second year students at Tokai Gakuen University, Japan. The participants seemed to be less motivated to learn English other than earning credits for graduation. Interestingly, they had common negative attitudes even towards the importance of English in their future career, and thought that English grammar is difficult to learn and had never enjoyed studying it.

Relationship between attitudes and students' background:

A number of studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between language attitude and learners' background. It has been highlighted that learners' socio-economic background influences rural EFL learners. Brown (1994), in this respect, contends that attitudes "develop early in childhood and are the result of parents and peers' attitudes" (p.180). Ghazali (2008), who investigated Malaysian EFL learners' attitude towards learning English, argued that the students whose parents read more and had a variety of books at home had positive attitudes towards English literary study. This indicates that parents with positive foreign language attitudes often motivate their children to develop a similar attitude. In contrast, learners whose parents have negative attitudes towards learning foreign languages may negatively affect their children's attitude. Such studies have indicated that there is a correlation between learners' background and their language attitude.

Research Methodology:

***Participants**:*

The present study focused on a randomly selected sample of 90 female rural baccalaureate students from two high schools (Sidi Aisa and Ibn Zaidoune) which are located in small towns in the outskirts of Kenitra, Morocco. Some of the female students who are from the urban area were excluded as the present study limited its focus on female rural students. All participants were in the arts stream and their age ranged between 17 and 20. They had been exposed to English language as an academic subject one year in secondary school and two years at high school. English for them was one of the main subjects since it is included in the Moroccan baccalaureate national exam.

Research Design and Instrument:

The present study dealt with quantitative and qualitative data. Part of the data was analyzed through the use of statistics, in particular Chi-Square tests, to measure the correlation between the participants' background and their attitude towards learning English. Because this study addressed language attitudes, it was also of significant importance to have qualitative data which was analyzed by the frequency and percentage measures.

An attitude questionnaire was the primary method of the data collection. The questionnaire items were partly adopted from Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2009) who conducted a study on learners' motivation and attitudes towards learning English. All the questionnaire items targeted the participants' attitude towards English and aimed at investigating the correlation between their attitudes and the socio-economic background they came from. Additionally, the questionnaire items were formulated in a simple language so that all participants could answer the questions easily regardless of their language competence.

Research objective and questions:

The objective of the current study was to find out whether female rural students hold a positive or negative attitude towards learning English, the variables that might influence their language attitude, and the relationship between students' attitudes and socio-economic background. The research questions the study targeted are as follows:

1. Do female students have a positive or negative attitude towards learning English?
2. Do female rural students have a negative attitude towards the culture presented in the English textbook?
3. Do female rural students associate social value to a person who speaks English?
4. Is there any correlation between female rural students' language attitude and their socio-economic background?
5. For what reasons do female rural students learn English?

Research hypotheses:

The following hypotheses were set to answer the research questions above-mentioned:

1. Female rural students may have a negative attitude towards learning English.
2. Female learners' attitude towards the foreign culture used in the English textbook is very negative.
3. The participants may give more social value to somebody who speaks English rather than French.
4. There might be a correlation between female rural students' language attitudes and their socio-economic background.
5. Personal goals are the strongest reasons why female rural students study English.

Results and Discussions:

In this section, the data was described and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Thus, the frequency and percentage were the main statistical measures to assess the participants' responses, and the Chi-square test was used to see whether the difference between the participants' responses is statistically significant.

1. *The preferred language to be studied at high school*

To identify the participants' favored foreign language to be studied at high school, they were inquired about their views on a set of languages (*English, French, Spanish, and German*). The question item that was provided to them is *"of the following languages, which would you prefer to study at your high school?"* The findings are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. ***The preferred language to be studied at high school***

Schools		Languages				Total
		English	French	Spanish	German	
Sidi Aisa	Count	40	2	2	1	45
	% within	88,9%	4,4%	4,4%	2,2%	100,0%
	Std.Residual	1,3	-1,8	-1,2	-,4	
Ibn Zaidoune	Count	25	11	7	2	45
	% within	55,6%	24,4%	15,6%	4,4%	100,0%
	Std.Residual	-1,3	1,8	1,2	,4	
Total	Count	65	13	9	3	90
	% within	72,2%	14,4%	10,0%	3,3%	100,0%

Findings in table 1 demonstrate that female students from the two high schools had very positive attitude towards learning English. The vast majority preferred to be taught English if they had to choose among a set of foreign languages even though French is regarded as a second language in Morocco and is taught starting from the primary school. This positive attitude towards learning English may be explained by the fact that some of the female rural students had a poor level in French and found English as a substitute to be bilingual. Another reason is strongly linked to the international status of English language.

This finding is consistent with Al-Quyadi's study (2002) in which he concluded that "the students had positive attitudes towards the English language and the use of English in the Yemeni social and educational contexts" (as cited in Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009, p. 35). Nevertheless, the present findings are inconsistent with Tsuda's study (2003) on the rural and urban Japanese students' attitudes towards learning English, in which she found out that the students from the remote rural areas had a negative attitude towards English since they could not see any relevance of English in their daily life.

Because French and English are both commonly used in Morocco, we compared the answers of the participants in these two languages to see their language preference statistically. The Chi-Square tests revealed marked differences in the participants' responses, as Table 2 shows.

Table 2. ***Results of students' attitudes towards English and French using Chi-Square test***

	Sidi Aisa	***Ibn***	***O.R***	***CI***	***P-value***

	N (%)	*Zaidoune N (%)*	*(Odds Ratio)*	*(confidence interval)*	
English	41 (62,1%)	25 (37, 9%)	9,02	1,846 – 44,082	,002
French	2 (15,4%)	11 (84,6%)			

The findings indicate a significant difference in students' language attitudes. Though it was concluded in Table 1 that female rural students from the two high schools had a positive attitude towards learning English, Chi-Square test shows that there is a correlation between learners' region and the nature of their attitude: O.R= 9,02 ; CI= 1,846 – 44,082 ; P=,002. Therefore, the female students belonging to Ibn Zaidoune High School had more positive attitude towards French while the ones belonging to Sidi Aisa High School displayed more positive attitudes to learn English.

2. The influence of the foreign culture presented in the English textbook on the students' local culture

It is worth mentioning that a number of textbooks target specific learners with particular language purposes, and thus textbook designers use purposeful pictures that tend to reflect learners' local culture to make the learning process more authentic and meaningful. EFL learners, thus, may be influenced culturally while being exposed to a language textbook. They may be culturally manipulated, for instance.

Therefore, to determine how similar or different the participants' attitude is towards learning English, they were further asked whether the foreign culture portrayed in the English textbook affected their local culture since language and culture are inseparable. Specifically, they were provided with a 5-point Likert scale from Level 1: Strongly Agree to Level 5: Strongly Disagree.

Table 3 shows the participants' answers to the question item *(do you think that learning English may affect your local culture?).* The findings, in Table 3, demonstrate that the majority of the female rural students from the two high schools agreed that the foreign culture presented in the English textbook exercised an influence on their own local culture, which confirms our hypothesis.

Table 3. ***The participants' responses as to the influence of the foreign culture presented in the English textbook***

Schools		Influence of foreign culture					Total
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Sidi Aisa :	Count	18	15	7	3	2	45
	% within school	40,0%	33,3%	15,6%	6,7%	4,4%	100,0%

	Std. Residual	,5	-,1	,2	-1,2	1,0	
Ibn zaidoune :	Count	14	16	6	9	0	45
	% within school	31,1%	35,6%	13,3%	20,0%	,0%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	-,5	,1	-,2	1,2	-1,0	
Total	Count	32	31	13	12	2	90
	% within school	35,6%	34,4%	14,4%	13,3%	2,2%	100,0%

The participants' negative perception towards the foreign culture might be due to countless reasons. One of which is linked to the characters used in the English textbook. If we take *Ticket 2 English*, an English textbook for Moroccan baccalaureate students, it includes some pictures that might orient students to adopt a certain behaviour or lifestyle such as the picture of Messi, a football player, in the first textbook unit (Gifts of Youth) and a number of western actors and actresses. We cannot deny the fact that students need to be open to the western culture, but it should not be on the expense of their own because students may feel that the textbook does not respond to their cultural background.

These findings confirm what Xiao (2010) concluded on Chinese learners' perception to the foreign culture presented in an English textbook. He particularly found out that the majority (the highest mean score 3,30) of the participants thought that the cultural knowledge contents were included in most tasks.

3. The participants' views as regards the people who speak foreign languages

The ability of speaking foreign languages (being a polyglot) is undeniably socially valued. Because of globalization and the daily cross-border movements, English, in particular, has become a 'lingua franca' to facilitate the international communication and bridge the communication gap. Therefore, English does have a socially significant status, and the person who speaks it is often socially respected.

Based on this, the participants were asked whether a person who speaks English has more social value than another who speaks French. For this reason, they were given two options (English or French) to choose from as they are two commonly spoken languages in Morocco along with Arabic (the mother tongue). However, because of French colonialism, French language is more widely used in the administrations and Moroccans' daily-life interaction than English is.

Nevertheless, this wide use of French in Morocco, which might be seen as a 'privilege' to this language, was not reflected in the participants' responses since the vast majority from the two schools thought that speaking English is regarded more significant than speaking French, as the table below apparently presents:

Table 4. ***The participants' responses to French and English social value***

Schools		Language		Total
		English	French	
Sid Aisa	Count	41	4	45

		% within School	91,1%	8,9%	100,0%
		Std. Residual	,8	-1,7	
	Ibn Zaidoune	Count	31	14	45
		% within School	68,9%	31,1%	100,0%
		Std. Residual	-,8	1,7	
Total		Count	72	18	90
		% within School	80,0%	20,0%	100,0%

Table 5. ***Chi-Square Tests***

	Sidi Aisa ***N (%)***	***Ibn Zaidoune*** ***N (%)***	***O.R*** ***(Odds Ratio)***	***CI*** ***(confidence interval)***	***P-value***
English	41 (91,1%)	31 (68, 9%)	4,629	1,387 - 15,448	,007
French	4 (8,9%)	14 (31,1%)			

The Chi-Square tests, in Table 5, also demonstrate that there is no effect of region, where the high schools are located, on female rural students' attitudes (O.R = 4,629; CI= 1,387 - 15,448; P=,007). Hence, the majority of the participants displayed a positive attitude to learn English than to learn French.

As previously hypothesized, the findings clearly point out that the female students had a positive opinion and belief towards the use of English in everyday interaction and the person who speaks English is more socially privileged. It might be argued that the students who have positive opinions about English use in formal and informal contexts have a positive attitude towards learning English.

The findings also reinforce the idea that the rural female students are aware of the vital role that English plays in their lives. It is worth pointing out that although French language is sometimes an essential prerequisite to get a job in Morocco the participants associated more social value to anyone who speaks English. Besides, Moroccans especially the elite and the upper class use French in their daily communication, and sometimes even ordinary people, using some French words, phrases or chunks, communicate with one another. Thus, there is much exposure to the contexts where French is employed. For this reason, the participants considered it normal to hear somebody speaking French, which, at most, was the reason why they highly valued somebody speaking English. Henceforth, we conclude that English has a prestigious status for the female rural students from the two schools though it may not seem very relevant to their daily life needs.

With reference to previous research, Heaney's study (2005) on Indonesian EFL learners revealed that "students had positive attitudes towards English and English had a prestigious status among the youths" (as cited in Siregar, F. L. 2010, p.73). Additionally, Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2009) came up with the conclusion that the principal motives encouraging EFL learners to learn English were to maximize their "personal development and to enhance their status among friends" (p.40). The findings of the present study are also confirmed by Bernat & Rosemarie study (2007) who asserted that the majority of the respondents agreed on the statement "people in my country feel that it is important to speak English" (p.87).

Significantly, for female rural learners, English is regarded as a distinguishing criterion among people. This means that the respondents considered English as a means of exercising superiority and power in society. In particular, the female rural learners might think that the people who are fluent in more than one language especially in English are more intelligent than those who speak just their mother tongue. A recent study conducted by Bernat & Rosemarie (2007), they have concluded that "women are more likely than men to believe that people who speak more than one language are very intelligent" (p.82).

4. *The female students' motivation and participation in the English class*

While motivation has been defined in many ways (Liuoliene & Metiuniene, 2006), in this paper it is mainly measured by the students' feeling (bored or motivated) and the frequency of participation in class. If EFL learners possess a positive attitude towards English, they will be highly motivated to show enthusiasm and positively take part in classroom activities during the learning process. Importantly, it has been pointed out that there is a correlation between motivation and learners' achievement in class. Therefore, motivation is one of the key factors to language learning success or failure (Ellis, 1994; McDonough, 1983). Getting students motivated in class assures tremendous teaching and learning outcomes. Given the importance of motivation as a key factor in foreign language learning, learners' motivation in an EFL classroom determines their attitudes towards learning English.

In order to obtain a deeper insight into female rural students' attitude towards learning English, their motivation in EFL classroom was investigated through two major question items with specific options: *how do you feel in the English classroom (motivated or bored)? How often do you participate in the English class (always, usually, sometimes, rarely, never)?*

Table 6 shows female students' feeling in the English class:

Table 6. ***The participants' motivation in the English classroom***

Schools		Students' feeling in the English classroom		
		Motivated	Bored	Total
Sidi Aisa	Count	29	16	45
	% within School	64,4%	35,6%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	,4	-,5	
Ibn Zaidoune	Count	25	20	45

	% within School	55,6%	44,4%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	-,4	,5	
Total	Count	54	36	90
	% within School	60,0%	40,0%	100,0%

Table 7. ***Chi-Square Tests***

	Sidi Aisa ***N (%)***	***Ibn Zaidoune*** ***N (%)***	***O.R*** ***(Odds Ratio)***	***CI*** ***(confidence interval)***	***P-value***
Motivated	29 (64,4%)	25 (55, 6%)	1,450	,621- 3,384	,118
Bored	16 (35,6%)	20 (44,4%)			

Table 7 shows that the participants' motivation cannot be explained by the region they belonged to or their socio-economic background, rather there are other major factors that can be the source of learners' motivation such as the teacher's teaching method, textbook, classroom arrangement, parents' intervention, etc. All these variables contribute to the shaping of students' language attitude either in a positive or negative way.

One of the variables that determines how learners positively or negatively regard a certain language is classroom participation. Thus, the participants were further required to specify how often they used to participate in EFL class. The findings are revealed in Table 8 below:

Table 8. ***female rural students' participation in the English class***

Schools		Frequency of Participation					Total
		always	usually	sometimes	rarely	never	
Sidi Aisa	Count	21	14	3	4	3	45
	% within region	46,7%	31,1%	6,7%	8,9%	6,7%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	1,0	,6	-1,6	,0	-,7	
Ibn Zaidoune	Count	13	10	12	4	6	45
	% within region	28,9%	22,2%	26,7%	8,9%	13,3%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	-1,0	-,6	1,6	,0	,7	
Total	Count	34	24	15	8	9	90
	% within region	37,8%	26,7%	16,7%	8,9%	10,0%	100,0%

It is evidenced, in the table 8, that the vast majority from the two high schools most often participated in the English class. Their tendency to participate in the English class reflects how

positive they are towards learning English. The participants were aware that through classroom participation they would improve their language skills especially the speaking skill.

5. *The female students' reasons for learning English*

The investigation of language learners' rationales for studying a language has always been of paramount significance. It is, undoubtedly, a substantial need to get deep insights into learners' specific purposes of learning a language and provide research evidence to language teachers and curriculum designers. In this respect, Oxford & Shearin, (1994) have stressed the importance of investigating learners' motivations which feed into the teaching and learning processes. Pachler (2000) similarly argued for investigating the aims of language teaching and learning in schools.

EFL learners learn English for a number of reasons. Personal benefits could be one of the strongest reasons that EFL learners tend to gain from learning a foreign language. In addition to the academic purposes, learners may be highly motivated to learn English to communicate efficiently in and out of school especially with native speakers, to have more chance to be employed in the job market, to get access to the English data produced on the internet, to explore foreign cultures, etc. There is also a social development impetus inherent in learners' desire to gain a social recognition and value. Importantly, since English has the status of a global 'lingua franca', learners perceive it as a prerequisite to their future career goals. Therefore, learners may be motivated to learn English because of its importance to their future prospects and they may have personal motives to learn it, as well.

Accordingly, the participants were provided with a list of language learning reasons that addressed their personal aims. The table below presents the participants' responses to the question item *(Tick the personal reasons behind learning English?)*

Table 9. ***Students' personal reasons of learning English***

Schools		Students' personal reasons of learning English					Total
		To find a job	To communi-cate with foreigners	To chat	To watch films in English	To listen to songs in English	
Sidi Aisa	Count	13	20	5	3	4	45
	% within school	28,9%	44,4%	11,1%	6,7%	8,9%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	,3	-,2	-,6	,0	,9	
Ibn Zaidoune	Count	11	22	8	3	1	45
	% within school	24,4%	48,9%	17,8%	6,7%	2,2%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	-,3	,2	,6	,0	-,9	
Total	Count	24	42	13	6	5	90

Table 9. ***Students' personal reasons of learning English***

Schools		Students' personal reasons of learning English					Total
		To find a job	To communi-cate with foreigners	To chat	To watch films in English	To listen to songs in English	
Sidi Aisa	Count	13	20	5	3	4	45
	% within school	28,9%	44,4%	11,1%	6,7%	8,9%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	,3	-,2	-,6	,0	,9	
Ibn Zaidoune	Count	11	22	8	3	1	45
	% within school	24,4%	48,9%	17,8%	6,7%	2,2%	100,0%
	Std. Residual	-,3	,2	,6	,0	-,9	
Total	Count	24	42	13	6	5	90
	% within school	26,7%	46,7%	14,4%	6,7%	5,6%	100,0%

As presented in the findings above, the vast majority of the participants ticked the option *to communicate with foreigners* (46, 7%) followed by the option *to find a job* (24%), which implies two major reasons female learners were strongly in need of: the need to improve their communicative competence to communicate with foreigners, in particular with native speakers of English, and to get a job. Accordingly, there appears to be a strong endorsement among the participants for the view that English language is very relevant to their daily needs. Sarjit (1993) similarly found that the instrumental and personal motivations were the main reasons for learning English. Benson (1991) also concluded that the integrative and personal goals were main motivations among Japanese college students to learn English.

It is not surprising that the vast majority of female rural students considered the communicative aspect of English and getting a job as their major personal goals. This might reflect their awareness of the international role of English language and the importance to communicate with foreigners, which has become a daily likelihood via the social networks regardless of the socio-economic background of rural students. It may also be explained by their longing to be able to speak a language which is often a priority to language learners in comparison with mastering the grammatical aspect of a language.

Conclusion:

The study aimed at investigating female rural students' attitudes towards learning English. It particularly attempted to identify whether female rural students, belonging to two Moroccan high schools, had a positive or negative perception of English and to measure the socio-economic variables that might shape their attitudes. This was performed through asking the targeted sample about the preferred foreign language to be studied at school, what social value

they would associate a person who speaks English to, the influence of the culture presented in the English textbook, and the reasons and motivations for learning English. Using the Chi-Square tests and the statistical measures frequency and percentage, the findings of the study indicated that female rural students' had a positive attitude towards studying English which refutes our hypothesis. This was remarkable in their preference to study English rather than other foreign languages at high school, high motivation and frequent participation in the English class, strong desire to improve their English communicative competence, negative attitude towards the culture used in the English textbook, and positive social value associated to a person who speaks English. Therefore, it was concluded that the socio-economic background of female rural students had no effect on or correlation with their positive attitudes to study English. The fact that they live in rural area where poverty, lack of educational opportunities, unemployment, etc. are prevailing did not have an influence on their attitude to study English. This conclusion is in marked contrast with previous research (see Ghazali 2008) which has shown that there is a correlation between rural students' language attitudes and their background.

About the Author:

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The Use of Interpersonal Discourse Markers by Students of English at the University of Jordan

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Abstract

This study adopts a functional approach to analyze the use of interpersonal discourse markers in interviews conducted with advanced EFL Jordanian learners. This group of subjects is represented by graduate students in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Jordan. The graduate students' data are compared to native interviews drawn from the Charlotte Narrative and Conversation Collection (CNCC). The native speakers' interviews are used as baseline data for evaluating the production of DMs by the advanced Jordanian EFL learners. Fung's (2003) taxonomy is employed for analyzing the use of interpersonal discourse markers in the native and non-native interviews. The analysis reveals that the advanced EFL Jordanian learners had a slightly higher percentage of interpersonal discourse markers than the native speakers of English. However, due to mother tongue influence, formal education and cultural preferences, the advanced EFL learners were found to employ a more restricted set of this category of DMs than their native counterparts.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, discourse markers, EFL learners, oral discourse

Introduction

Discourse markers constitute a class of linguistic items that are drawn from various syntactic categories. These context-dependent items usually serve different functions in different contexts. Discourse markers are optional devices that do not contribute to the propositional meaning of their host discourse units. Despite their optionality, discourse markers are believed to serve varied functions on the textual, interpersonal and cognitive levels of discourse.

The textual functions of discourse markers involve signaling relationships between discourse units on the local and global levels of discourse. The textual discourse marker '*so*', for example, signals a semantic relationship of consequence between its host discourse unit (*so* I will make you a sandwich) and the prior discourse unit (I know that you are still hungry). Discourse markers function interpersonally to enhance solidarity between interlocutors and to mark attitudes towards the propositional content of discourse units. For instance, the discourse marker '*just*' functions on the interpersonal level of discourse to intensify the emotional content of the discourse unit (I was *just* proud of you). Discourse markers function on the cognitive level of discourse to signal buying time for solving cognitive problems and reformulating prior discourse units. The use of '*I mean'* to mark the discourse unit it introduces (*I mean*, they were happy) as a reformulation of the prior discourse unit (she was happy) is a typical example of the cognitive functions of discourse markers. The following sub-sections provide background information on the terminology and characteristics of discourse markers.

Terminology

Some of the most common terms found in the literature to refer to discourse markers are 'discourse particles' (Schourup, 1985), 'discourse connectives' (Blakemore, 1987) and 'pragmatic markers' (Brinton, 1996).The wide range of terms that are used to refer to the linguistic items that are identified by many researchers as discourse markers (DMs) is attributed to the different approaches that have been employed for the analysis of these items and the various functions that they serve. The term DMs is used by Schourup (1999, p. 228) because it is "merely the most popular of a host of competing terms used partially with overlapping reference." The term 'discourse' suggests that these items function at the discourse level. The term 'marker' draws attention to the fact that the meaning of these items is analyzed in terms of what they signal rather than what they describe.

Basic characteristics

Discourse markers are syntactically and semantically optional. They are syntactically optional in the sense that their deletion does not render the discourse segments that host them ungrammatical. The syntactic optionality of DMs can be exemplified by omitting the DM '*actually*' from the discourse segment (she was tired *actually*). Omitting '*actually*' does not render its host segment (she was tired) ungrammatical, rather, it affects signaling explicitly the attitude of the speaker towards the propositional content of the discourse.

The semantic optionality of DMs is ascribed to the fact that these devices 'signal' the relationship between the discourse units that they connect, but they do not 'create' these relations. Thus, if the DM '*but*' is omitted from the sentence (Sami was late, *but* Sara was there on time), "the relationship it signals is still available to the hearer, though no longer explicitly cued" (Schourup, 1999, p. 231).

Moreover, DMs do not change the truth-conditions of their host sentences. Jucker (2002, p. 213) asserts that "a true sentence is true, and a false sentence is false, whether or not it contains a discourse maker." Brinton (1996, p. 34) attributes the non-truth conditionality of DMs to their "semantic shallowness."

Discourse markers are also observed to be syntactically detached from their host discourse segments. These devices, hence, have 'peripheral' grammatical functions in the sense that they do not enter into construction syntactically with other clause elements. For example, the DM '*you know*' in (Children are sometimes very annoying, *you know*) occurs outside the syntactic structure of the utterance that contains it and thus it serves a pragmatic rather than a syntactic function. That is, the DM '*you know*' in the abovementioned example does not fulfill a syntactic role. Rather, it is serves the pragmatic function of marking shared knowledge and experience between the interlocutors.

In accordance with the fact that DMs are context-dependent linguistic items, they usually serve different functions in different contexts. For example, depending on the context in which it used, the DM '*so*' can perform various pragmatic functions. For instance, '*so*' is used for summarizing previous points in the discourse in (Mary is very bright and beautiful. She has a very loving and supporting family and she has many friends. *So*, she is a happy child). This DM can also mark a transition to another topic as in (Right. *So* let's solve another aspect of this problem). Furthermore, '*so*' can be used to connect utterances to the non- linguistic context, for instance, a mother who sees her daughter crying tells her (*So* you failed the exams).

Interpersonal DMs

The interpersonal category of DMs might be employed to involve the listeners in the communication processes for the purpose of signaling solidarity between the interlocutors (e.g. *you know*). Discourse markers with interpersonal functions might be used to express attitudes towards conveyed messages. The DMs '*I think'* and '*sort of*', for instance, function as hedges that express language users' tentativeness towards the propositional content of discourse segments. The interpersonal DMs that indicate tentativeness seem to reduce social distance between interlocutors. In addition to hedging, interpersonal DMs can also contribute to establishing solidarity between interlocutors by functioning as backchannels. For instance, the DMs *'oh'* and '*yeah'* might be used to "show the hearer's understanding of the social relationship between the partners and to keep the conversation going" (Aijmer, 2002, p. 51).

Language users often employ interpersonal DMs to provide guidance to intended interpretation of messages by indicating their attitudes towards propositions. Therefore, the omission of DMs might result in a greater possibility of misinterpreting communicated messages. Moreover, in accordance with the fact that interpersonal DMs contribute to the establishment of intimacy, failing to use this category of DMs might result in increasing social distance between interlocutors.

Non-native speakers show a tendency to use a limited and redundant set of the interpersonal DMs to serve restricted functions. The difficulty of mastering the use of the DMs that function on the interpersonal level of discourse is ascribed to the informality or even stigmatization of this category of DMs, first language interference, formal de-contextualized education and grammar-based curriculum.

Aims of the study

The present study is a comparative analysis of the use of interpersonal DMs in informal interviews with American native and Jordanian non-native speakers of English. This analysis is based on corpus-driven data. The native speakers' interviews are used as baseline data for evaluating the acquisition of DMs by Jordanian post-graduate students of English. This study will attempt to answer the following question:

How do post-graduate students of English differ from American native speakers in their use of interpersonal DMs?

Significance of the study

In accordance with the fact that interpersonal DMs are used frequently in oral discourse, it is reasonable to hypothesize that they play a crucial role in language. In spite of the crucial role that these devices play, there are few studies that investigate the acquisition of interpersonal DMs by foreign and second language learners. Most of the studies on English DMs focus on the acquisition of these devices by native speakers of English. Moreover, few studies have been conducted on the comparative usage of DMs between native and non-native speakers of English.

This study is based on the belief that comparing the use of interpersonal DMs by native and non-native speakers of English may lead to a better understanding of the appropriate use of this category of DMs and may help Jordanian learners to achieve a native-like competence of these devices.

Limitations of the study

The present study will have the following limitations:

1- Detailed information on prosodic features of the interview transcripts is beyond the scope of the study.

2- In accordance with the facts that there is no enough information about the interviewers of the native English corpus and that the researchers conducted the interviews with the non-native learners, this study only analyzes the interviewees' use of DMs.

Literature review

Al-Masri (1999) adopts a pragmatic approach to analyze 26 English DMs under the label gap-fillers. The study is based on a corpus of nine television interviews. The participants in these interviews are 66 native and non-native speakers of English. The non-native subjects are represented by highly educated Jordanian people, whereas the native subjects are American participants of varied ages and academic levels. The results of this analysis indicate that the non-native subjects use the targeted gap-fillers less frequently than their native counterparts. Al-Masri attributes the Jordanian subjects' relative underuse of gap-fillers to the difficulty of the acquisition of these devices by non-native speakers. The analysis also reveals that the most frequent gap-fillers in the Jordanian and American data are '*you know'* and '*yeah'*. The Jordanian subjects, nonetheless, are found to avoid using (*hey*, *wow* and *anyway)* and to show cultural and stylistic preferences for (*I think* and *actually)*.

Romero Trillo (2002, p. 774) defines DMs as "elements that have undergone a process of discourse grammaticalization and have included in their semantic/grammatical meaning a pragmatic dimension that serves for interactive purposes." He investigates the use of *(look,*

listen, you know, you see, I mean and *well)* in native and non-native conversations. These interpersonal DMs are divided into involvement and attention getting markers. Romero Trillo's analysis is based on corpus-driven data. Data elicited from native speakers are used as "baseline data" for evaluating the production of DMs by Spanish speakers. The results of the study indicate that the Spanish speakers use the involvement markers less frequently than native adults. Moreover, the attention getting markers are "completely eliminated" from the non-native adult data. Romero Trillo concludes that the use of interpersonal DMs by non-native speakers is "fossilized both in quantity and diversity of elements used" (Romero Trillo, 2002, p. 783).

Fung (2003) adopts a functional-attitudinal approach to analyze discourse markers in pedagogical settings. Audio-recording and Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) are the tools for data collection from non-native and native English speakers, respectively. The comparative analysis of the data reveals that 52.2% of the targeted DMs are underused by the non-native subjects. However, these subjects overuse the DMs (*I think, but, yes* and *because)*. In comparison with their native counterparts, the non-native subjects use the targeted DMs to fulfill very restricted functions. The latter are also found to lack the skills in utilizing the interpersonal DMs "through which solidarity is shared" (Fung, 2003, p. 293).

Based on a corpus-driven analysis, Aijmer (2004) investigates how advanced Swedish learners of English use DMs. The researcher analyzes 50 interviews with undergraduate students of English. The students are interviewed by a native speaker "on a topic such as a recent trip or a movie they had seen" (Aijmer, 2004, p.175). The non-native data is "compared with a similar amount of conversational material from the London Lund Corpus of Spoken English" (Aijmer, 2004, p. 175).

The analysis indicates that some DMs are used frequently by the native and non-native subjects such as (*I think, you know, sort of* and *well)*. The DM '*I don't know'* is only used by the non-native subjects. The frequent use of '*I don't know'* by the Swedish learners "makes them sound more uncertain than native speakers" (Aijmer, 2004, p.186). In accordance with the fact that the learners are interviewed by a native speaker of English, Aijmer emphasizes that overusing '*I don't know'* is an indication of the learners' high communicative stress.

Muller (2005) examines the acquisition of English DMs by non-native speakers. This study adopts a bottom-up approach in which "evidence from the data takes precedence over theoretical constructions" (Muller, 2005, p.26). Muller analyzes the use of (*well, you know, like* and *so)* by German University students. English native speakers' usage of the targeted DMs is set as the standard of this analysis. The study is based on 70 conversations of the Giessen-Long Beach Chaplin Corpus (GLBCC) in which the subjects are asked to watch a Chaplin movie and retell it then exchange their opinions about it in pairs.

The results indicate that the four DMs are employed by the German subjects with a frequency of occurrences and individual functions which are different from the native subjects. The latter uses "*so* almost twice as often as the Germans and both *you know* and *like* even more than five times as often" (Muller, 2005, p.244). The German subjects, on the other hand, employ '*well'* twice as often as the native speakers of English. Muller analyzes German EFL textbooks in an attempt to interpret the results. '*Well'* is found to be overrepresented in the textbooks, in contrast with, (*so, you know* and *like)*. Moreover, in many cases '*so'* is substituted by '*well'* because the German speakers find the latter to be more English than the former.

Buysse (2011) analyzes the use of the operative DMs '*so'* and '*well*' and the involvement markers (*you know*, *kind of*, *sort of*, *like* and *I mean*) in informal interviews with native and non-native speakers of English. The non-native subjects are divided into two separate groups based on their exposure to the target language and their motivation for learning that language. They are forty native speakers of Dutch, half of whom are students of English Linguistics and the other half is represented by students of Commercial Sciences. The non-native corpus is compared to a corpus of twenty interviews with native speakers of English.

The analysis indicates that the students of Commercial Sciences use all the DMs under study less frequently than the students of English Linguistics. Both non-native groups use the operative DMs more frequently than native speakers. Nevertheless, the involvement markers are avoided or neglected by the non-native subjects. Buysse contributes the ignorance of the involvement markers to the unnatural foreign language context that "rarely contains an abundance of pragmatic items in spoken language" (Buysse, 2011, p. 15). The informality or even stigmatization of involvement markers is another factor that could lead to their significant underuse by the non-native subjects.

Methods and procedures

Subjects

The subjects of the study are American native speakers of English and advanced Jordanian EFL learners. The latter group of subjects is represented by thirty-three advanced Jordanian EFL learners who are between the ages of 23 and 37. These learners are graduate students in the Master's programs of the University of Jordan's Department of English Language and Literature. English graduate students have to score high in the graduate entrance exams that assess their English language proficiency level. Scoring high in one of these exams might qualify the graduate students to be considered as advanced EFL learners.

The native speakers' interviews are drawn from the Charlotte Narrative and Conversation Collection (CNCC Corpus).Thirty-three interviews are selected randomly from the interviews that are conducted with native speakers of English who are between the ages of 18 and 38. These subjects are mainly university students or graduates who occupy a different range of professions. The native interviewees reside in and around Mecklenburg County, which is located in the state of North Carolina (USA), and they come from a range of different ethnicities and social backgrounds.

Data collection

The non-native corpus is compiled along the lines of the CNCC Corpus. The non-native subjects are interviewed by the researcher who is a non-native speaker of English. To conceal the identity of the subjects, initials are used instead of full names. Furthermore, each interview begins typically by asking the subjects to introduce themselves by stating their names, ages, native tongues and the language they use as their major means of communication. The subjects are then asked about their childhood stories and adventures, favorite books, childhood memories, experience as EFL learners and about the difficulties they face as graduate students.

Transcription

Symbols that indicate brief unfilled pauses (-), unit unfilled pauses (pause), beginning of overlapping utterances ([ ), unfinished words (=), unintelligible speech ( ) and prolonged syllables (::) are added to the transcripts of the native and non-native interviews.

Model of analysis

The present study employs Fung's (2003) taxonomy in analyzing the interviews with the native and non-native speakers of English. Fung's taxonomy of DMs is elicited from authentic recordings from the pedagogical sub-corpus in CANCODE and from group discussions of 49 intermediate-advanced learners of English in a secondary school in Hong Kong (Fung, 2003, p. 68). Common DMs identified in the native and non-native corpora are grouped under four functional categories, namely, the interpersonal, referential, structural and cognitive categories of DMs.

The interpersonal category includes DMs that "perform a phatic function in the discourse to facilitate closeness between participants for the purpose of establishing roles and relationships between the interlocutors" (Fung, 2003, p. 77). According to Fung (2003), this category of DMs serves three interpersonal functions:

A- Marking shared knowledge (involvement markers): *See, you see, you know, Listen.*

B-Indicating attitude: *well, really, I think, obviously, absolutely, basically, actually, exactly, sort of, kind of, like, to be frank, to be honest, oh.*

C-Showing new responses: *OK, okay, right, alright, yeah, yes, I see, great, oh great, sure.*

Data analysis

Two criteria are employed in evaluating the native and non-native subjects' use of DMs. The first criterion is the frequency of the use of the interpersonal class of DMs. To indicate the frequency of the interpersonal functions of DMs, the total number of interpersonal DMs is to be compared to the total number of the entire set of DMs that are used by the participants. The frequency rates of interpersonal DMs used by the non-native subjects are to be compared to their native counterparts to detect whether they convey underuse, overuse or appropriate use of the targeted DMs.

In addition to the frequency of occurrence, another criterion employed for assessing the interviewees' use of DMs is the variety of the use of interpersonal DMs. Accordingly, the percentage of the occurrence for each marker within the interpersonal class of DMs is to be calculated to find out if the non-native subjects, in comparison with their native counterparts, use a restricted or varied set of interpersonal DMs.

Results and discussion

Frequency of occurrence

Following Fung (2003), the identified instances of DMs are categorized under four functional classes, namely, interpersonal, referential, structural and cognitive. Table 1 presents the frequencies of the functional classes of DMs that are employed by the native and non-native subjects.

Table 1.*The frequency of the functional classes of DMs in interviews*

	Native speakers	Non-native speakers	Total
	Percent	Percent	Percent

Referential	58.5	53.1	57.0
Interpersonal	21.2	26.2	22.5
Structural	14.6	14.2	14.5
Cognitive	5.7	6.6	5.9

As shown in Table 1, the non-native speakers (26.2) had a slightly higher percentage of interpersonal DMs than their native counterparts (21.2).This result contradicts the researchers' hypothesis that EFL Jordanian learners tend to avoid using DMs that operate on the interpersonal mode of language. The avoidance of interpersonal DMs in oral discourse is attributed to foreign language learners' exposure to unnatural linguistic input that prepares learners "to speak like a textbook rather than speaking naturally" (Fung, 2003, p. 177). Buysee (2011, p. 15) subscribes to the view that learning a language through formal instruction "restricts the opportunities for foreign language learners to familiarize themselves with pragmatic devices such as involvement discourse markers." Moreover, non-native speakers are encouraged to "steer clear of informal elements in an effort to keep their language as "neutral" and inoffensive as possible" (Buysse, 2010, p. 479). The ignorance of interpersonal DMs is, therefore, associated with the informality, "even up to the point of downright stigmatization", of this group of pragmatic devices (Buysse, 2011, p. 16).

Variety of interpersonal markers

This section presents a detailed analysis of the varied functions that DMs were found to serve under the interpersonal category. This analysis aims at finding out whether the non-native subjects used a varied or restricted set of interpersonal DMs in comparison with their native counterparts. Table 2 presents the frequency of the functions that were served by the interpersonal class of DMs**.**

Table 2.*The frequency of the functions served by interpersonal DMs*

Functions of interpersonal DMs	Native Speakers	Non-native speakers	Total
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Involvement markers	2.7	1.0	2.2
indicating attitude	17.5	22.6	18.9
showing responses	1.0	2.5	1.4

The most frequently served function by interpersonal markers was indicating the attitudes of the speakers towards the propositional content of the utterances. In addition to indicating attitudes, the interpersonal makers were also used as involvement markers by the speakers to involve the listeners in the conversational action and by the listeners themselves to signal active listenership. The function of involving the listeners in the communication process was slightly more frequent in the native interviews, whereas employing interpersonal markers for showing responses and signaling attitudes had slightly higher percentages of use in the non-native data.

Table 3 below presents the frequency of the interpersonal markers in the native and non-native data.

Table 3. *The frequency of interpersonal markers in the native and non-native interviews*

	Native speakers	Non-native speakers
	Percent	Percent
Just	27.2	1.8
Actually	12.0	30.1
You know	11.2	2.5
Kind of	8.9	1.8
Like	8.7	10.3
Really	8.1	2.1
I think	7.1	17.7
Well	3.4	8.2
Yeah	2.4	12.1
Basically	2.1	2.5
Oh	1.8	1.1
Right	1.6	0.0
Sort of	1.5	0.0
Ok	1.3	1.8
See	0.6	0.0
Obviously	0.5	0.0
Absolutely	0.3	0.0
To be honest	0.3	0.0
Yes	0.3	6.7
Alright	0.2	0.0
Exactly	0.2	0.4
Okay	0.2	0.0
Sure	0.2	0.4
I mean	0.0	0.7

Involving listeners in communication processes

`In the interpersonal category, the DMs (*you know, OK, right* and *see)* were used by the speakers to involve the listeners in the communication processes for the purpose of signaling solidarity between the interlocutors. In contrast to the non-native learners (2.5), the native interviewees (11.2) used the involvement DM '*you know'* frequently as a marker of the interviewers' assumed shared knowledge. Similarly, Fung (2003, p. 96) compared the use of 'you *know*' between native and non-native speakers of English. She came to the conclusion that the native speakers of English employed this marker more frequently than their non-native counterparts "to appeal to the assumed shared knowledge" of the hearers for the acceptance of information. A similar result is reported by Romero Trillo (2002, p. 777) who argues that the DM '*you know*' serves the function of involving the listener in "the thinking process of the speech." The following two examples selected from the native and non-native interviews, respectively, illustrate employing '*you know*' for the purpose of marking shared knowledge.

(1) AM: …*and* they were *just* pretty exciting stories especially when you are a kid *you know*... (Native)
(2) AM**: …***you know*-parents sometimes tell some stories to frighten their children- (Non-native)
In addition to '*you know*', another involvement maker that appeared in the native and non-native data is '*OK*'. It should be pointed out that this marker only performs the interpersonal function of showing responses to the speakers' contributions in Fung's functional categorization of DMs. However, there were instances where speakers employed this marker "to ensure that they have been understood correctly" (Lam, 2007, p. 35). Example (3) below illustrates the use of '*OK*' as an involvement marker.
(3) AK:…she was left alone- her husband was killed- by the white people- *and* also her other sons- were killed- *OK*-beloved- uh- when her- when her mother become old- beloved came to her as a soul-*OK*- ...(Non-native)
The involvement markers '*see'* and *'right*' were only employed by the native speakers. The former was involved in requesting the attention of the listeners and the latter served the function of seeking confirmation of the listeners' comprehension (Aijmer, 2002, p. 52).The use of '*see'* and *'right*' in the native interviews is demonstrated in the following examples.
(4) TS: How does Rob talk away this fire?
JR: He- he does some- I don't know- *see*- he can't tell you (laughter) - … (Native)
(5) QT: …*-well-* I used to hit my sister- *right*- *and* run to my mama before my sister would hit me-… (Native)

Indicating attitudes

In addition to functioning as involvement markers, interpersonal DMs were also used to signal the attitudes of the speakers towards the propositional content of utterances. The most frequently used attitude marker by the non-native subjects was '*actually'* (30.1), whereas '*just*' had the highest percentage of use in the native data (27.2). The use of these interpersonal markers is shown in the following examples.
(6) EA: Now- let's say as a child – did you do something funny- were you a trouble maker?-
AA: No- *actually*- I was a quite girl *and*-uh-(laughter) - *actually*– I don't uh- recall problems- (Non-native)
(7) SS: …*I think* it's *just* human nature to get jealous *and*- to *kind of* put up a- *you know*- an offensive front to whoever the invader or the intruder is… (Native)
As illustrated in example (6), the DM '*actually*' enables speakers to express "certainty about propositional meanings" (Fung, 2003, p.77). Al-Masri (1999, p. 64) relates overusing this marker by native speakers of Jordanian Spoken Arabic to "first language interference." She additionally admits that Jordanian EFL learners "have a tendency to use an Arabic equivalent" to this marker (Al-Masri, 1999, p. 64). Other DMs that served the function of indicating certainty about the propositional content of utterances include (*obviously, absolutely, basically, exactly* and *really*). In line with Al-Masri (1999) and Aijmer (2004), the DM '*really*' was more frequent in the native interviews. Moreover, there were no instances of the DMs '*absolutely'* and *'obviously*' in the non-native data. The DMs '*exactly'* and *'basically*' had comparable percentages of use in the native and non-native interviews.

The DM '*just*' is associated with "affective intensity" (Aijmer, 2002, p. 49). In example (7), '*just*' intensifies the emotional content of the proposition *(it's human nature to get jealous*).

Example (7) illustrates as well the use of the DM '*I think*' to signal the speaker's "level of commitment on the propositional content" of the abovementioned utterance (Lam, 2007, p.35). This marker appeared more frequently in interviews conducted with Jordanian EFL learners. Likewise, Al-Masri (1999) came to the conclusion that Jordanian EFL learners tend to overuse '*I think*' in comparison with native speakers of English.

The DMs '*sort of*' and *'kind of'* were underrepresented in the non-native data. Fung (2003, p. 97) who came to the same conclusion argues that these markers carry "evidential meaning like imprecision or approximation" and have "the interactive effect of softening the tone and building up interpersonal closeness with the interlocutor." The following are representative examples.

(8) AM: …I *sort of* remember the words *but*- she told me them when I was very little *like*- I don't know *like* four or five maybe even younger… (Native)

(9) BD: …*I think* they had a mixture *because I think*- um- it's *kind of like* two different- *you know* things that they would tell me as far as stories -… (Native)

The attitude marker '*well*' was used as a "responsive signal" which served the function of indicating the speaker's reaction to the prior utterance (Lam, 2007, p.114). This marker had a higher percentage of use in the non-native interviews. EFL learners' overuse of '*well*' is reported by Al-Masri (1999) and Muller (2005). As shown in example (10), the DM '*well*' can preface responses that diverge from the prior questions. The use of this marker to signal responses where no dispreferences are detected is illustrated in example (11).

(10) EA: OK- what about books you read as a grown-up?
HA: What- you mean novels?
EA: Yeah- maybe like novels- yeah
HA: *Well*- u::h- I read many- (Non-native)

(11) EA: Can you tell us a bit about Tarzan? What do you remember about it? –
LA: *Well* – he lives alone- as a person- a human being- among only animals that was special- considering- … (Non-native)

Likewise, the DMs '*yeah*' and '*yes*' served a similar purpose as '*well*' to signal "direct answers which do not convey any dispreferred sense" (Lam 2007, p. 117). Some of the examples that illustrate using '*yeah*' and '*yes*' to introduce direct responses to questions are listed below.

(12) EA: Ok – now back to stories- who was the most talented story teller in your family? –
LA: *Yeah*- u::m- *I think* I'm no different in term of this question- I would say my grandmother- usually grandmothers are good story tellers…(Non-native)

(13) EA: Did you learn English from school- university- TV? –
AM: *Yes*- I started English when I was sixth grade- *and*- um- *I think*- I got better when I was going into the high school level… (Non-native)

Moreover, there are two tokens of the DM '*I mean*' that served the function of prefacing responses that conveyed dispreferences. One of these instances is presented in example (14).

(14) EA: Ok- so what kind of books and stories do you read now?-
RK: *I mean actually*- we have many things to do (laughter)… (Non-native)

The attitude marker '*like*' had comparable percentages of use in the native (8.7) and non-native data (10.3). Two functions were performed by '*like*' in the interpersonal category of DMs. The first function of this DM was marking approximate number or quantity. Example (15) below presents the use of '*like*' to indicate approximation.

(15) AM: …I *sort of* remember the words *but*- she told me them when I was very little *like*- I don't know *like* four or five maybe even younger… (Native)

When '*like*' is used with a numeral expression, it indicates it is not an exact one. Therefore, it "reduces the speaker's commitment to the literal truth of his/her utterance" (Muller, 2005, p. 210). In addition to marking approximation, 'like' served the function of marking lexical focus. The DM '*like*' in example (16) is used to mark lexical focus on the new information "glow of light all around me"

(16) EA: …she saw *like* this glow of light all around me as if the Lord had definitely cured me of leukemia- no more treatments- no more… (Native)

In addition to prefacing direct answers, the DM '*yeah'* and *'yes*' also served the function of emphasizing the propositional content of utterances. Finally, the attitude marker '*to be honest'* appeared in the native subjects' interviews only, whereas '*oh*' was used by the native and non-native interviewees.

Showing responses

This category of interpersonal markers serves the function of providing responses to listeners and indicating "active participation and listenership" (Fung, 2003, p.98). Based on the optionality criterion, instances of '*yeah'* and *'yes*' that function as responses to polar questions are not treated as DMs. The DMs '*yeah'* and *'yes*' are employed to indicate acknowledgment, affirmation or agreement with the prior utterance. These DMs had higher percentages of use in the non-native data. Fung (2003), in contrast, found that '*yeah*' was underrepresented in the non-native conversations that she analyzed. She indicated that '*yeah*' was frequently substituted by '*yes*' in the non-native data. The use of 'yeah' as a response to a polar question is represented in example (17). Example (18) illustrates the use of '*yeah*' as a DM that signals agreement with the other interlocutor.

(17) EA: Yeah- right- do you remember some of your childhood adventures?-

AA: Yeah- of course- (Non-native)

(18) JJ: That's who did my um- (pause) wisdom teeth-

KG: Yeah-

JJ: I liked him-

KG: *Yeah* I did too- *actually*- *Well* Doctor Trevez was like - … (Native)

The DMs (*Okay, alright* and *right*) were only used by the native subjects. The interpersonal markers (*oh, ok* and *sure*) had comparable percentages of use in the native and non-native interviews. Using comparable percentages of the interpersonal marker '*oh*' by the native and non-native speakers of English contradicts Fuller (2003). Fuller (2003) identifies '*oh*' as a reception marker used to signal responses to speakers' contributions. This marker was found to have a higher rate in the interviews that she conducted with native speakers of English. The higher percentage of '*righ*t' in native interaction was observed by Al-Masri (1999) and Fung (2003). Contrary to Al-Masri (1999) who found that '*ok*' was more frequently employed in native conversations, the native and non-native subjects were found to be using a comparable percentage of this marker in the present study.

Summing up

The DMs that are categorized under the interpersonal category served the functions of involving listeners in the communication process, indicating the attitudes of speakers towards the communicated messages and signaling active listenership by showing responses to speakers'

contributions. The interpersonal markers (*really, kind of, just* and *you know*) were used more frequently by the native subjects. The non-native subjects employed the interpersonal markers (*well, I think, yeah, yes* and *actually*) more frequently than their native counterparts. The native and non-native subjects had comparable percentages of the interpersonal markers (*exactly, basically, oh, sure, like* and *ok*). The interpersonal marker (*I mean*) only appeared in the non-native interviews. As for the non-native subjects, they avoided using the interpersonal markers (*absolutely, obviously, to be honest, sort of, okay, alright, right* and *see*). As can be noticed, the non-native subjects avoided using a larger set of interpersonal markers. This might indicate that despite the fact that interpersonal markers appeared more frequently in the non-native data, a more varied set of interpersonal markers was used by the native subjects.

Conclusion

One of the conclusions that can be deduced from analyzing DMs in interviews conducted with native and non-native speakers of English is that advanced EFL learners can attain a near-native like competence in using these devices. Accordingly, the advanced EFL learners in this study were observed to use an appropriate frequency rate of interpersonal DMs. As for the variety of DM use, the advanced EFL learners employed relatively a varied set of interpersonal DMs. However, due to mother tongue influence, formal education and cultural preferences, the set of interpersonal DMs that appeared in the EFL learners' interviews differed from the one that was used by their native counterparts.

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Some Aspects of Equivalence in Literary Translation: Analysis of two Arabic Translations of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea1952*

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Abstract

This paper aims at analyzing two Arabic translations of the novella *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway 1952. One of the translations is by Dar Al-Bihar, Beirut, and the other is by Ziad Zakaria. The purpose of this study is to investigate problems and strategies of literary translation into Arabic and to suggest guidelines for better practices in the field of Arabic literary translation. This study is important because Arabic literary translation problems and strategies have been rarely tackled by researchers. Analysis of the translations is based on Baker's theory of equivalence. Two levels of equivalence are taken into consideration in this paper: equivalence at word level and equivalence at collocation level. The last part of the paper is devoted to investigate the cultural implications of Qur'anic expressions used in Zakaria's translation. The qualitative method has been used in compiling, analyzing and discussing data. Data has been collected, classified, and scrutinized in light of the theoretical background of the research. The findings show that the best translation should consider both contextual factors and cultural factors in SL and TL. Besides, naturalness and readability of the target text is crucial in literary translation. Untranslatable cultural specific items can be tackled in various ways such as paraphrasing, rewording, lexicalizing new concepts, and adapting them culturally as Zakaria has demonstrated in adding Quranic expressions in his translation of Hemingway. The researcher encourages creativity in literary translation provided that translators have literary competence and refined taste for style.

Key words: Arabic Translation, collocations, equivalence, expressivity, Hemingway

Some Aspects of Equivalence in Literary Translation:Analysis of two Arabic Translations of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea 1952*

Ghazala (1995: 1) defines translation as "the term that describes all the processes and methods used to convey the meaning" of a certain source language into another target language. Professional translators are aware of how to divide a target text into "units of translations" accurately. "A unit of translation is any word, or a group of words, which can give either a small or large part of meaning when translated together" (Ghazala, 1995:2). Concerning methods of translation, Ghazala suggests two main methods: literal vs. free translation. He mentions other methods that are suggested by theorists of translation such as, semantic vs. communicative translation, formal vs. dynamic translation, pragmatic vs. non-pragmatic translation, and creative vs. non-creative translation. Methods used to translate literary texts, for example, will not be useful to translate advertisements or scientific texts. Literary texts themselves are translated in different ways, i.e. the translation of poetry requires special methods that will not be applicable in translating a novel.

This paper aims at analyzing two Arabic translations of Ernest Hemingway's novella *The Old Man and the Sea*. The first translation (referred to throughout the paper as A) is published by Dar Al-Bihar in 2008, by unknown translator. The second translation (referred to as B) is by Zakaria in 2010. The translations will be compared at two levels according to the theory of equivalence presented by Baker (1992). The two levels chosen to be discussed in this paper are equivalence at word level and equivalence above word level. Some problems of literary translation, especially novels, and propositions on literary translation will be discussed briefly. This research applies the descriptive qualitative method.

Different examples taken from different parts of the novella will be incorporated in this paper with comparisons of their two translations. Extracts from the original text and their translations will be all preceded by the page number. Zakaria's translation will be highlighted because he makes use of many expressions from the Holy Qur'an in his translation. These expressions are mentioned at the end of the paper along with their equivalents in the original texts and the verses from the Holy Qur'an from which Zakaria borrows some expressions.

Some Problems of literary translation

What makes literary texts 'literary' is the fact that they are not direct; they always have hidden meanings behind the lines. So the task of translating literary texts is not an easy one. In her book *Translation Studies*, Bassnett (2005: 82) says that the translator who doesn't try to know "the rules of translation process is like the driver of a Rolls who has no idea what makes the car moves. For Bassnett (2005:83), "what creates most problems for translators when working on literary texts is their failure… to understand that a literary text is made up of a complex set of systems" which are related to other sets outside its borders. She says "most translators fail to consider the way in which" every single sentence consists a part of the total structure" (Bassnett, P. 120).

So translators should have the ability to interpret literary texts correctly in order to produce coherent and accepted translations for them. "It is therefore quite foolish to argue that the task of the translator is to translate but not to interpret, as if the two were separate exercises"

(Bassnett, P. 86). Interpretation means trying to find the author's intended meaning in a text. So this process is the most fundamental in translation because we don't translate grammar, or words, or styles, "we always translate one thing only: meaning". Translators must bear in mind that while translating literary texts, especially novels, they should translate every sentence or paragraph while relating it "to the overall work" (Bassnett, P. 121). That is because every paragraph in a novel is related to what comes before and after it. Translation and interpretation are two faces of the same coin. Thus, "translation is considered as an endeavor to establish linguistic equivalents, whereas interpreting aims at integral communication of meaning…" (Brislin, P. 92).

Ghazala (1995: 18) defines a translation problem as "anything in the SL text which obliges us to stop translating." He divides translation problems into four types: grammatical, lexical, stylistics, and phonological problems. Grammatical problems may arise from "complicated SL grammar," grammatical differences between TL and SL, or differences in word order. Concerning lexical problems, translators usually face the problems of literal translation, translation of synonyms, collocations, idioms, metaphors, and cultural terms. Style also has a great effect on meaning, too. Stylistic problems, according to Newmark (1981, P.60) may include formal/informal language, ambiguity, repetition, nominalization/verbalization, and the style of irony, among others. Phonological problems can affect the beauty of language, especially in poetry; the field which best suits the appearance of these problems. It is important for translators to realize that "the same problems can have different solutions according to different texts, contexts and different types of readership.

Translators of literary texts have a greater responsibility than that of translators of "technical, scientific, and commercial" texts because "style and mode of expression are far more important than is the case with purely factual material" (Finlay, 1971: 45). The difficulty of translating literary texts arises from the fact that the translator plays the role of "the agent through whom new works of art in the literary sphere are passed through the language or cultural barrier" (Finlay, P. 45). This difficulty explains why we always find more than translations for great works of art, and not for scientific articles (Finlay, P. 46). Therefore, translators need a broad "knowledge of literary and non-literary textual criticism," because they have to evaluate the "quality of a text" before they can translate it after the process of interpretation (Newmark, P. 5).

Some propositions on translation

Newmark (1980: 113) discusses aspects of translation theory and some propositions on translation. He says that "there is no such thing as a law of translation" because each theory exists to be applied "to certain types of text". He argues that if theorists of translation agree on a certain theory, they will not agree on some aspects of that theory such as "the ideal translation unit, the degree of translatability, and the concepts of equivalent-effect and congruence in translation…" (Newmark, P. 113). That is why translators must be aware of other factors that affect their translations such as TL culture. At word level, translators must be aware that in literary translation, "one translates ideas, on which the words act as constraints. If ever one is permitted to translate words, not ideas, it is when the sense in literary translation is still obscure after all aids have been consulted in vain" (Newmark, P.135).

At collocation level, "where there is an accepted collocation in the source language, the translator must find and use its equivalent in the target language, if it exits" (Newmark, P.114). When no equivalent exists, the translator will have a more difficult task. He must know when it is allowed for him to "break" collocations in the source language text.

Newmark (1980:128) discusses an important fact that all translators must bear in mind. The fact says that "a translation is normally written and intended for a target language reader– even if the source language text was written for no reader at all, for nothing but its author's pleasure." A translator should be worried about how much the translation sounds natural for the target reader.

Equivalence at word level

Baker (1992: 20) says that non-equivalence at the word level happens when "the target language has no direct equivalence for a word which occurs in the source text". Most of lexical problems in translation are due to literal translation. This problem appears in different examples discussed below, especially in Dar Al-Bihar translation of Hemingways' *The Old Man and the Sea*. Sometimes literal translation is accepted, but most of the time word-for-word translation is misleading.

Following is an analysis of examples from both Arabic translations of Hemingways' at the word level, with alternative solutions for certain problems.

(1) P3: Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated.

A12: كانت عيناه بنفس لون البحر وقد بدتا مبتهجتين ومنتصرتين.

B12: عيناه كانتا في صفاء مياه البحر، يطل منهما المرح وعدم الاعتراف بالهزيمة.

The first translator translates 'cheerful' as 'مبتهج', which seems the best equivalent in Arabic. But the word 'undefeated' has no direct equivalent; " A" chooses the opposite of 'defeated' to translate it. He fails in creating the intended meaning of the author, which is while the old man experiences continuous failure in fishing, his eyes refuse to accept this failure, the meaning which "B" succeeds to convey. "B" also prefers to translate 'cheerful' using the phrase 'يطل منهما المرح' to create a literary style and a dramatic vision of the old man's description.

(2) P4: You're with a lucky boat.

A12: أنت تعمل مع مركب محظوظ.

B12: انك تعمل في مركب حسن الطالع.

It is clear that "A" translates the phrase literally. The word 'محظوظ' is associated always with humans as being used by Al-Fairouz Abadi, 1996. So it is not common in Arabic that inanimate subjects be 'lucky'. "B"'s translation 'حسن الطالع' is more appropriate in this context.

(3) P4: He hasn't much faith.

A14: لاتوجد لديه الثقة الكافية.

B13: انه قليل الثقة.

The collocation 'have faith' is a common one in English which, in some contexts, has the Arabic equivalent 'يؤمن', for example, when speaking about a religious belief. The author wants to say that the boy's father lost faith in the old man because he hasn't got any fish for eighty-four days. The two translators succeed in bringing the closest equivalent in this context, which is 'ثقة', not 'إيمان'.

(4) P4: Others, of the older fishermen, looked at him and were sad.
A14: فيما ينظر آخرون إليه بحزن.
B13: فقد راحوا يتطلعون اليه في أسى ورثاء واشفاق.

"A" uses the direct equivalent 'حزن', while "B" adds two other words, beside the equivalent 'أسى'. The words 'رثاء واشفاق' are not equivalent for 'sadness' and there is no need to add them. The only reason that may explain why "B" adds them is to make the reader more sympathetic with the old man.

(5) P6: …when I brought the fish in too green …
A16: عندما جلبت السمكة حيّة وقوية ...
B15: عندما أخرجت حبالي سمكة هائلة...

In *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, one of the meanings of the word 'green' as an adjective is "youthful and vigorous". "A" succeeds to give the meaning 'قوية', but there is no need to add 'حيّة' because a fish which has just come out of water will be alive for sure. "B" distorts the meaning because a strong fish is not necessarily huge.

(6) P8: The shack was made of …
A20: الكوخ مصنوع من ...
B17: كان الكوخ مصنوعاً من ...

There is a problem of literal translation in both translations. The word 'مصنوع' gives the image of something much more complicated than a shack. It is much better to use 'مبني' or 'شيّد' as follows:
- كان الكوخ مبنيٌ من ...
- كان الكوخ قد شُيّد باستخدام...
(7) P12: "He is very thoughtful for us."
A28: "إنه يهتم بنا كثيراً."
B23: "مشغولاً بأمرنا إلى هذا الحد."

The equivalent meaning for 'thoughtful' in example (7) is not the intended one in "B"'s sentence. The old man wants to say that the owner of the Terrace takes care of him and the boy by giving them food and drink. "A" succeeds to grasp this meaning, while B's translation gives a message far from the intended one.

(8) P16: "You're my alarm clock," the boy said. "Age is my alarm clock," the old man said.
A34: "أنت ساعتي المنبه،" قال الولد. "العمر هو ساعتي المنبه،" قال الشيخ.
B26: "انك ساعتي المنبهة." فأجاب العجوز قائلاً: "الشيخوخة هي ساعتي المنبهة."

"A" does not give the intended meaning here, while "B" does. B's choice of the word 'شيخوخة' makes readers ask how this can be an alarm clock. It is easy to understand that when people get older their sleeping hours become less and they become very sensitive to sounds and lights. So the old man wants to say that he needs no one to awaken him, unlike the boy.

(9) P20: … the clean early morning smell of the ocean.

A40: ... رائحة الصباح النقية للمحيط.
B30: ... رائحة المحيط الطاهرة في الصباح الباكر.

It is obvious that "B" translated the word "clean" better. The adjective 'نقي' is usually used to describe the clean 'air'. We can use the adjective 'منعشة' for general " smell".

(10) P79: "But I have killed this fish which is my brother and now I must do the slave work."
A108: "ولكنني قتلت هذه السمكة التي هي بمثابة أخ لي والآن يجب أن أقوم بالعمل الشاق."
B88 : "ولكني صرعت هذه السمكة التي هي أختي. وعلي الآن أن أقوم بعمل العبيد."

"A" translates the word 'brother' as 'أخ', ignoring the fact that 'fish' in Arabic is a feminine name. "A" succeeds in bringing the intended meaning for 'slave work'. As it appears in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, "slave labor" means "forced labor." On the other hand, "B" makes interference when he translates 'brother' as 'أختي' to suit the Arabic rule of gender. But he translates 'slave labor' literally. The author mentions the word 'slave' to show that the old man is forced to do all the work on the boat because no one is there to help him. The old man keeps referring to the fish as 'him' or '*he*', and this is because he considers it all the time as a contestant. But we cannot translate the previous pronouns as they are because they don't go with the Arabic feminine 'fish'. We can, or should, make different interferences, such as adding some words, to draw this image of competition between the old man and the fish.

(11) P84: He was a very big Mako shark built to swim as fast as the fastest fish in the sea…
A112: إنه قرش كبير من نوع الماكو. وشكله مبني للسباحة كأسرع سمكة.
B92: وكان القرش كبيراً جداً، وسريعاً كأسرع سمكة في الماء...

"A" translates the underlined word literally, while "B" omits it from his translation. The word 'built' here means created in a good way that allows it to swim very fast. It is mentioned in the notes part of the novella's source text that Mako shark is one of the most dangerous sharks. The suggested translation of this part is:

وكان هذا القرش هائلاً بحجمه وله قدرة عجيبة على السباحة بسرعة خارقة

Such interference by the translator is sometimes inevitable.

(12) P89: The breeze was steady.
A118: كان النسيم ثابتاً.
B99: واستمرت الريح رتيبة.

In *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, one of the meanings of 'steady' is "done or operating or happening in a uniform and regular manner," and this is exactly the meaning of 'رتيب' delivered by "B". A's choice of the word 'ثابت' is not proper because the breeze is - above all - moving and not fixed, but it moves with a regular manner.

(13) P97: He did not want to look at the fish. He knew that half of *him* had been destroyed.
A124: لم يكن الشيخ يريد أن ينظر إلى السمكة. لقد عرف بأن نصفها قد دُمّر نهائياً.
B106: لم يعد العجوز يطيق ان ينظر إلى السمكة، فقد أدرك أن نصفها قد تمزّق.

"A" fails in translating the verb 'want' because the expressive meaning of the verb intended by the author is not simply the feeling of 'wanting', it is that the old man cannot look at the fish because he *cannot* endure to see it in that miserable situation. "B" is successful in his choice of the word 'يطيق'. "B" also translates the verb 'destroyed' more expressively. "A" tries to give that image of the destroyed body of the fish by adding the adjective 'نهائيّاً', but "B"'s choice is better. Another suggestion for this part:
- لم يعد العجوز يحتمل النظر إلى السمكة وهي بتلك الحالة التي يُرثى لها، وقد عرف بأنّ نصفها قد تمزّق.

(14) P98: I should have some luck. No, he said. You violated your luck when you went too far outside.
A126: "يجب أن أمتلك بعض الحظ. لا، لقد تعديت على حظك عندما ذهبت إلى البعيد جداً."
B107: وقال: "لابد أن يحالفني الحظ. لا... لقد تحديت الحظ أيها العجوز بإيغالك في البحر."

Concerning the underlined words, "A" again translates these two verbs literally. He translates the verb 'have' as "own" or "possess", but we cannot own luck, plus it is not common in Arabic to use the verb 'يملك' or 'يمتلك' with 'luck'. He also uses the first dictionary meaning of 'violate' which, in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, means "to disregard; fail to comply with (an oath, treaty, law, etc.)." The author uses the verb here as a metaphor, comparing "luck" to "law". So "B"'s translation for this verb is better, and his translation for the verb 'have' is perfect. In Arabic, 'to have luck' means 'يحالفني أو يسعفني الحظ'. An alternative suggestion is as follows:
حدث الشيخ نفسه قائلاً: "لا بد أن يسعفني الحظ. لا أيها العجوز، لقد استنفذت كل فرصك عندما بالغت في الابتعاد."

(15) P101: …and he could see the lights of the beach colonies along the shore.
A128: كان بإمكان الشيخ رؤية أضواء بيوت الشاطئ ...
B110: ورأى أضواء المستعمرات الشاطئية على طول الضفة...

"A" translates the underlined word simply as 'houses', whereas "B" translates the phrase 'beach colonies' literally. We cannot say that they are houses because it is mentioned in the text notes that the author means the "summer houses", and are inhabited temporally. So, 'colonies' here means 'lodging houses', which are houses which have different rooms for rent. In *Al-Mawrid*, a 'lodging house' means 'نُزُل'. The word can better be translated as 'النُزُل الصيفية' or 'مرابع الصيف'.

(16) P107: I didn't know sharks had such handsome, beautifully formed tails.
A138: لم أكن أعلم بأن لأسماك القرش أذيالاً جميلة ووسيمة بهذا الشكل.
B116: لم أكن أعرف أن للقرش ذيلاً أنيقاً جميلاً إلى هذا الحد.

"A" translates the word 'handsome' literally, while "B" chooses to use the Arabic word for 'elegant' to translate the same word. What is wrong with 'وسيم' is that it is usually used to describe the attractive appearance of a man. But it can be used with things, as mentioned in *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, to mean "pleasing and dignified in form or appearance". In Arabic the case is not the same; things are not described as 'وسيمة'. Concerning the second translation, 'أنيق' is usually used to describe the great taste and choice. So it is inappropriate here because

sharks don't choose or change the shape of their tails to be handsome. A better suggestion is to say:

- "لم أكن أعلم أن لأسماك القرش أذيالاً جميلة ورائعة المنظر هكذا"
- أو " لم أكن أتخيّل أن لأسماك القرش أذيالاً بهذا القدر من الجمال والروعة"

Equivalence at collocation level

Baker (1992: 46) mentions that words in any language "rarely occur on their own; they almost always occur in the company of other words". But, of course, there are always restrictions on the way they collocate to convey meaning. For example, we can use the verb "break" with "rules" but not with "regulations". Such collocations are "arbitrary restrictions" which do not follow certain rules. This aspect of arbitrariness makes the task of translation more difficult. Translation of collocations can create different problems such as misunderstanding of "source-language collocation", "tension between accuracy and naturalness", and failure to find equivalents for specific cultural collocations (Baker, P. 55-95). Translation of idioms and fixed expressions is another challenging task for translators. Baker discussed some strategies to avoid these problems. For example, she suggests that translators can make a cultural substitution for "a culture-specific item or expression" to have a similar impact on the target reader" (Baker, P. 31).

Following are examples of different collocations taken from Hemingway's novella with discussions about how far the two translators succeed, or fail, to find equivalent collocations in Arabic that give similar, or the same, effect on the reader.

(17) P32: "He's making a turn. Maybe he has been hooked before and he remembers something of it."

A56: "لقد ذهبت في جولة، ربما علقت قبل ذلك وقد تذكرت شيئاً من هذا القبيل."

B43: "انها في جولة وحسب... لعلها كابدت خطّافاً كهذا من قبل، فأخذت عبرة من الماضي ودرساً."

Here the old man is thinking why the shark does not eat the baits on the hook. He thinks that maybe it saw a hook before and cannot be tricked again. "B" succeeds in giving the intended meaning by using the expression 'عبرة من الماضي' which is used when someone made a mistake in the past that gave him a lesson not to repeat it in the future. "B" also translates the verb 'remember' as 'أخذ', which is the one that always collocates with 'عبرة' or 'درس'.

(18) P34: His line was strong and made for heavy fish.

A58: إن خيطه قوي جداً، ولقد صنع من أجل حمل سمكة ثقيلة.

B44: وكان حبله قوياً، وقد صنع خصيصاً لمعالجة الأسماك الضخمة.

The underlined part means that the line is able to raise heavy fish without being cut. "A" adds the word 'حَمْل' in his translation which helps a lot to make the meaning clear. But he should have used the plural of 'fish' because lines are not made for a special fish. "B" uses the word 'لمعالجة' which seems odd in this context. Suggested translations are:

- وقد صنع ليحتمل وزن الأسماك الثقيلة
- وقد تم صنعه ليحمل الأسماك الثقيلة دون أن ينقطع
- وله قدرة على حَمْل الأسماك الثقيلة

(19) P42: When the sun had risen further the old man realized that the fish was not tiring. There was only one favorable sign.

A66: ... هناك إشارة واحدة مرضية ...

B51: ... على أنه كان هناك بصيص ضئيل من الأمل ...

It is obvious that "B" transforms the underlined part into a common literary expression in Arabic. "A"'s translation is good especially that of the word 'favorable'.

(20) P43: "But I will kill you dead before this day ends."

A68: "ولكنني سوف أقتلك حتى الموت قبل نهاية هذا اليوم."

B52: "ولكني سأصرعك حتى الموت قبل أن ينتهي هذا اليوم."

"A" uses the words 'أقتلك' and 'الموت' which refer to the same thing. When the old man kills the fish, it will die immediately; he will not 'kill it until it dies!'. The author wants to say that it will not be easy to kill the fish; the old man will struggle with it until he can kill it. This intended meaning is expressed perfectly in "B"'s translation.

(21)P44: "Stay at my house if you like, bird," he said.

A70: "ابق في بيتي إذا أحببت أيها الطائر"

B54: "اغرب عن مأواي اذا شئت."

"A" translates the word 'house' literally, while "B" brings the best translation for the word. The boat is considered a temporal house for the old man because he stays in it for several days. "B" distorts the intended meaning and translates the verb 'stay' into the opposite meaning.

(22) P45: …I must eat the tuna so that I will not have a failure of strength.

A72: "يجب أن آكل سمكة التونا كي لا أصاب بالوهن."

B54: "ينبغي لي أن آكل التونة حتى لا أفقد قواي."

Both translators succeed in bringing the equivalent Arabic collocation for the underlined words. Other suggestions are also common collocations in Arabic:

- حتى لا تخور قواي. (الخَوْرُ: هو الضعف، وخَارَ الرجل: أي ضَعُفَ وانكسر ورجل خَوّارٌ أي ضعيف. *المصدر:لسان العرب*)
- حتى لا أصاب بالإعياء
- حتى لا تنهار قواي

(23) P68-69: If the boy was here he would wet the coils of line, he thought. Yes. If the boy were here. If the boy were here.

A96: "لو كان الولد هنا لبلل بكرات الخيط،" فكر. "نعم، لو كان الولد هنا. لو كان الولد هنا."

B76: لو كان الغلام هنا لبلل لفة الحبل. أجل ... لو كان الغلام هنا! ... ليته كان معي.

"B" makes the correct choice of words for 'coils of line', 'لفة الحبل', and in the overall structure of the sentence, but he fails to give the expressive meaning of the repetition "If the boy were here. If the boy were here." "B" gives two different translations for the same phrase, which makes the repetition lose its effect. "A" succeeds in giving the effect of repetition here, which is the old man's strong need for the boy's help.

(24) P70: "It is not bad," he said. "And pain does not matter to a man."

A96: "إنها ليست سيئة والألم لا يهم الإنسان."

B78: "لا بأس. إن احتمال الآلام من شيم الرجال."

"A" fails twice in this sentence. First, he fails in giving the correct meaning for 'a man' here. It is true that the word 'man' is used to refer generally to a human being; a person, as it appears in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*. But here the author refers to the human males. Secondly, "A" fails in giving the correct overall meaning of the sentence. The author doesn't mean that man can ignore pain, the meaning delivered by "A", but he means men have great ability to endure pain. "B" is worthily successful in solving these two problems. He even makes his translation better by translating 'pain' as plural to make the sentence a universal fact.

(25) P71: He picked it up with his left hand and ate it chewing the bones carefully and eating all of it down to the tail.

A98: التقطها بيده اليسرى وأكلها كاملة.
B79: وتناولها العجوز بيسراه، وأكلها ماضغاً عظامها بحذر فأجهز عليها حتى ذيلها.

It is clear that "A" omits a long part of the sentence and simply substitutes the whole process of eating by the phrase 'أكلها كاملةً'. This part of the translation particularly is accepted because the process of eating the small fish doesn't add to the whole meaning of the passage. B, on the other hand, chooses to translate every word and he succeeds in doing so except for the word 'بحذر'. The intended meaning here is that the old man chews the bones very well in order not to hurt his throat. It is better to translate 'carefully' here as

'ماضغاً عظامها جيداً'.

(26) P76: "Be calm and strong, old man," he said.
A104: "كن هادئاً وقوياً أيها الشيخ." قال.
B84: وراح يستجمع عزمه قائلاً لنفسه: "كن قوياً وهادئاً أيها العجوز!"

It is clear that "A" translates this sentence literally. He also keeps the structure as it is. He keeps the verb at the end as it appears in the sentence. "A" repeats this mistake with almost every quotation in the novella. It is so common in English to state a direct quotation or thought first then state the verb, e.g. *he said, she thought, they called.* But this structure is not accepted in Arabic. So A's sentence seems distorted Arabic. B, on the other hand, mentions the verb first along with other words to introduce the old man's speech. He also makes it clear that it is not a normal speech but the old man speaks to himself so B's translation is appropriate.

(27) P77: I must get him alongside this time, he thought. I am not good for many more turns. Yes you are, he told himself. You're good for ever.

A104 : "يجب أن أجلبها إلى جانب المركب هذه المرة." فكر الشيخ. "لست بحالة جيدة لأتحمل جولات أكثر. نعم، أنت بحالة جيدة وستبقى كذلك إلى الأبد."
B85: وقال: "لابد أن اجتذب السمكة إليّ هذه المرة.. انني لم أعد احتمل مزيدا من دوراتها".وشجع نفسه ببضع كلمات: "ولكنك لاتزال صالحا للصمود.. إلى الأبد!"

"A" translates the underlined part in a good way but there is a problem concerning the expressive meaning. The author intends to show the contrasting thoughts inside the old man's head and to draw his perplexed state of mind. The old man is exhausted physically because of his fight with the huge fish, but spiritually, he refuses to give up. "A" fails to convey this state of

mind and his sentence seems illogical because the old man says: 'لست بحالة جيدة', and then, in the same sentence and without interference or explanation, he says: 'نعم أنت بحالة جيدة'.
"B" does the necessary interference between those two sentences and says: وشجع نفسه ببضع كلمات which shows that the old man has contrasting thoughts about himself.

(28) P78: He took all his pain and what was left of his strength and his long-gone pride …
A106: تحمل ألمه كله وما تبقّى من قوته وكبريائه الضائع...
B86: استجمع كل آلامه وكل مابقي له من قوة، وكل ما أحرز في حياته من اعتزاز واعتداد بالنفس...

Here "A" is successful in conveying the correct meaning for the underlined part, while "B" distorts the intended meaning for two reasons. First, it is clear from the first page of the novella that the old man is losing his self-confidence because a long time has been gone without catching fish. So, A brings this image by saying that the old man has lost his pride because he cannot fish anymore. Secondly, the meaning of the verb 'يحرز' in B's translation is 'to accomplish' and 'pride' cannot be accomplished or achieved, it can be gained or acquired.
(29) P87: But there was nothing to be done now.

A116: ولكن لا توجد باليد حيلة.
B97: على أنه لا حيلة له فيه.
The previous sentence can be translated in different ways, which are all correct:
-ولكن لا يمكنه فعل أي شيء الآن
-والآن ليس هناك ما يمكن فعله
- والآن لا شيء يمكن فعله

Both translators bring the best Arabic expressions used usually to convey the intended meaning. This belongs to the degree of expressivity discussed earlier in the paper.
(30) P95: "You're tired, old man," he said. "You're tired inside."

A122: قال: "أنت شيخ متعب. أنت متعب من الداخل."
B104: وقال لنفسه: "لقد تعبت أيها العجوز.. ومسك الضر من الداخل.

There are better translations for this part than the ones given by both translators, such as:
- قال لنفسه: "إنك متعب أيها العجوز.. إن روحك هي المتعبة"
- وأخذ يحدّث نفسه: "إنك متعب أيها الشيخ الكبير.. نفسيتك متعبة"
- وحدّث نفسه قائلاً: "إنك متعب أيها العجوز...وتعبك ينبع من داخلك"

(31) P97: "Half-fish," he said. "Fish that you were. I am sorry that I went too far out. I ruined us both…"
A124: قال: "يانصف سمكة. سمكة سابقاً، أنا آسف لأنني ذهبت إلى البعيد. لقد دمّرتُ نحن الاثنين.
B106: فجعل يحدّث السمكة.. أو ما بقي منها: "يا نصف السمكة.. يامن كنت سمكة.. انني آسف إذ أوغلت في البحر. لقد حطمتك وحطمت نفسي."

It is obvious that "A" has a serious problem in this part because he was *too literal*. The sentences are disconnected; even each sentence's structure is broken, especially these two parts:'لقد دمرت نحن الاثنين' ، 'سمكة سابقاً'. "B" translates this part very well especially the way he chooses to introduce the old man's inner thoughts: 'فجعل يحدث السمكة... أو مابقي منها' . There is only

one thing to add. The old man's words: "I am sorry that I went too far out" could be interpreted in another way. The words may mean that he regrets following his ambition for killing a huge fish as he used to do in the past. A suggested translation is:

- وقال محدّثاً السمكة: "يا نصف سمكة، يامن كنت في الماضي سمكة.. أعتذر لأنني تماديت كثيراً. لقد دمّرتك ودمّرت نفسي.

Expressivity: an important requirement of literary translation:

Sometimes translators find equivalents in the target text but prefer to use more specific, or sometimes general, words to translate words. These equivalents "may not fit equally in different linguistic contexts, because they have different degrees of expressivity" (Ghazala, P. 257). This has something to do with the propositional and expressive meaning of a word. Baker (1992: 13) defines the propositional meaning of a word as the one that "arises from the relation between it and what it refers to or describes in a real or imaginary world, as conceived by the speakers of the particular language to which the word or utterance belongs." While the propositional meaning is the one that enables us to judge "an utterance as true or false", the expressive meaning cannot be true or false. It is associated with the speaker's feelings or attitude rather what words and utterances refer to.

Ghazala (1995: 257) discusses this aspect of expressivity arguing that the degree of expressivity determines the suitable equivalent in a certain context. He says that the wrong choice of one equivalent among others can cause confusion, and this happens when translators ignore the context and readership. He talks about the "show of muscles" in translation when translators choose very expressive words which don't suit certain contexts just to elaborate their style. An evident example of this is the translation of Zakaria (2010) of the following boy's speech in the novella

- "It was papa made me leave. I am a boy and I must obey him."
"إنّ أبي هو الذي حملني على تركك. وإنّي لغلام، ولا أعصي له أمراً."

It is obvious that the translation is very formal and expressive, and also makes use of a Qur'anic expression. Normally a teenager cannot speak in such a highly expressive language. Zakaria here ignores that the boy is speaking and chooses an expressive style that adults only can use it. Different examples from the two translations will be discussed to show the distinction between propositional and expressive meaning of a word.

(32) P3: It had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish.
A12 : مضى أربعة وثمانون يوماً والشيخ لم يحصل على سمكة واحدة.
B11 : وقد عبرت به حتى الساعة أربعة وثمانون يوماً لم يجد عليه البحر خلالها بشيء من الرزق.

It is clear that Arabic has a direct equivalent for the word 'fish', which is mentioned in the first example. The second translator chooses the word 'رزق', which appears at the first page of the story, to tell the reader that the old man has no other source for living. It doesn't distort the meaning because he chooses a superordinate word and the first image the reader will form when reading the word 'رزق' is an image of 'fish' since the old man is a fisherman.

(33) P7: "But are you strong enough now for a truly big fish?"

A20: "لكن هل أنت الآن قوي كفاية لاصطياد سمكة كبيرة حقاً."

B17: "أوَ ترى لك جلَداً على صيد الأسماك الكبيرة حتى الآن؟"

"A" gives the propositional meaning of the underlined words, while "B" gives the expressive meaning. B substitutes the word 'جَلَدْ'for the equivalent 'كافي'. As we see, B succeeds in giving a whole comprehensive situation using only one word. The boy asks the old man if he still has enough strength to fight a big fish. The word'جَلَدْ' can include patience, ability, and strength. Moreover, "A" translates the word "truly" as "really" which is not correct. 'Truly' here is used for emphasis and "B" achieves this sense of emphasis by using the plural of 'fish' in the translation while it is singular in the original text.

(34) P30: "If the others heard me talking out loud they would think that I am crazy," he said aloud. "But since I am not crazy, I do not care. And the rich have radios to talk to them in their boats …

A50: قال الشيخ بصوت مرتفع: "إذا سمعني الآخرون أتحدث بصوت مرتفع، من الممكن أن يظنوا بأنني مجنون ولكن بما أنني لست مجنوناً فأنا لا أهتم. الأغنياء لديهم مذياع يتحدث إليهم في مراكبهم ...

B40: وقال العجوز لنفسه بصوت مرتفع: "لو سمعني أحد وأنا أتحدث إلى نفسي بصوت مرتفع، لظن أنني مخبول. ولكنني لا أبالي مادمت أعرف أنني لست مخبولا. إن أثرياء الصيادين يحملون معهم أجهزة راديو في زوارقهم تتحدث إليهم...

Both translations are accepted because a radio (as a device) *metaphorically* talks. But the previous sentences show that the old man is bored because he is alone on his boat. He needs someone to talk to; that is why he keeps saying "If the boy were here." So we can translate the underlined verb as: 'مذياع يسلّيهم'or'أجهزة راديو تؤانس وحدتهم'. These translations are more expressive and can obviously show that the old man is suffering loneliness.

(35) P46: He picked up a piece and put it in his mouth and chewed it slowly.

A74: التقط قطعة ووضعها في فمه ومضغها ببطء.

B56: ومد يده الى قطعة منها فألقى بها في فمه، وجعل يلوكها ببطء.

Both translations are appropriate but B's translation is more expressive. His choice of words makes readers imagine the old man as if they see him while eating a raw fish.

Qur'anic References in Zakaria's Translation

One of the reasons that make Zakaria's translation sounds better than the other translation is its emphasis on the cultural shift from the source text into the Arabic target text. It incorporates an Arabic and Islamic spirit into the target text. The translator borrows a lot of expressions from the Holy Qur'an. I will mention them, along with the original text and the verses in the Qur'an from which the expression is borrowed:

(36) P3: He was an old man…

B11: كان الرجل قد بلغ من الكبر عتيا

قال تعالى: {قال ربّ أنّى يكونُ لي غلام وكانت امرأتي عاقراً وقد بلغت من الكِبَرِ عِتيّا} سورة مريم، آية(8)

(37) P4: It was papa made me leave. I am a boy and I must obey him.

B13 : ان أبي هو الذي حملني على تركك. واني لغلام، ولا أعصي له أمرا.

قال تعالى: {قال ستجدني إن شاء الله صابراً ولا أعصي لك أمرا} سورة الكهف، آية(69)

(38) P7: I want to be out before it is light.

B16: لأخرج من الماء قبل انبلاج الخيط الأبيض من الفجر.

قال تعالى: {... وكلوا واشربوا حتى يتبيّن لكم الخيط الأبيض من الخيط الأسود من الفجر...} سورة البقرة، آية(187)

(39) P8: They walked up the road together to the old man's shack…

B17: وسارا صَعَداً في الطريق إلى كوخ العجوز...
قال تعالى: {لنفتنهم فيه ومن يُعرض عن ذكر ربّه يسلُكْه عذاباً صَعَداً} سورة الجن، آية(17)
(40) P11: The boy left him there and when he came back the old man was still asleep.
B21: هكذا تركه الغلام ... وهكذا عاد فألفاه.
قال تعالى: {واستبقا الباب وقدّت قميصه من دُبُرٍ وألفيا سيّدها لدى الباب ...} سورة يوسف، آية(25)
قال تعالى: {إنّهم ألفَوا آباءهم ضالين} سورة الصافات، آية(69)
قال تعالى: {وإذا قيل لهم اتّبعوا ما أنزل الله قالوا بل نتّبع ما ألفَينا عليه آباءنا...}سورة البقرة، آية(170)
(41) P14: But he was rough and harshspoken …
B25: ولكنه كان جلفاً غليظ القول ...
قال تعالى: {فبما رحمة من الله لنت لهم ولو كنت فظاً غليظ القلب لانفضوا من حولك} سورة آل عمران، آية(159)
(42) P21: They spoke of it as a contestant or a place or even an enemy.
B32: يتحدثون عنه كمنافس أو كمجرد مكان من الكون وأحيانا كعدو خصيم.
قال تعالى: {خَلَق الإنسان من نطفة فإذا هو خصيم مبين} سورة النحل، آية(4)
(43) P68: This is what we waited for, he thought.
B76: هذا ما كنا نبغي.. فلنواجه الأمر الآن.
قال تعالى: {قال هذا ما كنّا نبغِ فارتدّا على آثارهما قصصا} سورة الكهف، آية(64)
(44) P82: … now he saw as well as ever.
B91: أما الآن فإن بصره حديد!
قال تعالى: {لقد كنتَ في غفلةٍ من هذا فكشفنا عنك غطاءك فبصرك اليوم حديد} سورة ق، آية(22)
(45) P85: "You're tired inside."
B104: ... ومسّك الضر من الداخل.
قال تعالى: {وأيّوب إذ نادى ربّه أنّي مسّني الضّرّ وأنت أرحم الراحمين} سورة الأنبياء، آية(83)
(46) P101: …and he was afraid of it for a moment.
B110: وأشفق منه لحظة.
قال تعالى: {إنّا عرضنا الأمانة على السماوات والأرض والجبال فأبين أن يحملنها وأشْفَقْنَ منها وحملها الإنسان إنّه كان ظلوماً جهولاً} سورة الأحزاب، آية(72)
(47) P103: It was blowing so hard that the drifting boats would not be going out…
B112: وكانت الريح صرصراً، إلى حد أن القوراب لم تخرج للصيد.
قال تعالى: {فأرسلنا عليهم ريحاً صرصراً في أيام نحسات لنذيقهم عذاب الخزي في الحياة الدنيا ولَعذاب الآخرة أخزى وهم لا يُنصرون} سورة فُصّلت، آية(16)
وقال تعالى: {إنّا أرسلنا عليهم ريحاً صرصراً في يوم نحسٍ مستمر} سورة القمر، آية(19)
وقال تعالى: { وأما عادٌ فأُهلكوا بريحٍ صرصرٍ عاتية} سورة الحاقة، آية(6)

The previous examples demonstrate the cultural shift that appears in Zakaria's translation. They are deeply rooted in the Islamic discourse familiar to Arab readers, giving the translation a sense of natural expression though sometimes they sound pompous.

Summary of findings

This analytical study has aimed to analyze some problems of literary translation suggesting some solutions to avoid them. It shows some requirements that enable translators to produce TL texts that have a similar effect on readers as SL texts. In translation generally the question is not "what is the best translation?", but "Best for whom?" The relative adequacy of different translations of the same text can only be determined in terms of the extent to which each translation successfully fulfills the purpose for which it was intended" (quoted in Brislin, 1976: 64).

Beside "competence and skill in verbal communication," a translator must have other attributes to be successful (Brislin, 1976: 58). For example, he must acquire a wide knowledge of the field s/he is working on, whether literature, science or commerce. He also should admire and respect the texts he is working on "for without this s/he is unlikely to possess either the patience or the insights" that will enable him/her to produce a good TL equivalent. In brief, as Newmark (1985:53) says "all translation remains a craft requiring a trained skill, continually renewed linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge and a deal of flair and imagination, as well as intelligence and above all common sense.

Therefore, the best translation should consider both contextual factors and cultural factors in SL and TL. Keeping a reader in mind is the point of departure for translators. Besides, naturalness and readability of the target text is crucial in literary translation. Untranslatable cultural specific items can be tackled in various ways such as paraphrasing, rewording, lexicalizing new concepts, and adapting them culturally as Zakaria has demonstrated in adding Quranic expressions in his translation of Hemingway. It is also recommended that translators have access to Arabic dictionaries for best choices of synonyms. Finally, there is always a possibility of creativity in literary translation provided that translators have literary competence and refined taste for style.

Conclusion

This paper has analyzed two Arabic translations of Ernest Hemingway's novella *The Old Man and the Sea*. The first translation (referred to throughout the paper as A) is published by Dar Al-Bihar in 2008, by unknown translator. The second translation (referred to as B) is by Zakaria in 2010. The translations have been compared at word level and collocational level according to the theory of equivalence presented by Baker (1992). Some problems of literary translation have been discussed briefly and strategies used by the translators have been highlighted.

This research applies the descriptive qualitative method. Different examples have been collected from the novella with their Arabic translations. Extracts from the original text and their translations have been all preceded by the page numbers. The two translations have been compared and discussed. Zakaria's translation has been highlighted because he makes use of many expressions from the Holy Qur'an in his translation. These expressions are mentioned at the end of the paper along with their equivalents in the original texts and the verses of the Holy Qur'an from which Zakaria borrows some expressions.

This study has revealed that the best translation should consider both contextual factors and cultural factors in SL and TL. Keeping a reader in mind should the point of departure for translators. Besides, naturalness and readability of the target text should be given priority in literary translation. Untranslatable cultural specific items can be tackled in various ways such as paraphrasing, rewording, lexicalizing new concepts, and adapting them culturally as Zakaria has demonstrated in adding Quranic expressions in his translation of Hemingway. It is also recommended that translators have access to Arabic dictionaries for best choices of synonyms. Finally, there is always a possibility of creativity in literary translation provided that translators have literary competence and refined taste for style.

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Reading Comprehension: A Guide for Non-English Lecturers at Higher Education in Central Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper attempts to find out the reading ability of the non-English lecturers at Higher Education in Central Java, Indonesia; to find out the language factors that affect the reading ability and to develop the reading comprehension guide for the lecturers. Research and Development (R&D) was employed in this research in order to develop a model on reading comprehension guide. Eighty non-English lecturers from several universities in Central Java were taken as samples. The data were in the forms of numeric and non-numeric. The result shows that the average score of the reading ability of the lecturers is 54.24. It indicates that their reading ability is very poor. While the factors that affect their reading ability are among others grammatical mastery, cohesion, pronouns, parallelism, and conjunctions. The lowest score was on grammatical mastery and cohesion 38,5% while the highest score was on conjunctions with the score of 56,25%. It can be concluded that the lecturers of non-English department have poor ability in reading, and therefore, it is worth developing a model on reading guide for them.

Key words: higher education, lecturers, model, reading comprehension guide

Introduction

Higher education lecturers, whose main duties are, among others delivering lectures, seminar and tutorial as well as developing and implementing new methods of teaching have to cope with the enhanced technological media. By coping with the advancement of the technological media, the lecturers will be able to apply it in their teaching-learning process in an appropriate way that they can transfer the knowledge easily and develop their professionalism in whatever fields of study. Actually the government has tried to enhance the lecturers' competence in teaching or research through many ways, such as by giving them an opportunity to continue the study abroad or supporting them in joint research with other universities in other countries but the response is unsatisfactorily. Many kinds of scholarships provided by the government to continue the study abroad are not taken. Djoko Santosa as quoted by Meirina (2013), the director of Higher Education in Antaranews.com stated that 1000 scholarship provided for the lecturers to study overseas was minimally taken. This is ironical since the government has tried to push them to increase their professionalism by providing scholarship to study abroad but it does not get positive response. The fact that they do not take the scholarship for their further study abroad is due to their incompetence in English either in spoken or written communication as well as in reading English text.

However, the lecturers nowadays cannot avoid the obligation to learn English since they are obliged to write articles published in the national or international journals in order to raise their ranks. By writing articles published in academic journals, it is expected that they will read as many scientific books or references as possible so that they have a broader view of the concept of knowledge. Thus, the ability to read scientific books is a must for them and it is therefore the researchers conducted a research with the following objectives:

1. to find out the extent to which the reading comprehension of the non-English lecturers is at Higher Education in Central Java
2. to find out the extent to which the lecturers' knowledge of reading component of English texts
3. to find out what language factors affect the reading ability
4. to develop a guide on reading comprehension of English text for non-English lecturers at Higher Education in Central Java.

Literature Review

Reading is a kind of spelling activity which includes visual activity, thinking, psycholinguistics, and meta-cognitive (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). As a visual process, reading is translating a letter symbol into spoken form. Meanwhile the thinking process of reading includes recognizing words, literal comprehension, interpretation, critical and creative reading. In line with the definition above, Vacca, & Gove (1991) as quoted by Mukhroji (2011: 57) state that reading involves decoding and comprehension. Decoding process refers to the process of saying printed words into a representation of similar to oral language either silently or aloud; and comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences, and connected texts. Leipzig (2001) supports the two definitions above who states that there are 3 qualifications for readers in comprehending the text: 1) identify the words in print – a process called word recognition, 2) construct an understanding from them – a process called comprehension, and 3) coordinate identifying words and making meaning so that reading is automatic and accurate – an achievement called fluency.

In general, the aim of reading as stated by Grabe & Stoller (2002) can be classified into seven parts: 1) reading to get a simple information, 2) reading with the skimming technique, 3) reading to learn something from the text, 4) reading to join the information, 5) reading to write or to get information for writing activity, 6) reading to criticize a text, and 7) reading to have general comprehension. Harmer (2001: 16), on the other hand argues that reading is a skill or a receptive activity that the readers get information from the text materials. According to him, the aims of reading can be classified into several parts, namely to look for the main idea, to get specific information, to look for the detailed information, and to transfer information.

According to Tarigan (2008: 7), in reading activity, the focus is on the reading skill rather than on the theory of reading itself. Reading activity involves some elements as follows:

a). Moving Element

In this part, the reading activity includes the letters identification of the text, the language identification, the identification of the relation between intonation, letter, and the silent reading speed.

b). Comprehension Element

The reading activity includes the ability to comprehend the simple language, to comprehend the implicit meaning of a text and to adjust the punctuation or intonation with the reading speed.

c). Other Elements

1). Awareness of phoneme
2). Phonetics
3). Fluent in reading
4). Vocabulary
5). Reading comprehension

In short, it can be stated that reading which is considered to be a complex activity that involves many elements has the main objective of understanding the implicit and explicit meaning of a text.

Brown (2004:186-187) states that there are three kinds of reading text, namely 1) academic reading, 2) job related reading and 3) personal reading each of which has its own characteristics and purposes. Academic reading text, for example, uses formal and direct language where the vocabulary and concept of knowledge in the text are not easy to be understood. The purposes of reading academic texts are to enhance the readers' knowledge for the betterment of their professionalism, to relate the content of the text to the existing knowledge and to integrate the readers' knowledge and the author's message or information. The texts that belong to the academic text are journals, thesis, and dissertation as well as scientific books. Here are the strategies to increase the speed and comprehension in reading: (a) ditermining the aim of reading, (b) fitting the speed of reading which is appropriate with the aim, (c) previewing the reading text before reading, (d) looking for the main idea in every paragraph, (e) using the knowledge and previous comprehension to understand the new concept, (f) comprehending the new vocabulary on a certain context, and (g) choosing the source of references from the right dictionary.

Job related reading text is a text containing messages dealing with matters on employment or occupation. The intention of providing job-related reading text is to help adult people to prepare for the job application or workplace. The followings are texts belong to job-related reading text such as memos, reports on job evaluation, project reports, applications, financial documents, etc.

Personal reading text is a text containing messages for pleasures and not for academic purposes. The language used in this text is not formal and easy to understand. Those belong to academic reading texts are newspapers, magazines, letters, novels, short stories, etc.

Research Method

This research belongs to research and development (R&D) because the researchers tried to develop a model of reading comprehension guide of English text for the non English Department lecturers in Central Java, Indonesia. So, the population of this research is the non-English department lecturers of private universities in Central Java. One hundred lecturers from several universities were taken as samples such as from: University of PGRI Semarang, Dian Nuswantoro University in Semarang, Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Academy of Health Analyst of August 17, 1945 Semarang, Academy Analyst of Pharmacist and Food of August 17, 1945 Semarang etc.

Three kinds of instrument were used in this research, such as reading comprehension test, questionnaires, and interview. Reading comprehension test was intended to assess the extent to which the lecturers' reading competence is. The researchers gave English reading test to 50 respondents. There are 25 questions consisting of inferences, vocabularies, and paraphrases. While the questionnaires intended to get the information on the difficulties in reading comprehension especially on the components of English reading text were given to 100 lecturers. The questions in the questionnaire were divided into two, namely general and specific. The general questions were asking the identity of the respondents while the specific questions were asking about the mastery of the language components. The questions in the language components were classified into 3, namely the grammar and cohesion mastery, vocabulary mastery, and coherence. The total number of the questions was 25 with the criteria of: (1) very difficult, (2) difficult, (3) average, (4) easy, (5) very easy. The mastery of each component is shown in the graphic. Interview was addressed to reveal the lecturers' opinion whether they feel the need of a guide how to read an English text. Therefore, data were collected in three ways namely by giving the reading test, distributing the questionnaires to the lecturers, and interviewing them.

The collected data were analyzed to find out the mean score. There are 25 questions in the reading test and the final score is counted using the scoring scale 0-100; and the formula used was as follows:

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{B}{50} \times 100$$

Besides finding out the mean score of the lecturers' reading competence, the researchers also analyzed the language factors that become the problems in comprehending the English text. In this case, the percentage of each language component like Reading Comprehension, Grammar, and Vocabulary can be known. From the percentage result it can be known which one is the easiest and which one is the most difficult language component. Then based on the information above, a model of guide for reading English text could be developed.

Findings and Discussions

1. The Lecturers' Competence in Reading Comprehension

The mean score of each component can be seen in the graphic below:

Figure 1. The Lecturers' Competence in Reading Comprehension

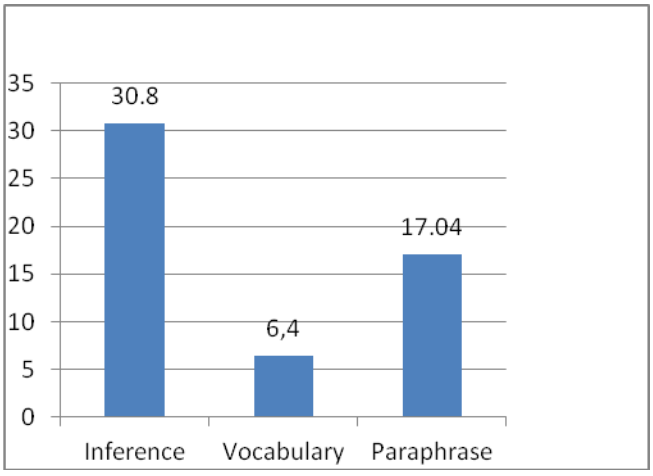

Figure 1. The Lecturers' Competence in Reading Comprehension

As a whole, the average score of the lecturers' reading comprehension test is 54,24 which covers the three main components, inference 30,8, vocabulary 6,4 and paraphrase 17,04. From the graph above, it can be seen that most respondents have difficulties in understanding the vocabulary with the means score of only 6,4. Meanwhile, the understanding of the inference is quite fair with the highest score of 30,8 and followed by the poor understanding of paraphrase with the mean score of 17,04.

The reason why most of the non-English lecturers have poor understanding in vocabulary is because they have no motivation to read the English textbooks. They think that it is easier to read the translated books than to read the original ones. As a matter of fact, they usually stop reading the English text when they find difficulties in understanding the vocabulary, grammar or complex sentences. Consequently, their reading competence does not develop or even dwindles. With reference to the answer of the questions in the reading test, the lecturers have the lowest score in the previewing and in finding the purpose of the text with the percentage of 40%. Then the highest score is in coherence with the percentage of 52,5%.

2. The Lecturers' Knowledge on the Language Components

The researchers distributed 100 questionnaires to the non English lecturers but only 80 questionnaires were returned. Those who filled out the questionnaires were the lecturers with various academic functional status, starting from Assistant Lecturer (A*sisten Ahli),* Reader (*Lektor),* Associate Professor (*Lektor Kepala),* and Professor *(Guru Besar)*. Those lecturers also bear various ranks such as rank III =73,75%, rank IV= 15%, and 11,25% were those who forgot to write their ranks. There were 51,25% female respondents and 48,75% male respondents.

Below is the percentage of grammar and cohesion mastery.

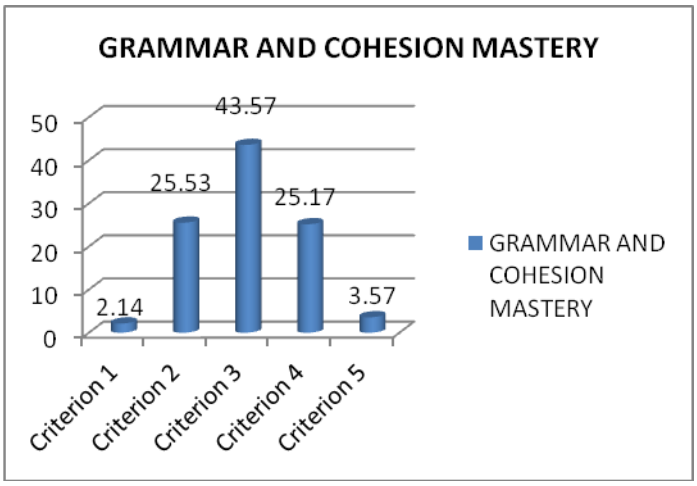

Figure 2. Grammar and Cohesion Mastery

The graphic above shows that the respondents get the score of 43,57% which belongs to the average level of the grammar and cohesion mastery. Meanwhile, the lowest score 2,14% belongs to the difficult level and 3,57 % belongs to the easiest level of grammar and cohesion mastery.

3. Vocabulary Mastery

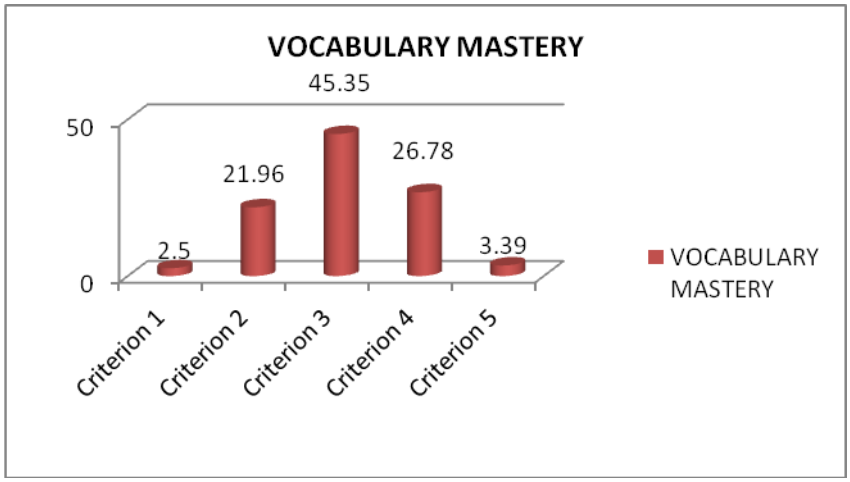

Figure 3. Vocabulary Mastery

In the second classification on vocabulary mastery, 45,35% of the respondents reach the average level of vocabulary mastery; 2,5% of the respondents reach the very difficult level and 3,39% of the respondents reach the easiest level the vocabulary mastery.

4. Coherence

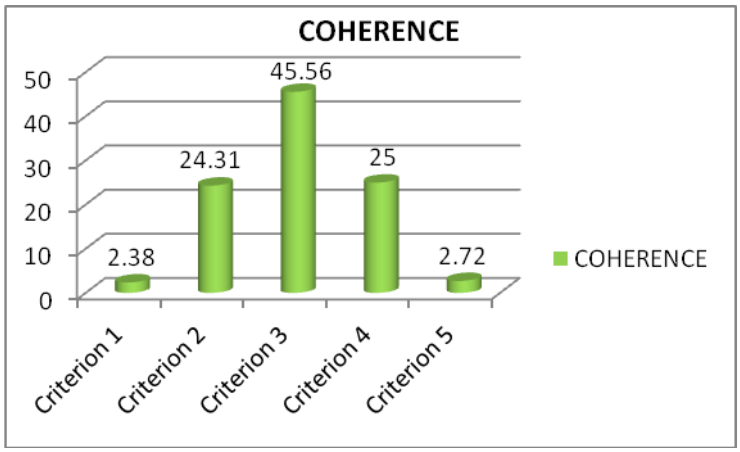

Figure 4. Coherence

In the third classification, it can be clearly seen that 45,56% of the respondents reach the average level of coherence understanding; meanwhile 2,38% of the respondents reach the very difficult level and 2,72% of the respondents reach the easiest level of the coherence understanding.

The researchers also interviewed the respondents to know whether or not reading comprehension competence is important for them; besides, they also crosschecked whether or not there is similarity on the answers in questionnaire with their opinion on the difficulty of the language components. Fifteen questions were addressed to them with the expectation that they can reveal the lecturers' problem in reading English texts.

Based on the interview, most respondents said that reading competence was very important for them as lecturers in order to be able to develop their knowledge. However, they admitted that they had problem with the vocabulary and grammar mastery. They also realized that those components of language, vocabulary and grammar are the important components of a language in order to be able to comprehend the message conveyed in the English texts, especially in comprehending the academic reading texts like scientific articles, thesis and dissertation. In spite of the fact that they have difficulties in mastering those language components, they still do not have efforts to learn it due to their limited time. They said that it took time for them to learn a foreign language while the execution of *three Dharma* of higher education including teaching and learning, research and public service should be carried out regularly and every semester the result of it should be reported to *Kopertis* (Coordinator of Higher Education). Due to the limited time to learn English as a foreign language, the lecturers therefore, feel the need of having a guide to help them understand the English text.

Besides having difficulties in understanding the language components, they also found difficulties in interpreting the charts or graphics in the English text. They did not know which part of the graph that should be identified first and what's next in order to interpret it correctly. It is therefore, they also need a guide of how to interpret the charts or graphics correctly.

3. A Model of Reading Comprehension Guide of English Text for Non-English Lecturers at Higher Education in Central Java

Based on the problems encountered by the lecturers in comprehending the English texts, the researchers tried to develop a guide on how to comprehend the English text. It was started from making an outline and then developing it into a draft. The draft was designed to cover the solution of all the difficulties encountered by the lecturers including the way how to find the main ideas, supporting details, understanding the vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, coherence and the way to interpret graphics. Therefore, the draft consists of five chapters; chapter 1 discusses the definition and the essence of reading; chapter 2 discusses the main ideas: main idea, topic sentence, etc.; chapter 3 discusses cohesion and coherence; chapter 4 discusses graphic interpretation and chapter 5 discusses academic reading texts.

Conclusion

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the reading competence of Non-English lecturers at higher education in Central Java, Indonesia is important in order to develop their professionalism. However, their competence for reading English text is very poor. This is due to the limited vocabulary acquired and the inability to understand the grammar and complex sentences. Besides, they also have difficulties in interpreting the graphs. Therefore, they need a guide on how to comprehend the English texts, particularly the academic reading texts in which they usually contain graphics.

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Teachers' perceptions about the process and challenges of designing an English for Specific Purposes course in the Arabian Gulf

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Abstract:
This paper discusses teachers' perceptions about the process and challenges of course design in general, and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses in particular. The study involves the process of designing an ESP course for returning students from the work place in the continued education department at the Higher Colleges of Technology. the findings in this paper are based on a qualitative research that employed an interpretivist/ constructivist theory, in which qualitative data was gathered primarily through interviews with a view to clarifying teachers' perceptions and understanding the beliefs and practices behind them. The study attempted to answer mainly the following questions. How do teachers perceive the process of an ESP course design? And what are the challenges they might encounter while designing ESP courses in general? In the findings section, four major themes have emerged from the data analysis process; they consist of influence of 1- Culture, Ideology, and Politics 2- The controversy of Needs Analysis, 3- Challenges in producing adequate course materials, and 4- Theory versus practice. Finally, the study discusses the implications of the findings and presents some recommendations for further use.

Keywords: Arabian Gulf**,** curriculum challenges, curriculum design, ESP courses, teachers' perceptions

Introduction

There is a growing concern about quality ESP courses. The need to develop, design and teach relevant ESP courses to students who are already working is often seen as a challenging project for teachers. Most institutions offer very limited planning time before delivering courses. Therefore, planning and designing an appropriate course that suits target ESP groups can be a challenging experience for teachers, who often face various difficulties when trying to develop effective courses that cover address the specific language and cultural needs of their students. Within the landscape of ESP, teaching and learning in the UAE, course design is not solely based on comprehensive approaches; rather it is led by productivity-oriented inclinations. In spite of these constraints, ESP teachers are requested to develop engaging courses that meet the work place or the sponsors' needs in addition to the English language needs of the learners.

Study aim

This paper discusses teachers' perceptions about the process and challenges of course design, and the findings within come from a qualitative research study that employed an interpretivist/ constructivist theory, in which qualitative data was gathered primarily through interviews with a view to clarifying teachers' opinions and understanding the beliefs and practices behind them.

Research questions

How do teachers perceive the process of ESP course design? And what are the challenges they might encounter while designing courses?

1. What do teachers understand by course design?
2. What is the process of course design in current practices?
3. What are the particular challenges that teachers face while designing courses?
4. What are the possible solutions/How to overcome encountered problems in the course design process?

I. Contextual background and current practices

With reference to the website of The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), www.hct.ac.ae/cert, HCT is the largest higher education institution in the United Arab Emirates; it offers various academic and vocational programs such as; continued education (CONED). The CONED department resides within the Centre of Excellence for Applied Research & Training (CERT), which is the commercial research and training arm of HCT. "The CERT Group of Companies leverages unique relationships with global leaders in education and business to provide a wide range of educational, applied research, training and consulting services to government, private sector institutions and businesses in the UAE and the region at large". Recently, a new client, the UAE Customs Management requested intensive English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses for its employees, the Customs staff. The request was at short notice, and an immediate operational plan was requested. These types of contracts cannot be turned down by CERT because they generate a lot of revenue on the one hand, and because they help bolster the institution's reputation on the other. There is a lot of competition in the market, and CERT always tries to attract and satisfy potential clients' needs through proposals, because many private institutions are willing to offer their services to secure these lucrative contracts.

Proposals generally consist of course goals and objectives, which are derived from the HCT learning model, a time frame, and a rationale for a course to be designed in a later stage. This is where we first encounter the teachers' role; to devise a theoretical framework and an operational plan for the potential course. Teachers in charge of course design should be inspired from approved and published HCT courses. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to research and produce relevant material and activities for the possible course following the HCT Learning Model, which is based on the following professional values:

1. Innovative practice
2. Continuous improvement
3. Professional integrity
4. Efficiency and effectiveness
5. Responsiveness to the needs of stakeholders (HCT website)

The HCT Learning Model sets standards for the design of courses, gives principles which should be followed in learning and teaching, and guidelines for assessment within the HCT. Additionally, it defines the HCT's educational philosophy while simultaneously identifying eight graduate outcomes:

1. Communication and Information Literacy
2. Critical Thinking
3. Global Awareness and Citizenship
4. Technological Literacy
5. Self-Management and Independent Learning
6. Teamwork and Leadership
7. Vocational Competencies
8. Mathematical Literacy (Ibid)

Through this learning model, academic staffs are committed to providing learning experiences that will change students who left schools at an early age into HCT students who will graduate with the knowledge, skills and attributes to effectively contribute to the nation-building process, and to help them develop a sense of personal and social responsibility.

II. Theoretical background and literature review

Curriculum documents in education generally describe the learning that is expected to take place during a course or program of study in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. They also describe the main teaching, learning and assessment methods, and ~~give~~ provide an indication of the learning resources required to support the effective delivery of the course. Curriculum development process is value-laden. It determines what should be taught in schools considering the social, cultural, political, and environmental influences. Syllabus design is one aspect of curriculum development, it is a description of the *content* of a course of instruction and lists what will be taught and tested as advised in J.C Richards (2001).

A syllabus can also be seen as a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students' learning and this is in line with (Breen, 1984a). Moreover, Nunan distinguishes between syllabus design and methodology. Syllabus -construction/design, he said "is connected with selection and grading of content, while methodology is concerned with the selection of

learning tasks and activities." (Nunan, 1994, p. 5) Richards gives a precise definition of the term "syllabus," restricting it to the content of a course while the term "curriculum" is seen as encompassing syllabus and other elements such as needs analysis, teaching, and evaluation.

Moreover, a syllabus is primarily informed by curriculum theory and instructor philosophy. Nunan (1994), for instance, distinguishes between the different types as shown below:

1- *"product-oriented syllabuses"* aiming at knowledge and skills which learners should gain as a result of instruction and the types of syllabuses that belong to this category are (i) The Structural Syllabus (ii) The Situational Syllabus (iii) The Notional/Functional Syllabus. This category calls for planning outcomes and directing the learning process to achieve these outcomes, it is product lead mapping. It is criticised for deviating learning from authenticity and dictating leading strategies to set outcomes.
2- And 2-*"process-oriented syllabuses"* emphasizing the learning experiences, (i) Procedural/Task-Based Syllabus (ii) Learner-Led Syllabus (iii) The Proportional Syllabus. The emphasis in this category should be on the process of learning, planners should focus on strategies leading to learning process and therefore to outcomes. Some educators prefer this category because it emphasises the learning process rather than the set outcomes.
3- Grundy, S. (1987) discusses *"curriculum as praxis",* rather than "a product", he argued that praxis gives the teacher emancipatory powers over what occurs in the classroom, by referring to Freire's principles of praxis. Freire believes that real education is always a "practice of freedom" rather than an alienating inculcation of skills. "Critical pedagogy goes beyond situating the learning experience within the experience of the learner: it is a process which takes the experiences of both the learner and the teacher and, through dialogue and negotiation, recognizes them both as problematic... [It] allows, indeed encourages, students and teachers together to confront the real problems of their existence and relationships... When students confront the real problems of their existence they will soon also be faced with their own oppression." (Grundy, 1987, p.105)

I think the three types of syllabuses presented above have different perspectives and need different learning contexts and philosophies to be applied. What is suitable for a particular learning environment might not be convenient for another one. I have discussed so far the leading theories informing curriculum; however other types are also discussed in the literature, for instance, curriculum as a syllabus or content to be transmitted as discussed in Breen (2001).

Few studies have emphasized teachers' views about issues and challenges in curriculum design in the UAE; they mostly focused on ESP courses outcomes. Zughoul & Hussein (1985) think that more attention to course design process is required to meet the gradually increasing number of ESP courses in the Arab and Gulf States. Shaaban (2005) discussed the importance of needs analysis for the employees at the American University of Beirut who attended a ten-week course on ESP. Based on the NA and ESP course delivery the teachers expressed their utter satisfaction with the NA conducted as it led to efficient learning of the communicative and linguistic tasks the participants needed in their workplace. An ESP programme is thus to be tailor-made fulfilling the learners' specific needs by conducting appropriate needs analysis. In Jordan, Zoghoul and Hussein (1985) stated that the dilemma of filling the gap between the students' English proficiency and the course demands poses a serious challenge for ESP teachers

who often find themselves returning to basic English rules to remedy students' linguistic weaknesses and at the same time enhancing students' communicative skills. Al-Busaidi (2003) investigated academic English, Almulhim (2001) and Al-Bazzaz (1994) looked at business English, and Gorashi (1988) investigated military English needs. I found that all the studies mentioned above examined course design processes and outcomes. Therefore, teachers' perceptions and views are often presented as part of course investigation rather than as a main focus. No study to date has looked specifically at the process and challenges of ESP course design in the Gulf as perceived by teachers or course planners.

In this paper, I will mainly focus on course design processes and challenges as perceived by teachers in the field. And for this assignment, I define a course as a *mini* curriculum – it is informed by curriculum theory and encompasses stages of syllabus design – That is in line with Darder as he says "Curriculum traditionally refers to the coursework offered or required by an educational institution for the successful completion of a degree or credentialing objective." (Darder, 1991, p. 19) For the research background, I will *adhere* to Richards' model describing the steps involved in course design. Richards, among others for example Nunan and Graves, is recognised to be a leading specialist in the area of course design. He states that course design involves different levels of planning and development, which are "based on the aims and objectives that have been established for a language program." (Richards, 2001, p.145) These levels include: 1) - developing course rationale, 2) - defining entry and exit levels, 3) - designing course content, 4) mapping course structure, and 5) - preparing scope and sequence plan.

In the following part, I will provide an overview about the different levels of planning. It is worth noting that the levels of planning a course are not in linear order, they rather depend on the planners' views and priorities, and this is in line with Richards (2001). Therefore, the order I present below is just a matter of organization.

1. **Course rationale**

A course rationale is an essential component of any course, it consists of describing the reasons and the nature of the course; and should seek to answer questions such as who is the course for? What is the course about? What kind of teaching and learning will take place in the course? According to Richards the course rationale should therefore answer these questions and demonstrate the beliefs, values and goals that underlie the course. Richards states that the course rationale "provides a succinct statement of the course philosophy for anyone who may need such information including students, teachers, and potential clients." (Richards, 2001, p.146) The course planners therefore need to provide "careful consideration to the goals of the course, the kind of teaching and learning they want the course to exemplify, the role of teachers and learners in the course, and the beliefs and principles the course will reflect." (Richards, 2001, p.146)

2. **Entry and exit levels**

Planners need to draw entry and exit levels for the course, international proficiency tests for instance, TOEFL or IELTS might be useful in determining the level of students' language skills as stated in the literature. However, local needs and students' levels might, sometimes, require deviation from the international standards. And course planners often adapt information from international tests to specific contexts and culture.

3. Course content

Course content is a vital element in course design, as Richards says "course content is probably the most basic issue in course design, given that a course has to be developed to address a specific set of needs and to cover a given set of objectives, and what will the content of a course look like." (Richards, 2001, p.148) Choosing course content depends largely on the course designers' views, assumptions, and knowledge. Richards says in this respect that "Decisions about course content reflect the planners' assumptions about the nature of language, language use, and language learning" (Richards, 2001, p.148). Indeed course planners' decisions on the content depends on: 1- Teachers' beliefs and Knowledge, their own assumptions about learning would shape their choice for curriculum framework in addition to their beliefs and knowledge in the area of course design, 2- The needs analysis results conducted for the course, and 3- The materials available as resources in addition to reviewing similar courses, tests in the area, and consultation with teachers and specialists, that is in line with Richards (2001).

3.1 Teachers' beliefs and Knowledge

Beliefs are different from knowledge as discussed in the literature, as beliefs can be questioned whereas facts cannot. In this respect Pajares (1992) states that the investigation of teacher beliefs is a vital aspect of educational inquiry for research and learning. Being able to identify and describe the impact of teachers' beliefs on instructional actions would strengthen and enrich our understanding of different practices. Beliefs can be identified in terms of personal assumptions about relationships, knowledge and society; professional beliefs about teaching and learning; and beliefs about change and development. Later Savasci-Acikalin (2009) suggests that beliefs refer to suppositions, commitments, and ideologies and do not need a truth condition while knowledge refers to factual propositions and understandings that inform skilful action and must satisfy a "truth condition". Richards (1998), asserts that teachers' beliefs result from the relationship between (a) the values, goals, and assumptions that teachers have about the content and development of teaching, and (b) the understanding of the social, cultural, and institutional context where teaching takes place.

Additionally, Ernest (1998) believes that the autonomy of the teacher depends on three factors:

i. The teacher's intellectual content, mainly his beliefs concerning the nature of teaching and learning.
ii. The social context of the teaching situation, particularly the constraints and opportunities it provides.
iii. The teacher's level of thought processes and reflections.

3.2 Needs analysis

Needs analysis or needs assessment (NA), which is used interchangeably in the literature, was first introduced into language learning through the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) movement. Nowadays, NA has a vital role in the process of designing all kinds of language courses (ESP, EAP, and general English). Richards (2001) describes the term *needs* as a "*linguistic deficiency",* that is describing the difference between what the learner can *do* and what he or she should *be able to do*. And he defines NA as "the procedures used to collect information about learners' needs are known as needs analysis." He adds that "Information

gathered during needs analysis contributes to the planning of course content." (Richards 2001, p.148) Richards believes that "a sound educational program should be based on an analysis of learners' needs" (Richards, 2001, p.51). Dudley-Evans and St John agree with this idea, they define needs analysis as "the corner stone of ESP and leads to a very focused language course." (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p. 122) NA processes can be different types; such as the learner's needs or the employer's needs or even the country's needs. Therefore, the concept of needs analysis has taken various different shapes across time. Needs may be divided into many different *categories* such as objective and subjective (Brindley 1989); target and learning (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987); academic and job related needs (Mackay, 1978). Munby (1978), for instance, called for the "communication needs processor" he claimed that it is possible to start with the learners themselves and work systematically toward creating specific needs that represent the target communicative competence. Chambers' (1980) introduced the "Target Situation Analysis" he claimed that the learner should not be the only main source of information to establish the program of learning. In addition to many other types of analysis that are mentioned in the literature such as *Present Situation Analysis, Pedagogic Needs Analysis, Deficiency Analysis, Strategy Analysis* or *Learning Needs Analysis, Means Analysis, Register analysis, Discourse analysis*. It would be appealing to explore the different types of NA, and explain how they all contribute to course design; but it is beyond the scope of this paper.

Course design is a cyclical process, thus NA is required at various stages: For instance, in the pre-course stage, also while delivering the course, and then after finishing the course. NA can be conducted through placement tests in order to check skills and levels, through running linguistics needs analysis and analysing the learners' perceptions in order to obtain a clear picture of the learners' culture and social context. The possible data collection tools are surveys, questionnaires, interviews or observation as advised in Richards (2001).

3.3 Materials

Material selection is an extremely significant step in course design, and needs sound decisions based on learners' contexts and culture. Planners have to base their decisions on contextual factors rather than follow the traditional textbook approach of an 'order of contents', or a pattern prescribed by a 'logical' approach to the subject, or even the shape of a university course in which they may have participated as pointed out by Curzon (1985). Moreover, designers need to be aware of the fact that published textbooks and commercial materials follow different standards of students' ability, Richards for example says "language programs and commercial materials typically distinguish between elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels, but these categories are too broad for the kind of detailed planning that program and materials development involves" (2001, p.146). Therefore, planners need to specify the proficiency level of learners with reference to contextual factors before engaging in material selection and development. One more issue would be the appropriateness of the materials and to what extent they support the local needs and lifestyle.

4. Course structure

Course structure involves form and sequence to provide a reasonable support for teaching, this stage involves: 1- syllabus framework, and 2 - instructional blocks.

4.1Syllabus framework

"The content of a course will often depend on the type of syllabus framework that will be used as the basis for the course" (Richards, 2001, p.148) In fact, course designers decide on syllabus framework in the light of curriculum theory, Richards suggests the following syllabus frameworks that planners can tailor:

a) Situational, which is organized around different situations with a main focus on oral skills.
b) Topical, which is organized around different topics with a main focus on conversation.
c) Functional, which is organized around the functions most commonly needed in speaking.
d) Task based, which is organized around different tasks and activities that the learners would carry out in English.

It is also worth noting that while choosing a particular syllabus framework of a particular course, planners are mainly influenced by the following factors as discussed earlier in teachers' beliefs and knowledge:

1. Knowledge and beliefs: A Syllabus reflects ideas and beliefs about the nature of speaking, reading, writing or listening.
2. Research and theory: They lead to selecting a particular syllabus type.
3. Common practice: Experience serves as a basis for different syllabus type.
4. Trends: They are approaches to syllabus design; they reflect national and international trends. (Adapted from Richards 2001, p.152)

4.2Instructional blocks

A further action would be to decide on instructional blocks which are self-contained sequences, for instance units, modules, or even lessons. It is a matter of organization and makes the course teachable and coherent, as well as linear with a clear starting point and a finishing point.

5. Scope and sequence

The final step in course design would be sequencing course content and preparing the scope and sequence plan. That is to say the order of distribution of the content throughout the course, and sequencing of the content in order to provide a basis for things that will be learned then; for example from basic to complex or in a chronological order as advised in Richards (2001).

Overall, I have examined and discussed the different levels involved in designing course content, structure, and scope and sequence and this is in line with Richards as a leader and analyst in course design for language learning.

III. Methodology

The current study is mainly qualitative, seeking narrative information in order to understand better teachers' perceptions about course design process and difficulties. From a socio-cultural perspective, learning is the process of understanding how to participate in the discourse and practices of a particular community. (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978) People follow a certain way of thinking by participating in social practices with more knowledgeable others. It is therefore about collecting and analysing narrative data, while focusing on people's attitudes and beliefs. Underpinning the research question is the assumption

that knowledge is socially constructed. For instance, teachers have different beliefs and perceptions about course design process and difficulties. These beliefs reflect teachers' attitudes and practices as noted by Richards and Lockhart "what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe". (Richards & Lockhart 1996, p.29). This paradigmatic assumption is constructed through a combination of individual and social processes (Vygotsky, 1978).

Consistent with the paradigmatic assumptions of interpretivist/constructivism, critical theory also defines ontology, epistemology, and methodology in a similar way. However, this paradigm -Critical theory- is also concerned with examining issues of power, control, and politics. The study therefore could embrace subjectivity because it is not value-laden and is openly ideological. The information gathered in this study mainly seeks deeper understanding and cannot be generalized.

1. Participants

The study involved two phases, a focus-group interview (FGI), and six one-to-one interviews (appendix1). The sample of the study consists of six teachers; as advised in Krueger and Casey (2000). Firstly, they all participated in the FGI, and then were invited for one-to-one interviews with a view of confirming and clarifying some issues that remained unclear to me. The sample might not be representative for the overall population of the college, however my intention was to gain a deeper understanding about the issue rather than generalise the findings. Additionally, the sample is purposive; it consists of the six teachers involved in designing an ESP course, the customs officers' course, as discussed earlier. The informants have been working together in the same department for few years so far, which ensures a friendly atmosphere. The following table presents an overview on the participants' social and academic backgrounds.

Table:1 *An overview on the participants' social and academic backgrounds.*

	Sex	Age	Nationality	Years of experience	Years of Experience in the UAE	Qualification	Job
Sam	M	46	Jordanian	20	12	MA	Teacher
James	M	52	South-African	30	20	MA	Teacher
John	M	55	British	35	10	BA	Teacher
Joy	F	50	Australian	25	4	MA	Teacher
Jane	F	40	United States	16	2	BA+DELTA	Teacher
Rea	F	30	Canadian	6	1	MA+ CELTA	Teacher

2. Ethics

I followed established ethical research procedures. Firstly, I submitted an ethical form to my supervisor at Exeter (appendix 4), describing the study process and methodology, which he approved. Secondly, I requested the permission to conduct research in the college from my work supervisor; and I got a verbal permission. Finally, I asked for the informants' consent to participate in the study, and to allow the use of the data for research purposes, they all signed a consent form (appendix 5). During the interviews, I also made sure the teachers did not mind me recording the interviews in order to ensure their awareness of the formality of the task.

3. Interview protocol

Following suggestions made in (Cresswell, 2002; Richards, 2003), an interview protocol was created. The participants were informed of the study aim. They were guaranteed anonymity, and given pseudonyms to protect their identities as suggested in (Cohen, Manion, & Morisson, 2001). They were also promised the opportunity to review the interview transcripts if needed.

4. Procedures and methods

This study was designed following a qualitative approach, which allows a wide range of data to be gathered and interpreted. Firstly, I planned and conducted a FGI for the data collection process; but after transcribing the data and attempting to analyse the findings, I found out that the information I have gathered was incomplete and vague. So I decide to go back to the informants seeking more clarification and further details about the aspects discussed in the interview. This stage seemed particularly relevant to me for research credibility. The rationale behind this decision was that the informant might provide sufficient details when asked in private.

4.1 Phase 1: Semi-structured focus-group interview

The first method employed to study participants' views is the FGI. It is qualitative in nature, and has recently gained popularity amongst professionals in the academic research field, primarily for its ability to generate large amounts of data in a relatively short time. Indeed, FGI helps explore informants' beliefs and views, enlightening their attitudes and behaviours. The main purpose of FGI is to collect data, clarify understanding, beliefs, cultures, feelings, and attitudes. Richards (2003) suggests the semi-structured interview, which is one possibility of gaining a critical view of participants' feelings and perceptions while maintaining a focus on the main research questions. I think that a semi-structured focus-group interview is ideally suited for this current research, which is aiming at exploring the complexity surrounding teachers' beliefs and behaviours within the context of verified teaching experience.

The interview was audio-recorded. In the beginning, I asked general questions, and then I asked additional questions for further details. While the interview protocol provided a general framework for addressing the overall research questions, participants were permitted to express ideas and opinions beyond the bounds of the questions asked. This approach served to reach a broader understanding of teachers' beliefs and attitudes about the process and challenges of course design.

4.2 Phase 2: Semi-structured one-to-one interviews

Kvale (1996) stated that interviews are a step towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans. The one-to-one interviews were conducted for a validity check and added more

information. The transcript of The FGI was shared with the participants in the second phase with a view to editing or adding information I might have missed. This step was extremely helpful; it brought up additional information to my initial findings, which helped me identify different views that were not unveiled in FGI.

IV. Findings and analysis

During the focus-group interview, I had a feeling that I merely scratched the surface of teachers' perceptions concerning their role in course development and the challenges they encounter. But, in the one-to-one interviews, the information being delivered was more detailed and significant. The input of the teachers was promising valuable findings. I have worked with the participant teachers for the past few years. Therefore, I was able to establish the rapport and build the relationships necessary to elicit honest and genuine responses from each participant. They were continually reminded of my role as a researcher, and that the information will be treated with extreme confidentiality. Their responses came without apparent reservation or hesitation.

The aim of both data collection methods, FGI and the follow up one-to-one interviews was to engage the participants in a reflective dialogue with the researcher (Cresswell, 2002; Richards, 2003). The FGI recording was forty minutes in length. I listened to the recording several times, and identified the major categories that emerged. I tabulated the data, and compared them to the study aim. I also revisited the research questions to find out what was missing in order to further investigate it in the second stage.

In the second stage, I listened to the recorded one-to-one interviews, which varied in length from fifteen to thirty minutes (appendix 1), and completed the missing information in the recurrent themes chart (appendix 3). Following Krueger and Casey (2000), I went back to the purpose of the study to manage the information and make sense of the data. And then, I carefully transcribed the relevant parts bearing in mind that the process of qualitative analysis aims to bring meaning to a situation rather than the search for truth.

The data Analysis process followed Cresswell's (2002) guidelines and Yin's (1989) suggested stages as he points out that data analysis consists of a number of stages, i.e. examining, categorizing and tabulating or otherwise recombining the evidence, in order to address the initial goal of a study.

Given my familiarity with the context, institution and teachers under scrutiny, I sought to minimize the impact of my views on the analysis of the data. I therefore attempted to use a "strategic and technical detachment" approach to both data collection and analysis (Holliday, 2001, p. 178). To avoid imposing my views on the data, I analyzed it using exploratory content analysis. I categorized and codified the emerging themes, and then compared them with the whole set of data using a constant comparison method that included reading and rereading within and across the responses of the participants (Lalik & Potts, 2001). Finally, few participants read the analysis to validate the themes that emerged.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe the analysis phase as "the interplay between researchers and data", acknowledging that there is an extent of subjective selection and interpretation of the generated data. It is important to note here that I do not claim to be an

objective observer in this study; so my aim is to honestly represent both the world of the participants and my own world. That is in line with the Vygotskian combination, of individual and social meaning making, will provide a framework to better consider the effectiveness of the current study. For the interpretivist what is meaningful emerges from the data. Therefore, the process is inductive. In presenting results it is the narrative of the participants that speaks.

Although the first method - FGI - was very limited and did not reveal enough information for the study, there were two evident resounding themes that dominated the interview; 1- the power of dialogue and 2- the impact of socio-cultural aspects on course design. These themes were also clearly revealed in the second stage. Therefore, I believe both methods were balancing, and I will consider the data gathered during both stages as complementary. I transferred the transcripts into the tables of the FGI data. Next, I will analyse the findings in the light of the FGI and the one-to-one data collected as one entity. (Appendix 3)

How do participant teachers define a course?

Before asking the participant teachers about their perceptions of the course development process and challenges, I asked them to define a course. This question yielded six individual responses. Rea, for example, said "A course is what needs to be taught, level, skills, assessment..." and Joy added that "A course gives teachers a direction of what they should be teaching." Sam agreed with them on the basics but thought that a course definition should also include alignment and time frame; she said "A course is a plan of study encompassing and aligning instruction for a study period." Another participant, James yielded a deeper definition that involved policy and outcomes; he argued that "The course we teach is a combination of materials based on the internal policy with an eye on the proficiency outcomes." John could not disagree with his colleagues and added a new dimension to the definition, which is "values" he said "A course is about values, understanding, knowledge, and skills, everything that ends up being transmitted to the learners. Hamm…course design a big responsibility." To conclude, Jane referred to the role of course designers and teachers in tailoring students' knowledge, she believes that "A course is what we tailor for learners to learn."

I found all the responses valuable and interesting as the participants kept adding on each other's views. Overall, the group defined curriculum as the academic content and concepts presented for students. The participants referred extensively to the crucial role developing materials plays in course design, and to the challenges they face during the process. This is consistent with Darder (1991) when he referred to the curriculum or the course as a document that guides and structures course content. Curriculum is essentially a course of study; it is value-laden.

While the scope of this study focused on teachers' perceptions of the course development process, acknowledging that course design depends mainly on materials development and selection is a recurrent notion in the interviews and worth to mention. I have just explained the general and collective definition of curriculum from the combined responses elicited during this research. I now turn more directly to teachers' perceptions of the course development process and challenges. Several resounding themes emerged during data collection and analysis.

In the following part, I will present and discuss the four major categories as recurrent themes that emerged from the data analysis process as represented in (appendix 3) 1- Culture, Ideology, and Politics 2- The controversy of Needs Analysis, 3- Challenges in producing adequate course materials, and 4- Theory versus practice.

1. *Culture, Ideology, and Politics*

Education is a socio-cultural process, which involves learning in a specific educational setting. The UAE is a multicultural society, where English is the official second language. In the educational field almost all the English teachers are expats holding different social backgrounds, for instance Canadian, American, British, South African, Tunisian, and Syrian…They all belong to different cultures, religions, and experiences. The team in charge of designing the custom's course for the Emirati students represents a blend of cultures as well as academic experiences as discussed earlier. The challenge is considerable because the team members do not share the same socio-cultural background. The interviews revealed the importance of dialogue, and the benefits of being able to discuss issues in course design as a team. They all agreed that the team managed to develop a culture of their own, collectively and individually, through dialogue. When asked about the importance of cultural aspects in course design, the participants acknowledged the huge challenge of socio-cultural issues in the current context, Jane said in this respect "I've been here for more than ten years, but still don't know all about right and wrong." And Joy added "When we first came, we were told that politics, religion, and culture should not be discussed in class." In her turn Rea expressed her concern about the choice of appropriate materials, situations and mainly pictures, she said "For example, while designing materials we should avoid *alcohol*, *bacon*, and always make sure the clothes are *conservative* in the pictures". This view was further discussed by Sam who voiced a deep concern about culture sharing and the students' rights of authentic exposure to foreign cultures. She said "We understand it is a different culture, but these are facts. Aren't the students supposed to know what is going on in the target language culture as well?" Joy shared Sam's point of view, she thought "maybe we should not have a picture of a local person in a pub, but why not a westerner, this is real life after all….I always avoid discussions in class about politics, rights, democracy…" She also alluded to discomfort and continuous fear from losing one's job when it comes to sensitive issues. During his turn John could not hide his frustration, he said "They ask for authentic material, but don't tolerate real situations. To me this is contradictory."

Additionally, when asked about how "global awareness and citizenship" - one aspect that is mandated by HCT learning model as discussed earlier - is translated in the course under scrutiny, the participants considered this question of political tendency, and that such subjects should not be discussed. The participants clearly expressed their disagreement with the policy, John, for instance, said "Some values cannot be discussed in class, the teachers do not discuss issues such as democracy and human rights, these topics are very sensitive in this part of the world" Jane added "Learning outcomes should be purely linguistic; teachers are mostly westerners with different political backgrounds, religions and values. And these should not be carried to class if they want to keep their jobs."

The conclusion that teachers perceive dialogue is important was drawn based upon direct and implied statements. Dialogue between teachers satisfied the teachers' need to feel valued, listened to, and respected for their opinions and experiences despite the differences in their perspectives. To my understanding, it is more a compromise for the benefit of the team work and

the advancement of the project. The team therefore, created a climate conducive to group deliberation to overcome their differences. However, the teachers might be knowledgeable and well-informed in their respective cultures and societies. But, in the current situation, they still need to understand better the values, cultures and attitudes in the UAE. I even felt hidden disrespect for local traditions in some responses. In this respect, Banks and McGee Banks (1995) believe that educators need to have the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to successfully implement a culturally relevant and equitable pedagogy. They argue that before teachers can effectively enrich their students' lives, they need to enrich their own cultural and sociolinguistic understanding. Fostering the attitude and encouraging teacher personal and professional development may be accomplished through self-reflection, study of pedagogy, and learning how to "recognize and respond to multiple students' characteristics, including race, social class, and gender" (Banks and McGee Banks, 1995, p.153). In this respect, Mckernan argues that "there are also difficulties in applying the culture concept to society because we live in multicultural society with pluralist values." (Mckernan, 2008, p.8) Therefore, values, traditions, customs, and politics should be managed with care in course design, which is frustrating, and limits teachers' freedoms and voices.

Vygotsky (1978) supposes that language is directly related to learning; it is actually spoken, thought, and influenced by the cultural context within which it occurs. Vygotsky also asserts that culture provides the tools for cognition and learning and that this cognition and learning are socially constructed. The question therefore is to what extent would the *-new-* developed culture be beneficial to local learners? And how would it help the learning process in the UAE context? It is obvious that the socio-cultural perspective has a powerful influence on course development.

In conclusion, the socio-cultural perspective and its ideology cannot be separated from the concept and the process of course design. Mackernan says "There are also political and cultural reasons for the way curriculum is mandated and implemented at present" (Mckernan, 2008, p.5) he also elaborates that "Every society sets up schools in order to induct students into the culture that is the way of society" (Mckernan, 2008, p.7) I agree with this view, and I strongly recommend the involvement of local teachers in course design processes in order to enrich the outcomes.

2. The controversy of Needs Analysis

The interviews revealed a vast deal of information on NA, theory versus practice. When asked about the current course design process and the importance of NA, all the participants agreed that NA is a critical component in course design, but it is practiced in different ways. The needs refer mainly to the client's needs. Courses are based on the client's needs rather than the learners' needs; they are tailored according to the employers' demands. And, the employers often assume that their employees need to foster their communication skills, and be able to read official documents in a relatively short time. Thus, the primary aim of an ESP program in our context is to present holistic English learning program for all students, John, for instance, said "I don't think we look for individuals' needs, the needs are always assessed by groups." Jane agreed with John, she added "We were never asked to assess the needs, we are asked to design a course that suits all learners. Needs analysis belongs to theory. In practice we use common sense." Rea in her turn stated that reality is different and that theory is rarely turned into practise, she said "How can we assess students' needs when we design course before meeting the

students?" This point of view was shared by Sam who added that "The needs always refer to the sponsor or the clients' needs rather than the learners." In his turn James justified this practise, and attributed the fault to time constraints, he said "These are intensive short courses; I don't think time allows NA." Joy justified the absence of needs analysis in a different way, she said "In short intensive courses, we have mixed-ability classes, levels, different learning styles, we can't cover all learners 'needs in short courses, we look mainly at general needs or urgent needs."

I found out that ESP courses have different agendas and priorities, contrary to Munby's assumption "ESP courses are determined in all essentials by the prior analysis of the communication needs of the learners." (Munby, 1978, p. 2), courses are now determined by employers' needs and vision in addition to the institution's policy. It is therefore a business and an agreement. Mckernan argues that "Policy-makers are notoriously obsessed with cost, effectiveness, and efficiency, and not only in education" (Mckernan, 2008, p.25). Course designers should then focus more on producing materials, which would satisfy the school administrators', the employers', and the students' needs. Reflecting back on Richards' framework and the different levels of course design, I discovered that NA is not properly used while attempting to design ESP courses. For the customs' course for instance, different aspects were revealed to be more salient than those of the comprehensive NA process, such as the employee's needs and practicality in setting classes. The individual's needs are not central; the learners are perceived as one group with common interests and needs. And catering for individuals' needs may be the teacher's job in class through using the right methodology for successful outcomes. Another technical issue which is tightly related to the design process is time constraints, almost all the informants voiced their concerns about the insufficient time allotted for course design. This challenge affects the quality of materials to be developed.

3. Challenges in producing adequate course materials

Material development is a crucial stage in course design as it is the most tangible part. The product of the course design process is the manual or the textbook. Therefore, teachers and administrators believe course planners should focus mostly on this aspect. However, the teachers find this stage extremely challenging. Joy, for example, said in this respect "Selecting appropriate materials for ESP courses is not an easy task, because textbooks were produced in different parts of the world, they recount different contexts and experiences." Rea agreed with Joy on this issue, she added "You have to look for materials on the internet, Canadian customs or American customs use different documents, which sometimes make the learning experience irrelevant and more difficult." The participants showed discontent and frustration because some policies and internal routines prevented them from achieving their goals in the way they wanted. Sam, for instance, was unhappy because she was not allowed to use official documents for educational purposes in the teaching manual, she stated "We asked for the permission to scan official documents and use them in the manual, but we did not get approval to use *all* the workplace documents." John raised an important point when he said "Some documents were not available in English; how can we teach students about something we don't know!" indeed some documents needed translation in order to be used in English language courses. Curiously, however, these documents are used in Arabic in the workplace. Additionally, Jane talked about the difficulties in finding appropriate materials that are socially and culturally convenient, she said "There are no locally produced materials to inspire or serve as support for us."

The findings in this area reminded me of Darder's view of knowledge, which is taught based upon what is recognized as "legitimate and necessary by those who dictate curricular decisions" (Darder, 1991, p. 19). Unlike traditional perspectives of education that claim to be neutral and apolitical, critical pedagogy views all education theory as intimately linked to ideologies shaped by power, politics, history and culture. Hence, I believe teachers are urged to recognize how schools unite knowledge and power in order to understand the big picture and contribute successfully to the learning process. However, we cannot deny teachers' perceptions and philosophies about imposition; power structure and voice may affect the material development process.

4. Theory and Practise

The interviews revealed that there is a considerable gap between educational research and educational practice. When asked about the theory informing the course and the syllabus frameworks, the teachers provided very little information, their answers were mostly monosyllabic such as "yes, nothing special, the usual…." Overall, they seemed unable to further develop their responses. I even tried to suggest possible terminology, and sometimes expand the discussion through multiple choice questions, for example, do you think the framework is "situational or functional". Or which model did you follow in your design? Was it the Taba or the Tyler model? I also tried to explain some theoretical aspects in order to elicit more information. But, the teachers were very reluctant to what they called "useless academic terminology" I even had the feeling that I was embarrassing some participants by further explaining my questions. I decided to avoid such situations in the interviews. The participants had different responses to these questions. Jane was funny; she was giggling, and then said "I forgot what I learned. I believe success is shaped by experience." But Sam had a serious tone, she firmly stated "I know how to frame the work, but can't recall what they call it…" Joy in her turn did not appreciate the question; she said "I don't go back to theory! Theory belongs to the study age…exams..." Overall the participants did not seem to like this question. Rea added "Research is too theoretical, for real learning to occur; you need to focus on the students' real needs rather than what scholars advise. Being aware and knowledgeable is great but not enough for creating successful learning opportunities." Similarly, John addressed the same point as he said "Theory is important, it is the backbone for education, but also theory is changing, Richards, Nunan…they all have different approaches. But our context is also different from theirs." The teachers tried to justify their positions through generalisation and common practices, James concluded that "Research is forgotten on shelves or in drawers; we are always asked to contribute, answer questionnaires, surveys, and interviews. But there is no change in daily practices. I am sure you will finish your assignment and forget this issue. Sorry, but this is the truth." It is worth noting that I had a bad feeling on the spot because the situation seemed like accusatory rather than intended to elicit the truth.

I found out that bridging the gap between *theory* and *practice* is very difficult. I had the feeling in the interviews that theory belongs to scholars and to my doctoral studies, but not to my colleagues and our jobs. Theory is far away from practice as claimed by the participants. Jane said that she read once about the importance of the *process* framework, but she disagrees with the concept. She added there should always be a *product* in the learning process. Task-based planning for instance is always based on predicted outcomes, which is the product. It is a backward design, "but process lives on random planning". I felt that teachers favour experience

to theory, and that they draw a sharp line between them. They confirmed my feeling as I continued the discussion. This is consistent with what Freeman (1998) says about research and knowledge of curriculum, "do not appear to translate into classrooms in the seamless, logical fashion in which we might hope or expect they would." (p.117)

VI. Reflection and conclusion

Teachers' perceptions of course design process and challenges was the focus and emphasis of this study, but critical theory assumptions did arise during this research and would need additional consideration and attention if the scope of this research allowed. However, I cannot ignore the questions I ended up having in mind.

1- If praxis is a system of reflection and action upon the world, and praxis is one way to transform the world as advised by Freire (1971) and his followers later on, and if key human values, such as democracy or human rights cannot be discussed in class. Would any course or curriculum in the region claim to belong to the Praxis category?

2- How can a country's philosophy and vision be reflected in its courses and curriculums if the course designers do not believe in them, and they belong to divergent socio-cultural backgrounds? The policy is not importing materials; rather it is importing teachers to design materials.

3- Some teachers believe that designing multicultural courses could bridge the gap between the west and the region under scrutiny. But, I think a multicultural course generally caters for ethnic minorities within one society, in the UAE context, the target students belong to one socio-cultural context, they all are Emirati. However, the real problem is that the locals represent a minority in their own country, and they have to deal with imported systems. Expat teachers and course designers also counted as minorities in this context.

Additionally, as discussed earlier, I think more intensive research should be conducted in the educational field in order to investigate the relationship between the assumptions that teachers have about the content and development of teaching and the social, cultural, and institutional context where teaching takes place. That is in line with Richards (2000). Similarly, and in line with, Ernest (1998) more investigations should focus mainly on the teacher's intellectual context, in terms of beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning in addition to the social context of teaching situations and the constraints they provide. Finally, special attention should be devoted to the teacher's level of thought processes and reflections.

These recommendations would help overcome difficulties and solve issues of course design, I think teachers would benefit greatly from such studies that would enrich the educational research field.

In conclusion, educators and consultants in the region are trying hard to change and reform the educational system in the UAE, the government is spending huge amounts of money in this respect, but professional development is not yet seen as an emergent need. I think every institution should develop a thorough professional development plan in order to equip its staff with adequate knowledge and enable them to bridge the gap between theory and practice on the one hand, and overcome the socio-cultural challenges on the other.

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Developing the English Curriculum in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Possibilities and Challenges

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Abstract

The world-wide diffusion of English has led to the development of regional varieties known collectively as World Englishes (WEs) and the need to teach English as an International Language (EIL). In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), although English is now a mandatory component of the curriculum from Grade 4 primary school, current materials and methods of English language teaching reflect Anglo-American cultural and linguistic norms and values, and therefore lack the diverse nature of English today and conflict with the Islamic discourses and values. In addition, there continues to be a marked preference for the standard American English accent. Such focus on standard English along with other linguistic and cultural factors have led to substandard English skills among Saudis. Moreover, English teachers in Saudi Arabia do not know much about EIL paradigm and its benefits on uplifting students' intercultural communicative skills in English, the essential requirement for the newly proposed conceptualisation of English competency. This paper discusses the inadequacy of the English materials used in the KSA schools and universities and argues that an EIL framework should be implemented in English curricula at all levels. The challenges of such change are also highlighted.

***Keywords*:** English as an International Language**,** English materials, English teaching in Saudi Arabia, English varieties

Introduction

As an English major student who has spent most of her life in a homogeneous culture (Saudi Arabia) and got a scholarship to Canada, the writer of this paper was challenged to see how much diversity exists in an inner circle country like Canada. How much she was prepared to communicate with such 'different' communities was the question that she asked herself the first day she arrived Vancouver in 2012. Although all those communities speak one language, namely English, but for her, they speak different languages.

English has been increasingly used all over the world and recognized as the 'default mode' for intranational and international communication (McArthur, 2002, p. 13). However, the spread of English has resulted in the diversification and the pluricentricity of the English language and led to the development of new paradigms: 'English as a lingua franca' (ELF) (e.g. Jekins, 2000, 2009), 'English as an international language' (EIL) (e.g. Matsuda, 2012; Mckay, 2002; Sharifian, 2009, 2013) and 'World Englishes' (WEs) (e.g. Kachru, 1986, 1992). These paradigms have empowered different varieties of English, emphasised the legitimacy of all these varieties and therefore challenged the taken-for-granted dominance and superiority of native-speakerism and Standard English. Kachru (1985, 1992) has divided the use of English in the world into three concentric circles: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle refers to the countries where English is spoken as the mother tongue, such as US and Australia. However, in the Outer Circle countries, English is recognized as an official second language, and these countries are former colonies, such as India and Singapore. The Expanding Circle represents the countries where English is used as a foreign language, including China, Japan and Saudi Arabia; the latter being the focus of this study.

In response to the tides of globalisation and modernization, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), like most Expanding Circle countries, has intensified the use of English in the country and given much attention to English teaching and practices. However, this movement has encountered processes of resistance, as people in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believe that English conveys Judeo-Christian values and Western beliefs (Karmani, 2005a; b; c). This situation does not exist only in KSA but concerns many countries around the world with regard to the hegemony of the English language as an'imperialistic tool' (Phillipson, 1992, 2009), and a 'missionary language' (Pennycook, 2003; Pennycook & Makoni, 2005; Wong & Canagarajah, 2009). These concerns have been particularly heated in the Islamic world where many scholars (e.g. Glasser, 2003; Karmani, 2005a; b; c; Charise, 2007; Kabel, 2007; Elyas, 2008, 2012; Mirhosseini, 2008; Elyas & Picard, 2010) have expressed their fears towards 'more English less Islam' and viewed English teaching as a 'catalyst in the ['de-Islamisation] process since it cuts across almost all disciplines acting as a conveyor of knowledge and culture' (Argungu, 1996: 331). Therefore, some scholars have proposed that western ideologies should be removed from English materials and an Islamic approach should be adopted in English teaching (e.g., Argungu, 1996; Makoni, 2005; Mahboob, 2009). The publication of the KSA local editions of English textbooks for primary and middle school serves as clear examples of this trend, emphasising the local culture and values. Mahboob & Elyas (2014) have analysed one of these textbook to prove the localisation of teaching and learning of English in KSA, discovering some linguistic features of Saudi English.

This paper discusses the apparent shortcomings of the English teaching materials used in

Saudi Arabia, some possibilities for redeveloping and strengthening these materials by incorporating EIL principles, and the challenges that might be faced during the process of implementing changes. The reasercher chose to describe the wide picture of teaching materials in KSA because the concept of EIL is still new in the Saudi context. For example, the education institutions still heavily rely on the teaching materials published by the US, which lack the diverse nature of English today. Further to this, the monolingual approach of teaching has still been practised in most, if not all, Saudi Arabian universities. Therefore, the issues underlying teaching materials are not limited to a certain institution but can be seen across the country. In this paper, the writer uses examples from an analysis of these materials done by some Saudi scholars.

Teaching Materials in Saudi Arabia

As sources of knowledge and cultural input, teaching materials play a vital role in foreign language classrooms and can reflect a certain view of the world. According to Brown (1995), teaching materials can be defined as;

> any systematic description of the techniques and exercises to be used in a classroom teaching . . . broad enough to encompass lesson plans and yet can accommodate books, packets of audiovisual aids, games, or any of the myriad types of activities that go on in the language classroom (p. 139).

Despite the many government reforms and initiatives towards implementing a Western, problem-based learning approach in both KSA middle schools and high schools (Sharp, 2004), the textbooks used are very much 'Middle Eastern' editions (Ministry of Education, 2005). However, Al-Saadat argues that the introduction of these texts is not an attempt to 'shrug off foreign culture', but rather to make it more acceptable to the locals (cited in Elyas, 2011). Evidently, there are various cultural and religious elements affecting the fundamental identity of learning and teaching in Saudi Arabia; yet, there is an acknowledgement of the paramount importance of English, and likewise Westernisation, in making efforts to build a modern society. Unsurprisingly, the ambiguity caused by these two competing views has led teachers to err on the safe side by limiting student exposure to English and its connected cultures in the classroom, and thus, has resulted in a general lack of cultural and linguistic competence in young learners.

At university level, the situation is somewhat different, and the Western angle is particularly prevalent. English courses are based almost entirely on US textbooks, which typically do not give any consideration to the Arabic or Islamic culture, and contrast sharply with the traditions and values of the Saudi lifestyle. For example, the textbook used for first year English students is *Interactions 1* by Kirn and Jack, published by McGraw-Hill Higher Education in 2002. As highlighted by Elyas (2011), an analysis of this book reveals many standpoints that potentially conflict with primary Islamic discourses (especially those focused on home and family). To give a specific example, the first cultural and ideological shock that Saudi students encounter occurs in the first chapter, page 1, entitled 'School Life Around the World', which features an image of a mixed gender group sitting together and conversing. Needless to say, the images of students' routines presented in this chapter are perceived as inappropriate and contradictory in the context of the KSA.

On the whole, it is clear that issues of sociocultural identity and representation need more attention in foreign language classrooms in Saudi Arabia. Here, many a number of linguists argue that language learning is problematic when there is a great deal of incongruence between home and classroom discourses, or even when the culture presented in class materials is 'alien' and incomprehensible (see Canagarajah, 1993; Pennycook, 1989, 1994).

A useful solution, or at least a mitigation, for this core concern would be to implement an EIL framework into the KSA curriculum. According to McCarthey& Moje (2002), the post-modern pedagogical approach should be targeted at 'teaching students literacy tools for challenging oppressive structures and for playing with the power of hybrid identities' (p. 238). In this sense, developing an EIL curriculum would go a large way towards achieving this goal in the KSA as it allows Saudis to take ownership of their use of English, and therefore they will be freed from the feeling that their own variety of English is inferior to other varieties.

The EIL Framework

As a result of globalisation, the landscape of English has been drastically changed. On this account, scholars in the field of TESOL and Applied Linguistics have called for the urgent reconceptualisation of the old practices of English teaching. Alsagaff (2012) assertes the importance of writing a book on the teaching of EIL and claimed that 'real English is not Inner Circle English' (pp. 3-235). Specifically, as mentioned by Brown (2012, p. 156), the EIL curriculum should:

- Embrace the cultural and linguistic diversity of English
- Give examples of successful communication among interlocutors from various backgrounds
- Be sensitive to cultural differences and develop strategies for handling the issues arising from these differences
- Enhance a sense of ownership among bilingual speakers and students
- Include the local culture of students to promote a sense of belonging to the international community
- Incorporate both local and global appropriation to help students function at the local and international level
- Integrate models of Outer-Circle and Expanding Circle countries to give a complete picture of the English uses and users today.

The Feasibility of Embracing EIL Principles in the KSA Curriculum

With the EIL paradigm still being in its infancy, the application of its principles to the KSA curriculum is by no means an easy task, but neither is it impossible. The ultimate aim of teaching EIL, as suggested by Matsuda (2012), is to help students utilise English as a communicative tool within an increasingly competitive and globalised world; a world which is widely diverse in both linguistic and cultural capacities. This diversity can be harnessed to present English as a pluralistic and dynamic entity in the national curriculum. In order to achieve this, classroom materials must be designed to enhance awareness of and sensitivity towards the many differences in the varieties of English used today, and to teach learners to appreciate, or at least tolerate, those differences. Unfortunately, the limited representation of English language users (only native speakers, chiefly from the US) in Saudi Arabia's teaching materials may result in some resistance or confusion when learners encounter new speaking varieties of English, such

as those spoken by people from the Outer Circle. The narrow perception of the English language in Saudi Arabia simply fails to correspond with the whole picture of English in the modern-day world.

In devising a strategy for exposing students to linguistic varieties of English, deciding which kinds to select as instructional models for use in teaching materials is somewhat challenging, especially from within the Expanding Circle countries where there is such a wide range of spoken English adaptations. Matsuda (2012) contends that it is more than enough for a textbook to focus mainly on one variety of English, and in many contexts, American or British English (the most popular instructional models) might serve as a reasonable choice. Nonetheless, students must be given insight into the relevance and legitimacy of all breeds of English and must understand that the variety they are studying is one of many. It is important to note here that it is not strictly necessary for learners to become fluent in several kinds of English in order to be successful communicators in international situations (Matsuda, 2012).

Further to this, electing which cultures to accommodate in the curriculum is yet another challenge for educators in the KSA. Both students and teachers in Saudi Arabia experience what is called 'a clash of civilisations' (Huntington, 1996; Ratnawati, 2005) as the cultural forces within university curriculum teaching and the learning environment compete with each other. The conflict between indigenous Arabic/Islamic values and Anglo-American values is bluntly obvious for English students in teaching materials at university level.

In terms of cultural content, the *English for Saudi Arabia* textbook used in middle and secondary schools from the mid-1990s till now (Elyas, 2011) appears to be an EIL textbook on the surface. However, Saudi nationalism and Islamisation are heavily endorsed in the book, making it incompatible with today's motives to utilise English for international communication.

Unlike Outer Circle English speakers, people in the Expanding Circle are less likely to express their indigenous values in English when communicating with people from their own culture, but they will inevitably need to do so in their communications across cultures. Following his study of English as a Second Language (ESL) textbooks, Gray (2002, p. 116) suggests that there is an urgent need for a 'glocal coursebook' that provides students with a 'better fit' in terms of practically connecting them with the world of English.

A key way to support this endeavour is to implement the principles of EIL in the KSA curriculum. However, this step is not easy to take in a context like Saudi Arabia where the thing that matters most to be an English university teacher is the accent. Two years ago, when the writer applied for a job in one of the big universities in KSA, the first question she was asked is 'how is your accent?'. From this example, it is obvious that most Saudi people are obsessed about native-based accent and native speakerism. Therefore, implementing EIL is quite challenging, and the process of making changes will be a long rough way. First, the education institutions in Saudi Arabia are competing with each other in having larger numbers of native speaker teachers, believing that the monolingual approach of teaching English ensures the high standards of their outcomes. This situation does not only occur in Saudi Arabia but the whole Middle East and can easily be seen through job advertisements for English teachers in this region (Mahboob & Golden, 2013). The attitudes of Saudi people, both teachers and students, towards the legitimacy of different varieties of English are also another area of challenge and frustration as the majority

of Saudi people are accustomed to the one correct answer approach. Their obsession about 'correctness' has led to the strong attachment to standard English (American) in their teaching materials. Even if some Saudi teachers are convinced about the significance of EIL approach in teaching English, they cannot apply this approach in their teaching without obtaining permission from their departments. Unlike teachers in other countries, Saudi teachers have less flexibility in their teaching process; i.e. they have to follow a set of lesson plans and activities agreed upon by the department. Moreover, curricular innovation cannot be done straight away without approaching English teachers programs which introduce teachers to the linguistic and functional diversity of English; yet, the lack of understanding of how to prepare EIL teachers is another concern (Matsuda, 2003). Although many scholars have urged the importance of implementing changes regarding teaching EIL, less attention has been given to how changes can be made, and what is essential for English teachers' preparation programs. For this reason, universities and other education institutions in Saudi Arabia are more likely to choose hands-on materials which are primarily published in inner circle countries. Looking at all these factors affecting the process of implementing changes in English materials in Saudi Arabia, the writer strongly believes that although the challenges ahead seem difficult, the results of such change are worthy striving for.

Conclusion

Clearly, there is a dichotomy in Saudi Arabia between the desires to teach proficient English and preserve indigenous Arabic values. I believe that incorporating EIL principles into English language teaching materials may be the most effective solution for dealing with this conflict on many accounts. Presently, the English curriculum in Saudi Arabia adopts only the native speaker model based on American pronunciation, and so students are very likely to experience frustration when encountering other non-native varieties of English. Furthermore, unlike Outer Circle users of English who have developed their own local nativised models, Saudi English speakers have long been struggling to express their own cultural norms and reflect their own variety of English for international communication. To this end, it is essential for them to gain practical knowledge and experience of different types of English and work towards developing their own linguistic system, and this can only occur by embracing an alternative pedagogical approach.

As proposed in this essay, a useful fix would be to implement English as an International Language, which helps students connect more personally with the materials they are using and allows them to freely convey their own identities. Developing and applying EIL in practice is just one of the many missions that Saudi Arabia must execute in response to the sociolinguistic demands it is facing both internally and externally. However, it is undeniable that English for the purpose of international communication is one of the most significant linguistic skills that Saudi natives can take advantage of in the present-day global setting. As part of the Expanding Circle, Saudis need to learn to appreciate and understand the myriad values reflected in both native and non-native varieties of English, and also to express their own indigenous ideals through their English communications, rather than just 'foreign' ones. To conclude, therefore, EIL methodology constitutes a definite way forward to balance the maintenance of cultural principles with satisfying escalating global needs.

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Syllabification in Najdi Arabic: A Constraint –Based Analysis

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Abstract
This paper seeks to show how the optimality theory regulates the syllabification of Standard Arabic, in general, and Najdi Arabic in particular. The arrangement of phonemes in the syllables is ruled by constraints. This paper shows how Najdi Arabic repairs the words adopted from Modern Standard Arabic to conform to Najdi Arabic constraints. The data is adopted from different sources such as previous studies, and the researcher's own data. Although a number of studies have been conducted on Arabic, this is the first study that implements the optimality theory to account for Najdi Arabic syllabic structure. Issues tackled here include epenthesis, syncope, the markedness of sonority hierarchy, vowel shortening, cluster tolerance and apocope. The analysis here is conducted at the word level.
Keywords: constraint, markedness, Najid dialect, optimal theory, sonority, syllabification

Introduction

Arabic language belongs to the Semitic group of languages. Arabic is the native language of over 150 million Arabs living in the area that extends from Morocco in the north western part of Africa to the United Arab Emirates and Oman in the eastern coast of the Arabian Gulf. Formally, Arabic has a morpho-syntactic structure that is unrelated to English or any of the Indo-European languages. For example, Arabic enjoys a rich inventory of consonants. Arabic has three varieties: Classical Arabic (the language of Islam's holy book), Modern Standard Arabic, and Arabic dialects. Modern Standard Arabic is the official language used in all seventeen Arab countries. It is used in formal situations which include political speeches, sermons, lectures, news broadcasts, conference discussions and most written activities. Colloquial Arabic, on the other hand, is the actual language of everyday activities, mainly spoken, and it varies not only from one Arab country to another, but also from one area to another within countries (Watson, 2007).

Modern Standard Arabic has twenty-eight consonants. It has also three short and three long vowels. Furthermore, it has a rich inflectional system of case for nouns and verbs, including plural forms for verbs, nouns and pronouns. It is endowed with a rich vocabulary characterized by a multiplicity of synonyms. In contrast, the phonological system of the colloquial varies extremely, but all of these share a simplified inflectional system of case and dual forms. Phonemically, when we consider the several colloquial dialects of Arabic that exist in the Arab countries, the number of consonants would be thirty one and here the reference is to the Arabic sounds as they are used orally. The sound system of Modern Standard Arabic is not very distinct from that of the colloquial. Very few sounds that exist in the Modern Standard Arabic are not used in the colloquial and vice versa (Brustad, 2000). Verbs and nouns are main word classes. Nouns are derived from verbs and verbs are sometimes derived from nouns. Therefore, Arabic language has a very distinct and complicated conjugated system.

There are three root types: strong, hallow and weak. The strong root does not contain glides (ktb "to write"). The hollow root has a glide as the second letter (nwm "to sleep"). The weak has a glide as the third letter (rmy "to throw") (Kabrah, 2004). In Arabic writing system, the short vowels are not written; only the long vowels are. For example, the word /kataba/ consisting of three consonants would be in Arabic system as follows: ktb.

The vowels in transcriptions will be short vowels a, i, u and the long vowels will be a: , i: , u: . Using English transliterations, we will use the Arabic writing system in most cases here (Aryan, 2001).

Najdi Arabic (spoken in the central part of Saudi Arabia) is similar to Modern Standard Arabic to some extent. However, there are some sounds that exist in Modern Standard Arabic, but are not found in Najdi Arabic. For instance, the phoneme /d/ which is a voiced dental fricative exists in Modern Standard Arabic, but is not there in Najdi Arabic. The phonemes /z/ and /d/ has been merged and pronounced as /z/. On the other hand, the voiceless affricate allophone [ts] of the phoneme /k/ is found in Najdi dialect, but does not exist in Modern Standard Arabic (e.g. the phrase " keef halak" meaning "how are you" in Modern Standard Arabic becomes " tseef al haal"). The inventory of vowels include three short vowels and three long vowels (i, a, u, i:, a:, u:). Look at appendix (a) for the inventory of the Najdi system (Ingham,

1994). In general, the morphology of Najdi Arabic is similar to that of Modern Standard Arabic with the exception that Najdi Arabic exhibits more elaborate morphology.

Theoretical Background

Prince and Smolensky (2004) introduced the optimality theory in 1993 as a model for linguistic analysis. The optimality theory states that there are no rules in the derivation of the surface forms, but a set of competing constraints that chooses the optimal form among possible set of candidates. The optimal form is the one that incurs minimal violations. Well-formedness constraints are ranked in a hierarchal pattern starting from the highest rank to the lowest rank.

The analysis of this study is based on the optimality theory. In this study, the researcher will work on different universal constraints or at least constraints that are employed in some languages. The focus will be on phonological phenomena such as epenthesis, syncope, vowel shortening, apocope, and sonority hierarchy. The following summarize the core principles of the optimality theory (Kager, 1999: 12; & Archangeli, 1999: 335)

1) Violability: "constraints are violable, but violation must be minimal"
2) Optimality: the surface form is the most harmonic if "it incurs the least serious violations".
3) Domination: Constraints are rankable and the higher ranked constraints have priority over the lower ranked constraint admitted by the well-formedness of the competing output.

Only few studies examined Arabic dialects within the optimality theory (Aquil, 2013). There seems to be a consensus among researchers that the framework of optimality theory can better account for the phonological phenomena. Exploring the phonological property of Madina Hijaz Arabic, Jarrah (2013) found out that the optimality theory is sufficient to explain the characteristics of Madina Arabic such as consonant clusters. Similarly, Aquil (2013) found out that no theory was able to capture the phonological phenomena of Cairene Arabic except the optimality theory. Compared to other generative phonological theories, the optimality theory provides a better analysis for epenthesis in Cairene Arabic.

Since the syllable structure is the most important component of phonological organization, and since it is the ground upon which the study is based, it will be a wise idea not to tackle the constraints in the optimality theory before having a clear idea about the syllable structure of Modern Standard Arabic and Najdi Arabic.

Modern Standard Arabic Syllables

Like English, Modern Standard Arabic has two kinds of syllables: an open syllable and a closed syllable. In Modern Standard Arabic, the open syllable consists of a consonant and a vowel (CV) or a consonant followed by two vowels (CVV). The closed syllable consists of a consonant followed by a vowel and a consonant (CVC) or a consonant followed by two vowels and a consonant (CVVC). The latter syllable (CVCC) occur word finally (Halpern, 2006). Additionally, Modern Standard Arabic does not allow initial consonant clusters (double onsets) and even if they appear close to each other, the first consonant of the cluster belongs to the coda of the first syllable and the second acts as a second of the second syllable (Mitchell, 1990). For example, mak.tab (desk) can be illustrated below to clearly show the point.

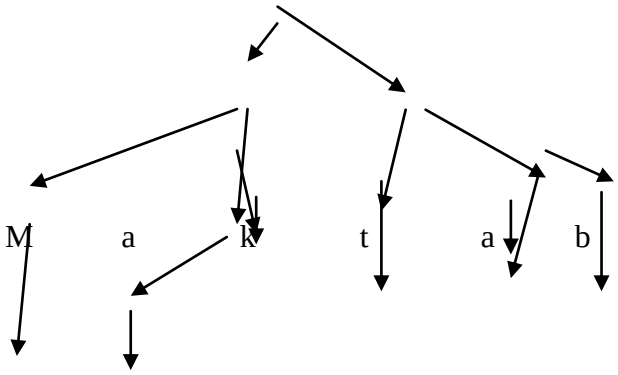

Figure 1. **Tree diagram of mak.tab**

The syllabic structure of Modern Standard Arabic has shown that the possible syllable types are as in the following:

a. Light syllable: CV (ka.ta.ba) (wrote). This syllable comes word initially, medially, and finally.
b. Heavy syllable: CVV. This occurs word initially (ka:.tɪb " writer"), medially (ka.lɪ.maa.tɪ " my words") and finally (ramaa "threw").
   CVC occurs in all positions (e.g yɪk.tub " he writes") and it is light word finally.
c. Superheavy syllable: The following super heavy syllables occur at word end.
   CV:C (nu:m) (sleeping).
   CVCC (barq) (lighter).
   CV:C (shaabb) (young).

Since speakers of Modern Standard Arabic delete short vowels in the word final position upon pausing, the final structure is CVCC. For example, ʔa.kaltu tufaha (I ate an apple).
Pausing on the word (ʔa.kaltu) would yield (ʔa.kalt). Here the word final short vowel /u/ is deleted/ apocopated (Halpern, 2006).

Syllabic Structure of Najdi Arabic

In general, the syllabic structure of Najdi Arabic is not much different from that of Modern Standard Arabic. In Najdi Arabic, there are three basic types of syllables:

a. Light syllable (CV). This syllable occurs word initially, medially and finally. For example, ʔɪk.ta.bu (they wrote). Here the syllable (CV) appears word initially, medially, and finally.
b. Heavy syllable (CVV). This syllable occurs word initially but usually comes word medially. It does not appear word finally. That means that Najdi Arabic diverges from Modern Standard Arabic in disallowing CVV word finally, as illustrated in ka:.tɪb 'writer'. Here it is word initially.

Like the light syllable, this syllable (CVC) occurs in all positions. This syllable, however, is regarded in the final position as a light syllable. For instance, the underlined is the CVC syllable.
mak.ta.buh (his office).

kɪ.tab.tuh (I wrote it).
Another heavy syllable is CCV (e.g. ktibat " she wrote").

C. Superheavy

In Najdi Arabic, as in Modern Standard Arabic and most Arabic dialects, superheavy syllables appear in the word final positions:
CV:C (nu:m) (sleeping).
CVCC (barq) (lighter).
CV:C (shabb) (young).

In Modern Standard Arabic, it is possible to obtain a string of five light syllables: ʃa.ga.ra.tu.hu.ma: "their (dual) tree". Such a form does not exist in Najdi Arabic. It can be observed that Najdi Arabic has a maximum of four syllables (e.g., ɪʃ.ga.rat.hum "their (dual) tree").

Methodology

The methodology used in this study is based on data collected from the previous studies and the researcher's data since he is a native speaker of Najdi Arabic. Care was taken to include words of different syllables, for example, initial consonant clusters and short vowels.

Najdi Arabic Syllable Structure within Optimality Theory

To account for the syllabic structure of Najdi Arabic within the optimality theory and to provide a better analysis of phonological phenomena such as consonant cluster, epenthesis, sonority hierarchy, vowel shortening, syncope and apocope, the following main constraints are used:

Markedness Constraints
a)*[□ V
Syllables must have onsets

b) *[□ CC
Onsets are simple

Faithfulness Constraints:

c) MAX-IO (no deletion)
d) DEP – IO (no insertion)

Consonant Clusters

Unlike Modern Standard Arabic, Najdi Arabic allows both simple onsets and initial consonant clusters (double onsets). For examples, **fl**a.mu.hum "their movies", **gl**a.mu.hum "their pens", **kt**ibat "she wrote", and **xd**ilat "she betrayed". Allowing both of these syllable structure CV and CCV is regarded to be "universally marked" compared to simple onsets (Kager, 1999). This fact can be accounted for by the following constraints of Najdi Arabic.
a)*[□ V
Syllables must have onsets

b) *[□ CC
Onsets are simple

Najdi Arabic behaves symmetrically according to theses constraints. The complex constraint *[CC is dominated by the other constraints. On the other hand, it is undominated in Modern Standard Arabic. In what follows the researcher shows how the ranking of the *complex onsets constraint accounts for the well-formedness of the syllable in Najdi Arabic.

Input / ktibat/	***[□ V**	**MAX-IO**	**DEP-IO**	***[□ CC**
a. katabat			*!	
→ b. ktibat				*

Tableau (1)

The optimal candidate, which is marked by the arrow, is (b). This candidate has no violation of the higher ranked constraint and it is the only one that incurs the least serious violations. Candidate (a) was fatally violated by the faithfulness constraint Dep-IO. If the ranking is reversed, the optimal candidate will be the incorrect form.

Input / **ktibat** /	***[□ V**	***[□ CC**	**Dep-IO**	**Max-IO**
→ a. katabat			*	
b. ktibat		*!		*

Tableau (2)

In tableau 2, ranking the markedness (the complex onset constraint) higher than the faithfulness constraint yields the incorrect form (katabat).

This is why the Najdi Arabic speaker would not encounter a problem in pronouncing an English word such as "street". Other dialects in Saudi Arabia would face difficulty in pronouncing such clusters. To solve this dilemma, speakers of these dialects resort to epenthesis. They insert a vowel to resyllabify the English word to conform to the syllabic structure permitted in these dialects (Hassan, 2007). Applying the same example, they would utter (sitreet) instead of pronouncing (street).

Epenthesis :(Vowels)

This section analyzes epenthesis at the word level. In Najdi Arabic, epenthesis reduces the occurrence of the syllabic structure (CVCC). Najdi speakers insert a vowel to split the final cluster. For example, the word (gidr "pot") is pronounced without inserting a vowel in Modern Standard Arabic whereas in Najdi dialect a vowel is epenthesized to break up the final cluster (gıdır). Other examples include the following: (Abu- Mansour, 1991)

Table 1. ***Vowel epenthesis in Najdi Arabic***

Input	**Output**	**Gloss**
ʔism	ʔısım	Name
Tifl	Tifil	Child
ʃukr	ʃukur	Thanking
Sahl	Sahil	Simple
gıdr	gıdır	Pot

Deducting from the above examples (table 1), it could be claimed that complex codas are allowed only when they conform to the sonority sequencing principle which dictates that sonority level should drop as we move from C1 to C2 (Yavas, 2006). Based on this, only consonant clusters that agree with the sonority sequencing principle are accepted. We notice here that the consonant clusters do not conform to the sonority sequencing principle. To avoid a consonant cluster that violates this principle, typical avoidance strategy is used, namely, epenthesis. The consonant cluster, for instance, [dr] has a sonority peak, rather than a sonority fall which makes Najdi native speaker insert a vowel [dɪr].

If we look at the following examples (Abu- Mansour, 1991) (table 2), we notice that the coda clusters (e.g. kanz, harf) conform to the sonority sequencing principle and thus they do not undergo the rule of epenthesis. That is, a word can end with the sequence [rd] and [lt]] but cannot end up with the inverse sequence, [dr] and [tl] because the sonority level rises as we move for instance from /d/ to /r/.

Table 2. ***Sonority sequencing principle in Najdi Arabic***

Input	**Output**	**Gloss**
Harf	Harf	Letter
Katabt	Katabt	I wrote
gɪrd	gɪrd	Monkey
Kanz	Kanz	Treasure

These facts can be accounted for by the following constraints:
Markedness Constraint:
a)Son-SEQ (complex onsets rise in sonority and complex codas fall in sonority).
Faithfulness Constraints
b) MAX-IO (no deletion)
c) DEP – IO (no insertion)

To account for examples in table (1), SON-SEQ dominates the anti-epenthesis constraint DEP-IO. Put on a tableau, this will look as follows:

Input / tɪfl/	***[□ V**	**SON-SEQ**	**MAX-IO**	**DEP-IO**
→ a. tɪfɪl				*
b. tɪf			*!	
c. tɪfl		*!		

Tableau (3)

Epenthesis is chosen as a repair strategy over deletion and this shows that Max-IO dominates DEP-IO. The optimal form here is (a) tɪfɪl. Other forms are violated by either by MAX-IO or DEP-IO.

If we keep the same constraints, no epenthesis would occur since SON-SEQ is not violated, as is shown in tableau (4).

Input / harf/	***[□ V**	**SON-SEQ**	**MAX-IO**	**DEP-IO**

→ a. harf				
b. har			*!	
c. harif				*

Tableau (4)

The optimal output here is (a) harf. The two constraints SON-SEQ is ranked higher than MAX-IO and DEP-IO. Some Arabic dialects such as Syrian and Lebanese Arabic, insert a vowel (e.g. harif) which shows that their syllable structure is not sensitive to the sonority sequencing principle.

However, there is a need for a morphological constraint to account for some words shown in table (3) (Al-Mohanna, 1998).

Table 3. ***Morphological constraint in Najdi Arabic***

Input	**Output**	**Gloss**
ʔasr	ʔasr	Capturing
Madh	Madh	Praising
Lakm	Lakm	Punching
Fath	Fath	Opening
Dafn	Dafn	Burying

If we take ʔasr as an example, even though the cluster sr violates the sonority sequencing principle, epenthesis does not apply here. Applying the epenthesis to the word (noun) would produce an output that is identical to the verb (ʔasar "capture"), having the same forms of the verbs derived from. To solve this dilemma, this syllable structure presupposes the following faithfulness constraint.

IDENT-IO

Correspondent segments in input and output must have an identical form.

To yield a correct form, the IDENT-IO constraint must be ranked higher than the SON-SEQ constraint as the following tableau displays. However, this constraint might not be the optimal one due to the fact that it is difficult to advocate distinctions of verbs, nouns, adjectives within the optimality theory.

Input / ʔasr/	***[□ V**	**IDENT-IO**	**SON-SEQ**
a. ʔasar		*!	
b. ʔasr			*

Tableau (5)

In tableau (5), the optimal candidate is (b) because it does not violate the faithfulness constraint IDENT-IO.

Using the same example in tableau (3), how can we account for an incorrect hypothetical candidate: *tɪflɪ? How can we discriminate between *tɪflɪ and tɪfil in a manner favoring the latter?

This candidate is a competitor since it respects the constraints SON-SEQ and MAX-IO. Therefore, we also need a right edge aligning constraint:

ALIGN]stem =]
The right edge of a Grammatical Word coincides with the right edge of a syllable

Now let's us examine this constraint in the following tableau in which there is particular ranking between ALIGN-R and DEP-IO is required.

Input / tɪfl/	***[□ V**	**ALIGN]stem =]**	**DEP-IO**
→ a.tɪ.fɪl			*
b.tɪf.lɪ		*!	*

Tableau (6)

The constraint **ALIGN]stem =]**outranks the constraint DEP-IO. The candidate (b) is ruled out by **ALIGN]stem =]**. The stem is separated from the right edge of the prosodic word by the final element /ɪ/ and thus it is misaligned. The optimal form (a) is successfully aligned. The right edge of ti.fil. (the stem final element /l/) is in itself the right edge of both the prosodic word and the lexical word.

The quality of the inserted vowel is usually similar to the vowel of the preceding syllable. The phoneme / ɪ / is usually chosen as the epenthetic vowel. This is governed by the following constraint (Adra, 1999: 22):

Epenthesis Association
***V/u, *V/a >> *V/I (it is less harmonic to epenthesize /u/ or /a/ than i).**

This phenomenon is exemplified in the following tableau

Input / gɪdɪr/	***V/u**	***V/a**	***V/I**
→ a. gɪdɪr			*
b. gɪdur	*!		
c. gɪdar		*!	

Tableau (7)

Candidates (b) and (c) are eliminated by the constraints ***V/u** and ***V/a.** Candidate (a) is the optimal form since it is worse to epenthesize **/u/ or /a/** than to epenthesize /ɪ/.

Epenthesis in Superheavy

As it has been said, Modern Standard Arabic as well many Arabic dialects including Najdi Arabic do not allow superheavy syllables to occur word initially or medially. To avoid the occurrence of superheavy syllables in non-final positions is by employing epenthesis. For instance, when the word kɪ.taab 'book' is attached to the suffix ha 'her', an epenthetic vowel (a) is added to prevent the non-superheavy syllables (AlMahanna, 1999).

kɪ.taab-ha → kɪ.taa.ba.ha (her book)
kɪtabt-hum → kɪ.tab.tu.hum (I wrote them)
tiin-na → tii.na.na (our clay)
jaab-ha → jaa.ba.ha (bring it to me)

To account for this behavior within the optimality theory, there is a need for an alignment constraint that blocks superheavy in non-final position (AlMahanna, 1999: 24)

ALIGN(S.H.) □
Every superheavy syllable must have its right edge aligned with the right edge of some prosodic word.

Also, in order to succeed in accounting for the epenthesis pattern in Najdi dialect, we need a syllable alignment constraint (ALIGNR) which is evaluated in terms of mora violation (Davis and Zawaydeh, 1996).
ALIGNR
Align the right edge of each syllable with the right edge of some prosodic word.

Tableau (8) shows that ***[** □ **V, ALIGNR,** and **ALIGN (S.H.)** □□□□must be ranked higher than **DEP-IO** constraint to yield the optimal output. If the ranking is revered by allowing DEP-IO to outrank the constraints, candidate (b), would lose and consequently the superheavy would occupy the non-final position (Davis and Zawaydeh, 1996)

Input/ bint-na/ (our daughter)	***[** □ **V**	**ALIGN(S.H.)** □	**ALIGNR**	**DEP-IO**
a. bint.na		*!	U	*
→ b. bin.ti.na			u, uu	
c. bi.nit.na			u, uuu*!	*

Tableau (8)

Candidate (b) has three violations and candidate (c) incurs more than three violations; thus, candidate (b) wins since it satisfies the ALIGN constraint. Candidate (a) is a fatal violation.
However, if the suffix begins with a vowel, then there is no need to insert a vowel because this vowel serves as the nucleus of the last segment of the stem. For examples,
kɪ.taab-i ⟶ kɪ.taa.bi (my book)
In this case, the faithfulness constraint DEP-IO will be ranked higher than ALIGN (S.H).

Epenthesis (Consonants)

Similar to Modern Standard Arabic, Every syllable in Najdi Arabic begins with a consonant, not a vowel. And if the word begins with a vowel (the definite article *al*), it is recognized in Arabic as beginning with the glottal stop /ʔ/. Universally, the presence of an onset is unmarked compared to its absence. Consider the following examples (table 4) which show how onset is important in Najdi Arabic and it is never violated in Arabic in general (Abu-Mansour, 1991; & Adra, 1999).

Table 4. ***Consonant epenthesis in Najdi Arabic***

Input	**Output**	**gloss**
ak.tub	ʔak.tub	Write (imperative)
an.ka.tab	ʔan.ka.tab	written
al.ki.tab	ʔal.ki.tab	book

a.naa.ni	ʔa.naa.ni	selfish

The interaction between the Onset constraint and the faithfulness constraints (MAX-IO and DEP-IO) is illustrated in tableau (9).

Input / a.naa.ni/ (selfish)	***[□ V**	**MAX-IO**	**DEP-IO**
→ a. ʔa.naa.ni			*
b. a.naa.ni	*!		
c. naa.ni		*!	

Tableau (9)

Each candidate incurs a violation of one constraint. The optimal form is (a) since it satisfies the high ranking constraints (Onset and MAX-IO). The violation of the DEP-IO is irreverent, given its ranking in the tableau.

Turning to codas, Najdi speakers usually add /h/ to the final words. This insertion/addition makes Najdi Arabic remarkable among all Saudi dialects. It shows that Najdi speakers prefer Coda to No-Coda. Consider the following examples.
mak.ta.buh (his office).
kɪ.tab.tuh (I wrote it).
The syllable structure (CVC) presupposes the following constraint:

NO-OPEN *V/u]□□
Word finally syllables ending in /u/ are not open.

Put on a tableau, this will look like

Input / kɪ.tab.tu/ (I wrote it)	***V/u]□□**	**DEP-IO**
→ a. kɪ.tab.tuh		*
b. kɪ.tab.tu	*!	

Tableau (10)

The second candidate (b) is eliminated by undominated NO-Open constraint as it contains an open syllable. Although candidate (a) violates DEP-IO, it is selected since it violates the lowest ranking constraint.

Vowel Shortening

In this section, we are dealing with an internal change in the syllables. When a superheavy syllable occurs in non-final position, the usual remedy is to insert a vowel between the consonant initial suffix and the last consonant of the superheavy syllable. However, vowel shortening in Najdi Arabic is restricted to hollow verbs that are suffixed by a dative marker followed by an object marker. When this environment exists, no epenthesis takes place. Instead of epentheis, the two vowels preceding the two consonants get reduced to one vowel (ALMahanna, 1999). Consider the following examples:
jiib-l-i ⟶ jib.li (bring to me)

raah-l-hum ⟶ rahlahum (he went to them)

To account for such behaviour within the OT framework, we need a set of constraints that are introduced so far.

Input /jiib-l-i/		***[□ V**	**DEP-IO**	**ALIGN(S.H.)** □	**MAX-IO**
a.	jiib.li			*!	
⟶ b.	jib.li				*
c.	jii.ba.li		*!		
d.	jii.baa.li		*!		

Tableau (11)

To produce the optimal form, the other constraints should be ranked higher than the MAX-IO. As for the ranking of other constraint, their mutual ranking is irrelevant. All candidates incur a fatal violation of one constraint except candidate (b) whose its violation is least expensive.

However, vowel shortening in not triggered in case a long vowel is followed by consonant-initial suffixes (other than the dative markers). Vowel shortening underapplies in accusatives. For instance, ʃaaf-na 'he saw us', baab-na 'our door'. In these examples, the failure of vowel shortening is due to the constraint **MAX-IO,** which is ranked higher than **DEP-IO** and **ALIGN(S.H.)** □

Looking at what have been said from a different angle, Najdi Arabic allows CVCC word finally which means that a syllable coda could have more than one consonant as long as the nucleus does not have a long vowel. Thus, the syllable structure CVVCC is prohibited in Najdi Arabic. Even loan words such as [ba:nk] "bank", and [tʃa:ns] " chance" are pronounced as [bank] and [tʃans] with a short vowel. To account for this, we need to introduce two constraints (Adra, 1999)

***uuu**
trimoraic syllables are prohibited

Such a constraint should be ranked lower than the following constraint to avoid deleting the consonant.

MAX-C-IO
(no deletion of consonants).
So let's evaluate some of the candidates based on the constraints introduced so far:

Input / ba:nk/	***[□ V**	**MAX-C-IO**	***uuu**
a.ba:nk			*!
⟶ b.bank			

Tableau (12)

The word 'bank' here is bimoraic and it is the optimal form (b). Candidate (a) is fatally violated by the constraint *uuu.

Syncope

In this section, the deletion of the high short unstressed vowel will be discussed. This syncope affects the internal structure of the syllable and it occurs when the last consonant is attached to a vowel initial suffix. In this case, the word final consonant is resyllabified as the onset of the following syllable and the preceding high front unstressed vowel is deleted. Let's consider the following examples (AlMahanna, 1999).

a. /yis-talim-uuk/ ⟶ yis.tal.muuk. `they receive you'
b. /tis-talim-ak/ ⟶ tis.tal.mak. `she receives you'

To avoid the occurrence of superheavy syllables in nonfinal positions, the high front unstressed vowel is syncopated. To account for this behavior with the optimality theory, the constraint that determines the optimality of this behavior is the ranking of Max-IO and DEP-IO relative to each other.

/tis-talim-ak/	***[□ V**	**DEP-IO**	**ALIGN(S.H.) □**	**ALIGNR**	**MAX-IO**
→ a. tis.tal.mak				uu,uuuu	*
b.ti.tal.mak				uu,uuuu	**
c. tis.tal. aki	*!	*!		uu,uuuu	**
d.tis.talim.ak	*!		*!	u,uuuu	
e.tis.ta.li.mak				uu,uuu, uuuu *!	

Tableau (14)

Both candidate (a) and (b) violate only MAX-IO. In order to make sure that only the unstressed vowel is deleted rather than a consonant, we need to incorporate another constraint to discriminate against deleting a consonant.

MAX-V-IO (no deletion of vowels).

The MAX-C-IO must be ranked higher than MAX-V-IO constraint because deleting a root consonant is more fatal than deleting an unstressed vowel. Thus, this will lead us to choose (a) as the optimal form.

/tis-talim-ak/	***[□ V**	**DEP-IO**	**ALIGN(S.H.) □**	**ALIGNR**	**MAX-C-IO**	**MAX-V-IO**
→ a. tis.tal.mak				uu,uuuu		*
b.ti.tal.mak				uu,uuuu	*!	*
c. tis.tal. aki	*!			uu,uuuu	*!	*
d.tis.talim.ak	*!		*!	u,uuuu		*
e.tis.ta.li.mak				uu,uuu,		

				uuuu *!		

Tableau (15)

However, syncope does not take place in the following examples (AlMahanna, 1999).

a. /SaaHib-i/ ⟶ SaaH.bi. `my friend (ms.)

b. /SaaHib-kum/ ⟶ Saa.Hib.kum `your(pl.) friend(ms.)

c. /Taalib-na/ ⟶ Taa.lib.na. `our student (ms.)

The vowels are not deleted in the above examples because the added suffix is not a vowel initial one; it is a consonant initial suffix.

Glottal Deletion (apocope)

In Najdi Arabic, the word final consonant (glottal stop) is deleted (see table 5).

Table 5. ***Apocope in Najdi Arabic***

Modern Standard Arabic	Najdi
ʔal.ki:m.ya:ʔ " chemistry"	ʔal.ki:.mya " chemsirty"
ʔal.fi:z.ya:ʔ " physics"	ʔal.fi: zya " physics"
ʔal.ga.da:ʔ " lunch"	ʔal/ga.da " lunch"
ʔal.sa.ma:ʔ " sky"	ʔal.sa.ma

To account for this kind of behaviour, we have to introduce another constraint that deletes the glottal stop word finally.

*ʔ]□□

Glottal stop must be deleted word finally

The following tableau demonstrates that behaviour.

Input / ʔal.ki:m.ya:ʔ/	**DEP-IO**	***ʔ]□□**	**MAX-IO**
a. ʔal.ki:m.ya:ʔ		*!	
⟶ b. ʔal.ki:.mya			*

Tableau (16)

The optimal form is candidate (b). Preserving the same output in candidate (a) is blocked by the constraint *h which mitigates against the presence of the glottal stop /h/ word finally.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher explores the optimality theory and how it accounts logically for the processes related to the syllable structure of Najdi Arabic. The optimality theory is helpful in explaining the syllabic structure of Najdi Arabic. This study points out the existence of consonant clusters, epenthesis, aopcope in Najdi Arabic and how they work within the optimality theory. However, optimality theory is still unexplored and much remains to be known about this theory and how it applied to other phonological phenomenoa.

About the Author

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The Inventory of the Najdi System (consonants)

B	Voiced bilabial plosive
W	Voiced labio-velar continuant
F	Voiceless labiodentals fricative
D	Voiced dental fricative
T	Voiced dental fricative
D	Voiced dental plosive
T	Voiced dental plosive

Z	Voiced alveolar fricative
S	Voiceless alveolar fricative
Dz	Voiced alveolar affricate
Ts	Voiceless alveolar affricate
T	Voiced dental plosive
S	Phraygealized voiceless alveolar fricative
Y	Voiced palatal continuant
J	Voiced palatal plosive
S	Voiceless palate-alveolar fricative
G	Voiced velar plosive
K	Voiceless velar plosive
G	Voiced uvular fricative
Q	Voiced uvular plosive
X	Voiceless uvular fricative
H	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative
H	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative

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Weblogs on Language Learning: A Technology-Enhanced Instruction in a Tertiary-Level EFL Classroom in China

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Abstract
The use of personal web publishing and social networking tools has been an emerging practice in the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning or CALL (Campbell, 2003). Weblogging, for instance, has already established itself in the popular media. Given its educational affordances, the utilization of weblogs in English Language Teaching (ELT) and English Language Learning (ELL) is deemed indispensable. This paper presents the implementation of weblogging activities in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program of Jilin University—Lambton College in China. Weblogs provide the students with extensive opportunities to put what they are learning in the classroom to use in expressive, interactive, and immersive ways. In addition to reading and writing practice, weblogs allow the learners to share their thoughts and ideas through blog posts made on the forum section and walls wherein the resulting language exchanges expose them to authentic uses of language that supplemented classroom activities and experiences. A convenience sampling from Jilin University—Lambton College (JULC) consisted of 71 Chinese university students from three different EAP classes participated in this exploratory action research based on weblogging experiences for language learning in English. A survey was distributed at the end of the course to all participating students to gather feedback and input on student views in relation to the classroom-blogging activities employed. Findings from an attitudinal survey performed reveal that the students had an exceptionally positive attitude for weblogging.

Keywords: CALL, EFL teaching in China, ELT, technology-enhanced instruction, weblogging

Introduction

The emergence of weblogs in English language learning afforded educators in higher learning institutions new technological tools for students to explore the target language in a new forum. This pervasive existence of Internet technology and its application warranted boundless possibilities for its use in various fields. Infinite reasons have been provided why this technology plays a crucial role in everyday routines and how it gained substance in the field of education particularly in ELT practice.

Dudeney & Hockly (2007) discussed some of these reasons which are attributed not only to the fact that now is a technology-directed world where a lot of young learners are growing up with technology as a natural and integrated part of their lives, but Internet access and broadband are becoming more affordable and more widely used by means of cable, satellite or wireless connections either at home, at work, at cyber cafes, or at educational institutions. In addition, English is being used in contexts mediated technology especially the Internet as it provides teachers with new opportunities for authentic tasks as well as a wider range of ready-made materials.

Although some people have described blogs somewhat dismissively as 'internet graffiti,' there is a growing body of literature that discusses the use of blogs in education as learning and teaching tools (Pierce, Bailey, & Littler, 2007). Stanley (2005) identified numerous reasons for using blogs in education; for instance, to provide a real audience for student writing, to provide extra reading practice for students, to increase the sense of community in a class, to encourage students to participate, and to create an online portfolio of student written work. Weblogs can become online classroom extensions of language learners (L2s) for interactive exchanges, wider learning community, and L2 skills reinforcement in the target language. Modern computer technology provides a plethora of software applications, many of which are available online. The various social networking tools, with quite a lot of these web hosting services obtainable for no cost, made weblogging accessible. Weblogging keeps on drawing recognition and growing interest not only in the popular media but also in the field of education especially in the area of English language education, for instance, in China.

Weblogging offers students not just a convenient hub for information related to the course but also provides them digital platforms for interactive exchanges. This online discussion forum allows learners to share their thoughts, views, and ideas either synchronously or asynchronously. The resulting conversations expose the students to authentic uses of language which stimulate and challenge them in ways that supplement after-class activities and experiences. Williams & Jacobs (2004) stated that blogging has the capacity to engage the students in collaborative activity, knowledge sharing, reflection, and debate. Godwin-Jones (2003) added that this engagement is likely to establish a viable learning environment when the learners are more involved particularly in creating and commenting on entries.

In the course of classroom-based blog activities at JULC, students in the EAP classes took part in regular blogpostings, either the wall or the forum section, for a collaborative learning and communication project wherein the blend of planned and spontaneous communicative exchanges made this language venture more meaningful and engaging. Integrating collaborative online tools like weblogs as digital learning spaces for reading and writing practice as well as

video and real-time chatting provided the learners with many opportunities to interact within their community of learners in the target language.

English Language Teaching in China

The propagation of English was implemented alongside standardization of Chinese and development of minority languages since the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China in 1949; as a result, more attention has been paid to English for non-English majors and English in schools. Lam noted, "With Deng Xiaoping's Policy of Four Modernizations in 1978 (or plans to modernize agriculture, industry, science and technology, and the military in China), the prominence of English escalated and it has not abated since" (Lam, 2005, p. 5).

The growth of China's international ties in the global and market economy generates a growing demand for university graduates with exceptional translation skills and high-level of English language proficiency. However, the exigent task for producing competent English language speakers among Chinese graduates is still a challenge for institutions of higher learning throughout mainland China.

In 2007, the study of Liu of Tsinghua University that sought to determine Chinese university students' attitudes towards and motivation to learn English revealed that majority of the respondents (73.76%) under study reported less motivation to learn English with little contact in the target language as one of the main reasons identified.

In response to this need, the Chinese Ministry of Education in 2004 formally highlighted the role of the computer and networking in its revised College English Teaching Syllabus (CETS). This is the guide for English teaching in mainland China featuring the integration of the computer and networking in College English learning to stimulate students' motivation and to improve their communicative competence (Liu & Huo, 2007).

This declaration of commitment for recent innovations in teaching strategies and exploitation of the rising popularity of computer-mediated instruction bolsters the goals of creating higher quality programs and more opportunities for L2 learners to achieve maximum language proficiency. This era of large-scale interconnectedness not only challenges higher education institutions and ELTs in making these prevailing technological innovations serve their learning communities but also in becoming highly aware of the potentials of computer technologies in amplifying students' interest and eagerness for English language learning.

Although ICT's application in language learning has become very popular, there is a need to explore weblogs in education in other contexts. It necessitates an exploration not only on how blogs' use is integrated in the course particularly on how multimedia blogging is incorporated but also on how it is helping the learners in target language development. In a research that summarized the existing studies on weblogs in higher education settings, Sim & Hew (2010) reported a continual need to study participants in other countries in order to understand how different geographical and socio-cultural contexts influence the use of blogs in higher education settings. In their review, "…a majority of the studies (77%) involved participants from countries in North America and Europe compared with other countries" (p. 8). While there is a growing body of literature focusing on the pedagogical implications of blogging in language teaching, this

present study is undertaken to contribute to this research area in documenting and investigating the introduction of this innovation in language teaching to obtain a more informed base of the learners' blogging experience within a Chinese context; specifically, the use of weblogs in English language learning and teaching in a Sino-Foreign context. Sino-foreign schools are Chinese institutions that have developed partnership with foreign counterparts enrolling Chinese students in a China-Foreign collaborative school using high-quality foreign education resources. The setting of this study is of such nature founded in 1999 and approved by the Ministry of Education as a joint Chinese-Foreign institution of higher learning of Jilin University—China and North American partner schools.

Purpose of the study

To provide wider opportunities for interaction in the target language and to contribute to the aims of communicative competence through the utilization of ICT activities on English teaching in China, specifically at Jilin University—Lambton College, an English-medium campus that envisions to produce globally competitive graduates, the use of weblogs in an EAP class has been implemented.

This classroom-based study is generally exploratory. This is an attempt to gauge Chinese learners' interest on weblogging in an EAP class. These blogging activities for language development were implemented to provide the students a viable classroom extension for greater target language contact and on how well the learners perceive weblogging as a tool for English Language Learning (ELL).

Specifically, this study aims:

a. To find out the attitude of the respondents, that is, whether they agree or disagree with the use of weblogging in an EAP class.
b. To obtain information on the potential use of weblogs as tools in motivating and encouraging the students in their learning particularly reading and writing in the target language.
c. To provide relevant findings on the importance of the role of language teachers in utilizing weblogs for ELT and ELL.
d. To determine the perceived effectiveness of weblogging in English language learning and teaching.
e.

Literature Review

Blogs or weblogs: Definitions

The term 'weblog' was first used by Jorn Barger in 1997 (Blood, 2000) to describe the list of links on his Robot Wisdom website (Downes, 2004) that 'logged' his internet wanderings. Peter Merholz shortened the word to 'blog' in 1999 (Loving, Schroeder, Kang, Shimek, & Herbert, 2007). Shortly thereafter, Evan Williams, an American entrepreneur, used blog as both a noun and verb. As a verb, it means to edit one's weblog or to post to one's weblog. He also created the weblog authoring software—Blogger. Though 1997 to 1999 marked the expansion of weblogs' use, the technology gained a strong foothold on the Internet after LiveJournal.com and Blogger.com opened their weblog hosting sites in March and August of 1999 respectively (Scheidt, 2009).

Godwin-Jones (2003) defined blog as a web-based space for writing where all the writing and editing of information is managed and immediately and publicly available on the Internet through a web browser. It is a form of online journal where the person keeping the blog (a blogger) records his or her thoughts (blogging) updated on a regular basis with entries in chronological order (Pierce, Bailey, & Littler, 2007).

Within the framework of how the blog was used for the present investigation on ELT for EAP, the author of this research defines blog as an interactive webpage accessible to the members of an online community created through a software that enables one to engage in online exchanges in the target language in which the posts made by the writer to a particular focus are archived chronologically for immersive and meaningful interaction either synchronously or asynchronously. Succinctly, within the educational context, a blog is a learner-accessed network directed toward Building Learners' Optimal Growth (BLOG) in the target language.

Pedagogical Perspective of Weblogging in ELT and ELL

Blog's nature of easy and trouble-free publishing lured a rapidly growing number of users across all sectors and fields for manifold uses ranging from personal and journalistic to commercial and now educational purposes. Its popularity continues to draw recognition from various sectors and disciplines.

A review of literature shows the use of blogs in educational contexts (Downes, 2004; Williams & Jacobs, 2004) and draws attention to their roles in information sharing, issuing news, encouraging the process of ideas development, personal reflection, creating potential content that can be shared and is available for discussion and recording events and capturing activity (Pierce, Bailey, & Littler, 2007). Other studies published include blogging's effect on learner autonomy, increasing writing efficiency, as a place for completing writing assignments (Wu, 2005), posting materials (Johnson, 2004), and as a way to open communication with bloggers outside the classroom (Pinkman, 2005).

Evidently, an increasing figure of foreign educators paid attention to this user-friendly technology by incorporating it into classroom instruction and language learning (Campbell, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Richardson, 2004). This interest is also apparent among language learners. The novelty factor stirs learners' interest in the use of blogs, while at the same time, language educators also recognize its value as a versatile language tool rich in applications.

Several blog supporters imply that weblogs are balancing agents for self-expression, classroom interaction and participation, autonomy, and independence of language learners, especially in L2 environment. Blogs do not only provide authentic writing practice but also offer opportunities to recycle language learned in class (Pinkman, 2005) and afford learners an alternative form of communicating with teachers and peers (Mynard, 2007). Blogs give students autonomy over learning and the sense of ownership of a personal space—a sense of belonging that is not so easily achieved in f2f environments (Pinkman, 2005).

Historically, English teaching in China has been dominated by a teacher-centered, book-centered, grammar-translation method, with an emphasis on rote memory (Hu, 2003; Rao, 2002).

Such "…a teacher-dominated classroom teaching and centralized examination system in China result in students' strong reliance on teachers in English learning…"; undoubtedly, this "…essentially passive way of learning greatly inhibits most Chinese students from learning English efficiently" (Rao, 2002, p. 113). Likewise, the timid and obedient nature of Chinese learners frustrates them owing to that little progress despite painstaking efforts. According to Xiao (2007), Chinese students are not used to raising questions in front of a large group of classmates, and outside of the classroom they are usually too shy to go to the teachers to clarify any doubts about the teachers' corrections if their teachers do assign homework for practice and have time to provide written comments.

In this light that the use of blogs for ELT within the Chinese context is pedagogically deemed of potential—it becomes a digital learning equalizer in encouraging language learners to take a dynamic interest as active participants in getting significant progress in the language that they all strive to be proficient at. Blogging, in this sense, has the inherent capacity to empower language learners in overcoming language apprehension and in building up confidence in language learning through online interaction within its community of learners.

Weblog for Academic Purposes (WAP)

Through a well-structured weblog plan, coalesced with systematic implementation and a well-directed set of blog activities, the blog technology provided the learners digital learning spaces not just for reading and writing practice but also in writing for academic purposes. Weblogs for Academic Purposes on the basis of this work is a pedagogic weblog designed for instructive aims targeting a particular group or community of learners in a scholastic milieu for interdisciplinary and educational purposes.

The author set up a tutor blog which is teacher-directed and restricted to the students of three EAP classes where each learner was asked to sign up an account at the start of the semester. To encourage reticent learners to take part and avoid unwanted commentaries, the blog is password-protected. At the same time, anonymity was ruled out to preclude irresponsible posting. The blog created was purposely designed in providing the students an online learning community as an after-class activity.

The students were brought to the school's computer laboratory when they first signed up and listened to a discussion on how to proceed, policies, and purposes of weblogging. The succeeding blog engagements happened in their spare time or at their convenience given that each of the learners owned a laptop and Internet access is available throughout the school's dormitory. This enabled them to engage in independent learning using Internet resources as well as work on their assigned tasks for in-class and after-class discussions via weblogs.

The browser-based hosting software used was SocialGo. It is one of the recently developed applications, and since it is a web-based service, it does not require software downloads making it even more convenient for the learners to access it from wherever they may be.

Generally, the blogging activities implemented by the teacher, specifically the posts on the blog's forum section, were assigned. Every week, the teacher posted selected topics, activities, links, and supplementary materials to reinforce concepts discussed in class and to extend content coverage of a particular focus that are of interests to the learners. The students

were expected to write their comments on each blog post. Their active interest and participation were apparent through a deluge of comments especially with the involvement of the teacher and the ease in the 'push-button publishing' afforded by weblogs to the language learners. The assertion of Johnson (2004) that the application of blogs is a useful supplemental aid to teachers is evident in this case.

The students were also asked to publish blogposts once or twice a week on a topic of their choice, and their classmates would read and respond. The prompting and inciting themes of every student's post on a range of interesting personal and social concerns brought out a stream of interactive exchanges.

Based on other classroom blogging activities implemented, weblogs' applications are summarized as follows:

1) A portal to online language learning resources.
2)An online hub for any information concerning the course like course content, class rules and guidelines, assignments, reminders, and upcoming discussion topics.
3) A digital decanter of vocabulary used in the class linked to their respective majors and idiomatic expressions (e.g. business idioms). New words and idioms were introduced each week in which students were made to write and post an example sentence to any of those posted.
4) A platform which addressed linguistic issues in the target language exchanges such as common orthographical, lexical and grammatical errors.
5) An e-space for pre and post-class discussion of assigned items taken from local or international online journals and periodicals in reading for main ideas and content analysis as well as for focused-writing tasks such as paraphrasing and summarizing.
6) An online bulletin for posting commentaries on English-language movies for film reviews and a certain language learning goal with thematic connection to the course and publishing achievements, exemplars or commendable written works of students.
7) An e-diary for student-bloggers who liked keeping an online journal of their interests, thoughts, feelings, and routines, of which, the majority of students made a weekly entry.

From these various blogging activities, not only was their ardent participation apparent, but the introverted students were also observed to have obviously taken an active interest in harnessing language skills and in learning in general since the digital spaces provided by the blogs reserved them a room to have gradually moved out of their shells. It fostered a sense of belongingness among the members of the blogging community and made this language learning engagement even more conducive.

The exposure that the learners had for this weblog undertaking prepared them to have accomplished another class writing project at the end of the term: a compilation of each student's written work—Anthology of Selected Writings in English for Academic Purposes class.

Blogging and its effects follow the six principles proposed by Chapelle (2001) for CALL program evaluation: (1) language learning potential, (2) learner fit, (3) meaning focus, (4) authenticity, (5) positive impact, and (6) practicality. With the preceding discussion, weblog

implementation gave a convincing impression to fit the program and the learners of the course in English for Academic Purposes. Thus, weblogging was undertaken owing to its promising pedagogical affordances.

Methodology

This section discusses the method of research employed in this study, the research design, the respondents of the study, data gathering instrument and data gathering procedure.

An attitudinal survey also known as an affective survey can provide information on student perceptions (emotions, feeling, and attitudes) of their classroom experience. This type of survey provides valuable information on student perceptions of their classroom experience which includes general attitudes toward the course, the discipline, and their own learning (Lewis & Seymour, n.d.). Since the primary objective of this study is to determine the efficacy of bringing weblogs into play in language teaching and learning through feedback and input from the students on their weblogging experience, the use of a survey design was employed for this research

.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the 71 students in three EAP classes of an English-medium campus in Northeast China, Jilin University—Lambton College, a private institution of higher learning that is part of Jilin University, the largest university in China. Twenty-nine participants were males and 42 were females, all 3rd year students and all in the business stream with majors in Business Administration (General), Management Information Systems, Banking and Finance, and International Accounting. Academic English courses, including English for Academic Purposes, at Jilin University—Lambton College are only offered to students once they have passed the Exit Test for EFL (English as a Foreign Language), which is given upon successful completion of the coursework required for this level. This Exit Test is administered to gauge whether their skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking are sufficient to continue with a college program. When they first arrived on campus, their communicative skills in English were tested and they were assigned to one of the three EFL levels (Intro, Level 1, and Level 2) based on the results of the placement test. These students spent a minimum of two semesters (a year) of EFL classes prior to acceptance into the regular college curriculum.

Data Gathering Instrument

A specially designed questionnaire was developed and administered as an instrument for gathering feedback from the students on their perception of the use of weblogs in English for Academic Purposes class.

The survey instrument distributed to the students contained 30 items in total. Four items focused on demographic information, one yes or no response to a statement, one item required checking the appropriate box, 20 rating scale items on degree of agreement or disagreement in a Likert Scale format, and four questions which required a short answer response. The 26 non-demographic items focused on the attitudes of students on the implementation of weblogging, the potential use of weblogs as tools in motivating and encouraging the learners in their learning particularly in writing and reading in the target language, the usefulness and perceived effectiveness of weblogging, and the teacher's participation in this innovation.

Data Gathering Procedure

In gathering the data needed, a questionnaire was distributed to each student at the end of the term. The survey was administered to the three different EAP 300 classes: Class A (25 students), Class B (22 students), and Class H (24 students). The aim of the classroom-based research was explained explicitly to the students, and they were guaranteed anonymity. They were also informed that their responses will have significant bearings on refining instruction, effects of course innovations, and improving strategies and classroom activities that they find useful and engaging.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis, and discussion of selected findings of the attitudinal survey.

ELLs' Attitude toward Weblogging for Academic Purposes

The survey results reveal that students considered weblogging an extremely interesting approach in ELL. Figure 1 shows an impressive 92.95% of the respondents chose "Strongly agree" and "Agree" for items 3.1, 3.6, and 3.7 (see Appendix).

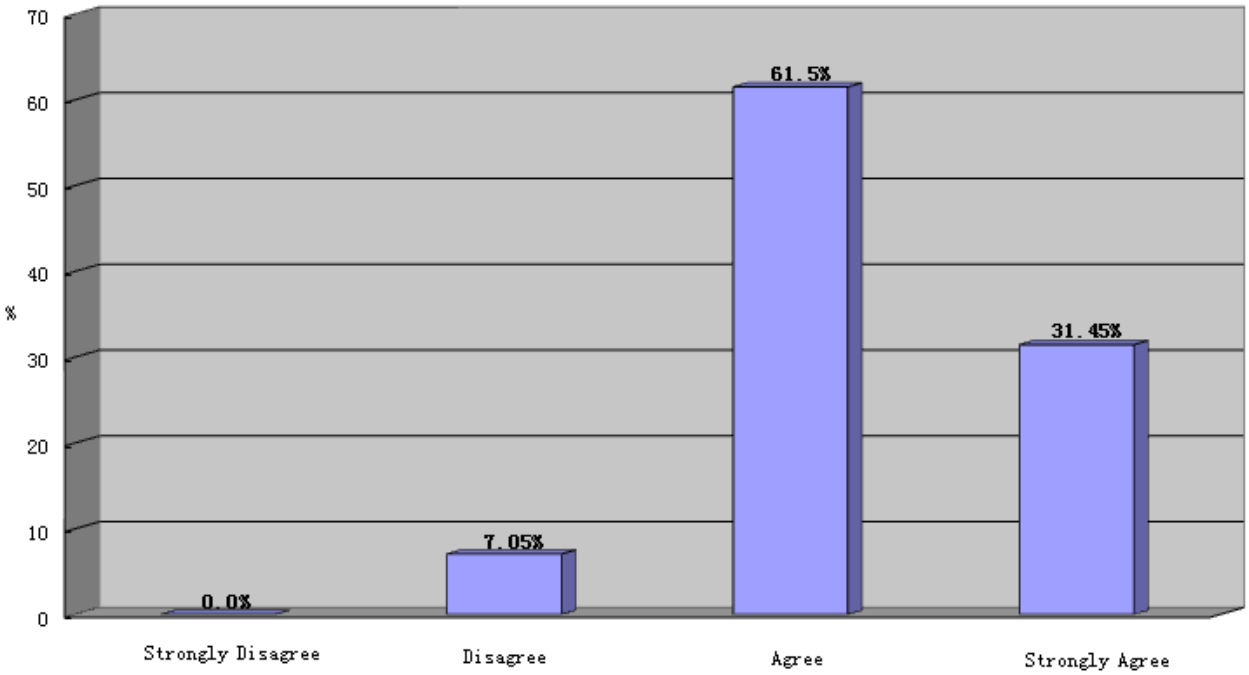

***Figure 1*. Aggregate percentage of respondents with positive attitude toward blogging (see items 3.1, 3.6, and 3.7 in Appendix)**

The majority of respondents expressed that weblogs provided them an extended learning space to communicate with the teacher and the members of the learning community. The responses for their exceptionally positive attitude toward weblogging can be summarized in the given feedback by one of the course-participants, "It's interesting because it can attract people to learn and use English. If one wants to learn English really well, using class time is not enough but weblogging gave us a wider stage to interact and to enhance our skills."

This result corresponds with the research of Walker (2005) who also applied weblogging in his classes. The majority of students said that they had enjoyed weblogging and found it valuable. Similarly, in the 2007 study conducted by Blackstone, Spiri, & Naganuma, which sought to gauge student interest in blogging and associated activities, survey results showed that 81.4% of the student-respondents (118/145) liked blogging as an activity.

Consequently, this highly positive regard on weblogging elicited a very affirmative stance that weblogs have the capacity to motivate and encourage the learners in their learning, specifically in engaging them to read and write in the target language. One of the students wrote, "Weblogs provided us a good English environment because English is used more, practiced more and spoken more. When you take part in the discussion or activities, you are learning and practicing English so it is a great practice site."

Another learner said, "Blogging is a very good venue for the language learners to discuss with each other and communicate in the target language because it can help us improve our skills." Sara, who chose to be identified, added:

> I like weblogging because I can communicate with my classmates and teacher even if after the class, and it's a useful way to drive you to use English in a correct way because everything you write will be read by the blog community.

Campbell (2004) emphasized that due to the elements of ownership and online identity, most students will write more carefully if they know that they are going to publish their articles online for authentic readers who may comment on their postings.

The findings in this research corroborate with several researches examining the learning potential of weblogs. The study of Williams & Jacobs (2004) found that two-thirds of participants strongly agreed or agreed that blogging helped them in their learning while Kavaliauskienė, Anusienė, & Mažeikienė (2006) concluded that weblogging can "…enhance students' motivation due to the novelty and diversity of possible learning activities" (p. 227). In a study of teaching reading and writing English for Specific Purposes through weblogs, Arani (2005) reported similar accounts which detailed that approximately three quarters of the class of forty students preferred writing the weblog to the more traditional written journal and most of the students believed that weblog can improve English. Also, Zeng & Harris (2005) found out in their research survey that 55% of the undergraduate students of an online health information management course agreed that blogs could help them learn in class. The survey of 23 undergraduate students of Educational & Communication Technology in Portugal made by Coutinho (2007) generated similar results. Moreover, the investigation of Ellison & Wu (2008) showed that students perceived reading other students' blogs to be most helpful for understanding course concepts.

The technical advantages of the Internet such as online English dictionaries and related links for language skills development, interactive exchanges, authentic learning environment outside the classroom, readership extending across all members of the blogging community, peer collaboration and teacher's feedback, are construed to be among the blog aspects that motivated students in their learning and in expressing their ideas in a new forum. These responses of the

learners augur a great potential for weblogs as tools in learners' language development and advancement.

This positive agreement of the learners toward weblogging in this current investigation satisfies the first principle, "language learning potential," of CALL program evaluation proposed by Chapelle (2001).

ELTs' Role in ELL

The results of the survey also revealed that the role of language teachers in implementing CALL activities such as weblogging, especially in L2 environment, was extremely important. Overwhelmingly, 100% of the respondents (71/71) chose "Strongly agree" and "Agree" to items 3.4 and 3.8 (see Figure 2 and 3). In a study on the effectiveness of weblogs to promote frequent extra reading practice in a freshman EFL Science and Technology reading program in Venezuela, Izquierdo & Reyes (2009) concluded that the role of the teacher is crucial in the creation of new learning environments beyond the classroom, and such innovation should not only be part of the role of technology in the 21st Century education but also a responsibility of foreign language teachers who prepare students to think

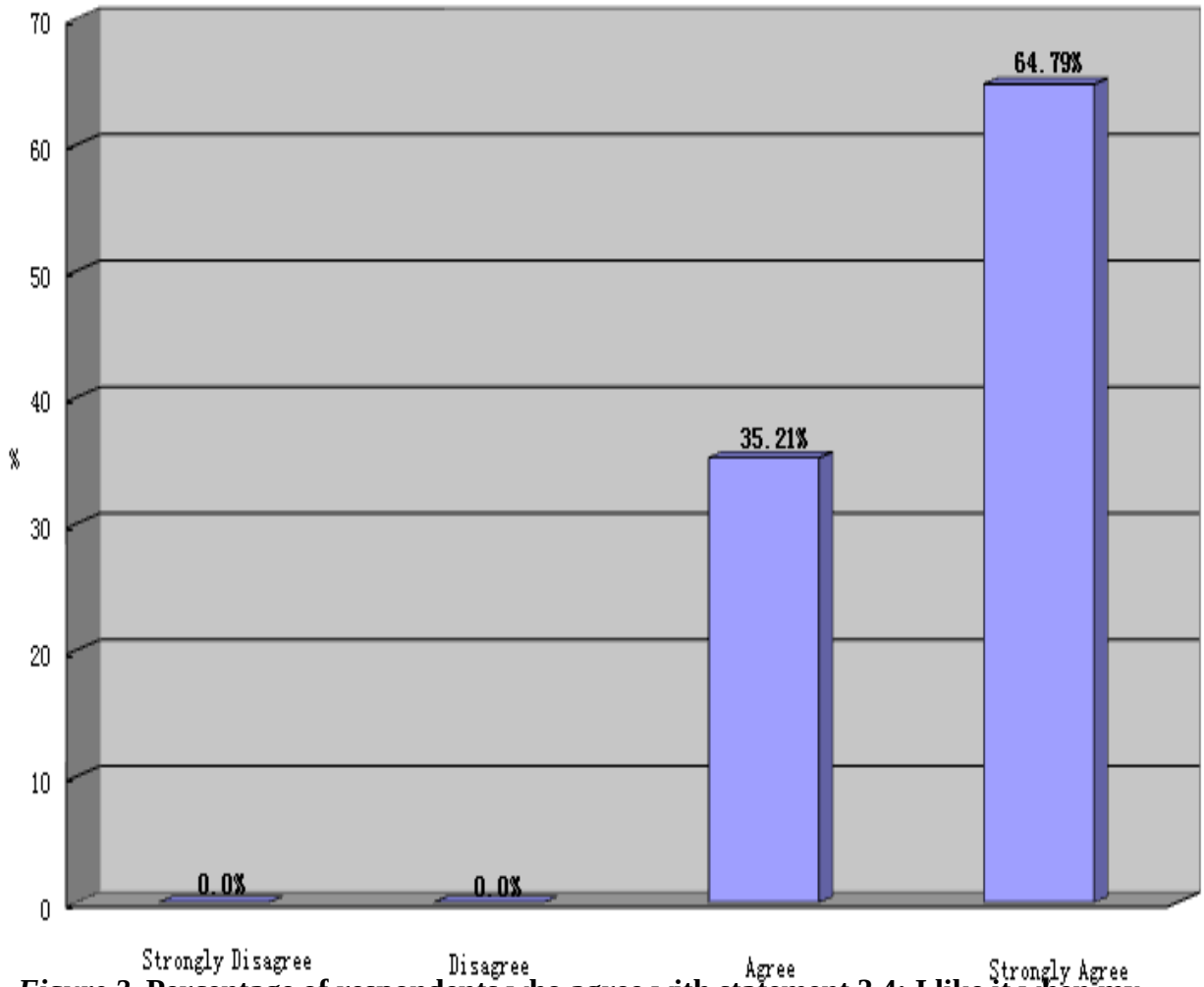

***Figure 2*. Percentage of respondents who agree with statement 3.4: I like it when my teacher comments on my posts and writes on my blog wall**

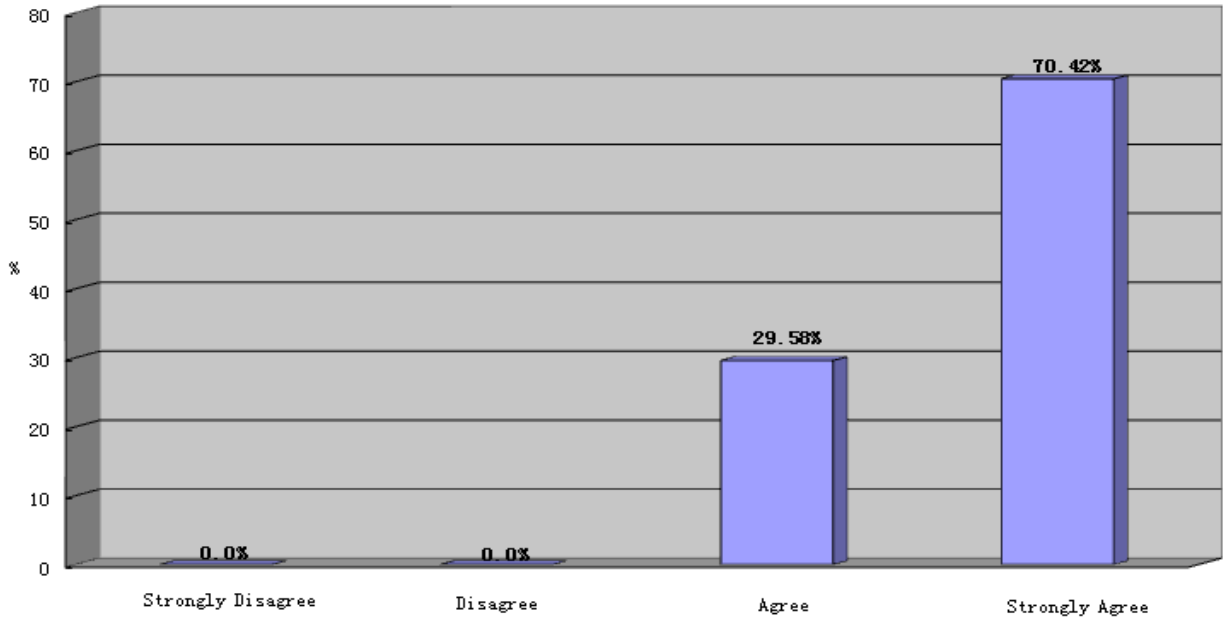

***Figure 3*. Percentage of respondents who agree with statement 3.8: I like it when the teacher gives feedback and comments in the class about our posts**

critically, take social responsibility, analyze problems, and provide possible solutions to them. Further, the impact of the involvement of the teacher in this engagement was also deemed to be of great value in Blackstone, Spiri, & Naganuma (2007):

> At the same time, students did not see the teacher as excluded from this process. In fact, since 100% indicated that they appreciated their teacher's comments on the blogposts, input from the teacher can still be considered vital within the context of these *blogalogues*. (p. 14)

A number of respondents stated that the connection between the teacher and the students is one of the main factors that made weblogs an engaging classroom activity. One participant wrote, "We can enjoy a real English environment through the blog because learners can communicate with teacher and classmates, and it's an effective way to learn English." Another respondent expressed, "Blogs provide a chance to practice English skills with friends, and it's also a way to enhance the interaction between students and teacher."

It can be gleaned from the results that relevant classroom activities employed by the teacher generate motivation to students in becoming active participants in the learning process. The more positive the responses the students articulate, the more they take action to the teacher's instruction; hence, the better they become and the more inspired the teachers are in providing them more opportunities for language development.

Effectiveness of Weblogging in ELL

Figure 4 and Figure 5 illustrate substantive proof that the respondents perceived weblogging as a very useful and functional English language learning activity. Item 3.5, weblogging is very useful, 94.37% of the student-participants (67/71) chose "Strongly agreed"

and "Agreed" (see Figure 4) while 91.55% of the respondents (65/71) "Strongly agreed" and "Agreed" to item 3.14 (see Figure 5).

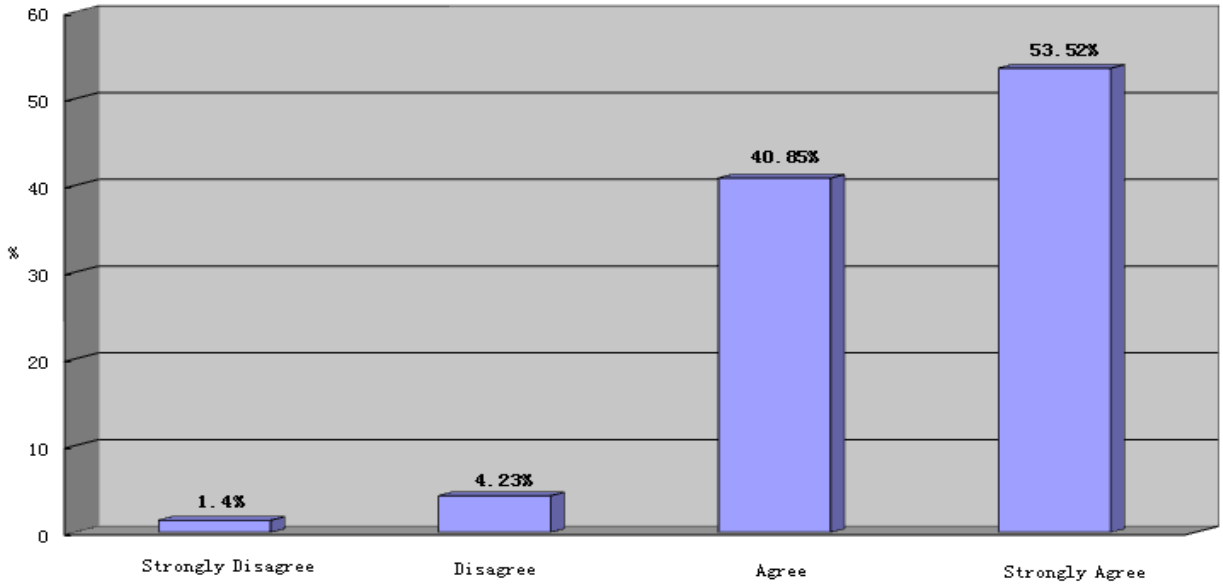

Figure 4. **Percentage of respondents who agree with statement 3.5: I find weblogging very useful**

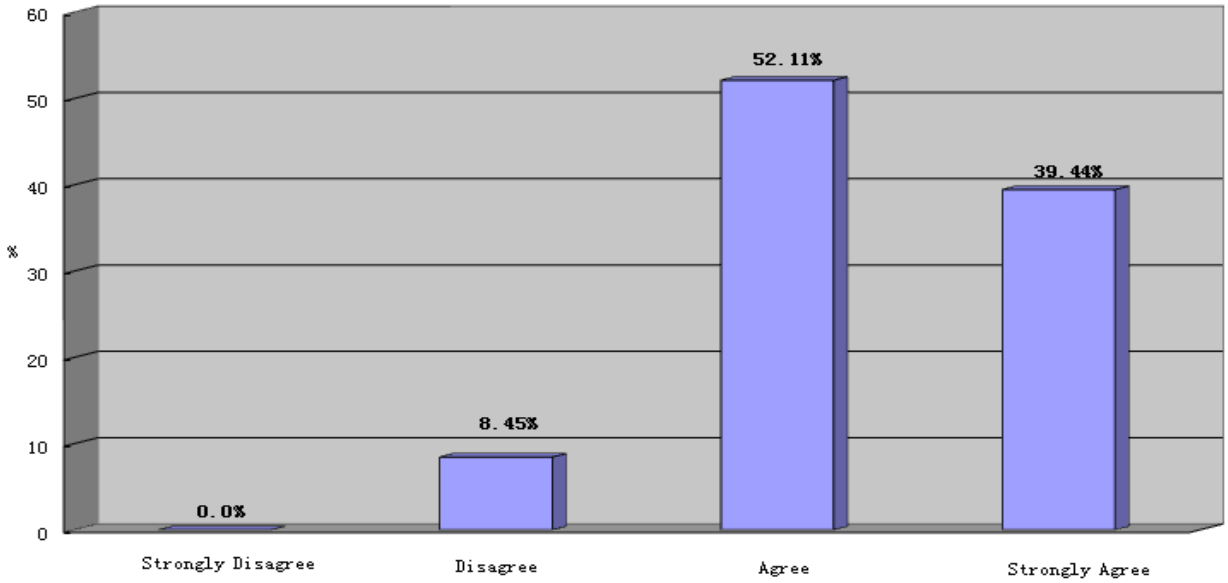

Figure 5. **Percentage of respondents who agree with statement 3.14: I find weblogging as a meaningful way of learning and practicing English language skills**

These findings produced similar outcomes with the data from the attitudinal survey conducted by Blackstone, Spiri, & Naganuma (2007) which demonstrated that the students responded positively to the blogging activities in general. Similarly in the study of Izquierdo & Reyes (2009), the blog was very positively perceived by a significant number of students who

considered the blog useful, interesting, and helpful in practicing English. The blog was further perceived by their students as a positive activity for the benefit of their English progress especially in the areas of reading, writing, and vocabulary building.

To illustrate, the following remarks from the respondents provide further support to this claim: "Weblogging is a good way to learn English. It's really useful for my writing, vocabulary, and reading skills besides we can all learn together and study in a relaxed way." Further, "It's a good way to let us study English out of class to practice reading and writing skills through the blogposts. I like this form to study English because it doesn't have limits and we can see each other's ideas and learn something from each other." And lastly:

> I learned new idioms especially business idioms, and it helped me to do thinking out of the box. It helped us a lot on communicating with each other, and we can also find out our mistakes from the posts we make and this helps us improve our English level. The things posted by our teacher are really worthwhile for us to learn and above all in weblogging we can have fun while we learn.

It can be deduced from the foregoing that students perceived weblogging to be a meaningful and supportive engagement in the English language learning process. In fact, a majority of the student-participants recommended weblogging to all English language learners, and it should be continued even if the course for which it was designed for is over.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, the results of this study show that the learners perceived weblogging a highly favorable and effective learning activity and a potential online cohort for target language development. Not only were the students afforded an after-class space for language practice and self expression under non-threatening conditions, but they were also given a broader learning community and a wider avenue in writing and reading for a purpose in the target language through weblogs used as a platform along with other authentic texts from a range of relevant materials online. The rapidly growing trends of blogs' uses continually extend an array of variations in classroom activities. The student-participants found its utilization in English language learning highly motivating and encouraging. They have also expressed remarkable interest toward weblogging and regarded language teachers' participation indispensable in this process. Indeed, this emerging phenomenon as an instructional medium according to Williams & Jacobs (2004) "…has the potential to be a transformational technology for teaching and learning" (p. 247).

This small-scale study also points out that the utilization of weblogs calls for teachers to know the purpose of its use in language teaching, and educators must also possess certain levels of computer skills especially on the technical aspect of integrating technology in language learning and the awareness of the ever changing and evolving nature of computer technologies to ascertain that it proceeds in the desired direction. Language practitioners must be attuned to these technological tools and its uses so as to better facilitate the application of this emerging language innovation in L2 environments and to enhance the efficiency of CALL activity like weblogs. Appropriate CALL training-workshop opportunities and collaboration of CALL teachers are recommended in this respect to every institution of higher learning that places great importance

on the role of technology in higher education settings. It would also be of great value to this research area if local and foreign teachers in the Chinese mainland and the Asian region employ blogging and survey their respective groups of English language learners on their experience for a broader exploration and analysis of how learners perceive weblogging. Investigation of blog participants' responses and attitudes in relation to the employment of weblogging in language classroom will be useful to researchers and teachers in continually studying and building a knowledge base of blog's use in second language teaching and learning. Finally, longitudinal studies for a more in-depth investigation of blog's pedagogical effects and affordances in language skills development, particularly reading and writing, underlying issues and concerns, and potential constraints and threats are suggested.

It can be assumed from the foregoing discussion on the results of this classroom-based study that blogs proved to be a functional technological support to ELT and learning communities. The course participants viewed this activity of enormous potential not only for a meaningful and useful target language engagement but also as viable digital conduits in bridging the gap in the traditionally sanctioned hierarchy of unquestioned authority of teachers inherent of a Chinese academic milieu.

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Appendix

Survey items rated on a Likert Scale and related to the present study
People's Republic of China
JILIN UNIVERSITY—LAMBTON COLLEGE
English for Academic Purposes 300
Name (optional):_____Gender: _____
Year Level: _____ Major: _____

1. I have my personal computer/laptop: □ Yes □ No
2. I check my blog: (Check the appropriate box)
   □ Daily
   □ Every other day
   □ Two to three times a week
   □ Not at all
3. Check the appropriate column. How do you find weblogging as a classroom activity tool in English language learning? To what extent is weblogging helpful in English language learning?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.1 I like weblogging.				
3.2 I like writing comments on my classmate's blog wall.				
3.3 I like it when my classmates post comments on my blog wall.				
3.4 I like it when my teacher comments on my posts and writes on my blog wall.				
3.5 I find weblogging very useful.				
3.6 I like reading blogs in the forum section.				
3.7 I like posting comments on the forum section's blogposts.				
3.8 I like it when the teacher gives feedback/comments in the class about our posts.				
3.9 The teacher's blogposts on various links in improving language skills are very useful.				
3.10 I regard weblogging as a language practice activity.				
3.11 I regard weblogging as a tool to communicate with the teacher.				
3.12 I regard weblogging as a tool for reflection and evaluation of my own language experience.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.13 I believe weblogging will help me improve my reading and writing skills.				
3.14 I find weblogging as a meaningful way of				

learning and practicing English language skills.				
3.15 Weblogging creates a sense of online-community to English language learners in the class.				
3.16 Weblogging is a very good venue for language learners to discuss with each other and communicate in the target language.				
3.17 Weblogging should be continued even if the course for which it was designed for is over.				
3.18 Weblogging encourages me to use and practice my skills.				
3.19 I enjoy weblogging.				
3.20 I recommend weblogging to all language learners of English.				

4. I like weblogging because…

5. What factors/reasons will affect/stop a student from taking an active interest in weblogging? Why?

6. What are your suggestions in solving the factors/reasons you identified in question number 4?

7. I recommend weblogging to all English language learners because…

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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Can the Subaltern Communicate?

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Abstract:
Following Gayatri Spivak's Controversial essay, "can the subaltern Speak?" a host of debates have come to the fore as regards whether or not the subaltern voice can speak at all, especially after the era of independence. Of course, Spivak has her reasons to answer the question she raises in the negative, but other writers (I take the example of Moroccans) have proven that they can speak and they actually have spoken in their writings though the means whereby the speech is conducted is Western. In this sense, my contribution addresses the question of the subaltern voice in some post-colonial literary works, especially of the Moroccans, and the extent to which this voice is able or abled to speak. This is seen into especially through the content of what the subaltern voice says and the literary techniques employed in speaking its mind.

Key Words: Abrogation, appropriation, discourse, the subaltern

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Now and then, literature has been concerned with the themes and factual aspects that demonstrate the extent to which we still live in a world intensified by the growing discrepancy between the haves and have-nots. That is the reason why many authors, scholars and even critics have embarked on a literary journey to which they have chosen the oppressed voices of the subaltern to be their main preoccupation. Therefore, the notion of the subaltern has become an issue in the post-colonial theory when Gayatri C. Spivak (1988) critiqued the assumption of the subaltern studies group in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Her criticism has rendered the issue of the subaltern voice one of the concerns of the post-colonial theoreticians and writers, thereby culminating in having a huge debate between the post-colonial theoreticians over whether or not the subaltern voices can speak. (Spivak, 1988)

As an answer to her question, Spivak (1988) asserts that the subaltern cannot speak because of different reasons. Along with her contention goes many writers as well as those opposing her. Spivak herself is one of the voices that we can place under analysis here. When she has problematized the Gramscian notion of the subaltern, many writers and critics, among whom we can cite Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, and others, considered her as an inquisitive voice that has sought to solve an issue that has come on stage because of the Indian repressing regime and its patriarchal system of ruling. Spivak (1988) confirms that the subaltern groups cannot speak in the sense they have hybrid identities and are governed or manipulated by the dominant discourse that provided them with the language and conceptual categories with which they speak. (Spivak, 1988: 273) Therefore, "the subaltern cannot speak, means that even when the subaltern makes an effort to the death to speak, she is not able to be heard, and speaking and hearing complete the speech act. That's what it had meant." (Donna, Landry et al, 1996: 292)

The subaltern, for Spivak, cannot speak because they do not have the means that can allow them to. They are, in a way or another, constructed by some discourse that they unintentionally work to promote. Spivak argues that the language utilised by the subaltern to voice himself/herself is appropriated, and any attempt to speak or write by means of this language will be a furtherance of the hegemonic power of the discourse by which the subaltern voice was constructed. In this connection Bill Ashcroft (1999) explains that,

> Theorists such as Gayatri Spivak drew attention to the dangers of assuming that it was a simple matter of allowing the subaltern (oppressed) forces to speak, without recognizing that their essential subjectivity had been and still constrained by the discourses within which they were constructed as subaltern. (Ashcroft, et al, 1999: 79).

The construction of the subaltern voice within the parameters of some certain discourses, such as the acquisition of the colonial language, is what prevents the voice from deploying all of their concerns and worries, thereby speaking, to use Edward Said's wordings, the truth to power. (Said, W. Edward, 1996: 85). Spivak is not the only one who has spoken of the subjectivity of the subaltern voice. Along with her line of reasoning go Louis Althusser, Lacan and Michael Foucault, among others. It seems that Spivak concurs with the post-structuralist position on

subjectivity. For instance, Louis Althusser stresses the importance of ideology in the formation of a subject or a subaltern voice. For him, the ruling classes in a society do not only rule, but they try to manipulate their thinkers and producers of ideas. Hence, the subaltern voice is constructed by the ideology of the ruling classes, and every action the voice can perform is the corollary of the ideological formation of this subaltern subject. As for Lacan, language constructs the subaltern's subjectivity. Post-colonial writers have been exposed to the colonial languages, and any attempt from their part to write or speak using this language is what makes them subject to it and only perpetuators of the hegemonic force of that language.

Furthermore, Michel Foucault is much known for his writings and interviews on discourse. For him, discourse produces a subject dependent upon the rules of the system of knowledge that produces it. For instance, the subaltern voice cannot escape the shackles of the discourse by which he or his people were first entrapped. Generally, any action or voice emitted by the subaltern is out of the three elements that have been examined by Louis Althusser, Lacan and Michel Foucault. (Ashcroft, et al, 1999: 224-225). Spivak also goes in the same direction by confirming that the subaltern cannot speak because it is constructed within some discourses that do without the emancipation of that voice. She even goes further as to explain the situation of the Indian women who constitute double oppressed voices, for they are voices oppressed by both the patriarchal society in which they have grown up and the colonial discourses that have constructed the whole Indian society. In her words, Spivak avers that, "in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow." (Qtd. in Ashcroft, et al, 1999: 219).

This is the situation of women as doubly marginalised by both the patriarchal Indian society and the ideological construction of their knowledge. Indian women are even in shadow and very few have been said on their behalf. If we can really speak of the subaltern as unable to speak, then the Indian women would provide the solid arguments underpinning such claim. Still, there is a growing tendency towards affirming the capability of the subaltern to speak, especially with the advent of the postcolonial theory. The subaltern voice, in this sense, has gained the confidence of some post-colonial critics and writers who asserted that this voice can speak and has already spoken. Therefore, the postcolonial literary products prove an indispensable haven where the subaltern voices effectively function as a counter-discourse to the ex-colonial dominant discourse.

In their book, *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, the authors have quoted George Lamming contending that it is time for this subaltern voice to speak and rebel against the ex-colonial norms and chains by which this voice used to be repelled. For Lamming, some post-colonial writers (such as Raja Rao, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe and Tom King, to mention but a few) have managed to establish their own rules and regulations meant to make of them voices against the neo-colonial dominance in the newly independent African countries. These voices, in turn, can console and represent the other oppressed and unknown people of the world. (Ashcroft, et al, 2001: 45). In support of this, Bill Ashcroft (2003) explains that the subaltern voice was suppressed and disabled to emerge during the colonial era, but more recently this voice has started to be heard, read and even incorporated into the Western canonical realm of the colonial literature. To clarify this idea more, Ashcroft (2003) puts forward the contention that,

> The English cultural hegemony has been maintained through canonical assumptions about literary activity, and through attitudes to post-colonial literatures which identify them as isolated national off-shoots of English literature, and which therefore relegate them to marginal and subordinate positions. More recently, as the range and strength of this literature has become undeniable, a process of incorporation has begun in which, employing Eurocentric standards of judgement, the works and writers of which it approves as British. (Ashcroft, et al, 2003: 7).

English writers have realised that the emergence of the subaltern voice has to be incorporated or contained within the English canonical literary world. This attests to the power of this voice as a precious source of knowledge about the world that the Westerners are trying to incorporate. Similarly, Elleke Boehmer (1995) invokes the same idea of the voices that are being claimed or incorporated by the British lest they would cause a change that may affect the English literary canon. Boehmer goes further as to say that foreign writers themselves acknowledge the fact that the subaltern can speak, since "there is an intriguing coincidence in the fact that metropolitan writers began to acknowledge in their work the presence of others around the same time as colonized writers were appropriating European genres and symbolic conventions to express their own identity." (Boehmer, 1995: 99)

The subaltern has been all the time presented as either a representative or a represented power in different literary works. This power has culminated in its recognition by both the place from where the power of the voice is released and the potential destination to where it is heading. Furthermore, many other postcolonial writers, among whom we find Moroccans, have corroborated the ability of the subaltern to speak. For instance, those writers tend to confirm that they are voices reading their cultures to others, and, in the meanwhile, they themselves employ some voices within their novels, autobiographies or short stories that they enable to speak.

In his *Heart of Embers*, Abdellatif Akbib has freed the voice of Said, the major character. Said throughout the novel tries to make up for all mistakes he committed in the past by voicing them through Akbib's lenses. In this regard, Said confirms that,

> I am saying this because, in the darkness of the room where I lie, in the grip of a deep sense of solitude, and prompted by a keen sensory perception, I have often caught myself communing with the past- journeying back through its nooks and recesses, puzzling my way along its tortuous labyrinth- now that I have practically no foreseeable future to plan for. (Akbib, 2004: 11).

Journeying back through the doors of the past, Said is meant to get his voice freed and feel at ease by doing good to those whom he mistreated in the past even by remembering their names and good deeds. In light of this and other literary works written by Moroccans and sub-Saharans, the question of the ability of the subaltern to speak has been fully tackled. More interestingly, it is amazing how a voice can manage to emerge from within some harsh circumstances used to have been stumble-blocking it throughout its successive attempts to tell or make the others hear its echoes and flashes. The subaltern voice has managed to speak when it played the role of the representative of, more or less, the other more oppressed voices still have

not emerged or spoken yet. What the voice utters or articulates is a transmission to endless problems and worries of either the subaltern voice or his/her people. For instance, Frederick Douglass is a black spokesperson for the black people. He is against slavery and the dehumanizing exploitation of the black by the white by chosing to represent the black race just as Martin Luther King did. King also did not hesitate to defend the black cause and fight against slavery, injustice and inequality. These are the underlying principles that made him organize non-violent campaigns with his fellow-country men. In his words, Martin Luther says,

> I am cognized of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I can not sit idly by in Atlanta and not to be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice every where. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. (King, M. Luther, 1971: 23)

Amazing is the metaphorical image Martin Luther King draws as to demonstrate the extent to which the black person is very important and is the focal point of most black writers. When some people are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality and tied in a single garment of destiny, they become one single body defending, speaking and caring for each other. In support of such ideals, Brick Oussaid (1989) has written an autobiographical story entitled, *Mountains Forgotten by God*, where he assumed the responsibility of speaking and representing his people about whom nothing has been heard or known. His story of a Moroccan Berber family is a representative of a larger social network of people still living under dire poverty and still enduring the caprices of life. These people are the forgotten, thereby needing to be voiced to the outer world via Oussaid's tongue. In this connection, he confirms that, "the people of whom [he] speak[s] have no voice, they can neither speak out nor demonstrate. The echo of their sighs does not carry far." (Oussaid, 1989: 4).

Furthermore, the subaltern voice has been a counter-discourse to the European dominant discourse. If the West depicts its "Others" as savages, uncivilized or immature, now the East will write and react back against the misconceptions that have been held against it for decades. For instance, Kamal Abdel-Malek (2000) summarises the scope of his anthology, *America in an Arab Mirror*, in saying that,

> This anthology illustrates the ways in which America has been portrayed in the one hundred years spanning 1895-1995. These travel accounts reveal the difference, background, and gender of the travellers images of America in these accounts range from America the unchanging other, the very antithesis of the Arab self, to America as the other that has praise worthy and reprehensible elements; some to reject, others to appropriate. (Kamal, 2000: 2)

Leafing through the anthology's pages, one can sense that Arabs are now in a position to act as Occidentalists. They have reached the moment to have their own ideas, thoughts and judgements about their "Others" heard and regarded with full attention. America now is the mirror through which the Arabs can see their real "Self." In so doing, throughout their literary

products, the subaltern voices endeavour to report their messages with the implication of different literary techniques to serve the unity or efficacy of the voiced concerns, especially with characterisation, language or temporal and spatial elements. In so doing, the use of a character or different characters in the post-colonial novel has been characterised by distinctive features. In the British or American traditional novels, the authors usually employ a protagonist versus an antagonist technique as both subjects and dominators of the events occurring throughout the whole novel. By contrast, when leafing all through a post-colonial novel of an African or Asian writer, we notice that the characters involved in the events of the story stand for a collectivity rather than an individual. Even when there is one character or more in such novels, they most of the time defend the cause of a group of people.

This explains that in the post-colonial era, we have ended up having objects rather than subjects: Subaltern voices defending and standing for the cause of a collectivity. This is perceived in Brick Oussaid's (1989) *Mountains Forgotten by God*, where one can feel Oussaid's ability to be the representative of his people; a voice that has shouldered the responsibility to carry the echoes of some other minor voices far than they themselves can. Abdellatif Akbib (2004) also in his novel *Hearts of Embers* puts into service a voice that was freed all the way through the novel in order to express the different concerns, mistakes or problems the voice of Said, the Major character, has encountered and led during his life. These and other examples are there to typify the ways in which the implementation of characterisation in the post-colonial novel has threaded a different path from that of the eighteenth and nineteenth century novel.

Besides, language is a key marker and an effective communicational device via which the subaltern is able or abled to speak. It is the most suitable arm a writer can make use of with the purpose of externalising what he/she thinks and feels. Similarly, in order for a voice to be heard, there needs to be a powerful language whereby the subaltern can effectively speak. The ability to speak by means of language can be marked in the different post-colonial literary products whose organic or thematic unity necessitates a language that can kill two birds with one stone. That is to say, language can do the job of a cohesive organizer of ideas, themes and evidence. It can also be a messenger despatching ideas to its readership. More importantly, a language does not only enable some voices to speak, but it also help these same voices enable other minor ones within their novels to speak their minds as well. In so doing, some characters are being voiced in some post-colonial literary products via other major voices that happened to possess the means or the language that can successfully deliver their messages. For example, in his *Abdullah's feet*, Hafid Bouazza (2005) has enabled other voices within his novel to speak by using a language over which only Bouazza has control. In this account, Bouazza relates,

> What is it, Baba?' Fatima asked:
> What is all the commotion? My father, sheik Abdullah, jutted his chin toward the kitchen. It's mother,' replied Fatima, 'she dreamed of Abdullah last night.' (Bouazza, 2005: 20).

Bouazza (2005) has given a voice to the characters he has employed in his work. Abdullah, the father, is able to ask his sister, Fatima, in a language that they, as illiterate voices, could not have spoken if it had not been for Bouazza. Likewise, Hamid Qabbal (2008) is another major subaltern voice who has enabled in his novel, *The Spirit of a City*, most of the characters to

speak through the language they may not have had access to without his help. The novel relates the life of Mouh who has gone through bitter and unsatisfactory experiences. Mouh has managed to speak along with the shoe-shiner boy using a different language. In this regard, Qabbal says,

> Mouh sighing with relief gently put him down, and eagerly asked:" how much have you got? "The boy looked down, topped the ground with the front of his right shoe and resignedly answered: "two hundred." Mouh giggled out:" that's too much for a boy!" the boy sadly contradicted:" too little for an orphan without a home an heir that money is now my father, mother, friends and family! (Qabbal, 2008: 66).

Had it not been the English language used in voicing both Mouh and the shoe-shiner, the like voices would have never been heard. Hamid Qabbal (2008) has done them favour when he has given them the language via which they, from time to time, are enabled to tell us something they want using their voice.

Time and space in the novels where the subaltern voice is set free are very important in showing the extent to which the subaltern voice can be traced through the temporal and spatial elements of a novel. When speaking about the significance of time to the subaltern voices, we then refer to the era or period where the literary works voicing them have been first produced. It is quite indispensable to make reference to the fact that most of the novels produced in the period of post-colonialism have given raise to the subaltern voices to speak and call for the recovering of identities, cultures or indigenous languages. In this respect, the minor voices have sensed the need to be independent and free to make their voices heard, especially as part of the independence that their countries have been granted.

Furthermore, space is another element constituting the novels of the subaltern. The significance of space in the post-colonial or minority writings lies in its ability to cause a change, which in turn would culminate in voicing the subaltern. Considering Brick Oussaid's (1989) *Mountains Forgotten by God*, we notice that the author has managed to speak through this literary work just after he left for France. This movement from his place of birth to the outer Nirvana of France has helped him a great deal with establishing the basics and foundations on which his voice as well as that of his people would stand and be secured. Oussaid's avers that, "the support of [his] friends and the social services of the host country saved [him]." (Oussaid, 1989: 125). France, for Oussaid, is the place where he has changed and transformed the life of misery and oppression he used to have in Morocco. From there also he has learned the basics to use in his writing and speaking about his people secluded in the middle of nowhere. In fact, the journey that Oussaid has undergone has helped him a great deal to discover who he really is: a representative of the forgotten.

More importantly, another main component making of the subaltern voices stronger to reach many an audience is the choice of language, especially a global one. In this regard, Chinua Achebe (1981) gave his support to the English language for two main reasons. The first one is that English, as a lingua franca, has helped with maintaining the national unity of a country, like Nigeria, where more than two hundred languages are at clash as to which language to use in daily life situations. The second reason is that English has become part of the Nigerian life and

should be seen as a Nigerian language, since it is spoken and used in the writings of the Nigerians to voice all what they have. (Achebe, 1981: 48). Besides, speaking of the good qualities of the English language, one may refer to its position among the other spoken languages all over the world. For the subaltern voice, the English language serves as a powerful medium of communication that has the capability to carry the voice to the remotest corners of the world. In so doing, "post-colonial writers in English are able to express their view of a world fissured, distorted, and made incredible by cultural displacement." (Achebe, 1981: 235).

English is a globally dominant language serving to voice every single issue on a global scale. This can offer us an answer to why some Moroccan voices speak in the English language though French is the language of the ex-colonizers. Of course, we can cite as many writers as the English language can testify of those Moroccans who write and speak through the open shatters of its windows. For instance, Abdellatif Akbib, Anour Majid, Jilali El Koudia, and Mohamed Benouarrek, to mention but a few, have all chosen to interpret their cultures in a language about which many scholars and African writers, such as Chinua Achebe said to have the ability to bear the burden of one's experiences and despatch them to faraway places. In the same connection, Chinua Achebe (1981) reckoned with the necessity to specify the readers intended to hear the subaltern voice. As an African voice, Achebe is very concerned with his potential audience and, in this regard, he argues that:

> I realise that a lot has been made of the allegation that African writers have to write for European and American readers because African readers where they exist at all are only interested in reading text books. I don't know if African writers always have a foreign audience in mind. What I do know is that they do not have to. At least I know that I don't have to. (Achebe, 1981: 42).

Though Achebe (1981) acknowledges that the English language can carry the weight of the African experience, he has in mind the African readership. Of course, English is the language that can read Achebe's thoughts to every Nigerian. That is why he testifies that,

> Last year the pattern of sales of things fall apart in the cheap paper-back edition was as follows: about 800copies in Britain, 20,000 in Nigeria; and about 2,500 in all other places. The same pattern was true also of no longer at ease. (Achebe, 1981: 42).

The Nigerian readership is outnumbering other foreign readers of Chinua Achebe. This can be attributed either to the topic that the voice is raising within his/her work, or to the efficiency of the English language and its aptitude to reach many readers all over the world. Chinua Achebe, like many other African writers, has opted for the English language as a trustworthy messenger to carry the cultural weight of his country and its subaltern voices. Surely, many disputes have resulted over whether or not the subaltern voice has any practical effects on real life situations though using the English language. Many views have expressed their doubt to that effect. Historically, by the time the ex-colonized countries got their independence, there began a move towards voicing the scandals and barbarity of the ex-colonizers by many post-

colonial writers. The subaltern voice has had an effective role to play on practical life. Bill Ashcroft (1999) supports this idea in saying that,

> The existence of post-colonial discourse itself is an example of such speaking, and in most cases the dominant language or mode of representation is appropriated so that the marginal voice can be heard. (Ashcroft, et al, 1999: 219)

The subaltern has managed to cause a change in its contemporary life and come up with a counter discourse to question, contest and even belie the modes of representation by which the ex-colonizers used to manipulate and picture their subjects. In this post-colonial discourse, the voice has utilised all the clues enabling it to speak out against the oppression of its ex-colonizer. Simply, by appropriating the ex-colonizer's discourse and then subverting it from within, the post-colonial writers have managed to shaken the giant edifice behind which the ex-colonizer used to take hold of its subject through discourse. That is to say, the appropriation of the colonial language was in fact an emulation that has sought to abrogate this language to become a tool running the counter-attacks against the European dominant discourse. Hence, the subaltern voice can dismantle the master's house just by using the tools of the master.[1] In support of this, Elleke Boehmer (1995) explicates that,

> Drawing on the special effects of magic realism, post-colonial writers combine the supernatural with local legend and imagery derived from colonialist cultures to represent […] and indict the follies of both empire and its aftermaths. (Boehmer, 1995: 235)

Speaking about the term abrogation, which was applied by most post-colonial writers as a subversive literary technique in the post-colonial discourse, the modern African stories offer us an insight into some African writers' literary works. These writers have appropriated the English language, but this English is a new one to effectively depict the African experiences. For instance, Nkem Nwankwo (1977) in his short story, "the gambler" writes,

> "My frend bay we de work with me last month no de work with again he throw in one hundred pounds, yes one hundred and he win thousands. Now I see am ride fine fine cars and carry fine fine women. You no see am." (Nwankwo, 1977: 172).

This is an example of the many texts in which the abrogation or rejection of the Standard English is manifest. Such African writers use this subversive strategy as a means of saying to their ex-colonizers that they have appropriated and mastered their language, and now it is their turn to write back in a distorted language standing as a mirror for colonial corrupt acts. Gabriel Okara (2001) offers us an explanation as to why many post-colonial writers write English in an abrogated way. In this regard, he explains that,

> Some may regard this way of writing English as a desecration of the language. This is of course not true. Living languages grow like living things, and English is far from a dead language. There are American, West Indian, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand versions of English. All of them add life and vigour to the language while reflecting their own respective cultures. Why shouldn't there be a Nigerian or West African English which we can use to express our own ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way? (Qtd. in Ashcroft, et al, 2001: 286-287)

As far as Gabriel Okara (2001) is concerned, there should be versions of English, each of which would be used to explain and read some peoples cultures, philosophy or thinking. This way of writing English could be conceived of as a revolt of the post-colonial voices against Standard English. However, Edward W. Said (1996) invites a kind of carefulness when dealing with language in the sense that the voices should use a language to necessarily bring about a change rather than seek revenge. Said, in this sense, affirms that, "in writing and speaking, one's aim is not to show everyone how right one is, but rather in trying to induce a change in the moral climate whereby aggression is seen as such." (Said, W. Edward, 1996: 74). In this sense, the role of the post-colonial voice is to speak the truth to power and attempt to, at least, generate a positive change. Therefore,

> The intellectual does not climb a mountain or pulpit and declaim from the heights. Obviously you want to speak your piece where it can be heard best; and also you want it represented in such way as to influence with an ongoing and actual process, for instance, the cause of peace and justice. Yes, the intellectual's voice is lonely, but it has resonance only because it associates itself freely with the reality of a movement, the aspirations of a people, [and] the common pursuit of a shared ideal. (Said, W. Edward, 1996: 75).

The subaltern can be effective and produce fruitful effects only if it associates itself with the worries, concerns and aspirations of its people. The voice, as mentioned earlier, has managed to produce some literary works where it has been expressed and further empowered. It is not that very essential to put in mind one's audience before starting to write or speak, but rather what counts is what to say and the concrete effects it could generate on practical life. These effects have to be positive and cause a change; a moral one in the unjust communities where injustice and oppression are still rampant even after the colonizer's departure.

To bring this discussion home, the subaltern voice has indeed generated disputed debates that have been seeking to unravel all the uncertainties of whether the subaltern can speak or not. Spivak has argued that the voice cannot speak, whereas many other writers have stressed that this voice can speak and, more than that, it has already spoken. This is argued for when we read some literary works of some post-colonial writers whose main preoccupations are to read their cultures to others, tell about the hardship of some people, celebrate the aspirations of their people or denounce the injustice found in their societies. In this respect, what is more important when speaking or writing is to make considerable efforts to cause a moral change in one's society. The subaltern voices have to associate themselves with the improvement of their social surroundings

and the aspirations of the people with whom they share cultural, social, linguistic and local belongings.

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Arab EFL Students' Application and Awareness of Critical Thinking in College Writing: A Case Study

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Abstract:
This paper sheds light on the necessity of engaging critical thinking skills in teaching college writing to EFL students at university. The study investigates students' attitudes towards writing, the challenges they face when writing paragraph assignments in terms of generating and organizing ideas. It has been noticed that students' performance in English college writing is not satisfactory not just for linguistic reasons but for lacking critical thinking skills. Many studies focused on the grammatical and vocabulary problems that face Arab EFL learner's when writing in English. Albeit, this research takes us a step further and even more pedagogical than just linguistic. It addresses the difficulties that students face when writing assignments that require them to argue, analyze, infer and judge. Results show that students' inefficient writing is due to their lack of critical thinking skills which are neglected throughout their writing experience at high school.

***Key Words*:** college writing, critical thinking, EFL classrooms, self-confidence

Introduction:

J. K. Rowling writes in the biography on her website that she was on a train when the idea for Harry Potter "fell into my head." She did not have paper or pen, so for the four-hour train ride all she could do was to think. Her mind came up with an idea, and she valued that idea; she was confident that idea was going to grow big, so she let her mind work freely, create and analyze utilizing all the knowledge she has acquired throughout her life. The result was a delightful series of children book, captivating readers in sixty nine languages around the world and turning a depressed mother living a stressful life in London into a billionaire author and philanthropist.

The example mentioned about shows how writing is a thinking process; it starts at the very moment of generating an idea and ends up with words on paper. Arapoff (1967) argues that "writing is much more than an orthographic symbolization of speech; it is, most importantly, a purposeful selection and organization of experience. By experience she means "all thoughts-facts, opinions, or ideas, which require active thinking." while teaching grammar is teaching students "not to think." (p. 33). Elbow (1998) states that students need to have ideas in order to write well. They need to create ideas and then think critically about these ideas

Obviously, teaching writing at college is not the same as teaching the other language skills. It is more than teaching grammar or sentence skills and how to use them; furthermore, it entails addressing other issues related to "thinking actively", thoughts, decisions, logic and reason. In other words, students need to learn to think critically in order to learn to write effectively. Their writing can be described as effective if it includes good ideas that are well organized and well supported.

Improving writing and critical thinking skills is essential to EFL university students. For one thing, university students need to be independent thinkers and active citizens, especially if they live in "societies that suffer political and socioeconomic problems." (Shaila & Trudell 2010) Another reason is that EFL students need to use the knowledge gained whether through life experience or education when they produce their own writings, whether when writing thesis, curriculum vitae, research papers, proposals, letters or essays. In all of these, they need to show strength by deciding on a purpose for their piece of writing, expressing their thoughts and beliefs, convincing and arguing. This can be only done when one has the ability to think independently, use the knowledge acquired through life experience or education, analyze and organize ideas; that is by implementing critical thinking. Another important reason for the need of developing independent and reasonable thinking for EFL university students is that they can easily access so much information through the Internet much of which is either second-hand, unattributed or unverified.

Therefore, when teaching writing, an instructor has more to do than just teaching linguistics and structures; a teacher has to work on the students' thinking, not just to make them think, but to make them think critically. The question is how far teachers are aware of the importance of addressing critical thinking while teaching writing. On the other hand, how willing students are to improve their thinking and learn to think critically.

Critical thinking

"Critical thinking" is not an easy concept to define for it means different things to different people in different contents. The online Oxford Dictionary defines critical thinking as " The objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment." On the other hand, Cambridge online dictionary defines critical thinking as "the process of thinking carefully about a subject or idea, without allowing feelings or opinions to affect you."

Shirkhani & Fahim 2011 define critical thinking as individual's ability to think and make correct decisions independently.

Facione (2011) argues that all the definitions that have been proposed for critical thinking agree that critical thinking is good thinking which is opposite to "irrational, illogical thinking". Facione also asserts the difficulty of providing an exact definition of critical thinking. He presents experts opinion in which an international group of experts was asked to try to form a consensus about the meaning of critical thinking. He quotes from the consensus statement of the national panel the following as "core critical thinking skills".

- Interpretation: " To comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgments , conventions, beliefs, rules, procedures, or criteria".
- Analysis: " To identify the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms of representation intended to express belief, judgment, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions".
- Inference: " to identify and secure elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions; to form conjectures and hypotheses; to consider relevant information and to reduce the consequences flowing from data, statements, principles, evidence, judgments, beliefs, opinions, concepts, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation".
- Evaluation: "to assess the credibility of statements or other representations that are accounts or descriptions of a person's perception, experience , situation, judgment, belief, or opinion; and to assess the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationships among statements, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation".
- Explanation: "To state and to justify that reasoning in terms of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, and contextual considerations upon which one's results were based, and to present one's reasoning in the form of cogent argument".
- Self-regulation: "Self-consciously to monitor one's cognitive activities, the elements used in those activities, and the results educed, particularly by applying skills in analysis, and evaluation to one's own inferential judgments with a view toward questioning , confirming, validating, or correcting either one's reasoning or one's results." (pp.9-10)

Engaging critical thinking in the EFL classroom

There are a number of studies that tackle the importance of utilizing critical thinking skills in EFL classrooms for its definite impact on developing the learners language competence and use of the foreign language.

Shirkhani & Fahim (2011) ,for example, argue that critical thinking is an important aspect that needs to be enhanced among language learners because of its important role in developing effective language learning. The researchers suggest that promoting critical thinking skills in the classroom is the task of the teacher. Hence, they suggest some ways in which language teachers can enhance learners' critical thinking skills when learning a foreign language

by using authentic content-based materials and group-work, project-based and presentation activities that require critical thinking on the part of the learner.

Nikoopour, et al (2011) also investigate the relationship between critical thinking and the use of direct and indirect language learning strategies by Iranian learners. Their study revealed that there is a significant relationship between Iranian use of language learning strategies and their way of thinking. This important relation, they believe, can add to the ultimate success of language learners in the challenging language learning process. The researchers suggest that syllabus designers should consider incorporating critical thinking as one of the "effective elements in the academic process" so that they will be equipped with the needed analytical skills. The researchers also emphasize that students who were educated to think critically "will demonstrate more professionalism in the use of ideas, assumptions, inferences, and intellectual processes".

Huang (2011) explores how critical literacy and conventional literacy can be "simultaneously promoted" in an EFL reading and writing courses. He argues that learners can benefit from the simultaneous emphasis on both critical and "conventional literacy- code breakers, meaning makers, and text users." His study also emphasizes the need to assess critical literacy implementation from the students perspectives.

Moreover, Bendriss (2012) shows how the three dimensions of integrated curriculum, class-related activities, and out-of-class experience affect Arab students' critical thinking abilities. His study revealed that students attitude towards integrated curriculum and out-of class experience are the key factors that affect their critical thinking skills. He states that "some educators often points out that Arab students' academic performance in college is week because they graduate from secondary education systems that rely on rote memorization and neglect critical thinking skills." (P. 36)

Finally, Allamnakharah (2013) conducted a qualitative case study at King Abdul Aziz University and Arab Open University. His study examins students' perception of learning critical thinking in secondary pre-service teacher education programs . The findings of the study highlight the need for education reforms based on critical thinking to evaluate the quality of education in Saudi Arabia.

Statement of the problem

It has been noticed that students' level of the writing assignments is not satisfactory due to the fact that they have difficulties in generating and organizing ideas logically, not ignoring the idea that they also make common linguistic mistakes.

Objectives of the study

The study aims at investigating students' attitude towards the skill of writing, their awareness and application of critical thinking skills in writing and the influence of their writing experience at high school on their college writing development.

Research questions

1. What is the students' general attitude towards critical thinking and writing?

2. Are there statistically significant differences at (α = 0.05) in the students application and awareness of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to their grade in English in Tawjihi (the name for the high school certificate in Palestine?
3. Are there statistically significant differences at (α = 0.05) in the students application and awareness of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to students' grade in English II course?

Significance of the study

The study aims at investigating students' awareness and application of critical thinking skills in writing. The presented paper can be of beneficial to three main sectors. First, it will give important insights to syllabus designers in terms of the extent to which critical thinking should be implanted in the teaching materials.

Teachers will also take advantage from this study since it will draw their attention to the necessity of addressing critical thinking when teaching college writing as well as giving more appreciation to their students ideas, and so their students' writing assignments can be evaluated as being efficient in terms of the creatively generated ideas.

Taking into consideration the recent trend in the academic process which focuses on creating a learner-centered environment in teaching and learning, students will be the most important party. This is because they can reshape their views of the writing process. They will be encouraged to think out of the box and come up with creative ideas. In other words, they will go beyond providing error-free sentences only, and they will be encouraged to be more self-confident to value their ideas.

Methodology

Sample

The current study has been conducted on second year university EFL students at Hebron University. All students are local citizens in the city of Hebron in Palestine.

The researchers aim at investigating the implementation of critical thinking among English majors in the Writing –I course at Hebron University. Twenty –one second-year students registered in this writing course in the summer semester 2015. The course is designed to give an introduction to writing skills mainly at the level of the paragraph and thus it prepares the ground for Writing-II which deals with essays. Students are taught the nature and purpose of the paragraph and are guided to write one according to a variety of purposes (contrastive, descriptive, argumentative and narrative) using clear, correct and logically-related sentences.

The textbook used in teaching this writing is *Exploring Writing: Paragraphs and Essays* by John Langan. As explained by the author, the main aim of the book is to teach students how to think logically in order to produce effective writing. At the very beginning of the first chapter of the book, Langan recalls the story that helped shape his book; his first college essay for which he received a C because it was "not badly written, but ill conceived" and that he "had not thought out " his "paper clearly."

As a prerequisite for this writing course (Writing I), all the students had taken English II writing course which focuses on sentence structure and writing error-free simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences.

Instruments of the study

As regard to this research, two instruments were used as the data collection tools:

1. A writing test.

   The students were given the choice to write a paragraph about one topic. They were given three choices. (See appendix. 1). One of the topics was to write a descriptive paragraph about their city, village, or university. The other two choices required the students to write a paragraph including their opinion about argumentative topics where they needed to think and give reasons to support their points of view. The students were given forty minutes to write the paragraphs. It is worth mentioning that the researchers explained to the students that the test would be graded and considered by their teacher so that they could take it seriously.

2. A questionnaire

   The researchers developed a three-part questionnaire for the students. (See appendix. 2). After the students had finished the writing test, the researchers collected their papers and distributed the questionnaire. The students were given fifteen minutes to fill out the questionnaire. The researchers here kindly asked the participating students to give honest responses, for the study would help improve the writing courses offered by the English Department further in the future.

   The questionnaire consisted of three parts; the first part consisted of students personal data; their grade in English in *Tawjihi* (the name for the high school certificate in Palestine) and their grade in English II, the prerequisite course to Writing I.

   The second part contained the items of the questionnaire where students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each one. The questionnaire focused on investigating students' responses to a number of core points related to critical thinking in writing:

- investigating the effect of teaching writing at high school English on their college writing,
- investigating students' self confidence,
- investigating students' understanding of their priorities in writing; whether writing error-free sentences or producing good and creative ideas,
- and finally, investigating their awareness of critical thinking skills.

   The third part of the questionnaire asked the students to include any further comments about their experience in writing throughout the writing course.

Statistical methods:

After collecting questionnaires, the researchers recoded answers to numeric values. 5 degrees were given to strongly agree answer, 4 degrees were given to Agree answer, 3 degrees were given to Neutral answer, 2 degrees were given to disagree answer and one degree was given to strongly disagree answer .

The Statistical methods used in the analysis of the research are :

1. Frequencies and percentages to describe the variables.
2. Means (averages) and standard deviations to measure the students application of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses .

3. The Analysis Of Variance(ANOVA) Test for testing the hypothesis.
4. Pearson Correlation Coefficients for validity.
5. Alpha (Cronbach) scales for Reliability.

Table 1: ***Correction key***

Mean Range	Level
Less than 1.8	The mean assumed very low
1.8 to less than 2.6	The mean assumed low
2.6 to less than 3.4	The mean assumed medium
3.4 to less than 4.2	The mean assumed high
More than or equal 4.2	The mean assumed very high

Results and findings

Table 2: ***Demographic sample***

Grade in English in Tawjihi	70_79%	2	9.1
	80_89%	11	50.0
	90_100%	9	40.9
	Total	22	100.0
Grade in English 102 course	75_79%	11	50.0
	80_89%	8	36.4
	90_100%	3	13.6
	Total	22	100.0

Reliability:

The Reliability scale (Alpha Cronbach) of the questionnaire was computed, and its value was (0.41). It is worth mentioning in this regard that the study was conducted in the summer semester 2015. Unlike the fall and spring semesters, the number of the registered students in the summer course is relatively small.

Research Questions

1. What is the students' general attitude towards critical thinking and writing?

In order to answer these questions, mean and standard deviation of the questionnaire items were computed. The following table shows the results.

Table 3: ***Mean and standard deviation of the questionnaire items***

	The students' general attitude towards critical thinking and writing	Mean	Std. Deviation	level
1)	Writing assignments at university is more challenging than it was at school.	4.73	0.46	Very high
2)	I get higher grades when I write correct sentences.	4.05	0.72	High
3)	I find memorizing vocabulary a priority in learning English.	4.00	0.76	High

4)	When I was a school student, my writing assignments were always limited to writing a formal letter or a letter to a friend or describing a building or a place.	3.86	1.13	High
5)	choosing to study English at university was my own independent decision.	3.82	1.37	High
6)	do not find it easy to write about topics that require analysis, logical thinking, creative thinking, self-reflection or explanation.	3.64	0.79	High
7)	Writing is challenging for me because it requires me to interpret, analyze, reflect on and explain a topic.	3.64	1.09	High
8)	Throughout the writing course, I have developed my thinking skills like interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation… etc.	3.55	1.06	high
9)	When writing an assignment, I always choose to write about easy topics that does not require me to think a lot such as descriptive paragraphs.	3.45	0.74	High
10)	Writing is challenging because I always make grammatical, punctuation and spelling mistakes.	3.45	1.14	High
11)	I get higher grades when I come up with creative and logical ideas.	3.41	1.10	High
12)	when writing, I pay more attention to writing free error sentences than to coming up with creative ideas.	3.41	1.14	High
13)	I find it challenging to write argumentative paragraphs or contrast-comparative paragraphs.	3.36	0.79	medium
14)	I am always confident about the ideas I include in my writing.	3.32	1.25	medium
15)	In English classes at high school, my teacher always asked me to think logically and creatively about the writing topic.	2.32	0.99	Low
16)	When I was a school student, the English teacher always focused on teaching us how to write free error sentences.	2.27	1.24	Low
	Total Degree	2.66	0.29	medium

2. Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the students application and awareness of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to their grade in English in Tawjihi?

The existence of these differences in the students application and awareness of critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses will be tested by using one way analysis of variance(ANOVA) test. The following table shows means and standard deviations and results of this test:

One way AVOVA results

Table 4: ***The students application and awareness of critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing course.***

Source / Scale	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.14	2	0.07	0.85	0.44
Within Groups	1.58	19	0.08		
Total	1.72	21			

The previous table shows that there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the students application of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to students' grade in English in Tawjihi because the F-value = 0.85.

Other conclusions handle students' application and awareness of critical thinking skills in writing with regard to their grade categories; (80_89% and 90_100%) is medium but due to grade category(70_79%), it is low.

The following table shows means and standard deviations of the students application of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to Grade in English in Tawjihi:

Table 5: ***Descriptive statistics for the variables***

Grade in English in Tawjihi	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
70_79%	2	2.41	0.31
80_89%	11	2.68	0.25
90_100%	9	2.69	0.32
Total	22	2.66	0.29

3) Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the students application and awareness of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to students' grade in English II course?

The existence of these differences in the students application and awareness of critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses will be tested by using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test. The following table shows means and standard deviations and results of this test:

Table 6: ***One way AVOVA results for students' grade in English II.***

Source / Scale	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.08	2	0.04	0.49	0.62
Within Groups	1.63	19	0.09		
Total	1.72	21			

The previous table shows that there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the students application of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to students' grade in English II.

Another conclusion is that the students application of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to all grade categories is medium.

The following table shows means and standard deviations of the students application of the critical thinking skills in EFL university level writing courses due to grade in English II course:

Table 7: ***Descriptive statistics for the variables***

Grade in English 102 course	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
75_79%	11	2.61	0.31
80_89%	8	2.68	0.26
90_100%	3	2.79	0.31
Total	22	2.66	0.29

Findings of the study

In general, results of the study show agreement with the researchers' hypotheses. It is evident that students insufficient performance in college writing is explained by their lack of critical thinking skills and of course influenced by their attitude towards writing as a skill and a process.

Students' attitudes towards critical thinking skills and writing:

Students' responses show clearly that they avoid applying critical thinking skills in their academic writing. When asked to answer the writing test as designed by the researchers, the participating students tended to choose the topic that they are familiar with and so does not require them to think a lot in order to infer, analyze or organize. Instead, most of them (60%) chose the question that asked them to write a descriptive paragraph about their city village, or university largely similar to what they had been taught at high school. This means that the students find it challenging when writing about topics that require analysis, logical thinking, self reflection or explanation, a thing which they highly agreed with in the questionnaire. The researchers interestingly noticed that even those students who chose to write an argumentative paragraph did not devote time for pre-writing activities such as brain storming, mind maps or free writing. This tells that they do not consider thinking as a core part of the writing process.

Generally speaking, students regard writing as a linguistic skill; they see that their ultimate success in writing is all about writing error-free sentences regardless of the ideas. The teacher's feedback here is a factor, for students think that the teacher's feedback is limited to writing error-free sentences. Most of them agreed that they expect high grades if they produce error-free sentences. Such an attitude by the teacher actually demotivates the students to devote more time and effort to thinking critically and creatively. In this regard, one student commented that " the teacher always focuses on my sentence skills and grammar mistakes and pay no attention to ideas. This makes me always depressed and anxious when I write."

Most students agreed that they have developed their thinking skills like interpretation, analysis, inference and evaluation. Yet, this is not highly reflected in their responses to other questionnaire items and the writing test, showing that the students find difficulties when applying these skills. This could be justified by students' limited knowledge of these skills and lack of self-confidence.

Pedagogically speaking, one has to be self-confident when writing creatively. Students have to learn to value their ideas so that they can include them in their writings. Interestingly, a good number of the students indicated that they are not always confident about the ideas they include in their writing.

Students experience of writing at high school

The students agreed that writing is more challenging at university than it was at high school. This is explained when students also agreed that the writing topics at school were limited to writing a letter or describing something, indicating that their English teachers at high school did not ask them to think logically about the writing topic. They also believe that their high school teachers did not focus on teaching how to write error-free sentences. This all shows that the writing skill is not well-addressed at high school which impairs students ability to do well in academic writing courses at university.

For the purpose of this study, the researchers find it necessary to investigate the statement of general goals for the Palestinian English Language Curriculum "English for Palestine" (see appendix. 3) where a number of goals is related to developing critical thinking skills. Here, it is also stated that the curriculum aims to "develop students' ability to think critically about different social, environmental, and political problems".

Yet, unfortunately these goals of writing are not reflected in teaching English at high school where the teachers' main concern becomes helping students pass the Tawjihi exam which in turn does not assess writing as a thinking process; here the main task on students is always memorizing words and answering grammar questions. The negative effects of the Tawjihi exam are clearly noticed in students' responses to the questionnaire.

Recommendations

With the regard the results of this study, the researchers provide the following recommendations:

1- Syllabus designers should consider including materials and activities that help develop students' critical thinking skills in EFL textbooks.
2- Teachers should emphasize the idea of writing as a thinking process.
3- Teachers should emphasize critical thinking skills in teaching and assessing students' academic writing.
4- Teachers should value their students ideas in writing with relatively little emphasis on their linguistic mistakes.
5- Further studies may take into consideration a larger sample.

6- The researchers suggest that further studies may consider gender as a variable when exploring the issue of applying critical thinking skills in EFL writing.
7- The researchers recommend that educators at higher education institutions should play an active role in helping students develop their self-confidence.

Conclusion

All in all, critical thinking skills are core elements in the EFL classroom. There is no doubt that the writing skill requires a lot of thinking on behalf of the students, which entails the teachers to highly consider applying addressing critical thinking skills in their teaching of writing. Students writing can sometimes be described as insufficient and ineffective because of students low level of critical thinking skills application in their writing. Besides learning structures of sentences, paragraphs or essays, students need to learn to value their ideas and think creatively and independently. This will definitely lead to an effective environment to learning in EFL classes in general and academic writing in particular.

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Learning Styles-based Curriculum in EFL Class for Senior High School Students

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Abstract

This study discusses the importance of applying a model of curriculum based on students' learning styles in teaching English at Senior High School. A wide range of studies on learning styles that show positive results stretching from elementary to higher education has been increasing from time to time. Educators start to understand the significance of identifying the learning style preferences of the students then applying them into practical teaching-learning process. In this study an investigation was made to diagnose the learning style preferences of 210 students and four EFL teachers in learning English through the use of Willing's questionnaire on "How do you learn best". The subjects included students of grades XI A to XI H and four EFL teachers. Results show that most students in each of the six classes preferred to be teacher-oriented (dependent learner) and most students in each of the other two classes preferred to be communicative learners. The fact is that the results seem to indicate a common phenomenon across the years. This may be a significant indicator for future direction in curriculum development in general and task design in particular for the EFL students in this study or in similar learning contexts as those in this study. Suggestions are given with regard to how the students' learning style preferences can help teachers to design instructional activities. Pedagogical implications are also discussed.

Key words: analytical learner, communicative learner, concrete learner, curriculum, learning style, teacher-oriented learner

1. Introduction

1.1. Definitions of curriculum.

In formal education, the school curriculum and the school teachers are very important facilitators of learning. Curriculum is a sub-discipline of educational processes like counseling, management, instruction and evaluation (Langgulung, 1998, cited in Hashim, 1999: 28). It is so important that scholars have been calling it the queen of educational sciences.

A number of educational researchers have been defining the term "curriculum" in various approaches. Some of them are presented as follows:

A curriculum is the content or objectives for which schools hold students responsible. It is the set of instructional strategies teachers plan to use (Posner, 1992: 4).

For Tanner &Tanner (1980: 16 as cited in Hashim, 1999: 29) curriculum means "all of the learning of students which is planned by and directed by the school to attain its educational goals". He further states that the four fundamental questions should be answered in developing a curriculum:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

Smith, Stanley, & Shores (1957 as cited in Hashim, 1999: 29) curriculum is defined as the set of potential experiences which are set up in a school for the purpose of disciplining children and youth in a group's ways of thinking and acting. Conversely, Stark offers a comprehensive definition of curriculum that includes:

1. The specification of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be learned;
2. The selection of subject matter or content within which the learning experiences are to be embedded;
3. A design or structure intended to lead to specific outcomes for learners of various types;
4. The process by which learning may be achieved;
5. The materials to be used in the learning process;
6. Evaluation strategies to determine if skills, behavior, attitudes, and knowledge change as a result of the process; and
7. A feedback loop that facilitates and fosters adjustments in the plan to increase learning (Hashim, 1999: 29).

In generic term, curriculum refers to a body of subjects or subject matters set out by teachers for students to learn. From this perspective, curriculum covers the whole process of instruction: educational objectives, contents, methods, and evaluation.

Despite of different definitions proposed by researchers they reached a consensus that curriculum can be defined in three approaches: curriculum as the expected *ends* of education, e.g., the intended learning outcomes, curriculum as the expected *means* of education, i.e., instructional plans; curriculum as *a plan* for or a report of actual educational events (Posner, 1992: 4).

Learners are the key participants in curriculum development process and it is important to gather as much information as possible about them prior to designing curriculum (Richards, 2002: 101). More precisely, curriculum development process involves the following stages: to set up philosophy of education, goals and aims of education, general instructional objectives, specific instructional objectives and outcomes, task analysis and content selection, learning activities (Madeus & Stufflebeam, 1989). One of relevant information for curriculum development is students' learning style preferences.

Similarly, Jim Keef wrote: "*Learning style diagnosis… gives the most powerful leverage yetavailable to educators to analyze, motivate, and assist students in school… it is the foundation of a truly modern approach to education.* (1979: 132 as cited in Dunn, 1984: 10). Like other factors such as age, sex, motivation, intelligence, anxiety, and learning strategies, learning style affects language learning success (Sharp, 2004 : 1).

Coffield et al. (2004: 70) stated that Betts developed Betts Inventory in 1909 to measure imagery type of leaning style. Furthermore, it was probably Witkin and his colleagues in the 1940s who started all this off (Witkin 1950; Witkin et al. 1954 as cited in Smith &Dalton 2005: 7). They developed a theory of perception called field dependence/independence. Field dependent people were not easily able to see a figure that was embedded in a background display, while field independent people found easily to see it because they were not confused by what surrounded it. In the earlier days the term "cognitive style" was used rather than learning style (Swanson, 1995 as cited in Tuan, 2012: 2). Witkin and his colleagues later extended the idea to learning styles, saying that some people are able to analyze and learn things in isolation from other surrounding issues, while others needed to learn on a more holistic basis which included the surrounding matters as well. Specifically, according to Kirby (1979 as cited in Tuan, 2012: 2) the term "learning style" came into use when researchers began looking for ways to combine course presentation and materials to match the needs of each learner.

Since then the term learning style has been defined in different ways by many researchers depending on their perspective. Generally speaking, they agreed to a certain degree upon the approaches to the study of learning style: psychological, cognitive and social/interactive (Lang et al., 1999 as cited in Uzun, 2012: 123). Similarly, Conner (2004 as cited in Putinseva, 2006: 1) stated that the study on learning style models falls into general categories for example information processing, personality pattern, and social interaction. Furthermore, Mitchell (1994 as cited in Coffield et al.2004: 56) claimed that there were over 100 learning style models.

1. 2. Definitions of learning style.

Researchers have defined the term "learning style" differently that can be found in literature. Dunn & Dunn(year of Publication) stated that learning style is the way in which each person absorbs and retains information and/ or skills; regardless of how that process is described, it is different for every one (1984: 12). Claxton& Ralston (1978) defined the term as a learner's "consistent way of responding and using stimuli in the context of learning" (p. 7). Later, Scarpaci & Fradd (1985) defined learning styles as "ways in which individuals perceive, organize, and recall information in their environment (p.184). For Keefe (1979 as cited in Reid, 1987: 87), learning styles are "cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning

environment". Dun et al. (1989 as cited in Clenton, 2002) assert that learning styles include variables such as "individual responses to sound, light, temperature, design, perception, intake, chromo-biological highs and lows, mobility needs, and persistence,…motivation, responsibility (conformity) and need for structure…" (p. 56). Ehrman & Oxford (1990, p. 311) define that learning styles are preferred or habitual patterns of mental functioning, and dealing with new information. Gregorc (1979, cited in Erhman & Oxford, 1993) states that learning styles are distinctive behaviors which serve as indicators of how a person learns from and adapts to his environments.

Reid (1995, p. xiii) asserts that learning styles have some fundamental characteristics on which they are based. The first is that *every person, student and teacher alike, has a learning style,* learning strengths and weaknesses. Learning styles exist on wide continuums although they are described as opposites- weaknesses. Furthermore, learning styles are *value-neutral*; that is, no one style is better than others. Therefore, students must be encouraged to stretch their learning styles so that they will be *more empowered in a variety of learning situations.* Often students' strategies are linked to their learning styles. Thus, teachers should allow their *students to become aware of* their learning strengths and weaknesses. (cited in Tuan, 2012: 2). According to James and Gardner (1995 as cited in Uzun, 2012: 2) learning style is the ways how individual learners react to the overall learning environment. Sadler-Smith (1996 as cited by Azun, 2012: 2) suggested that learning style may be defined as a "distinctive and habitual manner of acquiring knowledge, skills or attitudes through study or experience". Leaver, Ehrman &Shekhtman (2005: 66 as cited in Songsiri, 2007: 16) defined learning styles as the preferred patterns of learning used by a learner. Learning style reflects individuals' differences in regard to what type of instruction is most effective for them. (Pashler, et al., 2008 as cited in Tulbure 2012: 65). And finally, to quote Pritchard (2009: 42) as saying that learning style is a preferred way of learning and studying; for example using pictures instead of text; working in groups as opposed to working alone; or learning in a structured rather than an unstructured manner.

The definitions discussed earlier reveal that learning style is an individual learner's characteristic way of learning. It is relatively stable. And is value neutral. Meaning there is no better style than others. An instructional activities might be effective for some but not for some others.

On the other hand, (Peterson, et al., 2009 as cited in Tulbure 2012: 65) learning style represents an individual's preferred ways of responding (cognitively or behaviorally) to learning tasks which change depending on the environment or context.

Majority of researchers concluded that learning style is relatively stable manner. Conversely, (Peterson et al., 2009 as cited in Tulbure 2012: 65) claimed that learning style changes in accordance with the environment or context. It is supported by Pritchard (2009: 43) who stated that learning styles are not fixed traits which an individual will always exhibit. Learners are able to adopt different styles and adapt them in different contexts and situation. Nevertheless, most of us prefer one or two styles above the others.

Despite of various definitions of learning style proposed by a number of scholars, educational

researches have drawn conclusion that not all children learn in the same way (Guild, 2001 as cited in Subban, 2006: 939, Jacobs, 1990; Young, 1986; Frainer, 1986; Zippert, 1985; Jeskey, 1985; Avery, 1985; MacNeil, 1980; Gregorc, 1979; Witkin, 1973; Jensen, 1969 as cited in Cano et al. 1992: 46, Jacobs, 1990; Gregorc, 1979; Witkin, 1973 as cited in Raven et al. 1993: 40). They differ greatly in the way they learn (Sternberg, 1997; McCarthy, 1990; Herrmann, 1988; Kolb, 1984 as cited in Hsiao-Ching She, 2005: 609). Because each student varies in terms of preferred way of learning it therefore becomes imperative that teachers recognize the learning style differences and teach in a manner in which all learning styles are accommodated. Student' learning styles are a very important subject in today's learner-centered educational environment.

1. 3. Definition of learning styles-based curriculum

On the basis of the foregoing discussion learning styles-based curriculum can be defined as a set of instructional strategies, activities planned, designed by teachers to facilitate various types of learners during learning process to attain their goals.

1. 4. The importance of understanding learning styles.

Moreover, studies have shown that understanding students' learning styles is beneficial for both learners and teachers. It is helpful for learners when they are aware of their dominant learning style. In that sense, they might understand their strength and weakness and barriers to learning. Consequently, they can adopt and adapt learning strategies that suit learning which is being undertaken so that they can reach their goal. Furthermore, they have opportunities to improve their potential for learning and creativity when faced with situation that contradicts their preference (Songsiri, 2007: 17; Pritchard, 2009: 43; Coffield et al., 2004: 41). In contrast, unable or reluctant to adopt any particular style has the potential to hamper student's ability to learn effectively. In this context, Honey & Mumford (1986 as cited in Pritchard, 2009: 43) suggest that students need to be able to adopt any other styles in order to complete any given learning tasks satisfactorily. For that purpose, they need training on learning styles.

Being able to identify students' learning styles and then teach them accordingly can help them achieve better academic performance, and improve their attitudes toward learning (Green, 1999; Fine, 2003 as cited in Subban, 2006: 939).

Claxon & Murrel (1987, as cited in Ho, 1999: 53), states that understanding students' learning style and then teaching them through their learning preferences contribute to more effective learning and significant academic progress. Optimal learning occurs when students' and teachers' expectation of each other are mutually respected through establishment of agreement between them on what should be done and why. (Kasaian & Ayatollahi, 2010: 131). Parallel with this is what Zhenhui (2001) stated that teachers' knowledge and understanding about his/her students' preferred ways of learning help them create effective teaching. Studies have shown that students can learn more effectively if teachers try to cater to their learning-style preferences (Willing, 1985, 1988, Nunan, 1988, 1996, Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Similarly, Rod Ellis stated that students' learning will be more successful when the instruction is matched to students' particular aptitude for learning and if they are motivated (2008).

Extensive studies verify both student achievement and motivation improve significantly when learning and teaching styles are matched (Dunn & Dunn, 1979: 242).

Brown (1994) as cited in Zhenhui (2001: 4) advocates matching approaches in teaching to students' learning styles increase students' motivation to learn and enhance their achievement as well class performance. Researchers like (Griggs & Dunn, 1984; Smith & Renzulli, 1984; Charkins et.al., 1985) asserts that teaching and learning styles be matched especially in foreign language instruction (e.g. Oxford et.al, 1991; Wallace & Oxford, 1992) cited in Zhenhui (2001: 1). Kumaravadivelu (1991: 98) cited in Zhenhui (2001: 1) confirms that when there is a less gap between teacher intention and learner interpretation enhances learners' achievement. Other researchers have further reported that students whose learning styles are matched with the teacher's approach to teaching will have greater ease of learning (Packer & Bain, 1978) and higher satisfaction (Renninger & Snyder, 1983) than those whose styles are mismatched (She: 2003: 609).

The previous discussions reflects that understanding students' learning styles provide opportunities for teachers to think of designing a wide range of teaching approaches in terms of techniques, activities, materials, content and classroom atmosphere (Songsiri, 2007: 17). It trains teachers to be creative in conducting learning process.

Considering the significance of understanding students' learning styles and the findings of an interview with four teachers in the research site on 12 November 2012 that they neglected students' learning styles as one of determinant factors for learning to succeed it is high time to conduct the research on "Learning Styles-based Curriculum in EFL Class for Senior High School Students in Learning English".

2. Research Objectives

In light of all the above, the present study has sought to achieve two main objectives.

1. To identify the learning style preferences for all the students involved in the study.
2. To help the teachers design learning activities that can facilitate learning styles diversity
3.

3. Research Questions

More precisely, the present study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What learning styles do the students exhibit in the EFL classroom?
2. Which learning activities fit students' learning style diversity in curriculum development?

4. Research Method

4.1. Subjects

The subjects of this study are 210 students of grade XI of SMAN 1 Kabupaten Cirebon (Government Senior High School 1 in the District of Cirebon). The selection of the subjects was

based on willingness to take part in the study and they are accessible socially and culturally as well as geographically.

4.2. Instrument

In this study, an adapted version of Willing's (1988: 106) questionnaire on "How do you learn best" (See Appendix) was administered to identify students' learning style preferences and to illustrate how the findings can help teachers design learning tasks.

The questionnaire was modified slightly and translated into Indonesian language to help the subjects understand the matter. It consisted of 30 questions originally then it was modified purposely by the researcher to 24 items. Willing's (1988: 106) questionnaire was selected because it is more comprehensive to identify learner types and the learning methods described in the questionnaire are applicable and relevant to language learning context. It is, therefore, of great practical usefulness to language teachers in particular. Another reason was that it is reliable and valid since it used by two other researchers such as Belinda Ho (1999) and Adam Rekrut (2001).

Some other instruments (Coffield et al., 2004: 70-71) created by researchers for example Allison& Hayes (Cognitive Style Index (CSI): 1996); Apter (Motivation Style Profile (MSP): 1998); Dunn& Dunn (Learning Style Questionnaire (LSQ): 1979, Learning Styles Inventory: 1975, Productivity Environmental Preference Survey (PEPS): 1979, Building Excellence Survey (BES): 2003); Felder and Silverman (Index of Learning Styles (ILS): 1996); Grasha-Riechman (Student Learning Style Scales (SLSS): 1974); Gregorc (Gregorc Mind Styles Delinator (MSD): 1977); Hermann (Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI): 1995); Honey and Mumford (Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ): 1982); Kolb (Learning Style Inventory (LSI): 1976, Revised Learning Style Inventory (R-LSI): 1985, LSI Version 3: 1999); Myers-Briggs (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI): 1962; and Reid (Perceptual Learning Style Preference Survey (PLSPS): 1987 are more general and educationally oriented.

There are four types of learners identified by Willing (1988) through this questionnaire namely analytical learners, communicative learners, concrete learners and teacher-oriented learners. Nunan (1999: 57) explicitly defined the four learner types with reference to their preference over learning tasks:

Type 1: Analytical learners

These learners like studying grammar, studying English books and reading newspapers, studying alone, finding their own mistakes and working on problems set by the teacher.

Type 2: Communicative learners

These students like to learn by watching, listening to native speakers, talking to friends in English and watching television in English, using English out of class in shops, trains, etc., learning new words by hearing them, and learning by conversations.

Type 3: Concrete learners

These learners tend to like games, pictures, films, video, using cassettes, talking in pairs and practicing English outside class.

Type 4: Teacher-oriented learners

These learners prefer the teacher to explain everything, like to have their own

textbook, to write everything in a notebook, to study grammar, learn by reading, and learn new words by seeing them.

In order to model four learner types the questionnaire consists of 24 questions was set up asking the students how they preferred to learn English. Students were asked to show their preferences on a 4-ponit scale.

4.3. Data analysis

The questions on the questionnaire were categorized into four groups according to the learning style preferences of the four learner types identified by Willing (1988). The data was analyzed by adding up the scores of the subjects obtained under each category of questions. Thus, each subject had four scores. The highest score among the four scores obtained indicated what type of learner a subject belonged to. In cases where the subjects obtained two or more tied scores, they were not categorized into any learner type. They were called the "mixed type" or "combined type".

5. Results

The results of the study with regard to learner types as identified by the questionnaire are presented in the table below:

Table 1. *Overall Types of Learners in each class.*

Types of Learners	Grades							
	XI A	XI B	XI C	XI D	XI E	XI F	XI G	XI H
Analytical Learner	1 (3.44%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.70%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Communicative Learner	4 (13.79%)	6 (24%)	2 (7.40%)	9 **(32.14%)**	2 (8.69%)	7 **(35%)**	7 (23.33%)	8 (28.57%)
Concrete Learner	3 (10.34%)	3 (12%)	7 (25.92%)	6 (21.42%)	4 (17.39%)	5 (25%)	4 (13.33%)	5 (17.85%)
Teacher-Oriented Learner	15 **(51.72%)**	11 **(44%)**	9 **(33.33%)**	9 **(32.14%)**	7 **(30.43%)**	3 (15%)	15 **(50%)**	9 **(32.14%)**
Mixed type	6 (20.68%)	5 (20%)	8 (29.62%)	4 (14.28%)	9 **(39.13%)**	5 (25%)	4 (13.33%)	6 (21.42%)
Total Number	29	25	27	28	23	20	30	28

Table 3. *Teachers' Learning Style Preference*

Types of Learning Style	Sex	Age
Analytical Learning Style	0	-
Communicative Learning Style	1/F	<40s
Concrete Learning Style	1/F	<40s
Teacher-Oriented Learning Style	1/M	>40s
Mixed Type (Analytic, Communicative, Concrete, Teacher-Oriented	1/F	<40s
Total Number	4	

It can be seen from the above table that in each class, most students are teacher-oriented learner. The highest number of teacher-oriented leaner exists in class XI 1 **(51.72%)** followed respectively by XI 7 **(50%);** XI 2 **(44%);** XI 3 **(33.33%);** XI 8 **(32.14%);** and XI 5 **(30.43%).** Interestingly, grade XI 6 is dominated by communicative learner-type **(35%)**, whereas grade XI 4 occupied by equivocal number of both **32.14%** is communicative learner and **32.14%** is teacher-oriented learner.

6. Discussion

The reason for students' preferences may be related to their past experiences in learning English at least starting from Junior School. Education system in Indonesia is characterized by examination-oriented in which most students, especially those who in the final year are trained through intensive drills on past or sample examination papers. Another reason was as it was believed that teachers' teaching style can be categorized as expert type who preferred teaching methods such as didactic lectures, technology-based presentation, teacher-centered questioning and discussion. A teacher who is categorized as expert type possesses knowledge and expertise that students need. The expert type strives to maintain a status as an expert among students by demonstrating detailed knowledge and by challenging them to enhance their competence. He/she is concerned with transformation information to students and insuring them that they are well-prepared (Grasha, 1996: 154). Moreover, as research supports the concept that teachers teach the way they learned (Stitt-Gohdes 2001: 136 as cited in Brown 2003: 1). Similarly, according to Dunn & Dunn (1979: 241), and (Witkin: 1973; Gregorc: 1979 as cited in Raven et. al, 1993: 40) that "teachers teach the way they learned". The way most of Indonesian teachers teach was greatly influenced by their way of learning. Even the way they teach is the way they learn.

Since a number of teachers have experienced academic success in learning environments that were teacher-centered and relied heavily on lecture and textbook, therefore, their preferred teaching style would be to repeat what worked with them. Those teachers are categorized as field-independent type, that is who are more contend-oriented and prefer to use more formal teaching methods, favoring less student participation in learning to take place and more structured class activities (Hayes & Allison 1997; Pithers 2001). This style of teaching especially

suits field-dependent students who prefer to be told what they should learn and given the resources to acquire the specified body of knowledge or skills (Brown, 2003: 1). In this study, field-dependent learner is called teacher-oriented learner.

Learning styles is value neutral (Reid 1995, p. xiii). Therefore, a learning style might be effective for a certain instructional activities but less effective for others. Moreover, learners should develop knowledge of styles, in order to be aware of their own preferences and abilities, and use them in different instructional activities (Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone, 2004 as cited in Uzuntiryaki, 2007: 25).

Implications for Task Design

As the learning style preferences identified by a majority of the students of all grades, it seems reasonable to use the results as general directions to take in designing learning activities. Many research findings (Subban, 2006: 939; Ho, 1999: 53; Kasaian and Ayatollahi, 2010: 131; Dunn & Dunn, 1979: 242; Zhenhui, 2001: 1 and 4; She, 2005: 609; Bernard, 1972; Lang & Evans, 2006: 63; Fisser et al., 2006: 99 and Brown, 2003: 1) confirm that understanding students' learning styles and then teaching them through their preferred ways of learning enhanced academic achievement, improved attitude and motivation to learning, and created effective learning. Therefore, more teacher-oriented tasks for grades XI A, XI B, XI C, XI E, XI G, and XI H, whereas more communicative tasks for grades XI D and XI F need to be taken into consideration for inclusion in the course as most students prefer to learn in those atmospheres.

The followings are an example of how teacher-oriented tasks and communicative tasks can be designed.

The learning methods preferred by teacher-oriented learners as listed in Willing's (1988) questionnaire are as follows:

- to learn through teacher's detail explanation
- to be told what they should learn
- to be given the resources to acquire the specified body of knowledge or skills
- to learn more from reading comprehension
- to do grammatical exercise

Thus when designing teacher-oriented tasks for the classroom, the course designers may base on the principles described above methods such as providing detail explanation to students, teacher's modeling, helping students understand the course intensively, guiding students to do classwork. It is teacher-centered classroom.

The learning methods preferred by communicative learners as listed in Willing's (1988) questionnaire are as follows:

- to learn by watching and listening to foreigners
- to learn by speaking in English with foreigners when there is a chance
- to learn by talking to friends in English
- to learn by conversations
- to learn by watching TV in English
- to learn English by hearing these words.

When designing communicative tasks for the classroom, the course designers may also base on the principles described above methods such as learning through interactions and media aids) listed in Willing's (1988) questionnaire and take into consideration inclusion of group discussions and teacher student conferences as students prefer to talk with classmates and their teachers. English films and video programs are also effective means to help students listen to foreigners speak English. It is teacher-student centered classroom.

It is, however, important to note that by focusing on teacher-oriented and communicative tasks, it does not mean that tasks in which other learner types prefer should be excluded from the course. Tasks that suit other learner types also need to be included in the course to meet their needs. Research suggests that it is better to include learning tasks that suit all types of learners in a course. Kinsella (1996:30 as cited in Ho, 1999: 62) asserts that curricula should be designed with an equitable range of activities so that all learners feel comfortable and be trained to become confident to perform new tasks and be in new groupings. Similarly, it is desirable to expose learners for short periods of time to instructions, approaches, environments and teaching methods which do not match with the learners' learning style preferences. This helps learners to develop their adaptability to environments beyond their control and may also foster their creativity in learning and problem solving (Smith 1985:71 as cited in Ho, 199: 63).

Researchers, like Vaughan and Baker (2001as cited in Brown, 2003: 1) pointed out that matching may lead to learners' becoming bored. Moreover, Zhang (2006) opposes that the literature on teacher/student style match/mismatch contains somewhat ambiguous findings, some arguing the benefits of a match; whilst others challenges that the effect of matching is insignificant. On the other hand, some studies had shown that learning in mismatched conditions helps learners to overcome weaknesses in their cognitive styles, to develop a more integrated approach to their learning (Rush & Moore: 1991). Parallel with this is Hayes & Allison's (1997) finding saying that "exposing learners to learning activities that mismatched with their preferred earning style will help them develop the learning competencies necessary to cope with situations involving a range of different learning requirements (Brown, 2003: 1). Kowoser & Berman (1996) advocate that providing mismatches in teaching and learning styles can also stimulate learning and flexibility in learning. (Fisser et al, 2006: 99).

Claxton & Murrell (1987:73 as cited in Ho, 1999: 63) think that "experiences that are inconsistent with students' styles can 'stretch' students' and help them develop new learning skills and aspects of the self-necessary for healthy adult functioning.
Interestingly, Smith, Sekar & Towsend (2002 as cited in Coffield et al. 2004: 39) stated that the number of researches that support "matching hypothesis" is equivocal with that of contend it. They found nine studies which showed that learning is more effective where there is a match and nine showing it to be more effective where there is a mismatch. Similarly, Reynolds (1997 as cited in Coffield et al. 2004: 39) found five empirical studies in favor of "matching hypothesis" and three against them.

What is most important is to keep the proportion of the tasks that fit different learner types from the beginning of course. The proportion of the tasks can be adjusted according to the learning style preferences of the students as identified through the questionnaire.

It is probably beyond the abilities of most teachers both in terms of time allocation as well as teaching facilities and to a certain extent due to pedagogical knowledge to design instructional activities that accommodate learning styles' diversities. However, they can cater to variation in the nature of their students' learning styles by adopting a flexible teaching approach involving a variety of learning activities.

7. Conclusion

This study concludes that in formal education, the school curriculum and the school teachers are very important facilitators of learning. Curriculum is a sub-discipline of educational processes like counseling, management, instruction and evaluation. It is so important that scholars have been calling it the queen of educational sciences. On the other side, learners are the key participants in curriculum development process and it is important to gather as much information as possible about them such as their learning styles preferences prior to designing curriculum. The following stages need to be taken into account in developing curriculum: to set up philosophy of education, goals and aims of education, general instructional objectives, specific instructional objectives and outcomes, task analysis and content selection, learning activities.

Identifying learning style preferences at the beginning of course helps teachers develop curriculum and make adjustments in the proportion of task types to facilitate the learning of the students. Moreover, it helps students be aware of their strength and weakness so that they can maximize their potential and improve their weakness.

8. Suggestion for further research

In order to facilitate task design further, it is better to collect more information from the students through interviews or focus group discussions to identify the reasons for their preferences and the kinds of tasks that they preferred. Though it is beyond the scope of this study to carry out this research procedure, it is hoped that by doing so in future studies, more information can be documented on why most students preferred to be teacher-oriented and to be communicative learners and what kind of tasks they would like to perform in the course. It may also be interesting to conduct further research studies to investigate the effectiveness of implementation of the task-proportion adjustment method as suggested in this study on student's learning.

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Appendix A Table 2 Mixed Types of Learners

Grades	Mixed Types of Learners	Total
XI A	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.44%)
	Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	2 (6.84%)
	Communicative and Concrete	3 (10.34%)
XI B	Analytic and Concrete	1 (4%)
	Communicative and Concrete	3 (12%)
	Communicative and Concrete	1 (4%)
XI C	Analytic and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.70%)

	Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.70%)
	Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	2 (7.40%)
	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	2 (7.40%)
	Communicative and Concrete	2 (7.40%)

Table 2 continued

XI D	Communicative and Concrete	1 (3.57%)
	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.57%)
	Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	2 (7.14%)
XI E	Analytic, Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (4.34%)
	Analytic, Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	1 (4.34%)
	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (4.34%)
	Communicative and Concrete	3 (13.04%)
	Analytic and Teacher-Oriented	1 (4.34%)
	Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	1 (4.34%)
	Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (4.34%)

Table 2 continued

XI F	Analytic and Teacher-Oriented	1 (5%)
	Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	1 (5%)
	Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (5%)
	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (5%)

	Communicative and Concrete	1 (5%)
XI G	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.33%)
	Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.33%)
	Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	2 (6.66%)
XI H	Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	3 (10.71%)
	Communicative, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.57%)
	Communicative and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.57%)
	Analytic, Concrete and Teacher-Oriented	1 (3.57%)

Appendix B Learning Style Inventory

Dear students and teachers.

You are kindly invited to complete the questionnaire to identify your learning style. This research instrument is to be utilized as one of primary data for my research on "Learning Styles-based Curriculum in EFL Class for Senior High School Students".

You are not required to write your name. However, please add up the score and write on the total column provided.

If you have any inquiry on your learning style preference you may ask the researcher soon after completion of the questionnaire or write an email to kamilvirgo@gmail.com or send SMS to 08156177655.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Researcher,

Udin Kamiluddin

The following questionnaire was adapted from Willing K's (1988) *How You Learn Best? Learning Styles in Adult Migrant Education*, Adelaide, Australia: National Curriculum Resource Centre Cited in Rekrut (2001) with a slight modification in terms of format and key score to identify 210 EFL XI graders at SMAN 1 Kabupaten Cirebon (Government Senior High School 1 in the District of Cirebon).

I. How do you like to learn?

Circle the number on the right column that best shows your opinion on each statement below. Each statement reveals a different opinion.

1 = I do not like it. 2 = I like it a little. 3 = I like it. 4 = I like it very much.

Type I	Statement	Score			
1	I like to study grammar.	1	2	3	4
2	I like to learn by studying English boos at home.	1	2	3	4
3	I like to study English alone.	1	2	3	4
4	I like a teacher who allows me find my mistakes.	1	2	3	4

5	I like a teacher who employs problem-based approach.	1	2	3	4
6	I like to learn by reading newspapers at home.	1	2	3	4
	Total				
Type II	Statement	Score			
1	I like to learn by watching and listening to foreigners	1	2	3	4
2	I like to learn by having conversations with my peers.	1	2	3	4
3	At home, if I have a choice I like to learn by watching TV and/or videotapes in English.	1	2	3	4
4	Out of the class, I like to learn by using English.	1	2	3	4
5	I like to learn unfamiliar English words by hearing them.	1	2	3	4
6	I like to learn by having conversations.	1	2	3	4
	Total				
Type III	Statement	Score			
1	I like to learn using games in class.	1	2	3	4
2	In class, I like to learn by looking at pictures, films, and videotapes.	1	2	3	4
3	I like to learn English by talking in pairs with friends.	1	2	3	4
4	At home, I like to learn by using cassettes.	1	2	3	4
5	In class, I like to listen to and use cassettes.	1	2	3	4
6	I like to practice English with classmates out of the class.	1	2	3	4
	Total				
Type IV	Statement	Score			
1	I like a teacher who explains everything in detail to students.	1	2	3	4
2	I like to write every subject in my notebook.	1	2	3	4
3	I like to have my own textbook when I study.	1	2	3	4
4	I like to learn by reading in class.	1	2	3	4
5	I like to study grammar.	1	2	3	4
6	I like to learn new English words by seeing them.	1	2	3	4
	Total				

II. 1. Look at the items in section one which you have scored with 0. Explain why you do not like doing those activities.

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2. What do you do in place of these activities which you have scored with 0?

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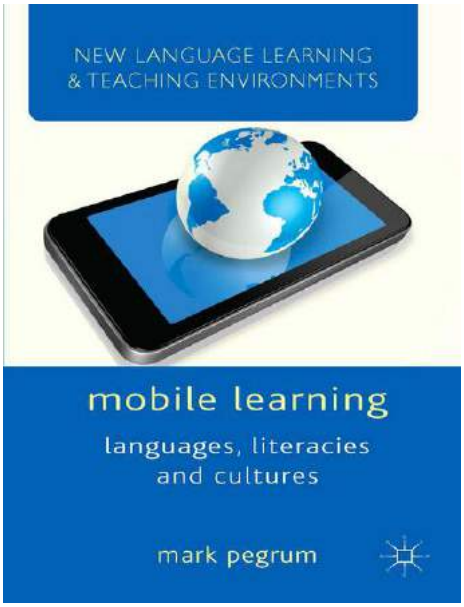
Book Review

Mobile Learning: languages, literacies and cultures



Author: Mark Pegrum
Book: Mobile Learning: languages, literacies and cultures
Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan
Year of publication: 2014
Place of publication, London, UK
Pages: 569
Reviewers: Jabreel Asghar & Pir Suhail Sarhandi
King Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia

The book in question presents a comprehensive overview of mobile learning in the current global educational scenario and is suitable for the researchers, educational technologists and the people who are in the filed of mobile assisted language learning. The volume consists of seven logically sequenced chapters covering the theoretical, practical and methodological implication of m-learning. The book offers two main features, allowing the book to offer more practical and beneficial features than a large number of other books on the topic available in the market do: first it provides insight into the potential and problems in the use of mobile devices in the classroom in a large number of contexts across the globe, which makes the book valuable for

a broader audience. The author offers vignettes, case studies and research from almost all the continents; secondly, unlike many other books on the topic, it encompasses the pedagogical issues in relation to m-learning. The author illustrates how language and literacy teaching through mobile learning could be facilitated more effectively. In the final section, the author discusses the prospects of mobile technology in education and the role of "digitally trained educators". The book can be divided into three sections. The first section (Chapter 1, 2 and 7) discusses the theoretical background and future implications of m-learning. The second section (Chapter 3) deals with the technical aspects of m-learning in the education sector, whereas the third section (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) elaborates on the pedagogical aspects of mobile learning.

Theory and practical challenges

The first section outlines the shift from e-learning to m-learning, and maintains that the latter is enjoying wider approval due to its availability as well as affordability for a greater number of people. The author highlights the major difference between fixed technologies of e-learning and mobile technologies where the former is inclined to be detached from everyday life, whereas the latter is more likely to become a part of users' real life experiences. The author also mentions that mobile devices potentially establish closer links between the individual and society, between local and global perspectives as well as between the *episodic* nature of m-learning and "*extended* learning over time", because mobile devices allow a consistently ongoing learning experience in the background – "and sometimes, episodically, in the foreground". He emphasizes that it is not only the mobility of devices, but also the mobility of the learner as well as learning experience that is significant in an m-learning event. However, being a theoretically young field, m-learning needs to be observant of the real-world experiences for enhanced insight, both in theory and practice.

The author maintains that new technologies can potentially be more helpful for educators to train learners for the 21st century scenario than the 20th-century models of educations. However, he observes, that sensitivity to local context is imperative In order to benefit from the potentials of innovative technologies in the classroom. Therefore, one of the important objectives of m-learning should be developing 21st century skills by encouraging innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and teamwork autonomy and flexibility, and lifelong learning". The author continues that affordability of mobile devices may open new opportunities for marginalized communities who are culturally, socially, economically or religiously at disadvantaged positions, in order to correct social injustices among various communities in society.

The books establishes that considering the future needs of an m-class, modern teachers will need to be digitally trained, having *technological content knowledge* (TCK) in addition to content and pedagogical knowledge. It also logically calls for digitally trained leaders to successfully implement the digital implications. Only digitally literate and trained teachers can "turn students from *tech-comfy* into *tech-savvy* users of mobile and other tools". The advent of technology in education also paves the way for professional training to be planned on such lines as to allow teachers to join digital networking, which would eventually lead to developing a personal learning network for each individual.

Technological Aspects

Thanks to the spread of mobile technology, a vast variety of mobile devices ranging from mobile phones USB drivers and digital pens are available on the market. The author divides these mobile devices into pre-smart and smart devices. The author refers to research which shows that depending on the context, the affordability and affordance, pre-smart devices have proven their potential in a number of Asian and African countries where simple text messaging via a basic featured mobile phone was used for numerous educational purposes. Regarding smart devices, he points out that in addition to smart phones, iPads and tablets have increasingly gained popularity, replacing personal computers (Meeker and Wu, 2013). In this regard, the book gives apt and practical suggestions regarding the use of technological hardware in an educational setting. Though all of the technological devices have great potential for educational benefits, the author advises that technology should not be used for technology's sake, as it may not necessarily lead to educational benefits. Another important point made by the author regarding the use of mobile devices in the classroom is that the affordance of technological devices must be used with a pedagogically informed approach. It means that educators should not depend on a single piece of hardware, particularly if it is a ''single-function device''.

In this section, the author also gives a brief history of connectivity starting from 1G to today's 4G networks. The author also describes how, with the advent of smart devices, numerous platforms for applications emerged where each platform has its own utility and limitation depending on the context, popularity of the relevant device/s and the functionality as well as accessibility of the application by its users. The volume also discusses genuine concerns regarding the use of mobile devices. The major problem is with the design of the hardware itself, which is not designed for educational purpose which poses a big challenge when it is used in an educational setting. Another major concern is that of health and environmental questions, with little research in the area. The author also refers to other issues such as limited input option, small screens of mobile phones, limited environment adaptability, limited storage and export options etc. which need to be addressed while planning for m-learning supported sessions. However, the section on the topic does not provide any clear solutions to these problems.

Pedagogical approach and m-learning

Discussion on the pedagogical aspects in mobile learning is the most beneficial part of the book, which not only gives an overview of strategic possibilities and potentials of incorporating technology in the curriculum, but also provides inexperienced teachers with insight into m-learning in various scenarios. The author highlights that in recent times mobile learning was hugely influenced by cognitive learning with a communicative approach to language performance. Mobile learning incorporated the notions of comprehensible input of a higher level, noticing new learning items, negotiation of meaning and risk taking in the language learning process. The author gives a succinct historical account of approaches used in language learning, concluding, that in current times ''language teaching typically draws on eclectic combinations of older approaches and methods alongside newer ones, but with the emphasis on meaningful communication within a sociocultural framework'' (p. 93). However, incorporating a cognitive approach does not diminish certain challenges, such as accessibility among different apps, differences in reading online/offline, and on mobile devices etc., put forth by m-learning. However, the author argues, that mobile devices potentially offer a wider variety of learning contents with greater possibilities of manipulating materials layered around the contents. Podcast

and vodcast have been used with greater advantages in academic contexts in various universities. Multimedia can be effectively used to ‘’develop coherent verbal and visual representations’’ in learners’ minds. The use of multimedia is also advantageous for providing a contextualized spoken language with boarder awareness of sociocultural awareness. After discussing the potential of MALL for content, tutorial, communication and creation, the chapter discusses the potential of MALL for various modes of assessment. The book gives a brief account of how MALL offers individualized, quick and constant ongoing feedback with the possibility of building a progress log of each learner. Like any summative assessment task in a traditional learning scenario, MALL teachers might have various modes of assessment including typical quizzes and exams, with caution though. It is vital to consider if informal personalized learning can be directly assessed in a formal and general setting.

On the question of what language to teach, one of the fundamental issues is textspeak, which is hugely criticized by the critics of mobile earning. The author quotes Kemp (2011) to support that there is a positive correlation between the use of textspeak and standard literate language, which can be manipulated effectively in the academic context. The author claims that learners generally having an understanding of textspeak and standard language, break rules on purpose and hence they can devise rules of their own. The author also puts the responsibility on educators to determine where to allow textspeak and where not. Though this is a wise strategy, it is ambitious in the sense that it seems to put extra responsibility on educators, who might well be the product of and influenced by textspeak and its ‘appropriate’ use. The book advocates the use of textspeak but the author does not give concrete answers to this fundamental problem. The MALL approach makes a shift of skills in a different mode. For example, reading online is unique as compared to reading from a book which emphasizes that educators are aware of new dimensions of reading which is simultaneously linked with and separate from writings skills. The author discusses in details how grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills can be taught through MALL in addition to teaching materials with integrated skills. The author refers to a number of approaches/projects (e.g. CAMCLL in China, MASELTOV in Europe & LOCH in Japan), which are likely to influence the way languages are learned under MALL.

The final part of the section on pedagogical approaches to m-learning expands on how successful projects in various parts of the world are in progress on multimodal literacy, code literacy, information literacy and other types of literacies, in addition to reading, writing and arithmetical literacies. Among these, code literacy is important, as the author notes that it helps in developing an appreciation of incorporating new and old approaches to learning in order to benefit the deprived populations of society. OLPC (One laptop Per Child) is one of such projects in progress in Australia that focuses on numeracy development, digital literacy and other notable literacies. The author rightly emphasizes that well trained teachers are required to explore the advantages and disadvantages of M-learning and MALL to design and implement mobile education. Support of educational policymakers, leaders and researchers is also inevitable to help teachers generate successful stories. A detailed account of these strategies has been made in the final chapter of the book, preparing for mobile education in the future.

The book is useful for a variety of audiences ranging from people with no background in m-learning and who would like to develop awareness in this area, to practicing teachers and researchers, in order to guide them on progressing further in the direction.

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