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Aptitude as a Predictor of Second Language Achievement: An Investigation in the Saudi Arabian Context

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Abstract

A two-wave longitudinal design was used to examine the extent to which aptitude predicts second language achievement. First-year Saudi university students ($N = 56$), who were involved in a seven-month intensive English language course as part of their degree, completed Aptitude and English proficiency tests at the start and the end of the treatment period. Univariate and multivariate analyses found moderate relationships between aptitude and second language achievement. Results are discussed for their implications for theory and interventions.

Keywords: L2 aptitude, aptitude testing, aptitude stability, L2 proficiency, MLAT

Introduction

Regardless of their theoretical persuasion, most second language (L2) researchers acknowledge that the learning of non-primary languages in adulthood involves a complex interplay among a set of often interrelated cognitive, psychological and environmental factors. As a consequence, adult L2 acquisition is a highly variable phenomenon, with plenty of empirical and anecdotal evidence of differential success even in situations in which learners are in essentially identical conditions. Hence, much attention has been devoted to individual learner differences—like age of onset, aptitude, attitudes, cognitive and learning styles, learning strategies and motivation—with the aim to ascertain their contribution to learning outcomes (see, e.g., Ehrman et al., 2003; Skehan, 1991). Among these learner-internal variables, beyond age of onset, language aptitude and motivation “have generated the most consistent predictors of second language learning success” (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003, p. 589).

Historically, aptitude research is associated with Carroll’s work on the development of a language aptitude test in the 1950s—the so called ‘golden era’ of aptitude research. Over the following 30 years, however, aptitude excited no interest in the teaching profession. This talent was perceived as immutable and course materials were designed on the assumption that all learners were equally talented. Similarly, many L2 researchers did not see aptitude as a fruitful area of investigation either (but note Skehan’s research). The last 30 years or so (since Parry & Stansfield, 1990) have seen a remarkable resurgence in aptitude research, reflecting an increased recognition of the importance of aptitude as an L2 factor. To quote Dörnyei and Skehan again (2003, p. 591):

[T]he concept of aptitude, long regarded as out of date, has much to offer, but needs new conceptualizations to link it to insights and findings from SLA research. It also merits an active research program.

On the agenda for future research, Dörnyei and Skehan list ten questions—some pragmatic, some theoretical. Of these, in keeping up with the traditionally pragmatic orientation of the field of L2 acquisition, our study examines the question whether aptitude is a fixed trait (i.e., not sensitive to instruction and/or learning experience), and whether it has the capacity to predict L2 learning achievement.

Conceptualization of Aptitude

Language aptitude is typically defined as a set of relatively fixed characteristics or talents—generally insensitive to language learning experience—which enable learners to master a new language faster and easier (Carroll & Sapon, 1959; Carroll, 1981; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992; Skehan 2002). Within this line of thought, aptitude is a stable cognitive trait specific to (second) language learning and therefore different from, and independent of, general intelligence. Likewise, aptitude is seen as different from, and independent of, non-cognitive factors like motivation, attitudes, personality, etc. (Carroll, 1962; Sasaki, 1993; Wesche et al., 1982).

Aspects of this conceptualization of aptitude have been challenged. Not everyone accepts that aptitude exists as a cognitive trait distinct from general intelligence, and there is disagreement as to what aptitude is conceptually, what types of language-related cognitive traits it involves, how much it determines L2 achievement, whether it is specific to the learning of non-primary languages or also bears some relation to first language acquisition and first language competence, and finally how much it is sensitive to environmental factors (incl. whether it could

be developed via training) (Harley & Hart, 1997; Kiss & Nikolov, 2005).

Aptitude Components and Testing

The whole discourse on aptitude is linked to aptitude testing because the existence of (different levels of) aptitude can only be established via some form of aptitude testing.

The best known aptitude test, the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT), was constructed by Carroll and Sapon in the late 1950s. Its development was driven by practical considerations. The purpose was to produce a selective and diagnostic tool to allow language institutions to identify learners with different levels of language learning ability, thus enabling such institutions to streamline teaching and learning, and make the process more cost-effective. By comparing participants' performance on a range of cognitive tasks the researchers identified four language-related skills which together form the trait of language aptitude (Carroll, 1981, p. 105):

Phonetic coding: the ability to identify distinct sounds, to form association between these sounds and the symbols representing them, and to retain these associations.

Grammatical sensitivity: the ability to recognise the grammatical functions of words (or other linguistic entities) in sentence structure.

Inductive language learning: the ability to infer or induce the rules governing a set of language material, given samples of language material that permit such inference.

Rote memory: the ability to learn association between sounds and meanings rapidly and efficiently, and to retain these associations.

More recently Skehan (1989) suggested that 'grammatical sensitivity' and 'inductive language learning' belong to a higher order skill he called 'language analytic ability' that has been found to be most strongly correlated with L2 success (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Harley & Hart, 1997; Nagata et al., 1999).

Carroll (1990, p. 14) argued that research since 1959 "has not suggested any major change in the components of foreign language aptitude that have been recognised from the start," although others contend that aptitude is a richer and more complex construct than the one originally proposed by Carroll. According to Skehan (2002), in addition to the four components above, aptitude also includes auditory segmentation, attention management, working memory, etc. It is unclear, however, whether most of these can be conceptualized as strictly language aptitude components rather than as more general cognitive processes.

Another relatively recent proposal is Robinson's (2002) hierarchical cognitive model of aptitude complexes, according to which each learner possesses a unique combination of aptitude components. Robinson's idea is to categorize learners according to aptitude profiles and match these profiles to "effective instructional options" (p. 113). Appealing as Robinson's work may be theoretically, in terms of practical applications its usefulness may be limited, because such applications would require substantial resources well beyond the capacity of most language teaching institutions.

Aptitude's Stability and Malleability

Another debated issue is aptitude's innateness and stability as a cognitive trait. Carroll (1993, p. 16) describes aptitude as "relatively stable and resistant to attempts to change through education or training." Similarly, Skehan (1988, p. 86) maintains that "foreign language aptitude is relatively fixed over a long period of the individual's life span, and relatively hard to modify in any significant way" (see also Harley & Hart, 1997; Politzer & Weiss, 1969). Others have

described aptitude as “a form of developing expertise rather than as an entity fixed at birth” (Eisenstein, 1980, p. 401) and have argued that aptitude can be enhanced through experience (Grigorenko et al., 2000, p. 173; McLaughlin, 1990; Sáfár & Kormos, 2008).

The issue of first language literacy’s impact on language aptitude is related to the question of aptitude stability. Skehan’s (1986; 1989) follow-up of Wells’ (1985) Bristol study found a strong correlation between early native language literacy skills and L2 aptitude in later years. Some recent studies (e.g., Sparks et al., 1995; Sparks et al., 1998; Sparks & Ganschow, 2001; and Sparks et al., 2008) also provide compelling evidence that early first language literacy skills, such as spelling and reading skills, are highly correlated with L2 achievement in later years. On the basis of such evidence one could argue that improving native language literacy rates via early childhood education would lead to a higher L2 aptitude later on. Even so, it is unclear from these studies whether aptitude can be changed after the onset of adulthood.

Aptitude as a Predictor of L2 Achievement

Carroll and Sapon’s aptitude test, which remains the most widely used aptitude test today, systematically predicts L2 achievement in various learning contexts. According to Carroll (1981, p. 96):

[T]he predictive validity coefficients for foreign language aptitude batteries in representative samples are typically in the range .40 to .60 against suitable criterion measures of success in foreign language attainment, such as final course grades, objective foreign language attainment tests, or instructors’ estimates of foreign learning ability.

Numerous studies have detected similar correlation ranges between aptitude and L2 achievement (e.g., Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Sparks et al., 1995; Nagata et al., 1999; Harley & Hart, 2002; Erlam, 2005; Kiss et al., 2005; Sparks, 2009). The latter is, in fact, noteworthy as the study which has established the highest aptitude-L2 achievement correlation (.75) we are aware of. Others, however, report much smaller correlations (e.g. Bialystok, 1978; Keitges, 1986; Hsieh, 2004; Rysiewicz, 2008), including null correlations (e.g., Headrick, 1984; Harley & Hart, 1997).

Aptitude’s ability to predict L2 achievement (via aptitude testing) has been challenged vigorously. Some have argued that aptitude, as well as the tests measuring it, are only relevant to skills developed via the audio-lingual teaching methodology, and that aptitude cannot predict achievement in relation to skills developed through the currently favoured communicative approach (see, e.g., Cook, 2001 and the sources cited therein). It has been suggested that the types of language-related cognitive traits measured with MLAT and other aptitude tests are relevant to what Cummins (1984 and elsewhere) calls ‘cognitive/academic language proficiency’ (CALP), but not to ‘basic interpersonal communication skills’ (BICS); the latter is the language of everyday communication, while the former could be described as the language of academic discourse and the product of formal classroom instruction.

Skehan (1989 and elsewhere) disagrees suggesting that analytical language ability should be equally relevant to formal and naturalistic contexts, as well as to spoken and non-spoken language skills, because it essentially involves the ability to deal with decontextualized language. Skehan refers to Reves (1983), whose study reportedly demonstrates that in both formal and naturalistic settings aptitude is more strongly correlated with achievement than a range of other

individual learner variables, incl. motivation and learning strategies. More recent studies by Harley and Hart (1997), Ehrman (1998), and Ehrman and Oxford (1995) found aptitude to be a strong predictor of L2 success even in a communicative teaching environment, but others found only a weak correlation between MLAT scores and achievement in communicative classrooms (Goodman et al., 1990; Ranta, 2002; Sáfár & Kormos, 2008). Hence, uncertainty remains—theoretically and empirically—about the extent to which aptitude has the capacity to predict L2 achievement.

This uncertainty partly reflects methodology. Most studies have used cross-sectional correlational designs (e.g. Harley & Hart, 1997; Sparks & Ganschow, 2004; Hsieh, 2004; Hummel, 2009; Gardner, 1997; etc.) which provide no firm basis for causal inferences. Also, many studies used the English version of MLAT to measure the language aptitude of speakers of languages other than English (Nagata et al., 1999; Robinson, 1997). As a result, their participants' performance would—at least in part—reflect their L2 competence in English, rather than language aptitude per se.

Design and Objectives of the Present Study

The present research was specifically designed to avoid such methodological problems. To this end, we conducted an empirical study with a cross-sectional and two-wave longitudinal design. First year university students at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia involved in a 7-month intensive English language course as part of their degree were administered aptitude and English proficiency tests at the beginning (Time 1, or T1) and at the end of their course (Time 2, or T2). To remove the English-proficiency confound of past assessments, we measured aptitude using a dedicated Arabic adaptation of MLAT.

We conducted a range of statistical analyses to isolate the relationships between the key constructs displayed in Figure 1.

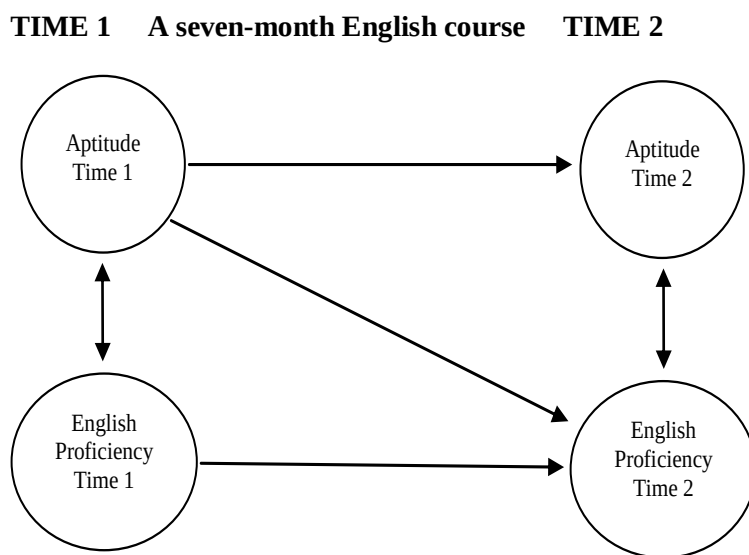


Figure 1. A cross-lagged design for L2 aptitude and achievement

The combined cross-sectional and longitudinal design allowed us to pursue the following objectives:

- (1) *Testing growth in L2 proficiency overtime*: Establish to what extent our participants' English proficiency changed from T1 to T2 [the unidirectional link between T1 English proficiency and T2 English proficiency];
- (2) *Testing aptitude stability vs. malleability over time*: Establish to what extent aptitude is sensitive to L2 learning experience over a period of 7 months of intensive instruction [the unidirectional link between T1 aptitude and T2 aptitude];
- (3) *Testing aptitude's ability to predict L2 proficiency*: Establish to what extent aptitude co-varies with, or is correlated to, L2 proficiency, cross-sectionally and longitudinally [the bi-directional links between aptitude and L2 proficiency at T1 and at T2, and the unidirectional link between T1 aptitude and T2 proficiency].

As part of the latter objective we also tested which aptitude components best predict L2 proficiency and which aptitude components best predict the three L2 skills included in the proficiency test.

Method

Participants

Our participants were male Saudi learners of English as a foreign language, between 18 and 20 years of age, who were first-year university students at the Languages and Translation College of King Khalid University in Abha (a city in the Southern region of Saudi Arabia). The initial sample involved 90 students: this number included the whole 2008 1st semester intake into the Languages and Translation College, although due to attrition this number eventually dropped to 56. Recruitment was conducted using a convenience sampling procedure (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Socio-cultural and religious factors characteristic of the Saudi context did not allow us to include female learners in the present study. According to Carroll (2002, p. 26), MLAT's capacity to predict L2 achievement is essentially the same for males and females. Hence, we do not expect the gender homogeneity of our sample to have significantly affected the external validity of the study's findings.

All participants were native speakers of Arabic sharing a very similar social and cultural background. At the time of enrolment in the intensive language program, all learners had learned English in high school for six years, four 45-minute lessons per week, typically from non-native speakers of English and through grammar-based textbooks, with little focus on spoken language skills.

The language program at King Khalid University involved twenty 50-minute English classes per week. By the end of the two-semester program learners would have been learning English for over 650 hours. Overall, the participant sample can be regarded as typical of 1st year university students majoring in English in Saudi Arabia.

Instruments

Arabic aptitude test

The Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) was used to measure aptitude because of its highest predictive validity compared to similar aptitude instruments (Parry & Child, 1990, p.

52). We avoided the confounds of past aptitude assessments with non-English speaking learners by using an Arabic adaptation of this test, which we constructed following Stansfield and Reed's (2003) guidelines, and drawing from Rysiewicz's (2008) Polish adaptation.

The Arabic aptitude test was modelled on the short version of MLAT whose predictive power, according to the MLAT Manual (Carroll & Sapon, 2002), is comparable to the longer version. Our test included three sections:

(i) Vocabulary and written coding (VWC) (the equivalent of MLAT's Spelling Clues) – 20 items;

(ii) Grammar sensitivity (the equivalent of MLAT's Words in Sentences) – 20 items; and

(iii) Memory (the equivalent of MLAT's Paired Associates) – 24 items.

Participants were given 30 minutes to complete the test: 10 min. per section. The Aptitude test was pilot-tested on a small group of comparable EFL learners.

English proficiency test

A short version of the Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) was used to evaluate learners' English proficiency in Listening, Grammar and Reading. This test is regarded as the best predictor among other English proficiency tests for non-native speakers of English (Hsieh, 2004).

The TOEFL version of the test we used was sourced from a TOEFL practice book (Phillips, 2001). It consisted of 50 multiple-choice items, divided into three sections: 20 listening items (10 min.), 20 grammar items (20 min.), and 10 reading items (20 min.). Participants' L2 spoken skills were not assessed due to the limited time and attention given to the development of spoken skills in this program and in Saudi Arabian language classrooms generally.

Data collection

The Arabic aptitude test and the TOEFL were administered twice in the same order—always aptitude first followed by L2 proficiency—at the start (T1) and the end (T2) of a seven-month period. Test administration was conducted in line with the respective manuals. Test answers were checked by two independent scorers. Discrepancies were resolved through accuracy check to ensure there is only one correct answer for each item.

Results

Analyses overview

To address our key research objectives, the study focused on two main variables: the Arabic aptitude test scores as an independent variable consisting of three components (Vocabulary and Written Coding, Grammar Sensitivity and Memory) and acting as a measure of aptitude; and the TOEFL scores as the dependent variable, also consisting of three components (Listening, Grammar, and Reading), and acting as a measure of L2 proficiency.

To assess aptitude stability vs. malleability over seven month intensive English instruction, we performed paired sample t-tests between the aptitude scores at T1 and at T2, as well as a correlational analysis between the two sets of scores.

To assess the Arabic aptitude test's capacity to predict L2 achievement, Pearson's product-moment correlation tests were conducted between the aptitude scores and English proficiency.

Multiple regression analyses were used to quantify the capacity of each of the aptitude test's individual components to uniquely predict L2 achievement on the TOEFL subtests (i.e., while

controlling for the predictive ability of the other components). For all analyses, the significance level (or alpha) was set to .05.

Preliminary analyses

Because 34 out of the original 90 participants dropped out of the course, attrition analyses were conducted on the data. These analyses confirmed that the data obtained from the retained learners were not statistically different from those obtained from the non-retained learners (i.e., there was no significant selection bias in our data).

We ascertained normality of the aptitude and proficiency scores and sub-scores (all skewness and kurtosis < 1). Descriptive statistics for all variables at T1 and T2 for the 56 participants are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the Arabic aptitude scores and English proficiency scores at T1 and T2 (N = 56)

Variable s (metric)	<u>TIME 1</u>						<u>TIME 2</u>					
	Mea n	SD	Mi n	Max	Skewne ss	Kurtosi s	Mea n	SD	Mi n	Max	Skewne ss	Kurtos is
VWC (0 -20)	12.3 3	2.7 4	7	18	-.15	-.44	13.3 2	2.9 9	7	18	-.59	-.38
Gramma r Sensitivit y (0 – 20)	6.91	2.4 8	3	12	.37	-.78	7.16	2.3 6	2	13	.07	-.23
Memory (0 -24)	14.8 2	4.6 0	5	24	.02	-.63	14.0 7	5.1 4	3	23	-.28	-.45
Aptitude Total (0 -64)	34.0 1	7.1 0	20	51	.16	-.36	34.5 3	7.0 1	19	48	-.06	-.47
Listening (0 – 20)	8.69	3.0 6	2	16	-.07	-.42	9.21	2.7 1	4	15	.13	-.16
Gramma r	6.73	2.8 6	.00	12	.00	-.30	8.33	2.6 8	4	14	.73	-.01

	<u>TIME 1</u>						<u>TIME 2</u>					
(0 – 20)												
Reading	3.00	1.4	1	7	.52	.45	3.91	1.8	1	8	.44	-.58
(0 – 10)												
English												
Proficiency	18.4	5.4	6	29	-.09	-.14	21.5	5.7	7	37	.37	.30
(0 – 50)	1	3					0	2				

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the respective variable's metric.

There was little difference between the means of the total scores for the Arabic aptitude test at T1 (M=34.01, SD=7.10, 53.1%) and at T2 (M=34.53, SD=7.01, 53.95%), suggesting that overall L2 aptitude underwent little or no change in our group of participants over the 7-month treatment period. There was a small increase in the mean of English proficiency test between T1 (M=18.41, SD=5.43, 30.7%) and T2 (M=21.50, SD=7, 35.8%), indicating modest growth in English proficiency over the treatment period. We formally tested for the significance of these changes with inferential tests, and report these results in the sections below.

Testing for changes in aptitude over time

To examine the stability/malleability of aptitude over time, we carried out a series of paired sample t-tests on each of the variables and identified reliable differences over the T1-T2 period (see Table 2).

Table 2. Mean differences in aptitude measures at T1 and T2 (N = 56)

Variables	<u>Means</u>		T2-T1 diff	SD	t	p
	<u>T1</u>	<u>T2</u>				
VWC	12.33	13.32	0.99	2.86	2.56	.01
Grammar Sensitivity	6.91	7.16	0.25	2.39	.78	.43
Memory	14.82	14.07	-0.75	5.51	-1.01	.31
Aptitude—Total	34.01	34.53	0.42	7.04	.55	.58

Note: diff = difference; t = t-value from paired sample t-test.

There was no statistically significant difference between the means of the Arabic aptitude test total scores or the scores on the Grammar Sensitivity and Memory aptitude components at T1 and T2 ($ps > .05$). The only statistically significant change (in the direction of improvement) was detected in VWC, $p = .01$ (Cohen's $d = -.35$).

We used correlational analyses as an additional means of quantifying changes in aptitude between T1 and T2:

Table 3. Correlations of aptitude measures between T1 and T2 measurements ($N = 56$)

Aptitude variables	r	p
VWC T1 and VWC T2	.50	< .001
Grammar Sensitivity T1 and Grammar Sensitivity T2	.51	< .001
Memory T1 and Memory T2	.36	< .001
Aptitude T1 and Aptitude T2	.50	< .001

The total scores at the beginning and the end of the course were moderately correlated ($r = .50$, $p < .05$, $N = 56$), adding support to the findings from the means difference test. Likewise, the scores for the three aptitude components were significantly and moderately correlated between T1 and T2, suggesting that little change occurred over the testing period. Overall, these results confirm that language aptitude is an internally stable trait.

Testing for aptitude's capacity to predict L2 proficiency

Cross-sectional correlations

We examined the cross-sectional correlations between aptitude and proficiency separately at T1 and T2. The results are reported in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

Table 4. Zero-order correlations between aptitude and English proficiency components at T1 ($N = 56$)

	Engl. proficiency	Listening	Grammar	Reading
Aptitude Total	.29*	.31*	.24	.02
VWC	.29*	.31*	.26*	-.13

Aptitude as a Predictor of Second

Moskovsky, Alshahrani, Ratcheva & Paolini

Grammar	.21	.21	.17	-.06
Sensitivity				
Memory	.16	.16	.11	.18

Note: * $p < .05$.

We found a significant moderate positive correlation between the aptitude total score and the English proficiency total score at T1 ($r = .29, p < .05, N = 56$). Hence, learners with a higher aptitude at T1 performed better on the English proficiency test at T1. Of the individual proficiency components, aptitude total score at T1 was significantly correlated with Listening ($r = .31, p < .05$) but not with Grammar or Reading. Among the three individual aptitude components, only VWC displayed a significant correlation with the English proficiency total score ($r = .29, p < .05, N = 56$, Listening ($r = .31, p < .05, N = 56$) and Grammar ($r = .26, p < .05, N = 56$). Grammar sensitivity and Memory showed no significant correlation with either the English proficiency total score or any of its components.

Regression analyses revealed that Aptitude Total on its own predicted 8.7% ($R^2 = .087$) of the variance in proficiency scores. We used multiple regression analyses to further investigate the unique relationships between the Aptitude components and the L2 Proficiency components. In a first set of analyses, we regressed each and all the scores of the English proficiency subtests at T1 separately onto each of the aptitude components at T1. The results revealed that none of the individual aptitude components uniquely predicted the scores on any of the English proficiency subsets (Listening, Grammar or Reading), all $ps > .05$, when controlling for the other components.

We carried out a set of parallel analyses on T2 data. These analyses aimed at assessing the cross-sectional relationships between aptitude and English proficiency, this time at the end of the 7-month training (see Table 5).

Table 5. Zero-order correlations between aptitude and English proficiency components at T2 ($N = 56$)

	Engl. proficiency	Listening	Grammar	Reading
Aptitude Total	.34**	.36**	.36**	.05
VWC	.21	.25(*)	.24(*)	-.04
Grammar Sensitivity	.26*	.24(*)	.20	.10

Memory	.23(*)	.24(*)	.13	.09

Note: (*) $p < .07$ * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

We found a moderate, positive, significant correlation between the aptitude total score at T2 and the English proficiency total at T2 ($r = .34$, $p = .005$, $N = 56$). As with the T1 findings, learners with a higher aptitude at T2 performed better on the English proficiency test at T2, confirming the Arabic aptitude test's capacity to predict proficiency.

Among the three individual aptitude components, only Grammar sensitivity showed a significant correlation with the English proficiency total score at T2 ($r = .26$, $p < .05$, $N = 56$); VWC and Memory were not significantly correlated with the T2 English proficiency total score.

Of the three individual proficiency components at T2, the aptitude total score was significantly correlated with Listening ($r = .36$, $p < .01$, $N = 56$) and Grammar ($r = .26$, $p < .01$, $N = 56$).

As Table 5 shows, despite the significant correlation between the total scores for aptitude and proficiency at T2, the correlations between individual aptitude test components and individual English proficiency subtests, while close, never reached conventional levels of significance.

Overall, the correlation between T1 aptitude and T1 English proficiency totals ($r = .29$) is similar in magnitude to that at T2 ($r = .34$). These correlations are lower than Carroll's correlation range (.40 – .60), but are in line with the correlations reported for adapted versions of MLAT (Sasaki, 1993; Ottó, 2002; Kiss, et al., 2005; Rysiewicz, 2008). We return to this in our Discussion.

T2 Aptitude total explained 12% ($R^2 = .12$) of the variance in Proficiency total. As was the case with the T1 analyses, we used multiple regression analyses to investigate the relationship between the aptitude and the proficiency components at T2. As at T1, none of the individual aptitude components uniquely predicted any of the English proficiency components (Listening, Grammar or Reading) or the L2 proficiency total, all $ps > .05$. However, unlike T1 results, at T2 the three aptitude components *together* significantly predicted Listening scores, $R^2 = .14$, $F(3, 52) = 2.91$, $p = .04$, and marginally predicted Proficiency total, $R^2 = .14$, $F(3, 52) = 2.76$, $p = .052$. None of the individual aptitude components, however, made a unique significant contribution to the regression models.

To summarize the results from the cross-sectional analyses, total aptitude and proficiency scores were significantly positively correlated at both T1 ($r = .29$, $p < .05$) and T2 ($r = .34$, $p < .01$). Total aptitude scores were significant, although moderate, predictors of total proficiency, explaining 8.7% (T1) and 12% (T2) of variability in overall proficiency. As far as the aptitude components, VWC was the only one that displayed significant correlations with proficiency and its components at T1. However, neither VWC nor any of the other aptitude components made a significant *unique* contribution to the prediction of total proficiency or its components at either T1 or T2.

Longitudinal correlations

We further examined the zero-order correlations between T1 aptitude scores and T2 English proficiency scores. These results are reported in Table 6.

Table 6. Zero-order correlations between T1 aptitude and T2 English proficiency components (N = 56)

	Prof. Total T2	Listening T2	Grammar T2	Reading T2
Aptitude Total T1	.27*	.26*	.23*	.04
VWC T1	.17	.27*	.16	-.10
Grammar Sensitivity T1	.14	.11	.16	.13
Memory T1	.24*	.18	.17	.13

Note: Prof. Total T2 = English proficiency total score at Time 2; * $p < .05$.

T1 Aptitude total correlated significantly although moderately (all $ps < .05$) with T2 Proficiency total ($r = .27$) and its Listening and Grammar components ($r = .26$ and $r = .23$, respectively) while, of the aptitude T1 components, VWC correlated with Listening ($r = .27$) and Memory correlated with total proficiency ($r = .24$). Neither total aptitude nor any of its components were significantly correlated with Reading. Notably, the lack of correlation between T1 Grammar Sensitivity and T2 Proficiency is inconsistent with results reported in the aptitude literature (Carroll & Sapon, 1959; Skehan, 1989).

Multiple regression analyses conducted separately with the total aptitude and the three aptitude components at T1 as predictors of English proficiency and its individual components at T2 revealed that T1 aptitude total accounted for 7.6% of the variance in English proficiency total at T2 ($R^2 = .076$; $p = .04$). None of the individual T1 aptitude components made a significant unique contribution to T2 proficiency total or any of the T2 English proficiency sub-test scores.

Discussion

The present study tackled issues central to the resurging debate on the nature of L2 aptitude—whether aptitude is stable or malleable over time and whether it predicts L2 proficiency.

Our study is one of few to use a two-wave design, allowing for both cross-sectional and longitudinal tests of aptitude-proficiency relationships. Also, to avoid the confound of participants' competence in English on their performance on the aptitude test, we developed and pilot-tested our own Arabic version of the aptitude test which we modelled on the most widely established and validated test, MLAT. We discuss below our key findings and put forward some ideas for future research.

Evidence of aptitude stability

We found evidence of aptitude stability over time. Our results showed no significant change in participants' performance on the language aptitude test over a period of seven months—i.e., between the beginning of the English course (T1) and its conclusion (T2); there was also a moderate correlation between T1 and T2 aptitude total scores. One could argue that the lack of change, rather than reflecting stable L2 aptitudes, reflects a plateau in aptitude development. Either way, the results suggest that the seven-month intensive language course (involving 20 hours per week of exposure to English instruction) was not sufficient, either in length or intensity, to produce a change in language aptitude—at least as measured with the Arabic aptitude test.

These findings go against Spark et al.'s (1998) study, but are consistent with Carroll's conceptualization of language aptitude as a language-specific cognitive trait that is stable and is generally unaffected by previous L2 learning (Skehan, 1991). Put differently, our results do not lend support to a view of aptitude as a dynamic trait amenable to training.

Evidence of limited increase in L2 proficiency

Our analyses reveal a statistically significant improvement in our participants' performance on the TOEFL at T2 (Cohen's $d = .55$). However, as the data in Table 1 show, in practical terms the change in English proficiency in our learners was small (averaged group performance ranging from 18.41 at T1, to 21.50 at T2, out of a scale maximum of 50): certainly much less than what one would hope to see after an intensive seven-month course. This relatively small achievement was particularly obvious in participants' listening skills, which changed little and at T2 were essentially at the same level as at T1.

Our study was not designed to investigate the reasons for the weak growth in English proficiency among our Saudi EFL learners. Low achievement in English has been reported for Saudi learners at all levels of the educational system (Zaid, 1993; Al-Seghayer, 2005; Alshahrani, 2007), and is attributed to a combination of learner-external and learner-internal factors. For example, it is acknowledged by L2 researchers and language teaching practitioners alike that language teaching/learning in the Saudi context involves limited exposure to L2 input, overpopulated classes, inferior syllabuses and substandard teaching/learning resources, inadequately qualified teachers, and unmotivated learners many of whom are only prepared to do the bare minimum to pass the course.

Evidence of a slim aptitude–L2 proficiency link

One issue at the forefront of aptitude research is the relationship between aptitude (as measured with aptitude tests) and L2 achievement. In practical terms, this is the question whether aptitude tests can predict L2 achievement. Our analyses reveal a positive significant correlation between our participants' performance on the Arabic aptitude test and their performance on the TOEFL. The moderate correlations we found ($r = .27$ to $.34$; $R^2 = .07$ to $.12$) are consistent with the correlations found in contexts where English is learned as a foreign language and non-English language versions of the MLAT are used (e.g., Rysiewicz, 2008: $r = .31$; Sáfár & Kormos, 2008: $r = .36$). Employing a non-English language aptitude test to predict English language proficiency eliminates the possibility that the scores of L2 English learners on an English MLAT are not only a function of learners' language aptitude, but their English language proficiency as well.

Another interesting finding of our research is that, while the total L2 aptitude score was significantly correlated with L2 proficiency, we did not find any significant correlations between

the individual L2 aptitude components and the total L2 proficiency. In other words, the capacity of aptitude as a whole to predict L2 achievement is different from the respective capacities of aptitude's individual component parts. This can be regarded as evidence that language aptitude is not a mechanical sum total of separate individual parts, but rather operates as an integrated cohesive trait fusing together a number of cognitive features.

Conclusion

Our study contributes to the understanding of the nature (stable versus dynamic) and function of language aptitude in the context of Saudi university classrooms. In the process, we attempted to overcome problems previous aptitude research has had with design and the measurement of aptitude. Ours is one of few studies to examine the relationship between aptitude and proficiency both cross-sectionally and longitudinally. It is also one of a few studies that have employed a non-English language aptitude test, thus avoiding the confounds of English competence proficiency in the measurement of aptitude.

Our Arabic aptitude test is the first of such instruments developed for native speakers of Arabic. With our newly developed Arabic aptitude test, we were able to examine the construct of language aptitude from a pragmatic perspective and found that it is stable in nature and moderately effective as a predictor of L2 achievement. It is necessary to bear in mind the characteristics of the participant sample when considering these findings. The strong homogeneity of the sample may have limited our ability to detect a larger relationship. Future research will benefit from replicating the present research protocol with a sample that is more heterogeneous not only in relation to its social-demographic composition, but also in relation to participants' initial levels of English proficiency. Also, it would be worth examining the capacity of our Arabic aptitude test to predict L2 achievement with Arabic learners of languages other than English.

Recently published literature on aptitude (e.g., Robinson, 2005; Skehan, 2002) suggests that contemporary aptitude research may be shifting its focus towards the exploration of the component structure of aptitude, with a view to establishing learner aptitudinal profiles and matching them to dedicated instructional treatments. The position we take here, however, is that the idea to match language instruction to learner aptitudinal profiles—although appealing—may not come to fruition any time soon for at least two reasons: first, the number of combinations within the “constellation of individual differences” (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003, p. 601) may be rather large and, second, batteries of tests will have to be developed in order to arrive at these profiles. In addition, the establishment of different aptitudinal profiles would not, in and by itself, automatically bring about improved learning outcomes unless dedicated curricula and language strategies/learning materials are developed to match each aptitudinal profile—a task well beyond the capacity of most language teaching institutions.

In relation to the role that individual aptitude components play with regard to L2 achievement, our study only examined the ones included in the short version of MLAT: ‘Vocabulary and Written Coding’ (our equivalent of ‘phonetic coding’), ‘grammatical sensitivity’, and ‘rote memory’. As far as these three are concerned, we found little evidence of a link between them individually and L2 achievement. At the same time we found a small, but statistically significant link between aptitude as a whole construct and L2 achievement. These findings point to the possibility that aptitude is a cohesive unified cognitive trait, not a mechanical sum of autonomously operating individual constituent parts.

Our study also showed that, similarly to other versions of MLAT, the Arabic aptitude test has the capacity to predict L2 achievement. For purely practical reasons, MLAT-like aptitude tests like the one we devised and used in this research will most likely remain a useful selection and diagnostic tool for many language teaching institutions and for some time to come.

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Aesthetics of Self-Representational Practices in Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's Autobiographical Writings

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Abstract

This paper examines the nature of distinct aesthetics of self-representational practices in Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's two autobiographical works: *The First Well: A Bethlehem Boyhood, and Princesses' Street: Baghdad Memories*. The former, I would argue, can be read as 'a portrait of the artist as a young man'. While it mainly sets out to capture the historical atmosphere which played a major role in shaping Jabra's personality, *The First Well* also provides insights into the young boy who would later become an artist. This is well manifested in the remarkable sensibility of the child. Fantasy, throughout the narrative, colors and shapes his portrayal of characters and his perception of reality. This aesthetic feature of self-representation practice in *The First Well* develops into a more sophisticated tendency to blur the boundaries between poetry and truth (to borrow the title of Goethe's autobiography) in *Princesses' Street*. The cross-fertilization between fantasy and truth in this second volume of Jabra's autobiography enables him to present with great scrutiny his psychological motivations, and flights of imagination. This aesthetic quality of Jabra's style can be interpreted in terms of Leigh Gilmore's theory of 'authorizing complex'. Jabra's aesthetic strategy to weave the texture of his text from disparate discourses is very well reflected in the titles of sections of this volume of his autobiography, including 'Hamlet, Ophelia, and I', and 'The Lady of the Lakes'. Just as Jabra's autobiographical writings tend to blend fact and fiction, so a reverse movement is simultaneously at play in his fictional writings in which he draws heavily on his personal experiences in his portrayal of the fortunes of fictional characters. Interestingly, in an interview, Jabra makes it clear that autobiography as a theme or motif is scattered throughout his fictional works.

Keywords: aesthetics, disparate discourses, fictional autobiography, self-representation

Aesthetics of Self-Representational Practices in Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's Autobiographical Writings

The First Well can lend itself for interpretation as a “portrait of the artist as a young man.” It tells of Jabra's early years up to the age of twelve. While it mainly sets out to capture the historical atmosphere which played a major role in shaping Jabra's personality, *The First Well* also provides insights into the young boy who would later become an artist.

Throughout this first volume of Jabra's autobiography, the narrative is punctuated with frequent flights of imagination, dreamy visions, the young child's moments of daydreaming, reveries, and indulgence in fantasy. All of these peculiar qualities of the personality of the child indicate unmistakable artistic sensibility. The child's unfolding innate artistic ability finds its most subtle expression at a very early stage in his development where we can easily detect the child's ability to describe things creatively. This is well manifested in his description of the clouds:

The clouds were white like flocks of sheep, and I followed their magical transformations. As they stretched and expanded, the sheep turned into huge whales, then into strange eagles, the fore-feathers of their wings spreading out motionless across the blue distances. I sometimes continued to observe those thin clouds till their edges turned red with the light of the sunset and then were transformed into marvellous pools of molten gold. When the full moon rose and ascended in two or three hours to its zenith, the white clouds stood in array around it in amazing concentric circles, as though they were sheep again or, now that they glistened, as though they were fine fragments of pearl oyster shells, from which we carved crosses and pictures and statues. (Jabra, 1995, p. 43)

This remarkable creative description of clouds is obviously worthy of a would be artist on whose gradual artistic development the whole narrative is based. In this particular instance, Jabra focuses the spotlight on the young boy's peculiar capacity for painting visual images by using words in the same manner as a painter uses a brush to paint a picture. This relates to Jabra's less recognized talent for painting- an outstanding facet of his artistic abilities.

Another equally noticeable sign of the young boy's artistic sensibility and aesthetic orientation is very well exemplified in his peculiar obsession with words and their meanings:

More important than all that was the Arabic language I was taught by teacher Jabboor Abbood. He infected us with his love for the language and his lesson was not limited to the official syllabus of that year. Of the grammatical rules of the language, he taught me in two years, or a little over, more than I ever learned from anybody else, and what he taught me has remained basic in my dealings with writing up to the present. He was fond of parsing difficult poetic verses, and like him, I began to find pleasure in following the complex relationships between words, for these are logical and rational relationships similar to mathematical relationships between parts of algebraic equations. (Jabra, 1995, p.25)

Jabra's interest in words and their meanings is a recurring theme throughout his autobiography. The child's preoccupation with the meanings of words may well remind us of Stephen Dedalus's fascination with the meanings of words in his early childhood as a sign of his artistic precocity.

At a later stage of the narrative, the child's obsession with words and language acquires more sophisticated intellectual dimension corresponding to his unfolding aesthetic development:

What I was really obsessed with was the reading of books, school texts as well as others. I filled my brains with Arabic and English words, with dates and events, and with diverse information which, as time went on, began to assume a certain pattern that had its own intellectual dimensions and gave me real pleasure. (Jabra, 1995, p. 161)

Coupled with his interest in words as a means of translating something physical into artistic form, we recognize the child's remarkable power of observation. The second paragraph of the first section of the autobiography provides a typical example of this power- an essential requirement for his future development as an artist:

Between our door and the street, there was a small wooden gate used as an entrance to the building. It was likewise a later addition to the building, meant to separate it a little from the street. Whenever we crossed the high threshold of this entrance, we faced the door of the khan about six or seven steps away. To the left, in the open space, there was an uncovered stairway leading to the upper floor, which consisted of a single room with a green door.(Jabra, 1995, p. 26)

The child's peculiar curiosity to observe objects and things combined with his remarkable capacity for physical description of people – two aesthetic attributes essential for his eventual development into a fully-fledged artist. The following passage in which Jabra describes a disabled young child provides a concrete evidence of this artistic attribute:

He had a large body but his face was a child's, despite his fourteen years of age. His left arm was almost paralyzed, the forearm always raised to his waist. His left hand appeared as though it was merely suspended from his wrist, its fingers twisted and shriveled into the palm, and it was smaller than his unimpaired right hand. Day in and day out, he wore a long striped qunbaz which reached his ankles and acquired a new patch now and then. When he walked, he dragged his left foot, which was not as able as his unimpaired right foot. And so he was obliged to stagger as he walked, yet he advanced forward with amazing speed. In fact, one of his favorite games was to challenge us to race him, and he won most of the time. (Jabra, 1995, p. 27)

The child's capacity for observation of things and people is considerably enhanced and fostered by his peculiarly active imagination. The child's power of imagination is such that he is able to produce a fantastic image of 'angels' with whom, by virtue of his flights of imagination and day dreaming, he is even able to mingle:

Seeing the angels remained an unfulfilled desire. Making me sometimes imagine I saw them in some ghostly form creatures that were midway between birds and women. I imagined I could play with them and invite them to a dish of rice-and-milk pudding. Angels would be able to eat as we liked because my mother would not see the angels, and perhaps she would not see me, either, because I was in their company. (Jabra, 1995, p. 28)

The passage highlights the young boy's susceptibility to fanciful thinking and peculiar capacity to live in an imaginary world peopled with ghostly creatures and forms. All of this fits in with Jabra's keenness to place the spotlight on the aesthetic development of the young boy throughout the first volume of his autobiography.

The discussion of the aesthetic devices employed in *The First Well* in this part of the paper has hopefully provided sufficient justification to label it as a portrait of the artist as a young man. Jabra's style in depicting the stages of the young boy's aesthetic development invites comparison with James Joyce's portrayal of the stages of Stephen Dedalus's aesthetic development in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* – the most outstanding artist novel, or, to use the German term, *Kunstlerroman* for this distinct type of novel.

Throughout *The First Well*, the child demonstrates his imaginative power which occasionally takes the form of dreams or sometimes daydreams. He continues to make keen observations and displays an acute sensitivity which eventually causes him to realize (in the manner of Stephen Dedalus) that his destiny is to create, to become an artist and to define his artistic soul. Interestingly, just as Joyce's novel concludes with the impression that the young hero of the last part of the novel qualifies to be its author, so *The First Well* concludes with the child's writing of his first long story when he was only twelve years old. However, the young child is not unaware of his artistic calling. Hence his tendency to identify himself with poets, which as later discussion would reveal, becomes more pronounced in the second volume of Jabra's autobiography *Princesses' Street: Baghdad Memories* (2005). In this second part of Jabra's autobiography the narrative is mainly devoted to recording his adolescence and early adulthood.

The emphasis on the aesthetic development of the 'young artist' in *The First Well* (as is reflected in the child's precocious talent for description, his obsession with the meanings of words, his remarkable capacity for observation, and active imagination) receives more attention in *Princesses' Street* in which the main bulk of the narrative is taken up with relating Jabra's personal story as an adult who demonstrates unmistakable signs of artistic talent. For instance, in section two of *Princesses' Street* entitled 'Hamlet, Ophelia, and I', we read:

At the University of Exeter, I was preparing myself to enter the University of Cambridge the following year to specialize in English Literature. My concentration was to be on poets, especially modern ones, in addition to my two favorites, Shelley and Keats; and I also had a great interest in novelists. My wide-ranging interests made me very sensitive to the sounds of words and the importance of metaphors, allusions, and symbols, something that had been a part of me since my school days at the Arab College. (Jabra, 2005, p. 15)

The title of this section of *Princesses' Street* reveals Jabra's tendency to employ intertextuality as a means of shedding light on specific experiences in his personal life. That is in light of well known self narratives and personal revelations presented in the world of fiction.

According to Debbie Cox, it is not uncommon on the part of autobiographers to employ intertextuality in writing their narrative of the self: "Clearly this [employment of intertextuality] has implications for all autobiographical writing in the sense that if all writing is a reworking of other writings, traced through by other meanings, the attempt to write a narrative of the self is already written through by other narratives, other selves." (1998: 233)

Jabra's explanation of his self-identification with Hamlet sums up what he (in his attempt to write a narrative of the self) has already found written in Shakespeare's play :

Hamlet was one of Shakespeare's plays I was especially interested in at that time. As it would for any other young man in conditions like mine, the play made me feel that I too carried with me the tragedies of my country wherever I went. Palestine was never out of my mind for a single moment, nor were my family's worries in that difficult period – and when were we Palestinians, ever since I was born, not passing through difficulties as individuals or as a nation? For it was as though we were trying daily to overpower a fate that never ceased to oppress us. Perhaps it gave me pleasure, as it did many other young men whom I came to know as the war escalated in its violence and destruction, to find ideas in some of Hamlet's situations and monologues that seemed to relate to me personally, as in his famous saying: To be, or not to be: that is the question. (Jabra, 2005, p. 15)

Jabra's perception of himself as a Palestinian Hamlet exemplifies one of the basic principles of autobiographical writing highlighted by Ramon Saldivar (1985): "Because of its fundamental tie to themes of self and history, self and place, it is not surprising that autobiography is the form that stories of emergent racial, ethnic and gender consciousness have often taken in the United States and elsewhere" (p. 25).

In his introduction to the book entitled *Writing the Self: Autobiographical Writing in Modern Arabic Literature*, Robin Ostle (1998) argues (p. 22) that the above quotation highlights one of the main features of Arabic autobiographical writing in which links are always established between history and the self. To a large extent, this holds true for Jabra's autobiographical writings. Yet, Jabra's self writing practice has a great deal in common with autobiography in the western tradition that is in so far as it tends to focus on the process of artistic individuation and romantic self reference.

Just as Jabra's self-identification with Hamlet enables him to provide deep insights into his own fortunes as a miserable Palestinian young man, so his reference to Ophelia furnishes a very effective fantastic context for reflecting deeply on his love relationship with Lamia' his muslim beloved who later became his wife after his conversion to Islam .

Ophelia's turbulent love relationship with Hamlet seems, I would argue, to parallel the state of affairs between Jabra and Lamia'. The course of love relationship between the two doesn't run smoothly due to faith differences between them. Full fictionalized details of this relationship can

be found in Jabra's novel entitled *Hunters in a Narrow Street* (1996). In this novel Jameel Farran (a fictional representative of Jabra) falls in love with Sulafa a muslim Iraqi girl who, in her turn, represents Lamia', because of faith differences between the two lovers their love relationship is beset with all kinds of hardships and difficulties. Jabra's fictionalization of his love relationship with Lamia' enables him to express indirectly his agonies and the hardships he encountered in his love relationship with Lamia'. In *Hunters in a Narrow Street*, Jameel Farran is even threatened that he would be deported to Palestine his original country, if he didn't sever his relationship with Sulafa. Here we are strongly reminded of Jabra's admission that his life story can be found not only in his autobiographical writing, it is also scattered in his fictional works. This comes out in an interview included in Jabra's book *Coexistence with the Tigress; or the Joy of Reading and Writing* (1992). In the same interview Jabra adds that because he was not planning to write an autobiography he used some of his personal experiences in weaving the texture of his fictional works and in his portrayal of main characters. Thus when he decided to write his autobiography he avoided recording personal events which have been already dealt with in a fictional context: "When I started writing my first autobiography *The First Well*, I realized that I have talked about some events in my life elsewhere (that is in my fictional works). In my novels those events are more effectively and profoundly presented" (Jabra, pp. 290-291). Jabra quotes Andre Gide who maintains that fantasy is more expressive and truthful than history (1992, p. 291) that is to support his decision to consign some important personal events to fiction, such as his love relationship with Lamia'.

The section entitled 'The Lady of the Lakes', in turn, can be interpreted along the same lines. On the level of reality, the reference to romantic poets such as Shelley and Keats reflects Jabra's romantic idealism, on the level of fantasy the reference to Keats's famous poem "The Lady without Mercy" seems to have provided Jabra with a fictional context which enables him to reflect more deeply on the identical hardships, disappointments, frustrations which beset the courses of love in the poem and in Jabra's love relationship with Lamia'. The analogy between the two love affairs stops here. For, while Keats's persona experiences despair and alienation as a result of his failure to consummate his love relationship, Jabra's love affair was happily consummated. Against this background, it might be argued that Jabra's references to Keats's poem suggest his reflections on what could have happened to him had he failed to consummate his relationship with Lamia'.

Jabra's novel *The Ship* (1995) furnishes another good example of the reverse movement in which he draws heavily on his private life experiences in his portrayal of the fortunes of fictional characters.

I am referring here to Jabra's description of the childhood of Wadi Assaf (one of the main narrators in *The Ship*) in Jerusalem. Commenting on this section of the novel Adnan Haydar and Roger Allen (1995) write:

One of the most moving sections of the novel describes Wadi's childhood in Jerusalem, where the tragedy of Palestine is depicted in vivid and painful detail through the great love which unites Wadi and Fayiz and separates them through an act of even greater love, martyrdom. Jabra's intense affection for the scenes of his own childhood brings reality into fiction (mine italics). The moving descriptions of his house and the environs of Jerusalem which we find

in an article [written by Jabra]* on Jerusalem have an uncanny resemblance to Fayiz Attallah's house as described in *The Ship*; the various districts of the city in which Jabra describes himself as living during the fighting of 1948 from the backdrop to Wadi's graphic portrayal in the novel. Reality and fiction coalesce even in the surname Atallah, Albert Atallah being one of Jabra's dear friends who was killed during the fighting in that fateful year. For Jabra, then, no less than for Wadi, the land, Palestine, is the dream which awaits fulfilment. (pp. 8-9)

Stefan Wild (1998) argues that in their attempts to reinvent themselves, autobiographers always tend to combine fact with fiction: "The reader of an autobiography expects an autobiographical work to be different from pure fiction, though, naturally, all autobiography contains the two elements that Goethe's autobiography combined in its title: *Dichtung and Wahrheit* (Fiction and Truth)" (p. 82).

According to Leigh Gilmore (1994), the autobiographers' tendency to employ multiple discourses relates to the unfixed generic entity of autobiography as well as to their characteristic awareness of the restraints of one discourse to accommodate the profundity of their subjectivities:

For both its writers and its critics, autobiography is driven by an authorization complex. Its writers attempt to situate themselves in relation to discourses of "truth" and identity while recognizing, in various ways, the insufficiency of any single discourse to express the "subject" of their writing. In the absence of a single, unified model of "autobiography," they weave testimonial texts from disparate discourses. (p. 71)

This characteristic generic aspect of autobiographical writing is further emphasized in the Introduction to a co-authored book entitled *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (2001) where we read:

In exploring self-narratives of different historical periods and different cultures, we shall encounter not only different ideas about the self and about the structure of a human life but also a wide range of differing literary conventions and discourses in which these selves and lives are represented. (p. 5)

Conclusion

The conceptual generalizations about the peculiar nature of autobiographical writing presented in the last two quotations apply to a certain extent to the mode of presentation employed in *The First Well* and *Princesses' Street*. In the two works, as we have been seen, the narrative is marked with fertilization between truth and fiction, the use of fantastic context, employment of intertextuality, the use of poetic style and the deployment of dreams and daydreams to delve deeply into the subconscious of the young boy.

Endnote

*I am referring here to an article written by Jabra (1979) entitled "Jerusalem the Embodiment of Time" in his book *The Eighth Journey*. A great deal of the description of Jerusalem in *The Ship* is based on its description on the above mentioned article (pp. 115-120).

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Imperial Nationalism in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

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Abstract

In *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), J. M. Coetzee interrogates the foundations of imperial states by highlighting the differences from the barbarians that the anonymous Empire maintains. The Empire defines itself and reinforces its identity by constructing a distance from the barbarians on many grounds. It maintains state institutions and keeps records, seeing itself as a modern state, an evolved version of "primitive" barbarians. Coetzee's novel exposes the Empire's precarious efforts at establishing the Other and its confused notions of state building. While the dominant interpretations of the novel focus on torture and the body, this article analyzes the novel's involvement with imperial state building and nationalism. Torture and the body are important insofar as they expose the Empire's efforts to identify itself and build a nation. The Empire's failure in most of these respects—as suggested by the ending with the Empire losing its hold on the frontier settlement and the settlement's people waiting for the arrival of the barbarians—makes us question the false assumptions on which many imperial enterprises are based. The Empire's failure to protect its borders, its retreat to its heartland, and its failure to maintain civilized behavior in its treatment of its subjects and barbarian prisoners are manifestations of a chaotic, nascent administration rather than an identifiable and civilized imperial nation. In exposing the unstable distinctions colonial nations use to justify their existence, Coetzee's work asserts an alternative ethic of engagement with the Other founded on the idea of essential humanity and tolerant recognition of difference.

Keywords: Imperialism; Nationalism; Identity; Coetzee; *Waiting for the Barbarians*

Imperial Nationalism in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

In an article entitled "Into the Dark Chamber: The Writer and the South African State," J. M. Coetzee (1986) asserts that *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) ¹ is a novel about "the impact of the torture chamber on the life of a man of conscience" and that torture "has exerted a dark fascination on many other South African writers" (p. 363).² However, torture—along with the relevant issue of the body or the discourse of liberal humanism represented by the magistrate as "a man of conscience"—is not the only important theme in Coetzee's novel. In fact, Brian May (2001) succinctly lists three important and yet intersecting issues in Coetzee's fiction: the problematic of history; the problematic of Empire; and the problematic of the body (p. 392). Although these issues are interrelated, more attention was given to the first and the last in the critical scholarship on *WB*. This can be ascribed to a traumatic history enfolding South African politics and embodying a violent apartheid regime that used interrogations and torture. The issue of the Empire was relatively left out. I consider its ramifications and relation to the treatment of identity and history.

Coetzee problematizes and allegorizes the question of history and tyrannical regimes right from the start by giving us an ahistorical setting, an anonymous frontier settlement belonging to an anonymous Empire that is itself rootless in time and place. In the words of David Attwell (1993), "Coetzee drops the definite article from 'Empire,' thus drawing attention to the universalizing forms of self-representation underlying imperialist endeavors" (p. 71).³ We have an imperial nation-state that defines itself through unfounded differences from barbarian others who are racially and geographically its enemy and who threaten its borders. Hence, Coetzee's fiction, and *WB* in particular, "offers a meditation on the question of whether all civilizations are not necessarily founded upon some arbitrary distinction between the civilized and the barbarian" (Moses, 1993, p. 116). This assertion entails a problematization of the proclaimed colonial/civilized identity and a complication of the foundations of imperialism as a civilizing mission.

Although several critics have understood the import of *WB* as dealing with imperialism, they gloss over the novel's treatment of imperial nationalism and empire building. In a study of Coetzee's early novels, ⁴ Michael Vaughan (1982) asserts that Coetzee's novels are "a sustained meditation on the principle of racial domination in the history of Western imperialism – with particular reference to South Africa" (p. 126). Michael Moses (1993) claims that in *WB* Coetzee "dramatizes the moral dilemmas and political paradoxes of all imperial enterprises, steadfastly refusing to specify either the geographic or historical setting of his novel" (p. 116). However, a look at the novel reveals the dynamics of imperialism and tactics of nation building. The Empire fails in most of these respects, which can be seen as Coetzee's critique of imperialism.

The Empire in *WB* conducts itself as a nation-state: a sovereign state whose homogeneous people have a feeling of common nationality. Apparently, it meets the criteria for defining a nation. Benedict Anderson (1991) argues in his seminal work *Imagined Communities* that the idea of the nation as a community is a fictional construct existing only in the minds of those who want to create a particular group identity for themselves. His proposed definition of the nation is: "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (p. 6). As Anderson elaborates, "imagined" means that all the members of any nation have in their minds "the image of their communion" (p. 6). He adds that the nation as an imagined political community is limited "because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other

nations" (p. 7). The nation as sovereign means, Anderson contends, free without the notion of religion, i.e. without "the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm" (p. 7). He also argues that the nation is imagined as a community because "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (p. 7). The Empire in *WB* seems to meet most of these basic definitional criteria of a "nation" Anderson lists. The frontier areas represent the point where the borders of the Empire are surrounded by barbarian territories. The Empire has a limited geographical stretch with a capital in the metropolitan center and some distant territories beyond which alien people live. Moreover, the subjects of the Empire see themselves as loyal subjects serving their Empire and attending its interests against a common barbarian danger. When the magistrate uses plural pronouns like "us" or "we" to refer to imperial citizens, he is appealing to an unconscious, communal sense of identity/nationality shared by the Empire's diverse population. In addition, despite the strained relationship between the magistrate and the imperial administration, the magistrate feels the foreignness of the barbarians and the distance existing between them and the Empire when he meets them in their own lands. His distance from the barbarian horsemen signifies his different affiliation with an imperial nation. It is only after his return from the journey to send the barbarian girl to her people—and his arrest for "treason"—that the magistrate feels the unstated bond and identification with the Empire are breached: "my alliance with the guardians of the Empire is over, I have set myself in opposition, the bond is broken ..." (p. 76). As for sovereignty, the Empire has an army and state institutions that represent its will and impose its power on its subjects. It has an expanding territorial stretch over which it exerts its sovereign power.

The spread of the Empire as a colonial nation forced the native barbarians to retreat to the surrounding mountains. The walled settlement the Empire built in the oasis, and where the magistrate is posted, has been around "more than a hundred years" (p. 50) by reclaiming barbarian land, building irrigation works, and farming, thus dispossessing the land's original owners. The Empire is depriving the barbarians of the pastures they use for their flocks. It also exploits the nomads during trade barter, bullies them, and despises them (p. 49-50). In exploiting barbarian land and labor, the Empire economically subjugates them as inferiors via flagrant colonial practices. The underlying logic commonly pervading colonialist texts and practices is based on the supposed superiority/inferiority binary between colonizer and colonized. As Abdul JanMohamed (1985) elaborates, "the manichean logic" can be defined as "a field of diverse yet interchangeable oppositions between white and black, good and evil, superiority and inferiority, civilization and savagery, intelligence and emotion, rationality and sensuality, self and Other, subject and object" (p. 63). It seems that the Empire justifies its exploitation of barbarian land and labor on the basis of this manichean logic. The magistrate tells a young conscript that the barbarians want "an end to the spread of settlements across their land. They want their land back, finally. They want to be free to move about with their flocks from pasture to pasture as they used to" (p. 49). The magistrate then exposes the interrelationship between racial and cultural differences in viewing the Other: "How do you eradicate contempt, especially when that contempt is founded on nothing more substantial than differences in table manners, variations in the structure of the eyelid?" (p. 50). He highlights the connection between racial and cultural differences in the manichean logic as used by imperial powers to justify subjugating the Other. To quote JanMohamed (1985) again, this manichean economy "is based on a transformation of racial difference into moral and even metaphysical difference" between self and Other (p. 61). Edward Said (1994) reminds us that a primary distinction in all imperialist

and nationalist enterprises is the one between “us” and “them” (p. xxv), a manichean distinction the Empire continually employs against the barbarians. Said, following another twist, highlights the basic meaning of imperialism and the role of narrative both in imperial quests and in resisting imperial enterprises, and thus helps us see Coetzee’s work as participating in resistance literature and critiquing imperialism.⁵ Said says:

... narrative is crucial to my argument here, my basic point being that stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history. The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course, but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future—these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided in narrative. (pp. xii-xiii)

Insofar as the Empire is trying to possess barbarian lands, and especially on the frontier area, it is engaging in a stark imperialistic enterprise. Said argues by way of pointing out the nuances of “imperialism” as opposed to the close concept of “colonialism” that “imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others” (p. 7). On a different occasion, Said (1990) reiterates the importance of land for the native and points out the relatedness to a place as a foundation of identity: “For the native, the history of his or her colonial servitude is inaugurated by the loss to an outsider of the local place, whose concrete geographical identity must thereafter be searched for and somehow restored” (p. 77). It is no wonder that the magistrate refers to the barbarians as the people “whose land we have raped” (p. 106), thus exposing the struggle over land in imperialism and settler colonialism. Said pinpoints and the land’s association with the native’s dignity, honor, and identity, which also explains the sexual tinge of the magistrate’s reference when land is lost to an imperial nation. Said (1994) defines imperialism and uses as “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (p. 9). The Empire in Coetzee’s novel is similarly busy with maintaining and establishing itself as an imperial power with distant territories along its borders and a metropolitan center in its heartland. The setting of the novel is a frontier outpost overseen by an anonymous imperial Capital.

Seizing barbarian land is just one imperial tactic at nation building; another is employing biopower as a means of achieving political dominance. The Empire uses the body as target for achieving control over its subjects and enemies. It directly touches the bodies of the barbarians. An expeditionary force is sent to exterminate the barbarians outside the walls of the town after a series of interrogations and torture practices against the barbarian prisoners, nomads and fishing folks who were brought to the town. What the Empire seeks is to impose its power on the alleged barbarians as a race, torture them, kill them, or even eradicate them in their own territories. For example, the twelve tortured barbarian prisoners brought on Joll’s second expedition, with a loop of wire running through their cheeks and hands, try to reduce the pain by acting collectively. Judie Newman (1998) says that they are “forced to move as one cohesive body” and that they represent “the enforced oneness of the body politic” (p. 135). The Empire uses biopower in its political battle to subjugate and control its enemies and even its dissenting population, people like the magistrate. It seeks political power through dominating life and bodies. Joll and Mandel torture the magistrate not to exact a confession through judicial torture, but simply to show the state’s power and dominion over its subjects, over both their wills and bodies.

As a nation-state, the Empire employs biopower as manifested in sanitary habits, rationed food, and public torture. The magistrate tries to impose this state biopower on the barbarians brought to the settlement and the officers who accompany him in his trip to send the barbarian girl to her people by stipulating strict hygiene rules. The Empire, on the other hand, starves him and tortures him; it deprives him of clean clothes and water because he is deemed as a disloyal subject. The spectacles of torture held in the public square or in the barracks yard against the barbarian prisoners or the magistrate are meant to teach the town's people a lesson and reassert the sovereign power of the Empire. The social body is brought to conform to the political power of the Empire through internalized fear on the part of the population and a spectacular display of political power on the part of the Empire. Hence, biopower and biopolitics are interrelated.

Michel Foucault (1977) makes it clear that public torture reflects the violence of the crime of the criminal on both victim and the sovereign as "the law represents the will of the sovereign" (p. 47). Hence, the body of the condemned, as it is the case with the magistrate and the barbarian prisoners, becomes the site for "the vengeance of the sovereign" represented in military officers like Joll and Mandel (p. 55). The spectators of public executions, Foucault states, may sympathize with the victim if they deem the conviction as "unjust" (p. 59), which makes them interfere in favor of the victim to stop the execution and creates "social disturbances" if they revolt (p. 61). The magistrate's public objection to Joll's torturing of some barbarian prisoners can be seen in this light. However, the Empire's men overpower him immediately and assert the dominance of the Empire over its subjects. On the other hand, Foucault argues that public torture teaches people by example and fear (p. 58). It demonstrates the power of the sovereign state before the crowds (p. 59), which is what the Empire achieves in conducting public torture. It was expected from the crowds to sometimes take part in the punishment, Foucault adds (p. 58). The exhibited victim would be "offered to the insults, sometimes to the attacks of the spectators. The vengeance of the people was called upon to become an unobtrusive part of the vengeance of the sovereign" (p. 59). The magistrate is humiliated by the public who call him a barbarian speaking a barbarian language while a little girl is allowed to flog the kneeling barbarian prisoners, an attempt by the Empire to maintain the status quo of power relations against enemies and dissenters. To counter the magistrate's public denunciation of Joll's torture practices, Joll offers scathing insults: "Believe me, to people in this town you are not the One Just Man, you are simply a clown, a madman. You are dirty, you stink, they can smell you a mile away. You look like an old beggar-man, a refuse-scavenger" (p. 111). The Empire's display, humiliation, and torture of its victims align it with the older penal systems Foucault describes yet hint at its status as a nation-state.

The magistrate sends the barbarian girl to her people and returns to find Warrant Officer Mandel in his office in the courthouse inspecting his documents and tax folders, the insignia of state bookkeeping. The Empire is found to have a written account of the magistrate's transgressions, documented with witnesses' accounts. Then, the magistrate is imprisoned; his food is rationed; he is not allowed to exercise or wash freely; and he is kept in a cell alienated from others (pp. 77-8). The Empire, thus, acts as a nation that has a distinct disciplinary system for what it deems as guilty. Foucault's (1977) *Discipline and Punish* is relevant here as an important historical document on power relations, normalization techniques, and knowledge formation in modern states. Prisons in modern states, Foucault points out, use examination, supervision, and surveillance; they document the results of such techniques to form a body of knowledge about prisoners and facilitate controlling them. Mandel tells the magistrate as he frees him that they keep records for prisoners (p. 123). Moreover, the idea of timetables and repetition

is employed to control bodies and make them conform to social norms. The magistrate is made to jump over a rope, i.e. to perform an exercise by which the body is controlled via repetitive tasks. He runs in the yard and does tricks for his torturers. The Empire punishes by deprivation from such recurrent practices; he is deprived of exercise or exposure to the sun even on some exercise days.

Discussing the changes in penal systems in the west towards the late 18th century and the early 19th century, Foucault focuses on "the disappearance of torture as a public spectacle" (p. 7). The disappearance of the "theatrical elements" was coupled with the disappearance of the body as a major site for "penal repression" (pp. 8-9). The soul rather than the body becomes the new target of penalty (p. 16, p. 101). Likewise, Joll and Mandel seem to focus on the magistrate's soul as an end although his punishment is corporeal. He is subjected to many bodily privations and punishments in his imprisonment. Foucault asserts the implication of the body power relations: "But the body is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (p. 25). The magistrate's desperation and lack of will make him abnegate a degraded, overpowered body: "There is no way of dying allowed me, it seems, except like a dog in a corner" (p. 115). His whole world is reduced to a cell corner, and the body becomes the ultimate reality when the outer world is denied. Elaine Scarry (1985) argues:

It is the intense pain that destroys a person's self and world, a destruction experienced spatially as either the contraction of the universe down to the immediate vicinity of the body or as the body swelling to fill the entire universe. Intense pain is also language-destroying: as the content of one's world disintegrates, so that which would express and project the self is robbed of its source and its subject. (p. 35)

Mandel seems to be punishing the magistrate as a body in order to punish his soul: "He deals with my soul [Mandel]: every day he folds the flesh aside and exposes my soul to the light; he has probably seen many souls in the course of his working life; but the care of souls seems to have left no mark on him than the care of hearts leaves on the surgeon" (p. 116). Mandel targets the body of the magistrate as an end, thus confusing the penal system of a modern state with a primitive display of torture and undermining the Empire's claim to being a civilized nation:

But my torturers were not interested in degrees of pain. They were interested only in demonstrating to me what it meant to live in a body, as a body, a body which can entertain notions of justice only as long as it is whole and well, which very soon forgets them when its head is gripped and a pipe is pushed down its gullet and pints of salt water are poured into it till it coughs and retches and flails and voids itself. (p. 113)

During his confinement, the magistrate performs his bodily processes in the same room with a smelly bucket in the corner. The rationed food he keeps eating (soup and porridge) makes him severely constipated. Limited exercise days and times, dirty clothes and underwear, and a wild beard all testify to his degradation by the Empire. The Empire humiliates him for insulting its sovereignty by consorting with its enemy without initially resorting to torture as it does with the barbarian prisoners: "No one beats me," the magistrate complains, "no one starves me, no one spits on me. How can I regard myself as a victim of persecution when my sufferings are so petty?" (p. 83). In modern states, the body, when punishment was no more centered on the

torturing of the body as the magistrate implies, was still touched indirectly through loss of “wealth and rights,” things like “rationing of food, sexual deprivation, corporal punishment, solitary confinement” (Foucault, 1977, pp.15-6). However, the magistrate’s punishment degenerates into public torture and even mock execution after a new wave of barbarian prisoners are brought to the public square, which exposes the Empire’s façade as a civilized state using a modern penal system based on privations. The magistrate is punished and humiliated publicly, and the spectacular torture formerly used against the barbarian prisoners is now used against him. With a broken nose and hand and a cheek wound, he is aware of the corporeal nature of his punishment and says: “What I am made to undergo is subjection to the most rudimentary needs of my body: to drink, to relieve itself, to find the posture in which it is least sore” (p. 112). The Empire’s penal system, the magistrate concludes, is a nascent one: “They have no elaborated system of pain and deprivation to which they subject me. For two days I go without food and water. On the third day I am fed. ‘I am sorry,’ says the man who brings my food, ‘we forgot’” (p. 113).

The Empire’s penal system is apparently impulsive and inconsistent, a reversion of the institutionalized systems and the notion of recorded history. The Empire imprisons the magistrate and releases him on an impulse. It even impulsively sees him sometimes as a prisoner or as a free man. The magistrate asks for a trial according to the law and Mandel responds: “But you are not a prisoner. You are free to go as you please” and then continues “How can you be a prisoner when we have no record of you? Do you think we don’t keep records? We have no record of you” (p. 123). Mandel asks the magistrate to work for his keep—another reversion of the idea of corrective punishment and the socialization of offenders in modern penal systems as the magistrate is not seen as a prisoner—and the magistrate protests that he is a prisoner waiting trial and that according to the law prisoners waiting trial should be kept from “public coffer” (p. 123). The Empire seems to have an idea of public funds or a treasury in its administration, yet it chooses when to implement relevant policies and when not to impulsively. Mandel insists that the magistrate is not a prisoner and frees him. In fact, what the magistrate gets in torture is also a reversal of a fair trial. According to Scarry (1985), “torture is the inversion of the trial, a reversal of cause and effect. While the one studies evidence that may lead to punishment, the other uses punishment to generate the evidence” (p. 41). In not allowing the magistrate a fair trial, the Empire seems to fail as a modern, civilized state with a legal system. By contrast, the public torture of the barbarians as an enemy reflects, in Foucauldian terms, a phase in punishment earlier than the establishment of the prison whereby punishment takes the form of public torture on the body or a new system of representation in which the criminal is punished in a way directly related to the crime. The criminal and the offence become one, i.e. the actual enemy becomes a medium for enacting the offence. The bodies of the barbarian prisoners are a medium that enacts their being an enemy. One could sense a kind of confusion if the barbarian prisoners’ punishment is compared with that of the magistrate: a corporal solitary punishment and a spectacular collective one are employed, which undermines the Empire’s status as a civilized nation-state.

The Empire uses cultural differences from the barbarians to define itself as a nation-state and subjugate them. The barbarian men’s old guns, sheepskin coats, and shaggy horses, among other things, all make them an alien Other: “Bodies clothed in wool and the hides of animals and nourished from infancy on meat and milk, foreign to the suave touch of cotton, the virtues of the placid grains and fruits: these are the people being pushed off the plains into the mountains by the spread of Empire” (p. 71). The peasant farmers who inhabit the Empire’s frontier settlement, by contrast, grow crops and till fields; they use bread, sugar, tea, beans, flour, cotton, fruits, and

grain, all things that require settling down rather than an itinerant life (p. 18). Nomads and fisherfolks use animal products and migrate every spring with their flocks. They live in tents, do not wash, and neither read nor write (p. 140). They are sheep-herders, and are in no need of state institutions as a result. The stationary Empire, by comparison, has state institutions like schools, courts, prisons, and the military. For example, a young officer leading a detachment of new conscripts has “the arrogant candour of a young graduate of the War College” (p. 49). Unlike the barbarians who live in the desert and are being pushed to the mountains by the spread of the Empire, the Empire has reclaimed land from the desert, built irrigation works, planted fields, domesticated stock animals, and walled its town to protect the houses it built against the barbarians (p. 50).⁶ It has acted as an evolved state of institutions and settled agriculture if compared with the itinerant barbarians.

The Empire has an administrative, fiscal, penal, educational, and military hierarchy. Joll is representative of a brutal military regime, a “fascist” one in the words of Teresa Dovey (1988) (“Allegory vs Allegory”, p. 137). The Third Bureau to which Joll belongs is an important division of the Civil Guard, and an indication of the presence of an army for an independent nation (p. 2). The magistrate’s penalty for offenders is “a fine or compulsory labour” in the absence of “facilities for prisoners” on the frontier as he tells Joll (p. 2). Petty offenders are sentenced to days of digging in the dunes (p. 14). Alternatively, they repair the irrigation works (p. 14) or tidy his rooms and do laundry as part of social reform (p. 26). The magistrate fills a burial warrant for a dead prisoner because the Empire keeps records (p. 6). An Imperial gazette, military ranks like colonels and lieutenants, law courts, and census officials are all indications of the existence of state institutions (p. 8). The Empire is referred to as a “State” twice in the text: The officials of the Third Bureau are called “guardians of the State” (p. 8), and the tortured magistrate sees himself as “enemy in his own way of the State” (p. 106). The magistrate also indicates an imperial fiscal system: “Perhaps this man [Mandel], and the man he brings along to help him with his work, and their Colonel, are torturers, perhaps that is their designation on three cards in a pay-office somewhere in the capital, though it is more likely that the cards call them security officers” (p. 115). There is a school in the settlement and officers with different military ranks as part of the disciplinary and hierarchical control employed by a modern state. The institutionalization manifested in schools, prisons, and an army serves as a means of normalization and power/knowledge, as Foucault would have it. The Empire also uses the barbarian prisoners as an object of knowledge. Barbarians in the flesh are displayed, subjugated, and punished. The Empire knows them by controlling them and simultaneously controls them in knowing them. As Foucault (1977) argues, “knowledge follows the advances of power, discovering new objects of knowledge over all the surfaces on which power is exercised” (p. 204). While the Empire conducts itself as a nation, a modern state, the barbarian “nation” seems on the verge of formation.

Discussing Yeats as a poet of decolonization, Said (1990) says that nationalism “still serves quite adequately to identify the mobilizing force that coalesced into resistance against an alien and occupying empire on the part of peoples possessing a common history, religion, and language” (p. 74). It is apparent that the barbarians, like the Empire, can equally claim belonging to a nation if they are to resist imperial domination. They do share a common language that the Empire does not understand or represses as an alien language of the enemy, a point manifested in one spectator’s comment during the magistrate’s public torture that the magistrate moaning from pain was uttering barbarian language. The barbarians also seem to have a common history. Their common history is evidenced by the barbarian relics the magistrate finds in the ruins in the desert

and sees as belonging to an ancient barbarian civilization that existed before the current Empire. Although nothing is mentioned about barbarian religion, we assume it is part of the cultural differences that set the barbarians against the Empire. What is more important is that the barbarians seem to be joining forces and resisting the Empire's possession of their lands, which signals the birth of a barbarian nationalism based on group identification and relatedness to native land. They seem to pose a real threat to the Empire at the end of the novel. One of Joll's surviving men who returns from the expedition tired and starving tells the magistrate that the barbarians lured them into the desert, cut their horses loose, and singled out stragglers (p. 144). The barbarians are also engaging in a decolonizing activity to be followed by a process of nation building on the basis of common interests and a common enemy. Said (1990) says that "the first moment of resistance to imperialism brought forth all the various nationalist and independence movements that culminated in the large-scale dismantling of the great classical empires, and the birth of many new states throughout the world" (p. 83). The dismantling of the Empire marks the birth of a new barbarian "nation." If the barbarians claim belonging to a formative nation, then the Empire's assumed existence as a unique imperial nation becomes questionable.

The Empire in *WB* is building a nation around its capital and decides who belongs and who does not belong to its borders, thus emphasizing the notion of group identity based group membership. In an essay on Salman Rushdie in *Stranger Shores*, Coetzee (2001) suggests this notion of group identity when he begins the essay saying: "The notion of personal identity has dramatically narrowed in our times. Identity has become in the first place a matter of group identification: of claiming membership of a group, or being claimed by a group" (p. 169). The magistrate and the Empire frame the imperial group identity in similar terms of cultural, stereotypical, and linguistic differences between barbarians and non-barbarians.⁷ The very meaning of the word "barbarian" entails an alien land, people, or culture. The word becomes an embodiment for foreignness, lack of refinement, learning, or artistic and literary achievements. Rebecca Saunders (2001), in an article on linguistic and literal foreignness in Coetzee's fiction, argues: "The paradigmatic foreigner in the Western tradition—the barbarian—is one who speaks a different language. Indeed, among the most identifiable marks of everyday foreignness are an accent, a mismanaged idiom, an alterity in expression: language bears a primary relation to foreignness" (p. 216).⁸ Insofar as language serves as a cultural medium carrying cultural practices and customs and productions, it also becomes a sign of belonging to a particular group or nation or lack thereof. Those who do not speak a specific language are excluded from belonging to the community that speaks that language. Saunders analyzes *WB* as a text that is "thematically and structurally about foreignness" (p. 223). As a novel about the barbarians and a magistrate who himself becomes an Other for the Empire, Saunders argues, it is thematically about foreignness. As a novel "structured as an allegory; and allegory is a kind of language in which a text's literal meaning is foreign to its proper meaning", the novel is structurally about foreignness (p. 223). A look at *WB* reveals how language is implicated in identity formation and imperialism.⁹

The magistrate and the barbarian girl communicate through the patois, the makeshift pidgin of the frontier settlement, as he does not speak her tongue. When the magistrate meets barbarian horsemen on their native northern soil and outside the limits of the Empire, he has to enlist the girl's help with the language to convey to them that she is blind. The linguistic difference as a foundation of identity is now augmented by a geographical one when he says: "We have crossed the limits of Empire" (p. 69). The magistrate asks her to tell them her story, and she has to interpret the terms of her return that the barbarians stipulate to him. After the

barbarian girl decides to go to her people and he feels the language barrier, he regrets not having learned her tongue (p. 70). Later, the magistrate is hanging from a tree in a woman's underclothes shouting for help in a mock crucifixion scene with his hands tied behind his back. He is hoisted to the tree through a rope and as he feels his feet leave the ground his shoulders tear. He screams and bellows, and the spectators identify him as a linguistic foreigner: "He is calling his barbarian friends," someone observes. "That is barbarian language you hear." There is laughter" (p. 119). People see his cries of pain as cries for help in a barbarian tongue and unconsciously measure group identification in linguistic terms. The notion that a community or a nation is linked by a language is also emphasized in this scene. A shared language heightens group consciousness and singles out an outsider. Seen from a different perspective, the torture he is exposed to reduces his voice to something like animal's roaring, rather than fathomable utterances, and destroys his ability to speak. His torture erases the boundary between the human and the non-human, between life and death; it makes death a process of undergoing extreme pain. As Scarry argues, "physical pain always mimes death and the infliction of physical pain is always a mock execution" (p. 31).

Scarry (1985) highlights the difficulty of expressing physical pain. She argues that pain resists and even destroys language. She shows how war and torture unmake the world and deprive us of cultural content while human creation makes the world. Pain reduces the sufferer to an inarticulate state of cries. The message is that pain and torture, by unmaking the world, destroy culture, civilization, language, and the sanctity of life.¹⁰ While the general import of Scarry's argument is relevant to Coetzee's novel in the sense that the torture practices of the Empire undermine its civilized status and cultural privilege as a nation, the argument is specifically illuminating for the specific scene mentioned above in which the magistrate's screams are seen to be an instance of barbarian language. Scarry argues that "[p]hysical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned" (p. 4).¹¹ She also argues that "[t]o witness the moment when pain causes a reversion to the pre-language of cries and groans is to witness the destruction of language" (p. 6). What Scarry sees as a pre-language used for expressing physical pain is seen by the spectators of the magistrate's torture as a primitive barbarian language, an implicit instance of linguistic racism. The Empire employs linguistic erasure to define itself as non-barbarian. It either relegates the language of its victims to a primitive level or silences it in the first place. The barbarian girl's torture, for example, has made her a passive, reticent victim unwilling to share her story. The magistrate tries unavailingly to have her tell the story of violent torture inscribed on her silent body by the Empire.

In addition to linguistic foreignness, the barbarians are also identified by cultural differences, especially about cleanliness, and these are often juxtaposed. The magistrate is repelled by the smell of two barbarian prisoners captured after a stock raid and kept in a hut attached to the granary.¹² Hence, he inducts one of the guards to get the prisoners to clean themselves quickly before he and Colonel Joll of the Third Bureau can talk to them (p. 2). The magistrate then offers to help Joll with the patois of the frontier, a language Joll does not speak. The barbarian language itself is objectified and reduced by Joll to a mere "it", an alien Other not much different from the barbarians who speak it. Joll asks the magistrate about the guard: "Does he speak it?" (p. 4). The fishermen sent to the settlement by Joll on his first expedition into the desert are, according to the magistrate, "aboriginal" people who do not speak the same language (p. 17). They are seen as exotic savages who defecate publicly, pick lice from each other's heads,

and eat voraciously. The barbarians are associated with filth, idleness, and disease. After Joll finishes his first round of interrogations and leaves for the Capital, the magistrate visits the prisoners left behind in the barracks hall and is repelled at their “sickly smell of sweat and ordure” and asks the soldiers to clean everything with soap and water (p. 23). The magistrate tells the barbarian girl that vagrants like her are not allowed in the settlement (p. 26). The magistrate has tried to prevent “a parasite settlement” inhabited by “beggars and vagrants enslaved to strong drink”, thus confirming “the settlers’ litany of prejudice: that barbarians are lazy, immoral, filthy, stupid” (p. 37). It seems that the linguistic barrier has widened the cultural gap between the Empire and the barbarians. During an atmosphere of paranoid fear of the barbarians, with the imperial army away from the settlement, the magistrate reiterates this notion of linguistic and cultural foreignness: “There has been a drift of refugees to the town, fisherfolk from the tiny settlements dotted along the river and the northern lakeshore, speaking a language no one understands, carrying their households on their backs, with their gaunt dogs and rickety children trailing behind them” (p.122). Cultural differences between barbarians and non-barbarians are often juxtaposed against linguistic ones.

The Empire manipulates language and uses it elaborately to condemn the barbarian prisoners and the magistrate. Its torture practices and interrogations silence its victims or make them confess what it wants to hear. Scarry articulates this point about interrogations memorably: “The question and answer also objectify the fact that while the prisoner has almost no voice—his confession is a halfway point in the disintegration of language, an audible objectification of the proximity of silence—the torturer and the regime have doubled their voice since the prisoner is now speaking their words” (p. 36). The magistrate’s conclusion after talking to Joll about torture and truth is something that reflects Joll’s belief in pain as the ultimate reality: “Pain is truth; all else is subject to doubt” (p. 5). However, because he could not bring himself to empathize with the barbarian girl or vicariously feel her pain before he himself is tortured, the magistrate remains doubtful about her torture and about how the torturers touched her eyes and ankles, especially in the absence of an account from the girl herself to relieve him. While the girl is a living example of the tortured body, the magistrate is increasingly doubtful about what exactly took place in the torture chamber. Scarry echoes this when she says:

So, for the person in pain, so incontestably and unnegotiably present is it that ‘having pain’ may come to be thought of as the most vibrant example of what it is to ‘have certainty,’ while for the other person it is so elusive that ‘hearing about pain’ may exist as the primary model of what it is ‘to have doubt.’ Thus pain comes unsharably into our midst as at once that which cannot be denied and that which cannot be confirmed. (p. 4)

However, Joll, unlike the magistrate, remains adamant in his belief in fixed truths. He is free to make the signifier and the referent unite on the backs of the prisoners by writing the word “Enemy” with dust and charcoal and beating them until the word is erased.

The Empire arrests the magistrate for “treasonously consorting with the enemy”, what the magistrate describes as “a phrase out of a book” (p. 76), and silences its victims through torture or reduces their speech to meaningless cries of pain. It refuses to give the magistrate a trial in which he might produce a counter discourse to that it employs. The magistrate tries to use language to counter the ornate rhetoric of the Empire, for he sees himself as a loquacious civil servant, but is not listened to and is also unable to articulate language. When he is dangling from a tree at the end of a rope with his hands pinned behind his back, he groans, bellows, and is often

lost for words. "I try to call out something," he says, "a word of blind fear, a shriek, but the rope is now so tight that I am strangled, speechless" (p. 117). When he objects to Joll's using of a hammer to crush the feet of four kneeling barbarian prisoners and says "NO" many times (p. 104), he is hit repeatedly and sustains a broken nose and hand and a swollen eye.

The torture of the prisoners, when experienced vicariously by the magistrate who lost his affiliation with the Empire as a "traitor", makes him oppose its imperial authority. He is made to say anything, say "No" to Joll and then scream incomprehensibly. In public executions, Foucault (1977) argues, "[u]nder the protection of imminent death, the criminal could say everything and the crowd cheered" (p. 60). Crowds around the scaffold, Foucault also writes, could hear a criminal who would lose nothing in cursing "the judges, the laws, the government and religion" (p. 60). The magistrate, to some extent, does something similar when he publicly denounces imperial torture against helpless barbarian prisoners and says "NO," thus breaking the repressive silence imposed on the Empire's subjects and challenging the Empire's sovereignty. However, he cannot continue the moralistic lesson he started about the miraculous human body and the miracle of human creation while a soldier continues to hit him with a stick. "Words fail me," he says (p. 105). After he receives a blow on the face, he cannot remember what he said about the miraculous creation of humans: "What I wanted to say next I cannot remember. A miracle of creation—I pursue the thought but it eludes me like a wisp of smoke" (p. 105). The Empire's men stop him from uttering what he began, and he fails to appeal to their communal identity as human beings, as "the great miracle of creation" (p. 105). Interestingly, this can also be read using Scarry's *The Body in Pain*, for she argues that human creation and creativity make the world while torture and wars unmake the world. The pain the magistrate endures disrupts his creative and affective train of thought. Nevertheless, the pain and bodily damage inflicted on the barbarian prisoners undo the miraculous potential of the human body for self-repair. According to Scarry (1985), "Brutal, savage, and barbaric, torture (even if unconsciously) self-consciously and explicitly announces its own nature as an undoing of civilization, acts out the uncreating of the created contents of consciousness" (p. 38). While the blows the magistrate receives silence him, they also contradict the Empire's claims to civilization; torture, thus, asserts itself as the enemy of civilization. On the other hand, the tortured are the ones who come to appreciate more the potential of humanity even if they are not allowed to express it freely. This counter logic implies that the magistrate and the barbarian prisoners become more human in being punished and silenced.

Colonial communities have been identified by language and by racism against the other on linguistic grounds. Language, therefore, has been implicated in nationalism and decolonization. Frantz Fanon's psychological and existential analysis of race relations, *Black Skin, White Masks*, provides an analysis of the role of language in power relations between the colonizer and the colonized. Fanon (1967) asserts that "to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (p. 17), for one speaks and one makes oneself alive for others. Since language is a carrier of civilization and history, the Negro of the Antilles, Fanon remarks, tries to master French to become "whiter" and more human via possession of language as a "cultural tool" (p. 18, p. 38). To speak a language, Fanon writes, "means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (pp. 17-8). Insofar as a man who speaks a language "possesses the world expressed and implied by that language" in Fanon's words (p. 18), the absence of a common language between the Empire and the barbarians makes them unknowable to each other. It relegates human communication and augments instead essentialized differences. Moreover, it makes the apparently more powerful Empire repress/silence the barbarian language and see the

barbarians as non-entities. Dominic Head (1997) asserts this idea with reference to Joll: "Just as the colonizer does damage to indigenous languages, so does Joll reduce all inflection to the single tone of pain/ truth. His role as torturer thus has also this figurative connotation, representative of linguistic imperialism" (p. 82). During the expedition to send the barbarian girl to her people, the magistrate sits in a tent while she talks to the other three men: "The banter goes on in the pidgin of the frontier, and she is at no loss for words" (p. 62). The magistrate is surprised at her fluency in this pidgin. However, the barbarian girl's true language is silenced in all her interactions on the frontier, and she, as a linguistically colonized subject, is forced to use the frontier's pidgin. Even in this pidgin she speaks, she cannot tell the story of her intimate pain at the hands of Joll. In her silence about her torture, she confirms her status as a figure of alterity, a subaltern Other who cannot speak or is not heard even if s/he speaks. The magistrate, in fact, tries to appropriate her discourse by having her tell a story of torture he can ultimately use in his own rhetoric against the Empire. Together with Joll, the magistrate adds a patriarchal dimension to the linguistic colonization of the barbarian girl.

The colonial identity, as the magistrate's confrontation with Joll's practices reveals, is more complex than mere linguistic differences between the Empire and its enemies. It is often fractured from within and fails to maintain its wholeness. The walled settlement stands for the fixed boundaries that delineate the Empire's "distinct" imperial identity, as opposed to the boundless terrain of the barbarians among hills and mountains, which allows the Empire to construct its own conception of barbarian identity and project on them its fears and prejudices. The magistrate and Joll, however, are two faces of the same imperial rule. They embody the ambivalence of colonial discourse in their fluid, overlapping identities. The magistrate's continual self-interrogation makes him a "hyperconscious person" who, according to Coetzee, is trapped in "an endless cycle of self-consciousness, incessantly questioning his own motives" (qtd. in Penner, 1989, p. 80). The doubling of his thoughts links him to Joll, for he reflects: "On the other hand, who am I to assert my distance from him? I drink with him, I eat with him, I show him sights, I afford him every assistance as his letter of commission requests, and more" (p. 5). Comparing himself to Joll, he also remarks that Joll might be his psychological double, a harsher version of himself: "It has not escaped me that an interrogator can wear two masks, speak with two voices, one harsh, one seductive" (p. 7). The magistrate finds that it is more and more difficult to maintain a coherent sense of his self; he turns out to be a "lie" founded on nothing but crumbling self-illusion. He rants: "For I was not, as I liked to think, the indulgent pleasure-loving opposite of the cold rigid Colonel. I was the lie that Empire tells itself when times are easy, he the truth that Empire tells when harsh winds blow. Two sides of imperial rule, no more, no less" (p. 133).¹³ Therefore, the magistrate shows how brittle the imperial identity is, how a humanist may well be an exploiter and a torturer, and how a civilized civil servant may be a "barbarian" within. He comes to represent the very unstable distinction between civilized and barbarian, or humanist and torturer, that the Empire prides itself on.

Michael Moses (1993) discusses *WB* in the light of Hegel's conception of history as the combination of events and a written account of such events to produce recorded history and sees this throughout the essay as a primary distinction the novel critiques between the "lettered" civilized Empire and the "unlettered" barbarians (p. 117). What Moses does not point out is that being lettered is another pillar upon which the imperial identity is founded and a signifier of the presence of state institutions. The magistrate is an official serving a lettered Empire in a courthouse. He basically deals with records; he collects taxes and administers the frontier's trade as well as the lawcourt. He hopes to go down in history as a civil servant of the Empire: "When I

pass away,” he says, “I hope to merit three lines of small print in the Imperial gazette” (p. 8). The Empire he serves has census officials and keeps records. For example, Joll takes a folding writing table on his first expedition into the desert and sends the magistrate a letter, sealed and signed, asking him to retain the prisoners sent till his return. The magistrate himself, angered by Joll’s prisoners, writes yet tears a letter he writes to the Third Bureau complaining about the incompetence of its agents (p. 19). When Joll brings in more prisoners and starts interrogating them, the magistrate occupies himself with municipal paperwork at the courthouse or tries to read the classics. Moreover, the magistrate’s office is full of legal texts and administration records (p. 22). After the expected prevalence of the barbarians, the magistrate thinks that they “will wipe their backsides on the town archives” (p. 140). While this image strongly suggests the coming of a people who do not possess a written language as a cultural asset, it more importantly shows that the lettered/unlettered distinction undergirds the imperial identity. The same idea is emphasized when the magistrate says: “No one can accept that an imperial army has been annihilated by men with bows and arrows and rusty old guns who live in tents and never wash and cannot read or write” (p. 140). However, the barbarian relics with a secret script testify that the barbarians have a linguistic system the Empire does not comprehend.

When the magistrate interprets some wood slips with a barbarian script to Joll and Mandel, he gives an allegorical interpretation on imperial injustice and historical recurrence. His interpretation counters Joll’s belief in fixities: “They form an allegory. They can be read in many orders. Further, each single slip can be read in many ways. Together they can be read as a domestic journal, or they can be read as a plan of war, or they can be turned on their sides and read as a history of the last years of the Empire—the old Empire, I mean” (pp. 109-10). Lance Olsen says that the wood slips, historically rootless as they are, “form an absence which may be supplemented in an endless number of ways, cut off from responsibility, from authority, an emblem of orphaned language, nothing more than a productive mechanism” (p. 53). Lance Olsen (1985) highlights the openness of articulated language to interpretation in the absence of a linguistic context or a historical link. What is more important is that these slips undermine the Empire’s belief in its unique possession of a lettered civilization and a system of writing/bookkeeping and make us question one of the Empire’s fundamentals of identity. The slips draw attention to the precarious nature of linguistic signs and the difficulty of using language as a definite tenet of identity. The fact that the barbarian girl easily learns the pidgin of the frontier while the magistrate fails to learn her language can be seen as another indicator that the Empire’s privileged stance on the grounds of linguistic superiority is shaky.

As for the barbarian identity, it is an imperial construction. The barbarians are described in evasive, hallucinatory terms as dark rapists and violent thieves (p. 8). They mainly exist in people’s imagination and are not allowed real life identities. The Empire does not only try to eradicate their “parasitical” existence around the town, it also uses its fixed notions of truth and language to engage them. The Empire has violently marked its history on the body of the barbarian girl in its attempts to wring a confession from her that validates its emergency state of ruthless interrogations. Moreover, the Empire has erased the history of the barbarian girl in the process of inscribing its own violent history. It has reduced her to a shapeless mass with no distinct features. The scars of torture, a lived reality on her body, make her continually live in the present as a tortured body with no redeeming past or future, and thus with no whole identity. In his dreams, the magistrate sees “a blank, featureless” face (p. 37). He cannot bring himself to remember the whole face of the barbarian girl before torture. He tries unavailingly “to recall her as she was before the doctors of pain began their ministrations” (p. 46). The magistrate finds her

body “blank”, “obstinate, phlegmatic”, and “incomplete” (p. 41). Her body bears the signs of torture yet fails to give the magistrate a true account of what it has endured at the hands of Joll. It remains beyond the magistrate’s comprehension although he continually sees it as a site of hermeneutical and epistemological questions that culminate when he cannot determine whether he is interested in her as a whole, healthy body or as a body that signifies her story of torture (p. 63). The torture she was subjected to has touched her and rendered her incomprehensible to the magistrate. The violent history the Empire has imposed on her has actually made her without a history beyond being a tortured body. It has decentered the subject position of the magistrate, as his existence for her is now peripheral. The tortured eyes of the barbarian girl allow her to see only the outer surfaces or edges of things. There is something missing at the center of things. The identities of both victim and perpetrator are split and confused, though in different ways.

The Empire seeks a justification of its *raison d’être* through the barbarian girl and other prisoners. The prisoners are to admit about an ongoing plot against the Empire to confirm the Empire’s doubts. On the one hand, this assures the Empire about the existence of a barbarian Other, and thus consolidates its own existence as a civilized self. On the other, it justifies the torture practices the Empire carries out against the barbarians. However, the imperial identity is made repeatedly more vulnerable in the figure of the magistrate who is already skeptical about the Empire and its ways. Looking into the eyes of the barbarian woman, already half-blind because of torture, the magistrate sees nothing that affirms his identity: “I look into the eye. Am I to believe that gazing back at me she sees nothing—my feet perhaps, parts of the room, a hazy circle of light, but at the centre, where I am, only a blur, a blank? I pass my hand slowly in front of her face, watching her pupils. I cannot discern any movement. She does not blink” (p. 31). He fails to fathom the nature of his desire toward her or to move her; her face remains blank, refusing to give the magistrate the Hegelian reciprocation of identity he is after: “and with a shift of horror I behold the answer that has been waiting all the time offer itself to me in the image of a face masked by two black glassy insect eyes from which there comes no reciprocal gaze but only my doubled image cast back at me” (p. 43). He fails to get the mutual recognition he needs for a whole identity, which means that he does not exist for her in the same way she does not exist for him as an Other. Such a failure unsettles his identity as a master. To quote Dovey (1988) on this,

The girl’s partial blindness is a sign of her state of incompleteness, in Hegelian terms, of her ‘inessential consciousness’ in relation to the Magistrate’s position of mastery. She cannot reciprocate the Magistrate’s desire, cannot provide proof of his identity, because she cannot return the look of recognition he seeks. Looking into her eyes, he finds no answering desire there, but only the image of his own desire given back to him. (pp. 226-7)

It turns out that the obliterated identity of the barbarian girl brings to a crisis the magistrate’s own identity. He fails to maintain a distance from her as a figure of alterity and equally fails to find himself in relation to her. “The act of returning the girl to her people,” Dovey argues, “is an attempt to restore her to ‘herself’, to a state of wholeness, so that she *would* be able to provide this kind of reciprocal recognition” (p. 227). Restoring her to herself is also akin to ridding the magistrate’s conscience of a traumatic experience and restoring him to himself, for Joll’s torture practices against the barbarian prisoners, and especially the girl, have initiated the magistrate’s

identity crisis. The Empire's torture practices, in seeking to assert certainties about the imperial identity, backfire and make this very identity subject to doubt.

The magistrate's problematic identity, his in-between status as a complicit humanist, is manifested when he says: "I must assert my distance from Colonel Joll! I will not suffer for his crimes!" (p. 44). However, the magistrate, an upholder of the values of civilization and progress, is not sure about his sentiments toward the barbarians, whom he refers to in stereotypical terms:

Do I really look forward to the triumph of the barbarian way: intellectual torpor, slovenliness, tolerance of disease and death? If we were to disappear would the barbarians spend their afternoons excavating our ruins? Would they preserve our census rolls and our grain-merchants' ledgers in glass cases, or devote themselves to deciphering the script of our love-letters? (p. 51)

The magistrate's musing over his thoughts and desires puts him again in a position like that of the Empire, being an enemy of the enemies of civilization. He writes a letter to the provincial governor before he leaves to send the girl to her people and signs and seals the document. However, he is not sure about the nature of the second document because of his conflicting emotions:

A testament? A memoir? A confession? A history of thirty years on the frontier? All that day I sit in a trance at my desk staring at the empty white paper, waiting for words to come. ... On the third day I surrender, put the paper back in the drawer, and make preparations to leave. It seems appropriate that a man who does not know what to do with a woman in his bed should not know what to write. (pp. 56-7)

The presence of the barbarian girl in the magistrate's life unsettles his presumed privileged status as an imperial subject who can write and renders him impotent with her. He comes to enact an abortive patriarchal association between phallus and penis. He fails to maintain control over his conscious desires and motivations. Instead, he revels in a dream world about the barbarian girl.

In questioning the manichean binary of civilized/barbarian or self/Other as a definite one, the novel constantly establishes it yet erases it. The word "ENEMY" that is written by Joll on the backs of some barbarian prisoners with dust and charcoal is erased with their blood and sweat (p. 103). Four out of twelve prisoners Joll brings on his second expedition into the desert lie as docile bodies on the ground while they are being beaten. Joll tries to fix the barbarian identity and reduce all doubt about the existence of the barbarians as a threat to the Empire. As Foucault (1977) says, "[t]he tortured body is first inscribed in the legal ceremonial that must produce, open for all to see, the truth of the crime" (p. 35). Foucault means that the body was made to carry its condemnation and to produce it publicly (p. 43). This is basically what Joll tries to do by writing the guilt of the prisoners on their backs: to make the barbarian body testify to its crime as an enemy to the Empire, and thus save the imperial identity from falling apart in the absence of barbarians to subjugate. After the spectacle of pain for the barbarians and the magistrate's own beating (in which he sustains a broken nose and a sore hand and eye and is treated as an enemy of the State like the barbarians), the magistrate expresses his doubts about defending the barbarians: "Easier to lay my head on a block than to defend the cause of justice for the barbarians: for where can that argument lead but to laying down our arms and opening the gates of the town to the people whose land we have raped?" (p. 106). The oscillation in the magistrate's role as an imperial subject and a liberal humanist, and thus an enemy of the State,

and the loose identity labels used by the Empire for its subjects and enemies show that Coetzee is questioning the bases of imperial identity. Such loose labels are clear when the magistrate shifts the label “enemy”, and implicitly “barbarian”, to Joll and exonerates himself and the barbarian prisoners:

‘Those pitiable prisoners you brought in—are *they* the enemy I must fear? Is that what you say? *You* are the enemy, Colonel!’ I can restrain myself no longer. I pound the desk with my fist. ‘*You* are the enemy, *you* have made the war, and *you* have given them all the martyrs they need—starting not now but a year ago when you committed your first filthy barbarities here! History will bear me out!’ (p. 112)

The foregrounding of the personal pronouns “they” and “you” makes them exist more as linguistic signifiers whose referents can be easily shifted. Joll is here accused of having committed “filthy barbarities” against the barbarian prisoners back in time, and Mandel is earlier described by the magistrate as “one of the *new* barbarians” (p. 76; my emphasis), which undoes all identity binaries established by the Empire and imposed on history or renders them as impotent pronouncements. Moreover, history as a shifting force that condemns or exonerates imperial practices means that it cannot be taken as an asset for a stable imperial identity or nation.

Coetzee’s novel exposes the illusory foundations of imperial enterprises, and foremost imperial identity. It shows that the self is defined by constructing an Other, that may not even exist, and ascribing to it various differences at many levels. The Other can be an inherent aspect of our own instincts or unconscious drives. It can exist, Maria Boletsi (2007) argues, as a “mental image” (p. 85), a Jungian psychic image of our souls or a Freudian alter ego. This can account for the conclusions of the novel in which no barbarians arrive. If the “barbarian” is within, then it will never arrive no matter how much we wait; we should look within ourselves to find it. As Boletsi argues, “[w]e only receive a mediated mirror image of the barbarians, as it is reflected on the bodies of the civilized” (p. 85). The “barbarians” here stand for human nature as opposed to the culture we construct. The magistrate experiences this aspect about our human nature that gets repressed under the façade of civilization. At the end of *WB*, we see that the imperial garrison left in the town and the abortive expeditionary force members become the noticeable “barbarians”—stealing, ravaging, and ransacking—while the expected barbarians continue to have a shadowy existence, never arriving to confirm the Empire’s doubts. Said (1979) relates the imaginary construction of otherness necessary to the self-definition of imperial powers and shows that the colonized has equal claims to “civilizations and languages”:

The Orient is ... the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. (pp. 1-2)

The defeated imperial army retreats to the heartland to protect the capital against the suspected encroachment of the barbarians upon the Empire. The Empire has failed to maintain its presumed coherent identity. Coetzee’s book can be read as a nationalist allegory not only for the Empire but also for the resisting barbarians, for the end signals the assertion of a new barbarian nation. The Empire creates an epoch in history, while at the end the barbarians are about to create a new

history of decolonization. To save themselves and their crumbling nation, the citizens of the settlement learn to work cooperatively to survive the barbarian encroachment, and the magistrate calls them "my fellow-citizens" (p. 141). The school, a state institution, is closed, and the children are employed in securing food for a harsh winter ahead (p. 140).

If the novel undermines imperial notions of identity and statehood, then it is asserting an ethic of viewing the colonized Other. The self and the Other cannot exist as separate entities, and their coexistence should be enriching to both. Instead of looking at their deconstructed binaries, WB implies, we need to open up an alternative ethic of recognizing their human differences and appreciating more their similarities (Craps, 2007, p. 59). Insofar as the novel seeks to deconstruct the binary divisions of imperial cultures, it then advocates the assumption that cultures and identities are varied and hybrid rather than monolithic, an idea promulgated by postcolonial critics like Said and Bhabha.¹⁴ Nations also are not microcosmic identities of finite borders and pure races. This endows Coetzee's novel with an ethical stance that interrogates not only political atrocities but also ambivalent political discourses that can harm the Other or further its subjugation, like that of liberal humanism adopted by the magistrate. The novel, in offering an alternative ethic of engagement with the Other, transcends history and asserts the discourse of the novel as a more ethical one.¹⁵ What the magistrate says at the end about his inability to see what is staring him in the face (p. 152) is probably an indication of the failure of the magistrate's discourse of liberal humanism to account for the Other on its own terms or engage it. The new alternative Coetzee offers is not one based on historical or fictional discourses, but on an awareness of our limitations and prejudices. Sigmund Freud (1961) asserts that "civilization is a process in the service of Eros, whose purpose is to combine single human individuals, and after that families, then races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind" (p. 69). This counters all narrow claims to civilization that exclude the Other.

Notes

¹ Hereafter abbreviated as WB. Parenthetical citations will be given in the text.

² It is not surprising that much of the commentary on the novel focuses on the issue of torture. For example, see J. Wenzel, M. Moses, and B. Eckstein.

³ Although the anonymous Empire is given an allegorical, universal status by virtue of its being anonymous, Coetzee does not drop the definite article of "the" Empire all times in the text as Attwell seems to suggest. For example, see pp. 8, 17, 18, 37, 110, and p. 128. Hence, I use the definite article for the Empire throughout.

⁴ These are: *Dusklands* (1974), *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), and WB.

⁵ Likewise, Anderson claims that the imagined community which is the nation is mediated by discourses of representation and narration, especially those of the novel and the newspaper (p. 25).

⁶ S. Freud argues that civilization is measured by managing rivers and canals, and fields, planting, and breeding domestic animals (p. 39). Freud says: "We recognize, then, that countries have attained a high level of civilization if we find that in them everything which can assist in the exploitation of the earth by man and in his protection against the forces of nature—everything, in short, which is of use to him—is attended to and effectively carried out" (p. 39).

⁷ Susan Gallagher argues that "the dichotomy between the Empire and the barbarians is marked by physical and social differences" manifested in differences in physical appearance, food, hygiene, occupations, and lifestyles. She argues that the novel questions "the stereotypes of idleness and slovenliness" used to identify the barbarians (p. 129).

⁸ Maria Boletsi says that the etymology of the ancient Greek word "barbaros" "is supposed to imitate the incomprehensible mumblings of the language of foreign peoples, sounding like 'bar-bar' (or, as we would say today, 'bla bla')" (p. 68).

⁹ I am not interested in the structural allegoricalness of WB or the way it relates to South African politics as a moral allegory. Many critics have examined such issues. See T. Dovey.

¹⁰ Although the overall thrust of Scarry's argument about the negative impact of torture on culture, civilization, and language seems valid, the argument can be problematic if one considers the fact that torture can ultimately awaken

our human conscience against the brutalities of torture. It can be redeeming if it returns us to civilization. The magistrate acquires more of a human status in his own eyes, and in ours as well, when he is subjected to the torture practices of the Empire. In fact, he comes closer to seeing the barbarian girl on equal terms as a tortured human being after he himself is put in her position as a tortured victim of the Empire.

¹¹ Newman makes a similar claim about this scene and brings a gender twist to it: "In public, therefore, the magistrate enters a state of liminality, inhabiting a space on the margins of male and female, human and animal, an area seen as prelinguistic, outside the categories of language" (p. 136).

¹² Freud sees "cleanliness" and "order" as "important requirements of civilization" (p. 44).

¹³ On another occasion, the magistrate reflects: "Whom will that other girl with the blind face remember: me with my silk robe and my dim lights and my perfumes and oils and my unhappy pleasures, or that other cold man with the mask over his eyes who gave the orders and pondered the sounds of her intimate pain?" (p. 132).

¹⁴ See Said's introduction to *Culture and Imperialism*, especially pp. xxv and 15.

¹⁵ In "The Novel Today", Coetzee argues against the colonization of the novel by the discourse of history in South Africa. The novel, he argues, should have its own discourse and function according to its principles.

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Embedding Grammar while Developing Communicative Competence in English: Relevant Cultural Contexts and Teaching Approaches

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Abstract

This article examines Arab-heritage learners' preferences on how grammar is taught in English classes with a communicative competence focus, serving as a basis for developing principled teaching practices and teacher-training. Data was collected via a questionnaire from 336 adult learners that attend a private teaching facility using primarily Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methods. In the study, learners were pooled into lower-level, or higher-level groups depending on their Common European Framework (CEF) language level. Data was collected on learners' preferred teaching/learning strategy choices including (i) deductive or inductive approaches, (ii) embedding grammar in local or 'international' cultural contexts, (iii) use of tasks and exercises or activities, and (iv) immediate or delayed teacher intervention. Results indicate Arab learners' overall preference of grammar instruction practices based on deductive approaches, conditional to teaching practices being embedded in meaningful contexts. Lower-level learners prefer local cultural contexts, while higher-level learners prefer Western/international ones. Very few Arab-heritage learners prefer methods based on guided inductive approaches using tasks and exercises with periodic teacher-intervention, and almost none chose the deep-end CLT inductive approach. Conversely, shallow-end inductive approaches, with contextualized tasks, activities and delayed teacher intervention are almost as popular as contextualized deductive approaches. This study indicates the importance of meaningful cultural contexts for embedding grammar instruction, reappraising contemporary deductive methods, and the balanced use of shallow-end CLT and inductive approach. These results should therefore help teachers and teacher-trainers realign popular Western beliefs about English teaching and teacher-training when operating in Arab-heritage communities.

Keywords: Arab heritage learners, communicative competence focus, cultural contextualization, embedding grammar, inductive and deductive approaches, teacher-training.

Introduction

The case for grammar instruction

The importance of English grammar teaching around the world remains contentious, and learners continue to face many divergent positions. “When, and to what extent, one should teach grammar to language learners is a controversial issue” (Celce- Murcia, 1991, p.459). For example, in the 1960s and 1970s most Anglophone countries such as England, Australia, New Zealand and the USA renounced grammar instruction on the grounds that it was ineffectual (Jones *et al*, 2013). The teaching of language forms has also been disparagingly described as “Neanderthal” (Long, 1988, p.136), and Hillocks and Smith (1991) stated that “Research over a period of nearly 90 years has consistently shown that the teaching of school grammar has little or no effect on students” (p.602). Yet currently English grammar is in the process of re-introduction into the English curriculum in many Anglophone countries, even if the ambiguity of its role and if and when to teach it still persist (Myhill & Jones, 2011; Myhill, 2011).

Grammar-teaching methodologies

This ambiguity has resulted in learners being exposed to markedly opposing strategies for teaching English grammar, for example, form vs. function, form vs. meaning, fluency vs. accuracy, meaning-based instruction vs. form-based instruction, and communication vs. grammar (Lock, 1997). There often are varied and often conflicting perceptions, motivations and attitudes towards the role of grammar and how it should be taught in much of the Arab-speaking world, stemming from both learners and teachers. Such countries include, and not restricted to Algeria (e.g. Senoussi, 2012), Egypt (e.g. Latif and Mahmoud, 2012), Iraq (e.g. Al-Mawl and Al-Azzawi, 2011), Libya (e.g. Tantani, 2012), Morocco (e.g. Dkhissi, 2014), Oman (e.g. Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam, 2011), Saudi Arabia (e.g. Assalahi, 2013), South Sudan (e.g. Mallia, 2014a), Sudan (e.g. Mallia, 2013a; 2014b), the United Arab Emirates (e.g. Eltantawi, 2012) and Yemen (e.g. Ezzi, 2012).

Arab-heritage countries therefore have concerns about the rationale behind the methods and approaches for English grammar teaching and their efficacy, particularly communication versus grammar. Additionally, negative connotations with the attitudes of Arabic-heritage English learners exist, and that they are not open to new approaches. For example in Saudi Arabia “[...] learners’ perceptions and beliefs about grammar are influenced by their cultural, social, and environmental factors. As such, participants from Saudi Arabia favoured traditional grammar method of teaching...” (Rattar, & Dilshad, 2010, p.28).

Newby (2003) suggests that making informed choices about the role of grammar and its effective instruction have been helped via the three general ways of approaching grammar throughout ELT history, including traditional grammar teaching and communicative language teaching (CLT). López Rama and Luque Agulló (2012) summarize that “Traditional grammar teaching was based on a formal notion of competence: the underlying knowledge of concepts and rules stored in the minds of speakers which equated grammar with syntax and morphology, considering meaning as totally different linguistic level” (p.180). The classroom practices utilized are essentially based on the procedure known as ‘presentation, practice and production’ (PPP): new grammar rules, particularly the form and meaning, are first presented, followed by decreasingly controlled tasks and exercises, leading to freer and more natural production of the target language (TL) (Harmer, 2007).

The explicit knowledge of rules was often the main classroom objective for PPP, generally with greater focus on knowing about grammar, rather than its written or oral communicative purpose. Research on the relation of language with culture and society by Hymes (1972) resulted in the introduction of the concept of ‘communicative competence’, with the ensuing critical shift of importance, “...to highlight the difference between knowledge ‘about’ language rules and forms, and the knowledge that enables a person to communicate functionally and interactively” (Pérez Martín, 1996, p.316).

Communicative competence, grammar and context

Yet the strategy of pitting communication vs. grammar (Lock, 1997), and idea that CLT requires an exclusive focus on meaning, at the expense of grammar, is far from accurate (Spada, 2007). Indeed, communicative competence has been categorized into four aspects including the grammatical and linguistic competence, in addition to sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence (Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983). Analogously, Bachman (1990), and Bachman and Palmer (1996) subdivide communicative competence into language competence, strategic competence and psychological mechanisms. Language competence is further divided into ‘pragmatic competence’ and ‘organizational competence’, the latter including grammatical and textual competencies.

It is therefore also of importance to evaluate the role of context and culture within communicative competence. Using it may facilitate embedding grammar in a CLT classroom, but learners’ perceptions on the preferential use of local, familiar cultural context, versus extraneous ones needs also to be examined.

CLT, PPP, inductive and deductive approaches

CLT is divided into the shallow-end and deep-end approach (Thornbury, 1999). The latter approach, based on Krashen’s theories of the Natural Approach (1985) rigorously excludes the role grammar in classroom teaching due to the perception that it may interfere with communication. Instead, the meaning and use of grammar items are acquired by learners inductively through activities and tasks that replicate real-world scenarios. This is in sharp contrast to PPP and traditional methods of teaching grammar which are often based on deductive learning and involve explicit teaching of grammar (e.g. see Mallia, 2014a).

While the use of PPP has somewhat waned, particularly in Western (or Western-influenced) classroom environments, deep-end CLT is virtually obsolete. Concerns regarding the latter started to appear in the literature almost 25 years ago, for example Larsen-Freeman (1991) wrote:

“Despite the popularity such approaches [the Natural Approach] now enjoy, if the pattern alluded to earlier is perpetuated [no grammatical analysis in the classroom], then one would expect them to be challenged. Indeed, there are already signs that this is happening. [...] Thus, a more satisfactory characterization of teaching grammar, harmonious with the above assumptions, is that teaching grammar means enabling language students to use linguistic forms accurately, meaningfully and appropriately” (p.279-280).

More recently, López Rama and Luque Agulló (2012) state that:

“[...] even when the contradiction about teaching grammar still exists in ELT literature, in the classroom the deep-end approach is not currently used, as most authors and teachers attach a role to grammar, without diminishing the main target of communication” (p.182).

Conversely, in the shallow-end CLT approach grammar is often taught via a guided inductive approach. For example, the teacher may create classroom scenarios where grammar can be embedded in meaningful, communicative contexts that are essentially learner-centred. The teacher's role becomes that of a facilitator, guiding learners appropriately to utilize the target language in a contextualized and meaningful manner. The teacher's guidance may involve the implicit or explicit discussion and analysis of the TL, employing caution not to interrupt the 'communicative flow' of the lesson.

Grammar teaching in the CLT classroom is clearly synchronous with the ultimate objective of developing the learners' communicative competence. Hence, while the importance of cognitive theories of language acquisition cannot be underestimated, so to must the need for their practice in the context of 'real-operating conditions' Johnson (1988, 1996). Similarly, real-world conditions are advocated as a necessary part of the lesson, with a having concrete practical activity (Lantolf and Johnson, 2007) or favouring communicative behaviour (DeKeyser, 1998).

Research objectives

Despite these underpinning principles, the pragmatic views of learners themselves, increasingly exposed to a wider variety of teaching methods and approaches, are often ignored. Learners represent a valuable resource of knowledge on 'best practices' when teaching and learning grammar in the contemporary English classroom.

The purpose of this paper is therefore to:

- (1) Examine contemporary Arab learners' acceptability of traditional grammar teaching classroom practices using deductive approaches, such as PPP;
- (2) Examine Arab learners' acceptability of deep-end CLT classroom practices using 'rigorous' inductive approaches;
- (3) Examine Arab learners' acceptability of shallow-end CLT classroom practices using guided inductive approaches;
- (4) Explore the importance of using familiar and meaningful 'Arab heritage' cultural contexts in which to embed grammar instruction as an aid to presenting its form, and illustrating meaning and use;
- (5) Explore the importance of using 'new' cultural contexts that may strengthen intercultural communicative competence.

Methods

Participants and course

The study population consisted of 175 male and 161 female adult Sudanese learners with ages ranging from late teens to early sixties, attending English classes at the British Council in Khartoum, Sudan. Some learners had been attending courses of progressive levels for over a year, while the newest arrivals were on the second month of their first course. Learners can join a general English course at the appropriate level as indicated by their placement test. The main pre-selection criterion for this study was having Arabic as the mother tongue (L1), having learnt

English in a non-Western scholastic environment (e.g. Sudan), and having been on one of the ongoing courses at the British Council for at least six weeks.

The study population of 336 learners was placed at various levels of the European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF). Following the British Council's CEF-language level equivalency as indicated *A Core Inventory for General English* (North, Ortega & Sheehan, 2010), there were 48 learners at A1 CEF level (approximately 'elementary 1'), 46 at A2 CEF level (pre-intermediate 1), 50 at A2 CEF level (pre-intermediate 2), 34 at B1 CEF level (intermediate 1), 92 at B1 CEF level (intermediate 2), 50 at B2 CEF level (upper-intermediate 1), and 16 at C1 CEF level (advanced 1).

Learners are taught by one or more different teachers having a CELTA course, undergraduate degree and several years of international experience as the minimum set of qualifications. The syllabus adopted by all teachers is guided by the course book series *New Cutting Edge* (elementary-advanced level as appropriate). Teachers supplement course book materials with their own, choosing resources from other course books, adapting materials or creating their own independently as they feel is suitable. However, the core syllabus covered for a specific language level is generally adhered to, and the British Council strongly encourages the use of CLT in its Sudan classes. However, the actual approach and materials adopted may vary within any single teacher's course, and certainly across courses conducted by different teachers. This diversity exposes learners to many teaching styles, and encourages them to experiment with different learning approaches.

Measurements

The research tool used was a written questionnaire (*Table 1*), with a single question about learners' preference for new grammar instruction (e.g. future perfect). The participants chose one out of these seven options:

(1) Teachers initially give the learners the new grammar rules, then look at the course book for examples, having a Western context, and then doing exercises and activities to practice. While this procedure is wholly deductive, it is preceded by a lead-in, personalization, and activation of schemata. Additionally, the teacher may even model the target language (TL) via live-listening, recordings, video clips, anecdotes etc. Rule presentation (form) is followed by a phase where the teacher uses resources in the book, or others with also a Western context, to show the meaning of the TL situations where language can be used in context. A final phase allows practice through exercises (controlled practice) and activities (freer practice) as prescribed by the text book.

(2) Teachers first give the learners the new rules, then directly do course book exercises and activities to practice them. The procedure is similar to (1) above, i.e. deductive, but rule presentation (form) is not followed by the phase where meaning is highlighted. Learners therefore immediately pass to a practice phase, doing exercises (controlled practice) and activities (freer practice) from the course.

(3) Teachers initially giving the learners the new grammar rules, then discuss many examples using Sudanese culture and life, before proceeding to practice by doing exercises and activities that use the grammar in Sudanese life-situations. This option is also essentially similar to (1) i.e. deductive, except that the teacher links the use of socio-culturally familiar resources extraneous to 'generic international textbooks', to show the meaning of the TL situations where language can be used in a socio-cultural context relevant and meaningful to the learners.

(4) Teachers giving learners simple tasks and exercises, including cloze exercises (gap-fills), using 'Western situations' from the start, where they have to use the TL (new grammar), then the learners form the rules themselves. This procedure is a form of guided inductive approach. It is preceded by a lead-in, personalization, activation of schemata. Again, there could be discreet modelling of TL by teacher, via video clips, recordings etc. The guided inductive phase follows, where the teacher guides the learners to use resources in the book to encourage consciousness raising of the TL, showing the meaning, use and form of the. While rules and form are not presented or highlighted as such, tasks such as gap-fills will encourage learners to focus on the TL needed. The teacher therefore has the role of guiding learners towards the consolidation of the form-function relationship so they can apply it in 'real' operating conditions. Other book-based activities, generally with a more overt 'communicative' aspect, additionally focus on the meaning and use of the TL.

(5) This option also follows a guided inductive approach. The learners therefore engage with exercises, such as cloze exercises, using Sudanese contexts and socio-cultural situations', where they have to use the new grammar, and then find the rules themselves. Other culturally meaningful activities, having a 'communicative' function reinforce the meaning and use of the TL. This option is essentially similar to (4) but makes use of a cultural context that is familiar to the learner.

(6) Teachers solely give the learners situations or observations to interpret, case studies to analyze, or a complex real-world problems to solve. Through such activities and tasks in class students can subconsciously notice the meaning, use and form of new TL, and inductively understand the links between form and function without discussing the rules or additional guidance. This is a 'deep-end' CLT inductive approach, where non-communicative actions such as rule-giving or consciousness-raising may distract from the communicative focus.

(7) This option is based on a shallow-end CLT inductive approach, but a TL focus occurs towards the end of the lesson to consolidate TL. If needed, teacher intervention can, however, occur earlier in the lesson: learners may receive guidance and prompts from the teacher towards the end of the inductive process. This option, unlike (4) and (5), does not utilize gap-fills and other tasks that strongly focus on the TL and bring it to attention to the learners. Instead, more subtle 'real-world' challenges are presented in the course of the lesson.

Procedure

This was a convenience sample, and all Sudanese learners in a course that voluntarily chose to participate in this study and satisfying the selection criteria entered the study. Information was gathered through the use of a written questionnaire (*Table 1*) incorporated as part of the 'routine' feedback collected from students at the teaching centre, and participants could choose to remain anonymous, helping to avoid possible bias and guaranteeing confidentiality. The study was also conducted inside the learners' own classrooms, and during regular class hours, further reducing possible bias that can be caused by changing the educational setting or hours.

No confounding variables (e.g. gender, age etc.) were solidly identified as being influential. Groups being compared were therefore not matched for such criteria as this could actually introduce bias, and possibly lessen the power of the study (i.e. ability to find significant differences).

The researcher was always present to help orally administer the questionnaire to guarantee a full understanding of the question and answer choices, the latter offering several often subtle differences. This procedure increases the internal validity of the study, namely the accuracy of learners' answer choice in that it truly reflects their thoughts, and also reliability (i.e. repeatability of questionnaire across the different classes, as this may be a concern (Fink, 2003). Despite its brevity, on average the questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes to complete as learners often asked the researcher for specific differences among the options. The questionnaire was conducted by the same person (the researcher) for all classes, eliminating the possibility of introducing bias via the use of different questionnaire administrators. Learners were not allowed to discuss the answer options, or interact in any manner so as not to influence each others' answers.

Statistical analyses

Descriptive statistics, expressed as counts and percentages were compiled for the seven answer options given in relation to the CEF-language level (North, Ortega & Sheehan, 2010). Similar statistics were also compiled for deductive, guided inductive and deductive choices according to learners' language-level after pooling results from options 1-3, options 4-5 and options 6-7, respectively. Additionally, statistics were collected and analyzed for learners favouring either local, culturally contextualized embedding of grammar (pooling options 3 and 5), or Western cultural contexts (pooling options 1, 2 and 4).

A suitable 'cut-off' point across language levels was identified by statistically assessing differences in the proportion of learners that chose for example, deductive-type options based. The Pearson's chi-square test was used for this purpose (Preacher, 2001): comparing the proportion of learners at intermediate level 1 with that at intermediate level 2 for deductive-type options (options 1-3), gave a statistic of 6.445. The p value is 0.011 and therefore this result is significant at $p < 0.05$.

On this basis, two groups were formed, one group by pooling learners from 'elementary 1' through to intermediate 1' (lower level group, $n = 178$); the second group was formed by pooling learners from 'intermediate 2' through to 'advanced 1' (higher level group, $n = 158$). Subsequent comparisons between the two groups used the Pearson's chi-square test for the deductive and inductive comparisons, and additionally with Yates correction for the guided approach comparison due to the small sample size and cell values.

As three comparisons between the same two groups are made the problem of multiplicity arises: the number of hypotheses in a test was increased (i.e. to 3), and consequently the likelihood of reject the null hypotheses when it is true (type I error) is also increased. The Bonferroni correction statistically adjusts for this phenomenon (Bonferroni, 1936; Dunn, 1959), and for three comparisons (each with $p = 0.05$) requires p to be lowered to 0.017. This value is taken conservatively at $p = 0.01$ for each test, and quoted at $p = 0.005$ in this study.

When examining the importance of the cultural context, learners that favour embedding grammatical learning within local cultural contexts, or those that opt for a Western cultural context were identified. A single comparison was made between the proportion of lower-level learners versus higher level learners ($n = 272$).

Results

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics, expressed as percentages were compiled for the seven answer options given in relation to the CEF-language level (North, Ortega & Sheehan, 2010). They are summarized in *Table 2*.

Many higher-learners prefer inductive approaches where the teacher's interventions occur towards the latter part of the lesson (option 7: 25.06%). In contrast, they are clearly reluctant to adopt a 'deep-end' inductive approach (option 6: 1.23%) where the focus would be exclusively 'communicative' throughout the lesson and the onus for deciphering TL falls squarely on the learners. Similarly, guided inductive approaches, where the teacher along the course of the lesson are not popular choices (options 4-5: 11.39 %). The majority of higher-level learners prefer the use of deductive approaches to introduce and focus on new grammar while developing communicative competence in English (options 1-3: 63.29%).

The use of tasks and activities with the teacher's opportune intervention towards the end of the lesson was popular (inductive option 7: 11.24%), and is preferred to the use of more 'traditional' tasks with the teacher's periodic involvement at all learner levels (guided inductive options 4-5: 1.12 %); they rigorously avoid the 'deep-end' inductive approach (option 6: 2.25%). When using more traditional tasks and exercises learners clearly preferred deductive approaches, which was the overall preference for both lower and higher-level learners (options 1-3: 62.92 %). While using deductive approaches, reducing or eliminating the presentation and discussion of contextualized examples and moving directly to practice was not favoured by learners of high- and low-levels (option 2, overall 4.17 %).

Creating a context and embedding examples that clearly show the meaning and use of the new language was favoured by learners at all levels, e.g. from all learners choosing deductive approaches (options 1-3), 93.65% wanted a context (options 1 and 3). Lower- and higher-level learners preferred deductive approaches with local contexts out of all the choices (51.69 %, 32.91% respectively) as a backdrop for developing an understanding of the accurate meaning of new language and noticing its appropriate use. Analogously, Western contexts were preferred by 28.09 % and 20.26 % of lower- and higher-level learners, respectively.

Teaching approach preference

Statistics were also compiled for deductive, guided inductive and deductive choices according to learners' language-level by pooling results from options 1-3, options 4-5 and options 6-7, respectively. The statistics are summarized in *Table 3*.

When comparing the proportion in the lower-level group that chose a deductive approach (options 1-3) with that in the higher-level group, the Pearson's chi-square statistic is 21.81 ($p = 3 \times 10^{-06}$). This result is significant at $p < 0.05$ (after Bonferroni correction), therefore the proportion of learners at lower-levels that prefer to learn new grammar via deductive approaches is significantly higher than that of higher-level learners.

When comparing the proportion in lower level group that chose a guided inductive approach (options 4-5) with that in the higher level group, the Pearson's chi-square statistic is 13.99 ($p = 1.81 \times 10^{-04}$). This result is significant at $p < 0.05$ (after Bonferroni adjustment and Yates correction), therefore the proportion of learners at higher-levels that prefer to learn new grammar via guided inductive approaches is significantly higher than that of lower-level learners.

A comparison of the proportion in lower level group that chose an inductive approach (options 6-7) with that in the higher level group, the Pearson's chi-square statistic is 10.65 ($p = 1.1 \times 10^{-03}$). This result is significant at $p < 0.05$ (after Bonferroni correction), therefore the proportion of learners at higher-levels that also prefer to learn new grammar via inductive approaches is significantly higher than that of lower-level learners.

Cultural context preference

Statistics were also collected and analyzed for learners favouring either local, culturally contextualized embedding of grammar (pooling options 3 and 5), versus those preferring a Western cultural context (pooling options 1, 2 and 4). The statistics are summarized in *Table 3*.

The comparison of the proportions in the lower level and higher groups that chose a familiar 'local' cultural context for embedding the learning and practice of grammar (options 3 and 5) as opposed to a western context (options 1, 2 and 4), yielded a Yates corrected Pearson's chi-square statistic of 6.93 ($p = 8.51 \times 10^{-03}$). This result is significant at $p < 0.05$, therefore the proportion of learners at lower-levels that prefer grammar learning to be embedded in a familiar context is significantly higher than that of higher-level learners.

Discussion and conclusions

Deductive approaches

This study has shown that teachers, particularly those having Western training, need to acknowledge Arab learners' continued marked overall preference of traditional grammar teaching classroom practices using a deductive approach. This is true for adult learners at all language levels examined in this study, from elementary through to advanced levels (A1 – C1 CEF levels). However, learners first choice generally included deductive strategies having an underpinning Western or local cultural context. Accordingly, this indicates an ongoing clear shift away from 'traditional' decontextualized learning that attempts to teach TL via the book-based teaching of rules and exercises with progressively freer use of language.

Differences between how Arab teachers impart grammar and how Arab learners would like to take it on are generally present. For example, in a Saudi Arabian study (Rattar & Dilshad, 2010) learners stated they needed more explicit grammar teaching while also feeling the need to be more communicative. Both these conditions cannot be satisfied by traditional decontextualized teaching of grammar, and was largely rejected in this study. Regretfully, this model may be closest to that often widely practiced in the past (and possibly also the present), and as stated by Mulder (2013): "[...] grammar has traditionally been taught and learned in an environment that is devoid of context" (p. 73), suggesting that this issue which extends well beyond the Arab-speaking world.

This study therefore also suggests that Arab-heritage learners may, indeed, be more exacting in their preferred methods of learning grammar, even via explicit deductive approaches. This was specifically shown by their rejection of the decontextualized reaching option in favour of those with a meaningful and involving context.

Decontextualized teaching results in failure to involve the learners imaginatively from the onset of the lesson as no 'real-world' scenarios in which the TL could be embedded meaningfully are created. Therefore examples, anecdotes and situations, where the teacher can demonstrate the use and relevance of the TL to Arab learners by embedding it in either familiar, 'safe' local cultural contexts, or titillating new Western ones, are absent. Contemporary Arab-

heritage learners largely have come to expect the inclusion of context alongside the use of deductive approaches.

The underpinning theory for some of the results in this study may be explained by Badstone and Ellis's (2009) Given-to-New Principle, "[...] where existing world knowledge is exploited as a resource for connecting known or 'given' meaning with new form-meaning mappings" (p.194). This gives an understanding as to why decontextualized teaching and failure to activate learners' schemata pushes learners away from deductive approaches as presented in option two, devoid of context. Learners are not presented with opportunities to affix new TL with previous language experience (or indeed life experience), making learning slow and stilted.

However, as even 'higher-level' learners were opposed to decontextualized deductive approaches, the implication is that this rejection was not only 'technical', i.e. based on rendering the learning of TL meaning and use difficult due to abstraction. An additional important factor for the rejection was that of removal the 'pleasure factor' by eliminating the cultural contexts in which TL could be embedded. For example, learners often enjoy sharing elements of local culture and news among each other and also with their teachers, and take pleasure from listening and interacting with them and talk about foreign countries and cultures. This is particularly so if foreign are foreign, hence the greater information gap.

In addition to the useful pleasure of sharing facts and ideas, learners can be trained to utilize opportunities given by contextualized discussion and debate to raise their TL awareness. An increase of 'useful teachers talking time' can therefore be employed by instructors to model TL, particularly its meaning and use, in addition to correct forms. This suggests an additional purpose, namely to direct learners' conscious attention to grammatical features that they might normally fail to notice. This satisfies another second condition that helps create successful learning of grammar, the Awareness Principle as described by Badstone and Ellis (2009) and "[...] which states that discovering new mappings between form and meaning is a process which necessarily involves awareness" (p.194).

With the careful use of 'contextualized deductive approaches', lessons therefore additionally create numerous opportunities for dialogue, debate and sharing of experiences: a CLT-type of environment that allows for the embedding of more TL-focussed aspects of this approach through cultural contextualization. This also allows the intimidating, formal and dry classroom environment, stereotypically associated with deductive approaches to be mitigated. The resulting fortification of social bonds among teacher and learners further facilitates the learning experience.

Cultural context preference

This study has also highlighted adult Arab learners' preference between the possible use of local, or international cultural contexts when teaching language. Interestingly, higher-level learners are more open to Western contexts than those reflecting local culture, and the opposite is true for lower-level learners. This ambiguity is not a new issue, and referring to learners worldwide, Kramsch (1996) stated that "The teaching of culture as a component of language teaching has traditionally been caught between the striving for universality and the desire to maintain cultural particularity" (p.5).

It has, however, frequently been suggested that more importance should be given to local cultural contexts. For example, Tsui and Ng (2010) discuss the importance of the "[...] teacher in perceiving and exploiting "situated possibilities" in the classroom, this article argues that it is important for teachers to construct local understanding of their work embedded in the local

cultural traditions [...]” (p.364). A study in Saudi Arabia (Shah *et al.*, 2013) indicated that pedagogy was negatively influenced by social, cultural and religious insensitivities. Similarly, learners of Arabic heritage in Western countries may face challenges: for example, a study in the U.S.A. showed that these students face challenges associated with the culture, in addition to learning English and the culture (Omran Akasha, 2013).

Lower-level learners in this study may therefore have preferentially chosen the use of local cultural contexts versus Western ones as not having to grapple with new cultural understanding would be one learning obstacle less. This study suggests that the degree of incompatibility between the Arabic language and culture, and those of English may potentially lessen the motivation of some learners, as also evidenced in other studies (eg. Al-Mahrooqi & Asante, 2010; Burns, 2010).

In contrast, higher-level learners were, however somewhat more enthusiastic about using Western contexts: being less encumbered by linguistic challenges they perhaps viewed English as being a tool to learn more about the world...arts, culture, history politics and science. Indeed, studies in Egypt (Mallia, 2013b) have evidenced similar attitudes: most high-level Egyptian learners felt that English significantly facilitated choices and knowledge through internet, cinema, TV, and reading choices. Their awareness of world politics and general knowledge was also broadened, and they generally felt that English helped them to be more open-minded. In addition to the transactional functions of English (e.g. exams, interviews, degrees and career), emphasis on the importance of the interpersonal role of language was clearly in evidence.

Therefore using an extraneous context (i.e. not local) may generate an information-gap that encourages learners to notice and use new language while communicating, by creating opportunities to learn about new cultures and interact with the rest of the world, hence the concept of ‘intercultural communicative competence’ (Byram, 1997; Simons, 2010). Simons (*ibid*), refers to this as the ability to "cope with different cultures ... pay attention to differences in culture, detect them and react on them in an adequate way on the daily work floor" (p.33). This study indicates a clear preference among high-level for developing this ability.

Inductive approaches

Learners of all levels in this study mostly rejected the ‘fully inductive’ CLT deep-end method. Based on Krashen’s natural approach, the underpinning theory is that grammar should be acquired subconsciously, and in which there is no role for grammar, as it would affect the final aim of communication. Long’s (1996) Interaction Hypothesis similarly proposes that the learner’s attention to the TL form develops naturally during communication challenges, objectives and problems experience while performing meaning-focused activities.

However, this study shows learners generally wanted the teacher’s final contribution or step by step validation during lessons. The ‘extreme’ inductive approach is therefore not perceived as a means of empowering them through greater autonomy; instead, it generates a sense of insecurity. As indicated in other scenarios (Batstone and Ellis, 2009), the greater emphasis on communicating (meaning), the more likely are the details relating to form are to be missed; the connection between meaning and form can therefore all too easily fail to be achieved.

Conversely, learners in this study, particularly of higher levels are enthusiastic about inductive approaches associated with shallow-end CLT precisely because time to focussed grammar teaching is allocated during the latter part of the lesson. This approach fully qualifies

as an inductive approach, as Prince and Felder (2006) precise: “When we speak of inductive methods, we therefore do not mean total avoidance of lecturing and complete reliance on self-discovery, but simply teaching in which induction precedes deduction” (p.3). Learners have the knowledge that the later stage of the lesson is teacher-led, and supplies the necessary focus on TL, with clarifications as may be needed. This helps create a secure learning environment for learners that allows them to participate, enjoy and learn in the initial ‘more communicative’ and inductive phase of the lesson. Analogously, Batstone and Ellis (2009), suggest that “An alternative way of developing students’ explicit understanding is to make the target feature explicit to the students in the course of their performing a communicative task [...] (p.199).

In contrast, learners in this study largely did not choose the guided inductive approaches, despite the CLT focus and periodic intervention by the teacher to ensure learners were on-track. While Batstone and Ellis (2009) reiterate that the teacher’s guidance must necessarily involve the Given-to-New and Awareness Principles, precisely how this guidance is to be achieved remains controversial. Perhaps the teacher’s role here was seen to be too ‘soft’, and the essentially learner-centred lessons evidently created a sense of insecurity. Or perhaps the teacher simply is ‘too absent’ and not overtly available, i.e. not sufficiently teacher-fronted. This is the main difference between the guided inductive options with periodic but subtle intervention of the teacher, versus that in inductive approach (option 7). The latter option is popular because an overt teacher-fronted phase routinely occurs in the latter part of the lesson.

Listening to learners’ choices

It has often been suggested that learners in several countries (including Arab-heritage ones) gravitate towards deductive approaches because this is generally the only approach they are accustomed to. This ‘teaching-learning culture’ (which must be distinguished from the cultural context discussed above in which TL is embedded) can be seen from this study (Rattar, & Dilshad, 2010), where:

“[...] participants from Saudi Arab firmly believed in explicit grammar teaching and declarative knowledge. They showed their reluctance in participating group discussions [...] These findings indicate that learners’ perceptions and beliefs about grammar are influenced by their cultural, social, and environmental factors. As such, participants from Saudi Arab favoured traditional grammar method of teaching [...]’ (p 28).

However, it is of particular importance to note that learners in Arabic countries may also have the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of teaching methods. For example, those in this study participate in learning environments based on guided inductive and inductive approaches, as these are favoured by the teaching centre. Even when given these alternative choices, this study suggests that a more balanced perspective, namely encouraging the use of deductive approaches, in addition to the existing repertoire of methods based on inductive approaches, would be appropriate. Yet the latter are invariably seen as progressive and “[...] often universally assumed to be the better choice [...]” (Mallia, 2014a; p.223), although they may not necessarily reflect “[...] local cultural perceptions on language learning [...]” (*ibid*, p.223), and the former as ‘traditional and backwards-looking’.

While learners’ preferences, if not aligned with CLT, are often surrounded by a negative connotation, i.e. too traditional and backward looking, this is certainly at times unwarranted. This study has shown that learners of Arabic heritage (i) will not necessarily ‘make do’ with

traditional or decontextualized deductive approaches because other methods and approaches are not on offer; (ii) enjoy overt emphasis on TL (e.g. grammar), particularly if embedded in a meaningful and contextualized scenario that is meaningful and interesting; (iii) both inductive and deductive approaches are welcome if they satisfy condition (ii), even if there was a slight preference for methods using a deductive approach, and (iv) the communicative aspect of language learning is imperative but should not be seen as being ‘in competition’ with overt language TL instruction: the two are symbiotic.

About the Author:

Joseph Mallia has a PhD in English with a focus on the differences in English learning strategies’ that reflect the influence of socio-cultural variance in language learning and teaching, particularly in the Arab World. Reflecting this, he has carried out teacher and trainer training in the MENA region and beyond. His current interests also include teaching English for academic and specific purposes, and experimenting with the teaching of grammar within writing systems.

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Table 1. Questionnaire of preferred teaching-learning approach for embedding new grammar while developing communicative competence in English in the classroom

Choose only ONE option that you feel is best for you.

When learning NEW grammar, for example new verb tenses such as the future perfect, I want the teacher to:

- (a) first give the students the NEW rules, then look at the book for examples (Western), and then do exercises and activities to practice;
- (b) first give the students the NEW rules, then directly do book exercises and activities to practice them;
- (c) first give the students the NEW rules, then discuss many examples using Sudanese culture and life, then practice by doing exercises and activities that use the grammar in Sudanese life-situations;
- (d) first give the students exercises, such as a gap-fill, using 'Western situations', where they have to use the NEW grammar, then the students find the rules themselves;
- (e) first give the students exercises, such as a gap-fill, using 'Sudanese situations', where they have to use the NEW grammar, then the students find the rules themselves;
- (f) do activities / games in class and students can notice the way NEW grammar is made without discussing the rules;
- (g) do activities / games in class, students alone produce and notice the NEW grammar is made and rules are discussed

Table 2. Teaching strategy preferences (%) chosen by learners at different language levels

* Teaching strategy preference	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)	7 (%)
Level							
Elementary 1 CEF A1 (n=48)	41.67	4.17	37.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.67
Pre intermediate 1 CEF A2 (n=46)	0.00	0.00	86.96	0.00	0.00	4.35	8.70
Pre intermediate 2 CEF A2 (n=50)	32.00	4.00	48.00	0.00	4.00	4.00	8.00
Intermediate 1 CEF B1 (n=34)	41.18	17.65	29.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.75
Intermediate 2 CEF B1 (n=92)	28.26	6.52	30.44	4.35	4.35	0.00	26.09
Upper Intermediate 1 CEF B2 (n=50)	28.00	0.00	36.00	12.00	4.00	0.00	20.00
Advanced 1 CEF C1 (n=16)	12.50	0.00	37.50	12.50	0.00	12.50	25.00

* Teaching strategy 1 = deductive, western context; 2 = deductive, no contextualized examples; 3 = deductive, local cultural context; 4 = guided inductive, tasks & exercises, western context; 5 =

guided inductive, tasks & exercises, local cultural context; 6 = 'deep-end' inductive; 7 = 'shallow-end' inductive, tasks and activities, delayed teacher intervention

Table 3. Differences between choices of lower- and higher-level learners for teaching approach and cultural context

Teaching approach and cultural context [^]	Language level *		chi-square	P value	Significant (p=0.05)
	Lower (n)	Higher (n)			
Deductive (n = 252)	152	100	21.81	3.0×10^{-06}	yes**
Guided inductive (n = 20)	2	18	13.99	1.81×10^{-04}	yes***
Inductive (n = 64)	24	40	10.65	1.1×10^{-03}	yes**
Western (n = 110) (teaching strategy 1, 2, 4)	50	60	6.93	8.51×10^{-03}	yes
Local (n = 152) (teaching strategy 3,5)	94	58			

[^] Deductive = options 1-3; guided inductive = options 4-5; inductive = options 6-7; * Lower = elementary pre-intermediate pre-intermediate 2, intermediate 1; Higher = intermediate 2, upper-intermediate 1, advanced 1; ** Chi square significant with Bonferroni adjustment; *** Chi square significant with Yates correction & Bonferroni adjustment.

Collocational Competence in English Language Teaching: An Overview

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Abstract

Despite its prime importance for language proficiency, collocational competence is one of the most neglected areas in vocabulary studies and second language teaching/learning. This negligence is the underlying motive for writing the present paper. Hence, the paper aims at raising awareness of the importance of this significant dimension of vocabulary knowledge and presenting a well-rounded view of this lexical phenomenon. To this end, the paper gives a brief introduction to the topic, and offers an overview of relevant definitions and classifications. This is followed by a summary of the importance of teaching/learning collocations, and a list of relevant lines of research in collocation studies. The last part presents a number of recommended activities that English language instructors can implement in their classroom. The paper is thus helpful to both researchers and language instructors as it sheds the light on pertinent areas for research and recommends useful activities for teaching collocations.

Keywords: collocational, competence, English language teaching, lexical competence, second language learning, vocabulary studies,

Introduction

For long decades, the focus in second language (L2) acquisition and language teaching studies was placed on the study of grammar and, to a much lesser extent, pronunciation neglecting the importance of vocabulary learning. This was due to a sweeping misconception that vocabulary acquisition could take care of itself (Decarrico, 2001). More recently, however, and especially starting the 1970s and 1980s, many voices highlighted the importance of vocabulary acquisition/learning (e.g., Wilkins, 1972) and cast doubt on the “natural” acquisition of vocabulary by L2 learners. A number of studies also proved that vocabulary plays a significant role in language proficiency, such as reading comprehension (Beck et al., 1987) and writing production (Laufer, 1994; Read, 2002), and that poor vocabulary proficiency is a common cause for incompetent communication (Chastain, 1988). These voices and findings led to a revival of interest in vocabulary acquisition/learning and urged a number of researchers and practitioners to pay more attention to vocabulary studies.

Word knowledge is of special significance to vocabulary acquisition/ learning. According to Nation (2001), word knowledge involves knowledge of word form, word meaning and word use. The aspect of word form refers to the spoken and written forms of words as well as their morphological composition. As for the aspect of word meaning, it entails knowledge of a number of constituents, including reference, sense, connotative meaning and sense relations. The last aspect, word use, refers to knowing the grammatical, lexical and stylistic constraints on the use of words in the linguistic context. Among the three aspects of word knowledge, the last aspect received the least attention despite its significance to accurate language use. The present paper falls under studies of word use, and more specifically the lexical constraints on using words in context. The paper focuses on the lexical combinations of words or, in other words, word collocates. With the aim of raising awareness to the importance of this language phenomenon, widely known as collocation, encouraging more research in the area and urging language instructors to give it due attention, the paper reviews some pertinent definitions/categories, highlights the significance of collocations, summarizes the main relevant lines of research and suggests a variety of classroom activities to teach collocations.

II. What are collocations?

Since the early introduction of the notion of “collocation” by Palmer (1938) and its first use as a technical term by Firth (1957), a number of definitions have been advanced for the term “collocation”. A clear and well-phrased definition is Lewis’s (1997) who explained that “collocations are those combinations of words which occur naturally with greater than random frequency.” (p.44). Hence, collocations refer to word combinations that occur consistently together. Any word combinations that do not exhibit frequent co-occurrence are not classified as collocations. For example, *blonde hair* is a collocation, but *black hair* is not normally categorized as a collocation.

An important characteristic of collocations is their arbitrariness. The choice of the constituent words does not follow any logic, but is only based on linguistic convention (Lewis, 1997). There does not seem to be any logic why *good chance*, *high probability* and *strong likelihood* are acceptable collocations in English while *strong chance*, *good probability*, and *high likelihood* are not (Farrokh, 2012). In fact, this arbitrariness is the only explanation why “we say to *break rules* but not to *break regulations*; to *hold a funeral* but not to *hold a burial*; to *make an attempt* but not to *have an attempt* and to *have a try* but not to *make a try*,” (Sinclair, 1991, p. 170). It is also this arbitrariness that makes acceptable collocations vary across languages. For example, Wray

(2002) observed that “in English you *run a business*, but in German you *lead it*.... In English you *lie in the sun*, but in Russian you *lie on it*,” (p. 73).

In addition to the arbitrary nature of collocations, which requires memorizing possible word combinations in every language for effective production, the meaning of words may be determined by their collocates. That is what some linguists refer to as a collocationally restricted meaning (e.g., Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002). For example, the meaning of the word *white* changes in each of the following collocations: *white coffee*, *white wine*, *white noise*, *white man* and *white lie*. Likewise, a full understanding of the word *heavy* requires knowing its meanings in *heavy man*, *heavy rain*, *heavy meal*, *heavy traffic* and *heavy smoker*.

The literature includes different classifications/ categories of collocations. Some of these classifications rely on the word class of the combining words. For example, Benson et al. (1986) divide collocations into two major groups – lexical collocations and grammatical collocations. Lexical collocations constitute of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs whereas grammatical collocations include a noun, verb or adjective combined with a preposition or another grammatical structure, such as infinitives or that clauses. Below is a selected list of collocations:

Lexical collocations

Verb + Noun (e.g., *compose music*; *revoke a license*)

Adjective + Noun (e.g., *strong tea*; *rough estimate*)

Noun + Verb (e.g., *bees buzz*; *bombs explode*)

Grammatical collocations

Preposition + Noun (e.g., *in advance*, *at anchor*)

Adjective + Preposition (e.g., *afraid of*; *interested in*)

Noun + Infinitive (e.g., *He was a fool to do it*.)

Following the same pattern of classification, Lewis (2000) listed other types of collocations including the following:

Adverb + Adjective (e.g., *extremely inconvenient*)

Verb + Adjective + Noun (e.g., *revise the original plan*)

Compound noun (e.g., *fire escape*)

Binominal (e.g., *backwards and forwards*)

Other researchers classified collocations through placing them on a continuum (e.g., Abdul Ridha et al., 2011). At one extreme of the continuum come the free combinations with the highest degree of productivity, semantic transparency, and substitutability of items for the constituent elements. At the other extreme are word combinations with an idiomatic meaning that are least productive, most opaque in semantics, and the most frozen in terms of substitutability of elements. All along the continuum and between the two extremes lie different collocations with varying degrees of restriction.

Following the continuum-mode of classification, Carter (1987) divides collocations into four categories based on the strength of their restriction. According to him, unrestricted collocations (e.g., *take a look/ a holiday/ a rest/ time*) involve words that collocate freely with a number of lexical items whereas semi-restricted collocations (e.g., *harbor doubt/grudges/uncertainty/suspicion*) consist of elements that are not easy to replace. The other

two categories include familiar collocations (e.g., *unrequired love*; *lukewarm reception*) whose elements collocate on a regular basis, and restricted collocations (e.g., *dead drunk*, *pretty sure*) that are fixed and inflexible.

Lewis (1997) classifies collocations into four groups: strong, weak, frequent and infrequent. The distinction between strong and weak collocations is based on their fixedness and restriction whereas frequent and infrequent collocations are determined based on frequency of occurrence. Strong collocations, such as *drink beer* and *drug addict*, are tightly connected and function like single words. Weak collocations, however, consist of words that often occur with many other collocates, such as *nice day* and *good chance*. Combining strength and frequency results in four different types of collocations; (1) strong and frequent collocations, (2) strong and infrequent collocations, (3) weak and frequent collocations and (4) weak and infrequent collocations. In relation to the collocational continuum, Lewis (2000) argues that most collocations are found in the middle of the continuum. He believes that the largest number of collocations can be described as medium strong (e.g., *magnificent house*; *significantly different*), followed by common collocations (e.g., *fast car*; *have dinner*). In his view, strong collocations (e.g., *avid reader*; *budding author*) are quite rare.

Hill (2000) introduced a similar classification that categorizes collocations into unique, strong, weak and medium-strength. Unique collocations are fixed and are highly predictable. For example, the verb *shrug* only combines with *shoulders*, not any other part of the body. Strong collocations include words that collocate with very few other words. An example here is *rancid* that collocates with only a few words such as *butter* and *oil*. Weak collocations contain words that combine freely with many other words and have a predictable meaning. Relevant examples include *dark green*, *light green*, *pale green*, *bright green*, *emerald green*, *lime green*, *lush green*, *rich green*, *olive green*, *dull green*, etc. Finally, medium-strength collocations are similar to weak collocations but constitute much more difficulty for language learners. Learners may know the individual words in the collocation, but are not familiar with the collocation as a whole. For instance, the word *key* is relatively easy for language learners, but they would not normally know the combination *a key person*.

III. Importance of collocations for second language learners

The previous section already indicates the importance of teaching/learning collocations for L2 learners in three ways. First, it must be clear by now that collocations are arbitrary, which means that they lack predictability. Attempts at guessing which words co-occur are likely to fail and result in deviant word combinations. Instead, L2 learners need to memorize collocations as single units. Second, it has already been highlighted that collocations may determine the meaning of words. Reference in this respect has already been made to the words *white* and *heavy*. Another example can be the word *chair* whose meaning changes completely in these two collocations: *department chair* and *vacant chair*. Third, collocations vary greatly across languages. L2 learners need to understand that there is nothing as one-to-one correspondence between two languages regarding collocations.

In addition, it is important to learn collocations due to their frequency of occurrence and their facilitatory effect on language processing. Hill (2000) estimates that “collocations are found in up to 70% of everything we say, hear, read, or write,” (p. 53). Similarly, Lewis (2000) considers collocations as the most common and most representative of English multi-word expressions. A language phenomenon with such high frequency of occurrence deserves considerable attention. Besides, the use of pre-fabricated chunks reduces processing effort, and enhances language

comprehension and production (Cantos and Sanchez, 2001; Wiktorsson, 2003; Schmitt, 2004). It is thus highly recommended to train learners on the identification, memorization and retrieval of ready-made collocations instead of letting them create deviant word combinations. As Gleason (1982) puts it, “working on the second language acquisition indicates that the second language learners begin not so much with generative systems as with chunks, prefabricated routines, or unopened packages,” (p. 355).

Finally, collocations enormously contribute to efficient language comprehension and production. Regarding comprehension, memorizing chunks helps learners predict the content of texts, and automatically enhances comprehension. Carter and McCarthy (1988) state that “collocations teach students expectations about which sorts of language can follow from what has preceded,” (p. 75). As for production, a number of researchers have highlighted that the correct use of collocations enhances fluency and makes one’s speech much more comprehensible and native-like. For example, James (1998) asserts that “adherence to the collocational conventions of a foreign language contributes greatly to one’s idiomaticity and native-likeness, and not doing so announces one’s foreignness,” (p. 152). Likewise, Nation (2001) concludes that “all fluent and appropriate language use requires collocational knowledge,” (p. 318).

In conclusion, collocational competence is considered a key component of language competence. The fact that collocations are arbitrary, highly frequent in natural language and unpredictably varied across languages calls for special attention to their teaching in L2 classes. In addition, collocations largely contribute to the definition of word meanings, reduces processing load during language use and support learners on the path of efficient comprehension and production. It is due to this importance for collocations that research studies are on the rise in this area.

IV. Research on collocations

Due to the significance of collocations, a number of researchers, especially recently, have conducted varied studies in this domain. Fan (2009) made two relevant observations. First, most studies use two types of techniques; either elicitation techniques, such as translation tests, multiple choice, gap filling and grids, or production data, which involve the analysis of students’ writing in regards to the use of collocations. The elicitation techniques often require the participants to produce single collocates, which fails to reflect the natural performance of participants. Similarly, analyzing the natural participants’ production (e.g., paragraphs or essays) lacks tight control over writing content and fails to examine low-frequency collocations. Second, most studies emphasize certain structures of collocations, including verb + noun, adjective + noun, adverb + adjective and verb + preposition. This emphasis has produced relevant results to particular types of collocations, but has not really resulted in a deep understanding of collocational use in general.

In addition to these observations, three characteristics of collocational studies in English as a second/foreign language have been noted. The first characteristic is that researchers make use of different well-known corpora and dictionaries to verify the acceptability of collocations included in their elicitation tasks or their participants’ production. Among the frequently used corpora are the British National Corpus and the Contemporary Corpus of American English. As for dictionaries, examples include Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary and Oxford Collocation Dictionary for Students of English. Another characteristic relates to the use of questionnaires. Questionnaires are mostly employed to examine language learners’ perceptions regarding collocations or to investigate the effect of language exposure on collocational competence. Finally, most studies state the proficiency level and first language of the

participants, which has proved useful to avoid overgeneralization of results. This has also helped identify important gaps in research. For example, the collocational knowledge of low-proficient learners has not yet received sufficient attention.

The remaining part of this section attempts to provide an overview of common lines of research in collocation studies. For each line of research, only one example study will be summarized due to space limitation. However, it is worth mentioning that each of the lines of research referred to in the present paper covers a wide range of studies. Among the most researched areas in this regard has been the EFL (=English as a Foreign Language)/ESL (=English as a Second Language) learners' receptive and/or productive knowledge of collocations (e.g., Siyanova & Schmitt, 2008; Alsakran, 2011). In his paper entitled "collocability as a problem in second language production," Brashi (2006) examined EFL learners' receptive and productive knowledge of verb + noun collocations using a blank-filling test and a multiple choice test. The results showed that the participants performed better at the receptive level than at the productive level in regard to verb + noun collocations.

Another line of research relates to the difference in collocational competence between native and non-native speakers (e.g., Waller, 1993; Durrant & Schmitt, 2009). Waller (1993), for example, collected written texts by native speakers of English and advanced English language learners at near-native proficiency. Comparing the use of collocations in the two types of texts, the results showed that the advanced learners' use of collocations is the most tangible marker of their non-nativeness. Waller (1993) mentions that deviant use of collocations was only noted in the texts produced by non-native speakers. However, lexical errors other than collocations as well as syntactic errors were found in texts written by both native and non-native speakers. He thus concludes that the use of collocations may create "a foreign accent in writing," (p. 224).

Some researchers have also analyzed different types of collocational errors and traced the sources of these errors (e.g., Abdul Ridha & Al-Riyahi, 2011; Hong et al., 2011). A case in point is Darvishi (2011) who investigated the collocational errors in EFL college learners' writing in a paper published at the International Conference on Education Research and Innovation. Analyzing thirty eight assignments and thirty eight in-class practices by 68 sophomore university students, Darvishi (2011) concluded that ignorance of rule restriction was the major source of collocational errors in the learners' production. He also identified other sources for errors, including mother-tongue interference, lack of the collocational concept and shortage of collocational knowledge. The study also made use of a questionnaire to explore the participants' perceptions of difficulty in collocations. The results showed that learners' perceptions did not match with the types of collocational errors in their writings.

Studies have also addressed the development patterns of ESL/EFL learners' collocational knowledge (e.g., Li, 2005; Zhang & Chen, 2006). In this regard, Gitsaki (1996) provided many valuable insights. She examined 275 Greek learners of ESL at three different proficiency levels (post-beginner, intermediate, and post-intermediate) using three measurements (essay writing, a translation test and a cloze test). The translation and the cloze tests measured cued production of collocations whereas the essay writing showed the learners' free production of collocations. All the target collocations in the cued production tests came from the learners' textbooks and did not match with collocations in their mother tongue. The results of the study were extremely interesting. First, they showed that grammatical collocations are easier to acquire than lexical collocations. Among the lexical collocations, the type that proved most challenging for learners was verb + noun collocations. Second, the post-intermediate group demonstrated the most

accurate use of collocations. Finally, the study supported the existence of a positive correlation between the development of language proficiency and collocational knowledge.

Another interesting research question that is frequently addressed in collocation studies concerns the factors affecting L2 learners' ability to learn collocations (e.g., Hussein, 1990; Gitsaki, 1996). An intriguing study here is Shehata (2008) who explored the effect of learning English in an EFL context versus an ESL context on collocational competence. A total of 97 advanced Arabic-speaking English language learners were recruited for the purpose of the study. Thirty five participants were studying at Ohio University in the United States while the remaining sixty two were majoring in English at an Egyptian university. Five different instruments were used in the study; namely, a self-report questionnaire, two fill-in-the-blank productive tests, an appropriateness judgment receptive test and a vocabulary recognition test. The author reported that ESL learners outperformed EFL learners in all receptive and productive tests, which highlights that an ESL learning context is more supportive for collocational development than an EFL learning context.

The correlation between English language learners' knowledge/use of collocations and their English language proficiency has also triggered some significant collocation studies (e.g., Zhang, 1993; Sung, 2003). For instance, Hsu (2007) investigated the relation between the Taiwanese college English language learners' use of collocations and their writing. Analyzing the writing of 41 English majors and 21 non-English majors, the study attempted to answer two important questions: (1) does the participants' frequent use of collocations correlate with their writing scores and (2) does the participants' varied use of collocations correlate with their writing scores. The study results showed a significant correlation between the participants' frequency of lexical collocations and their scores in online writing tasks. Similarly, a significant correlation was found between the participants' variety of lexical collocations and their online writing scores.

All the summarized studies above were conducted in the context of general English. Yet, the field of English for Specific Purposes has had its share of collocational studies as well (e.g., Ma & Lee, 1997; Gledhill, 2011). Wu (2003), for example, compared the knowledge of information technology and internet collocations among three groups; (1) non-native Computer Science and Information Engineering (CSIE) university students, (2) non-native English university students and (3) native English speakers with no IT background. Employing a sentence completion test and a multiple choice test, the author showed that the CSIE students demonstrated better command of collocations related to their area of specialization than English students. Yet, their collocational knowledge still proved much less developed than native speakers despite the latter's unfamiliarity with the field of IT and their moderate amount of exposure to IT-related information. Hence, it seems that frequent exposure to collocations in a certain field gives advantage to non-English majors with ESP collocations in comparison to English majors, but not to native speakers of the language.

A final line of research explored in this paper is more pedagogy-oriented. Some rigorous research studies have attempted to examine the effect of explicit teaching on the development of collocational competence (e.g., Mahvelati & Mukundan, 2012; Pirmoradian & Tabatabaei, 2012). An important study is Hsu's (2002) who examined the effect of teaching lexical collocations on the development of Taiwanese EFL learners' collocational proficiency in a one-month, intensive, business English workshop. The researcher examined different relevant materials including the participants' writing tasks, the teacher's class notes, pre- and post-tests and videotaped records of the participants' interviews, presentations and classroom activities. The results came in favor of the explicit teaching of collocations on the development of

collocational competence. The results also demonstrated a slight positive relationship between the learners' use of lexical collocations and their overall language proficiency. Hsu (2002) hence concluded that collocations must be explicitly taught in the EFL classroom to support learners' efforts to master the L2.

V. Teaching collocations

The explicit teaching of collocations has been supported by a number of researchers in addition to Hsu (2002). For instance, Farghal and Obiedat (1995) pointed out that "the highlighting of collocation aspects of lexical items is as important as teaching them individually. This, we believe, is the sole way of nurturing the active use of language and helping the foreign learners construct lexically as well as grammatically acceptable sentences," (p.3). Likewise, Hill (2000) stated that "collocation should play an important part in our teaching from lesson one," (p. 60). Similarly, Fan (2009) highlights the importance of teaching collocations by mentioning that "since collocational use is not rule-governed and, in most cases, arbitrary and idiosyncratic, it is important for teachers to raise the awareness of L2 learners to this problematic aspect of language," (p. 120).

Studies on collocational competence have produced significant implications for teaching collocations and provided recommendations in this regard (e.g., Brashi, 2006; Fan, 2009; Farrokh, 2012). In the present paper, emphasis will be placed on four recommended activities; namely, (1) awareness raising, (2) identification of collocations, (3) receptive knowledge, and (4) productive knowledge. Each area is important to help enhance learners' knowledge and use of collocations, and thus improve mastery of their L2.

First, raising learners' awareness of collocations comes in line with the noticing hypothesis (Schmitt, 1990; 1994) which emphasizes the importance of learners' conscious processing and identification of language for efficient language learning. Awareness raising activities can cover a number of collocational aspects. L2 learners need to know the meaning of collocations, especially if they lack familiarity with the term. They should also be made aware of the importance of collocations and the lack of correspondence between collocations in their first and second languages. It is necessary here to let students see the difference with concrete examples from their two languages, whether through providing examples in class or discussing the erroneous collocations produced by learners due to interlingual transfer.

Learners' awareness must also be raised regarding the arbitrary nature of collocations, the skill of chunking and the collocational aspect of synonymy. Knowing that collocations do not follow clear logic, but rather rely on mere linguistic convention, will make learners pay more attention to collocations and exert more effort to learn them. Besides, learners must be trained on the skill of chunking, which enables them to better identify collocations in texts, and hence supports their learning. In addition, learners must realize that synonyms vary greatly in collocational behavior (e.g., *tall man*, *long ruler* and *high building*). This information will encourage learners to be more careful while choosing among synonyms.

Once made aware of collocations, learners need to be trained on the identification of collocations in different texts. In this regard, learners must be trained to identify useful collocations in oral/written texts. They should also be encouraged to explore the collocations provided in good monolingual English dictionaries. Some dictionaries include the collocations in the example phrases/sentences while others highlight them using bold type, italics, etc. In addition to identifying collocations in texts and dictionaries, learners should be trained to make use of corpora, particularly the ones available online. Two good recommendations are the British

National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English. The corpora can be used for a variety of purposes; (1) to verify the accuracy of collocations through conducting a collocation search, (2) to check the frequency of occurrence of a given collocation in the corpus, and (3) to identify collocations in Key Word In Context extracts.

It is also important to engage students in a variety of collocational activities that enhance both their receptive and productive knowledge of collocations. On the receptive front, gap-filling activities with words from a list/box can be adapted to introduce collocations. The example below from McCarthy et al. (2010) enhances the receptive knowledge of collocations by including collocations in a box for students' use in gap-filling:

Fill in the gaps with collocations from the box.

pay good interest/ set aside money / get an allowance

When Andrew was growing up, he was careful with his money. He _____ every week from his parents, and because he wanted to go to college, he _____ every month. He opened a savings account that _____, so his savings grew.

Another useful activity in this regard is “crossing odd words out” or what is sometimes known as “finding the intruder”. In this task, learners need to identify the word that does not collocate with a target word. McCarthy et al. (2010) also provide the following example:

Cross out the food that is the least likely to go with the preparation.

- a. smoked cheese / turkey / bread / meat
- b. fried noodles / yogurt / chicken / potatoes

Visual input enhancement has also proved useful (e.g., Rezvani, 2011). Highlighting frequently occurring collocations helps raise learners' awareness of the existence of collocations, and encourages them to recognize useful chunks. A relevant example (McCarthy et al., 2010) is shown below:

Listen. Are these statements about manners true in your country? Check (✓) true or false.

- a. It's rude to **cut in line**.
- b. You should try to **keep your voice down** in public.

Another interesting activity is the collocation bingo. In this activity, the learners are given a card with a number of words. Then, they are asked to find the target word in the bingo card that collocates with a number of other words. The activity below (adapted from Vasiljevic, 2008) serves as an illustrative example:

Find the target word in the bingo card that comes with these collocates.

pants	engineer
hill	glass
flavor	lady

Example delicious/ exquisite/ rich/ strong flavor

1. rocky/ high/ rolling/ green (answer: hill)
 2. flared/ baggy/ fitted/ boot-cut (answer: pants)

Matching collocates is another commonly used task to enhance learners' receptive collocational knowledge. Learners only need to match collocations along two or more columns. Boonyasaquan (2009) provides the following example:

Match the collocate in column B with the word in column A that is a good collocation.

Column A	Column B
(green)	a. brand
_____ 1. business	b. balance
_____ 2. company	c. green
_____ 3. sheet	d. multinational
_____ 4. image	

Finally, multiple choice questions are recommended to practice collocations at the receptive level. Learners are asked to identify the best collocate for a target word. The distracters provided can vary in their difficulty. For example, challenging tasks can include synonyms as distracters, which requires learners to choose the correct answers based on their collocational knowledge not the meaning of words. Brashi (2006) used the following task for the purpose of a research study: Choose the verb that collocates with the noun (in italics) in the following sentences.

1. The couple _____ *a pact* not to talk about each other.
 A. performed B. gave C. made D. had
2. They are _____ *the promise* they made before the election.
 A. ruining B. breaking C. demeaning D. corrupting

As for productive knowledge, a variety of tasks can prove useful. For instance, Martynska (2004) asked learners to correct collocation errors in the task below:

Correct the underlined collocations errors in these sentences.

1. I have a terrible tooth pain.
 2. You never change your brain. You're so stubborn.

Towards the same goal, Vasiljevic (2008) used a task known as "focus paraphrase." In this task, learners are required to paraphrase a given sentence using collocations. Prompts are provided to help learners produce the target collocations. Here is a relevant example:

Paraphrase the following sentences. You will use collocations from the options provided.

Example

There were many cars on the street that day.

Adjectives (strong / big / heavy)

Nouns (vehicles / transportation / traffic)

Answer: Traffic was heavy that day.

1. You should go to work after the weekend on Monday.

Verb (report/ record/ transform)

Noun (job/ profession/ duty)

Answer: You should report for duty on Monday.

2. At the time arranged in advance, a car stopped outside the bank.

Adjective (agreed / accepted/ confirmed)

Noun (time/ hour/ minute)

Answer: At the agreed hour, a car stopped outside the bank.

Another relevant activity, albeit controversial, is grid completion. In this task, learners need to complete grids with frequent collocates for target words. Although this enables learners to produce a set of collocates for every target word, the task may not provide learners with sufficient information on the usage of collocations (Nesselhauf, 2005). Below is an example from McCarthy et al. (2010):

Complete the collocations in the chart. How many ideas can you think of?

Verb + Noun	
earn / make / spend / save / waste	money
	a bank account
	an allowance
	cash
	a budget

In addition to using gap-filling activities to enhance learners' receptive knowledge of collocations as shown above, the same type of activity can be used at the production level. Only part of the missing word will be supplied this time, such as the first letter, syllable, etc. This was, for example, used by Alsakran (2011). An extract is included below:

Put the **verb** which best completes the sentence in the blank. Use the first letter as a clue.

EXAMPLE: My teacher was disappointed because I didn't *do* my homework.

1. It's true that we g_____ weight when we eat more than we can burn off.
2. Governments should t_____ the necessary actions to stop global warming.

Sometimes, learners can also be encouraged to use collocations in their speaking/writing through requiring the production of given collocations in their devised dialogues or written paragraphs. For example, students can be asked to write a weather forecast using these collocations:

Adjective + Noun

freak hailstorm/ heavy rain/ minor earthquake/ flash flood/ catastrophic wildfire

Verb + Noun

damage a building/ disrupt traffic/ injure people

The last recommendation is to design tasks that rely on both the receptive and productive knowledge. An example could be to ask learners to judge the acceptability of certain word

combinations. Acceptable collocations can be ticked while the unacceptable ones can be corrected. Here is a sample activity used in Alsakran (2011):

Decide whether the underlined part of the sentence is an acceptable collocation or not. Tick (✓) the acceptable collocations and correct the unacceptable ones.

1. The dentist will fix my artificial teeth.
2. Are you having second thoughts about coming to Brighton with me?

English language instructors can choose the activities that suit their teaching contexts best or devise their own. While teaching collocations, however, repeated encounters with collocations are important for efficient memory storage and fast retrieval. It is also important to select collocations that are active and appropriate. It is not advisable to teach collocations that learners will rarely encounter again in natural English. Finally, language instructors must carefully consider learners' needs while selecting the collocations they teach. For example, if learners are keener on developing their written proficiency, common collocations in the spoken mode, such as "kind of" and "sort of," may not constitute a teaching priority. Similarly, learners studying English in a certain university major (e.g., computer science, law or engineering) will be much more interested to learn relevant collocations to their field of study than general collocations or collocations related to other areas of specialization.

VI. Conclusion

Collocational competence in L2 teaching/ learning deserves special attention from both researchers and language instructors. Negligence to this area could produce L2 learners with accurate, yet awkward and odd language. Focusing on studying individual words in the L2 without paying attention to acceptable word combinations requires learners to invent or create their own lexical patterns, which normally sound non-native. Besides, enhancing learners' collocational competence fosters their language proficiency, whether in comprehension or production.

It is this significance that has recently triggered some rigorous research on collocations. Researchers have examined the receptive/productive collocation knowledge of L2 learners, compared the collocation competence of native and non-native speakers, analyzed the types and sources of collocation errors by L2 learners and traced the development patterns of collocations among different levels of language proficiency. Research has also attempted to discover the factors that influence the development of L2 learners' collocational competence, explore the relation between collocational competence and language proficiency, study the development of collocational knowledge in the field of general language use or language for specific purposes and investigate the effect of explicit teaching on collocational competence. More lines of research on collocations are also developing.

As for language instructors, more attention to collocations has been noted recently. In addition to the numerous activities on collocations that are found in modern English language textbooks (e.g., McCarthy et al., 2010), special vocabulary books (e.g., McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005) and dictionaries (McIntosh et al., 2009) solely address collocations nowadays. This has helped emphasize the importance of collocations in language teaching/learning, and has stimulated language teachers/teacher trainers and textbook writers of devising varied activities to improve English language learners' collocational knowledge. The present paper has attempted to offer a framework for these efforts through classifying the activities needed into four categories; (1)

awareness raising, (2) identification of collocations in texts/dictionaries/corpora, (3) developing the receptive collocational knowledge and (4) enhancing the productive collocational knowledge.

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Paul's Manipulation of the Three Major Women in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the development of Paul's personality and the influences that shaped it in D.H. Lawrence's major novel *Sons and Lovers*. The study has approached the novel from psychological perspective, particularly, emphasizing the protagonist's various attempts to manipulate the three women characters he came in contact with, in order to create a personality for his own self, and it also reveals Lawrence's treatment of women through the delineation of their characters and their relationship to Paul Morel. The qualitative research paradigm is adopted focusing on textual data analysis of the novel. The findings of the study revealed that what Lawrence actually wrote about was the relationship between man and a series of female stereotypes, for women characters were treated unfairly by the author, who seems to blame them for their attempts to absorb the character of Paul. And that a healthy and successful relationship between men and women is a dream that is difficult to achieve. This can be seen through Paul's failure to establish a successful and healthy relationship with all of the three women characters in the novel. At the end of the novel, Paul decides to free himself and go on alone. Freedom is what he has been looking for, and that kind of free life cannot be achieved unless he runs away from the women he came to know.

Keywords: Female, male, manipulation, relationship, stereotype

Paul's Manipulation of the Three Major Women in D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*

D.H. Lawrence's men and women are simply human nature, with the elemental endowment of instincts and passional impulses in more than the normal measure. In order to lay the souls of his characters naked in front of the readers, Lawrence probes deep into the human consciousness and makes a study of pain, pleasure, hate, arising from the interplay of sex. He goes to the extent of probing deep into his characters' subconscious and the unconscious. His characters tend to be centers of radiation, quivering, with the exchange of impulses, as the carriers of the vital life-force. What this paper tends to achieve is to shed some light on the three major women characters and their relationship to Paul Morel in Lawrence's major novel *Sons and Lovers*; the paper will also unveil the influence the three women have on Paul's make-up and temperament, and his ways of manipulating them for self-interests.

Right from the beginning till the end of *Sons and Lovers*, we come in contact with various women characters, one after the other. A few of these characters pervade the whole atmosphere of the novel from the beginning till the end. All the major women characters have been delineated so artistically and intimately that the reader feels he/she knows them personally. A few of these characters have their counterparts in real life.

In an effort at self-identification, Paul Morel manipulates the three major characters (the mother, Miriam, and Clara) to become himself. They are delineated as merely instruments to achieve that identification. Paul Morel is a curiously passive figure in comparison with his elder brother William, who, until his death, is the lover and of whom Paul is extremely jealous. But Paul, at the age of fourteen, when he is expected to go out into the world and make his living, has no higher goal than the regressive one of living with his mother. In this connection, Lawrence says:

His ambition, as far as this world's gear went, was quietly to earn his thirty-five shillings a week somewhere near home, and then, when his father died, have a cottage with his mother, paint and go out as he liked, and live happily ever after p. 113

This wish-fulfillment is actually expressed by Lawrence himself in a letter to Earnest Collings (Letters, 17 January 1913) When he said: "It is hopeless for me to try to do anything without having a woman at the back of me ... I daren't sit in the world without a woman behind me" (p. 93). This quote suggests the autobiographical element in the novel; Paul can be seen as a copy of Lawrence himself, who was also attached to his own mother. "After his brother William's death, Paul becomes his mother's favorite and struggles throughout the novel to balance his love for her with his relationships with other women" (<http://www.sparknotes.com>). Thus it is clear to us that Paul is a shadow of his mother, and cannot live without her being by his side, even in the smallest things he tries to accomplish. Some critics think that Lawrence has not done justice to the women characters in his novel, but justice is what he wanted to do to his protagonist Paul, who, throughout the narrative, tries to free himself from the negative influence the three women try to exert on his soul.

Instead of attempting at the creation of the other sex, Lawrence is usually defining some aspect of himself in his portraits of women because he is an extremely egotistical writer. Lawrence's main object was always to examine the male psyche and to use his women characters to that end. Lawrence's women are allowed their liberty only in so far as they will always acknowledge him as the master. Lawrence remained deeply bound to his early Eastwood life. In that his later relations with women were determined by his privileged mother's boy status and his taking over many feminine characteristics. Lawrence's later longing for a tender male

friendship comes from the nurturing companionship between his father and his father's male friends at the pit; a community life, from which the women were completely excluded. Morel's ineffectual attempts to control his wife and dominate her, by physical means if necessary, were later mirrored in Lawrence's struggles with Frieda. Because the world of the novel is a patriarchal one, husbands in *Sons and Lovers* are called "masters who always try to subdue their wives" (Frieda Lawrence, 1934, p. 32). Lawrence isn't concerned with women as themselves, but only as examples; he has marked a tendency to undervalue individuality in women, and to value them as supporters to males. Mrs. Morel is much more of a stereotype than her husband. But since Paul is dependent on his mother for emotional security and self-esteem, he is unable to appreciate his father's qualities because this would have been seen as treachery by his mother. But the reality is that Paul sides with his father, whom he things lives life naturally, without affectation and prejudices, while his mother represents the social class system which existed in England and caused much discrimination between the upper and lower classes.

In *Sons and Lovers*, Lawrence presents Paul as a male version of Mrs. Morel only because he is afraid that he is like his father. He even looks like her: "Paul was now fourteen, and was looking for work. He was rather small and rather finely-made boy, with dark hair and light blue eyes" (p. 112). There is a great deal of class antagonism here. Paul, through his mother, is determined that he will not be a common laborer. Social mobility demands that he take on the characteristics of Mrs. Morel's lower middle class status. The children refuse to speak in dialect and they read books only to find a position in that society, so what makes them avoid being like their father Mr. Morel, is not their hatred for him, but their desire to rise in class and be intellectuals like their mother. In an article written on the languages the Morels use in *Sons and Lovers*, Ross (2014) stated "Walter Morel is a dialect speaker, and his speech predictably becomes tinged with associations of brutality and ignorance, though it is initially attractive to Gertrude and displays, again, a kind of erotic masculine robustness" (p. 3). The children's struggle in their relationships with their mother and father is symbolic of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, which is a common theme that runs throughout all of Lawrence's major novels. Lawrence himself was with the blood, rather than with the mind, because, according to Lawrence, we can go wrong with our minds, but what our hearts feel is always true.

Lawrence found it hard to resist the temptation of blaming women. For coming too close and impinging on his divine selfhood, or for being too detached and daring to have a life of his own. *Sons and Lovers* is concerned mainly with condemning Mrs. Morel for her stifling hold on Paul. He is presented as a mere victim on whom her view of the world is forcibly branded. As Jessie Chambers pointed out, "the climatic rejection of Miriam does not come about because Paul has made a conscious decision, but because he cannot successfully resist his mother" (p. 69). In other words, Paul is an object over whom two strong women are struggling. He attempts to justify this action by insisting on Miriam's inadequacies, both as a personality and, specifically in sexual terms. However, as Lawrence himself said in a letter to A.D. McLeod, "one sheds one's sickness in books" (Letters, p. 150). One of the main sicknesses has been pointed out by Helen Corke, one of the most perceptive of Lawrence's early critics. In the novel, Mrs. Morel is a *type* of woman, so is Miriam and so is Clara. Lawrence's error was to talk in terms of Man and Woman; whereas, as Corke (1968a) says, "there is no such abrupt and total distinction between the sexes" (p. 71).

What makes Paul very cruel is his effort to emancipate himself from the influence of his mother. In spite of his deep involvement with his mother, he is determined to get away from her and his passion for her in the end is unreal and self-indulgent, in line with his self-dramatizing desire to join her in death, as stated by Sagar (2011, p. 27). All this is healthy in the sense that

Paul must separate himself from his mother in order to survive. As she is dying, Paul wishes her to get it over as quickly as possible with little pain. It can be argued that this intensity is simply a mask for Paul's terrible pain, and yet, there is also a very real sense in which Paul wants to see his mother off, since she has ended her usefulness to him. According to Lawrence's gloss on the novel, in the Garnett letter (Letters, pp. 76-7), "Mrs. Morel realizes that she is an obstacle to Paul's sex life and so decides to die." There is truth in this view, but it also indicates that Paul was never able to develop an adult relationship with his mother, and therefore remained an abandoned child, rather than a male lover. The Paul that can be seen at the end of the novel is a child rather than a grow-up man, who can face reality and start a life of his own.

In order to make sense of his story, Lawrence had to create women characters that are not really credible, so that he could avoid guilt and responsibility. And the relationship with the mother (the magical figure) who is literally breathing life and purpose into her son, and on one occasion, saving him from death, is the basis on which Lawrence was later to found his theory of the man-woman relationship. This theory as stated in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (Lawrence, 1921) is little different from the ideal life of Paul Morel when he works at the factory and comes home to be restored by the admiration of his mother. In the unpublished foreword that Lawrence wrote to *Sons and Lovers*, and made clear in a letter to Garnett, he says:

Now every woman, according to her kind, demands that a man shall come home to her with joy and weariness of the work he has done during the day: that he shall then while he is with her, be re-born of her; that in the morning he shall go forth with his new strength. Pp. 101-2

The above quote shows a negative male passivity, which renders man weak and helpless in the face of Eve. This demand made by woman cannot and shouldn't affect the law of polarity advocated by Lawrence in almost all his works. Lawrence's law of polarity advocates respect and equality between the sexes, which is absent in real life, and which causes the failure of so many relationships.

Lawrence's novel *The Trespasser* shows the same pattern of male passivity, victimized by representative woman, in which Siegmund kills himself because he failed to resolve the situation between himself and two women. In the final chapter we see the Lawrentian self-pity, where the women concerned are shown getting on with life after Siegmund has hanged himself. Despite the weaknesses of his hero, women are blamed. The same kind of sexual repression was suffered by Helena as the wretched Miriam: "She belonged to that class of 'dreaming women' with whom passion exhausts itself at the mouth" (*The Trespasser*, 1912, p. 23). Siegmund's wife, on the other hand, is a bad housekeeper whose husband is a kind of lover who feels inadequate to the demands of women. Finally, Siegmund is destroyed by the two women. Lawrence's basic sickness, which paradoxically provided much of the most compelling material in his work, is a series of conflicts aroused by his Oedipal situation with his mother. It is often, as here, conceived of as a battle to the death between Man and Woman. Siegmund is killed, but, in *Sons and Lovers* Paul manages to kill his mother, or at least, hasten her death. So if this relationship is to be termed as battle, then Paul is to be considered the winner, simply because he is able to save his soul.

The following scene from *Sons and Lovers* is an important and instructive one as regards to Lawrence's attitude to women. In this scene Paul breaks Annie's doll and gives it a strangely vindictive funeral that suggests Lawrence's hatred of women, though he is deeply upset at the

pain he has caused:

Let's make a sacrifice of Arabella," he said, "Let's burn her." She was horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do. He made an altar of bricks, pulled some of the savings out of Arabella's body, put the waxen fragments into the hollow face, poured on a little paraffin, and set the whole thing alight. He watched with wicked satisfaction the drops of wax melt off the broken forehead of Arabella, and drop like sweat into the flame. So long as the stupid big doll burned he rejoiced in silence. At the end he poked among the embers with a stick, fished out the arms and legs, all blackened, and smashed them under stones. "That's the sacrifice of Miss Arabella," he said. "An' I'm glad there's nothing left of her." pp. 75-6

In the same way, Paul hates Miriam because he has broken her since she has failed to rise to his requirements and deserves to be discarded, just like a toy in the hands of a child.

The above passage is significant because of the language Paul used to describe his emotional response to the situation, the "stupid" doll, "wicked satisfaction" etc. Paul's unconscious intention in burning the doll is to revenge himself on a female substitute when he thinks he can get away with it. It seems that Lawrence is condemning Miriam for her excessive love for her little brother. But it's notable that Lawrence himself felt a deep affection for young children, as expressed in his poem, "A Baby Running Barefoot" (in actual fact, the child of his London landlady). Apparently, this was acceptable; what was unacceptable was children coming between the male protagonist and women.

What is at the center of *Sons and Lovers* is Paul's weird and absorptive relationship with Miriam. Lawrence tries to be just in his assessment of the failure of this relationship, and he shows Paul's contribution to that failure. It can be deduced that both Miriam and his mother are to blame, Paul is not. Again he is acted upon, rather than active. Paul bitterly resents the emotional hold of both, Miriam and his family have on him. It's because Paul is not an adult, he cannot choose for himself. Similarly, he doesn't really choose Clara Dawes; he just suggested the idea to his mother who encouraged him to go ahead, and he actually did after her permission. Lawrence is here revealing the inner consciousness of his protagonist Paul, since the novel was originally entitled *Paul Morel*. From *A Personal Record* (1935), we know that Jessie Chambers had a strong hold on Lawrence because, as she thought, he was unable to desert her, since she was necessary to his career. This factor is very much presented in the novel, where Miriam is cast as a disciple, rather than any kind of intellectual equal. Paul's brutal insensitivity to Miriam often repels even the mild creature Lawrence wishes to recast Jessie as:

Miriam was the threshing floor on which he threshed out all his beliefs. While he trampled his ideas upon her soul, the truth came out for him. She alone was his threshing floor. She alone helped him towards realization. Almost impassive, she submitted to his argument and expounding. And somehow, because of her, he gradually realized where he was strong. And what he realized, she realized. She felt he could not do without her. P. 279

The above passage indicates that Paul wants to maintain a sexless companionship with Miriam, so that he can continue to have her help with his work, without giving anything in turn. She is a source of inspiration to him. His cruelty consists in the fact that he doesn't treat her as a real human being, with needs and desires. Clara often believes that Paul is mistaken in his

interpretation of this situation, and it is his sexual inhibition that causes the terrible tensions between them. He occasionally realizes this fact, but he continues to blame his own mother for this failure.

Lawrence wants to blame Miriam here because of her lack of self-confidence which has never been displayed in the text. In a sense Miriam appears to be "a strong figure with a secure sense of herself and of her surroundings" (Corke, 1933b, p. 25), but in this, she is merely being manipulated as a mirror image of Paul. He wants her to write, though she shows no real aptitude for it and he wants her to have his own interests. What she must not do is compete with him. "Perhaps he could not love her. Perhaps she had not in herself that which he wanted. It was the deepest motive of her soul, this self-mistrust" (p. 271). To Paul's disappointment, Miriam is not all the accepting fantasy-figure he would like her to be, and she is not a passive figure.

The following scene suggests a typical movement in the dealings between man and woman occurs in Lawrence's work. Paul is complaining that Miriam is making unnatural demands on him which he is right to refuse to fulfill:

You don't want to love-your eternal and abnormal craving is to be loved.
You aren't positive, you're negative. You absorb, absorb, as if you
must fill yourself up with love, because you've got a shortage
somewhere. P. 268

If Paul is talking about his mother, this statement would be irrelevant to the situation. Her demands on his love are excessive and unnatural; but he has allowed them to be so. Paul wants to maintain his relationship with the Lievers because they provide him with what he does not get at home. In his immaturity, Paul thinks that he can continue to have all the privileges of a relationship without the responsibility. After his cold reception by Miriam in one of the scenes, Paul turns to Edgar in order to punish her for the pain he caused for himself. This is contained in the following sentence: "At this time he gave all his friendship to Edgar" (p. 180). This is hard to credit because Miriam is not the only one to blame for whatever pain is caused.

When she brought about the first meeting between Paul and Clara, Miriam doesn't show any lack of self-confidence. According to Lawrence, she sees it as a test, in which Paul must choose the higher (herself) over the lower (Clara). This cannot be totally correct since no woman would bring a rival to herself, especially when love is concerned. Here again, Paul is using women to explain his own personal problems. It is possible that Miriam might want to force the issue by indicating the existence of other kinds of women. Physically, Miriam is described as fully mature; and there are many occasions when she is expecting an "animal" response from him, as stated by Murfin (1987). Notably, during the holiday at Mapplethorpe:

He turned and looked at her. She stood beside him, forever in shadow. Her face, covered with the darkness of her hat, was watching him unseen. But she was brooding. She was slightly afraid-deeply moved and religious. That was her best state. He was impotent against it. His blood concentrated like a flame in his chest. But somehow she ignored him. She was expecting some religious state in him. p. 220

Lawrence's following interpretation is that Miriam could scarcely stand the shock of physical love. The references, in the above passage, to Miriam's religious quality seem more like special pleading to disguise Paul's own ineffectuality. The transference of Paul's interest from Miriam to

Clara, is indicated at the point where the three meet Limb with the stallion.

Paul's interest shifts from Miriam to Clara Dawes, and this fickle-mindedness is indicated when the three of them meet Limb with the stallion. Miss Limb's admiration for the masculinity of the horse embarrasses both Paul and Miriam, but Clara is aware of the fact that Miss Limb wants a man. Paul insists that "it is the loneliness sends her cracked" (p. 250), in other words, lack of friendship is more important than lack of sex. Soon after this incident, Paul forgets Miriam and turns his attention towards Clara, demonstrating his desire to control her through pity. "Rather than walking, her handsome body seemed to be blundering up the hill. A hot wave went over Paul. He was curious about her. Perhaps life had been cruel to her" (p. 201).

It seems that Paul takes pleasure in seeing women suffer physically. Miriam is often described as clumsy and her lack of physical dexterity is insisted on rather gloatingly in contrast to Paul's own neatness and competence in everyday domestic affairs. Paul considers himself a better woman than any of the actual women that he encounters. His critical attitude to women is literally deadly. It is only Clara who is able to point out some confused elements in Paul's response, but he avoids the issue by treating her remarks as a form of love-play:

"I have no doubt," said Clara, "that you would much rather fight for a woman than let her fight for herself."

"I would. When she fights for herself she seems like a dog before a looking-glass, gone into a mad fury with its own shadow."

"And you are the looking glass?" she asked, with a curl of the lip.

"Or the shadow," he replied.

"I am afraid," she said, "that you are too clever."

"Well, I leave it to you to be good," he retorted, laughing "Be *good* sweet maid, and just let *me* be clever." P. 215

The above words indicate that there is a perverse kind of sexual feeling here. One which rejoices in failure, unhappiness and physical suffering in woman; all states that allow the male to dominate. The dialogue makes Clara miserable rather than happy. Needless to say that any reciprocal move on the part of women to comfort men is seen as stifling and destructive. At the age of twenty one, Paul writes Miriam a letter which doesn't show he has grown up to be an adult. In the letter he says: "See, you are a nun. I have given you what I would give a holy nun-as a mystic monk to a mystic nun" (p. 270). These words demonstrate his lack of awareness about himself, and the affectation of style in this passage conveys clearly the unreality of the emotion. In any case, what had the non-conformist Paul to do with mystic nuns? It appears that Paul is accusing Miriam of a fault that very much exists in his character.

Clara's episode is, in many ways, the scheme of *Sons and Lovers*. Lawrence has intended it merely to show that Paul was capable of successful sexual relations, and that Clara, who is much older than him, seems to be swept away by his expertise, and that Paul is her "boss." "Here, I say, you seem to forget I'm your boss. It just occurs to me" (p. 290). And in spite of her attempt to appear superior, she is in fact subject to his will. A very titillating situation and one that Lawrence would have liked to get every woman into. Once Clara has fulfilled her purpose of vindicating Paul sexually, she can be casually handed back to her husband, in whom Paul is actually more interested.

Lawrence's later protagonists seem to impose themselves on their women. In itself it mirrors his own struggles to escape from his mother, as he described them in a letter to Garnett:

"I had a devil of a time getting a bit weaned from my mother at the age of 22. She suffered, and I suffered, and it seemed all for nothing, just waste cruelly. It's funny. I suppose it is the final breaking away to independence." P. 112.

Fearing the role of the helpless victim, and engaged in a life-long struggle for self-assertion, Lawrence has always made an effort to assert himself as a man, and that was not easy for him, especially with the dominant women. This effort made him unable to accept women as individuals.

The relationship between Paul, Clara and Dawes is a clear case of this kind of manipulative interest on the part of the author. In spite of their initial passion, Paul loses interest and Clara asks the following question: "is it *me* you want or is it *It*?" (p. 310), this question raises indignation in Lawrence and his protagonists because this reduces them to only objects of desire and fulfillment. But since Clara is a married woman, she has no claim on him and can make no demands. According to Ford (1970), the only source of danger, if there is any, is that of Miriam, who wants to "absorb" him completely (p. 88). Paul fears that she would take him away from his only "beloved" and that is his mother, since she is a mother-figure.

In *Phoenix* (1912-1930) Lawrence stated that Paul's growing love for Clara is repulsed because of her "nagging desire to get at him and possess him" (p. 77). Therefore, he begins to instruct her as a wife and to reprimand her for treating her husband rather rottenly. She accepts his claim and he was surprised. It's all right for Paul to leave Clara now because he has relieved her of her self-mistrust and had given her herself, but this wouldn't be easy for Clara since her life would be an ache after him. But now their "missions" were separate.

Withdrawing love from a series of women and criticizing and rejecting them seems to be Lawrence's mission. The fight between Paul and Baxter Dawes indicates much more sexual tension than ever was in the descriptions of physical love between Paul and Clara. According to Ingersoll (2014), when Paul's inevitable beating by Baxter Dawes occurs, Paul seems strangely unprepared, not only physically--even after all the talk earlier about defending himself--but also psychologically (n.p.). At the end of it, all Paul wants to do is to get to his mother. The repetition emphasizes the urgency: "he wanted to get to his mother-he must get to his mother-that was his blind intention" (p. 315). When Clara and Miriam visit him on his sick-bed, he rejects them both. It is because he believed that being involved with women is dangerous, but the physical contact with men is infinitely more exciting. When Paul visits Dawes in hospital, "the two men were afraid of the naked selves they had been" (p. 316). After the interview, "the strong emotion that Dawes aroused in him, repressed, made him shiver" (Ibid). Interwoven with this new concern with a man is the actual death of Mrs. Morel and the symbolic death of Paul's relationship with Clara. Paul uses the death of his mother as an excuse to drive Clara away from him. He tells her that he grudges the food his mother wants to eat. He condemns his mother for wanting to live, for wanting to continue to be with him. His attitude to her is vindictive; and the reader is not made to feel that this is simply a reaction to his mother's unbearable pain. Paul's feelings are summed up in his short, brutal sentences, "she won't die," "I don't want her to eat," "I wish she'd die" (p. 317). In the end Paul literally kills his mother, and, whatever the conscious motivation, it is clear that they are both aware that this will happen and are engaged in a terrible battle. And what is intolerable is the mother's will to live, but as soon as she has been overcome by death; Paul falls

into a sentimental lover like relationship with her. She becomes the young girl whom he would always like to see. This has been explicitly stated in the exchange between them on the trip to Lincoln: "why can't a man have a young mother? What is she old for?" (p. 260). The final scene between Paul and his mother is definitive:

She lay like a maiden asleep ... She lay like a girl asleep and dreaming of her love. The mouth was a little open, as if wondering from the suffering, but her face was young, her brow clear and white as if life had ever touched it. He looked again at the eyebrows, at the small, winsome nose a bit on one side. She was young again. Only the hair as it arched so beautifully from her temples was mixed with silver, and the two simple plaits that lay on her shoulders were filigree of silver and brown. She would wake up. She would lift her eyelids. She was with him still. He bent and kissed her passionately. pp. 485-6

The sleeping beauty connotations of this make clear the acknowledged fact that Paul was his mother's true husband. It is a symbolic picture of the essence of their purified and idealized relationship. The reality is that Paul has ruthlessly dispatched his mother because her continued existence and his inability to resolve the situation had become unbearable to him.

In the last scene, Paul can't take Miriam even after the death of his mother. This is an indicator of his immaturity and narcissism. Paul summed up the problem himself when he spoke to his mother of his inability to relate to his lovers as people: "You know, mother, I think there must be something the matter with me, that I can't love ... sometimes, when I see her just as the woman, I love her, mother; but then, when she talks and criticizes, I often don't listen to her" (p. 426). This is a true misogynistic attitude which only a selfish man can experience; Paul utters the above words only to please his mother at the cost of Miriam.

It is a response that Lawrence exploited in many of his later novels, usually to the detriment of women in general. The truth is that the Lawrence hero can't cope with women except in their maternal aspect or as faceless objects of passion. His descriptions of intercourse rely heavily on the pleasures of a descent to the unconscious and obviously contain an incipient death-wish. A woman, after all, can only give the unimportant part of herself to work; the rest must be available for the use of man.

It is wonder that Miriam remarks, in one of the truest sentences in the novel, "I've said you were only fourteen-you are only four!" (p. 190). Yet again, Lawrence makes Paul project his own feelings onto Miriam, to escape guilt:

She knew she felt in a sort of bondage to him, which she hated because she could not control it. She had hated her love for him from the moment it grew too strong for her. And, deep down, she had hated him because she loved him and he dominated her. She had resisted his domination. She had fought to keep herself free for him in the last issue. pp. 361-2

The above passage indicates that Miriam loves Paul and wants a lifelong relationship with him. The refusal and hesitation is all on his side. Miriam can't win because she would have been thrown out as a dominant woman by Paul. Paul is here condemning Miriam for not taking an active role, the role appropriate to himself as the male partner. His basic emotional response is fear of Miriam because she has forced him into the realization of the hate and misery of another failure.

The final pages of the novel concern Paul's determination to go on alone. As has often been noted, the "healthy" aspects of his mental state at this point are his urge to go towards the town (life) and reject the darkness (death); and the final word of the text is "quickly," used in both its senses. However, the mystical solution which Lawrence presents is not very satisfactory. Paul's mother, like Wordsworth's Lucy, has become part of the universe: "Who could say his mother had lived and did not live? She had been in one place, and was in another; that was all ... Now she was gone abroad into the night, and he was with her still" (p. 510). This cannot be called a real consolation since what Paul wants is the actual physical presence of his mother, and he wants this much more than he ever wanted Miriam or Clara. The tone of the above passage shows how desolate Paul is. Paul has never become an adult—he has never emerged as a separate human being. What Lawrence presents here is a false situation and a false resolution of it. In his letters, and in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1921-1922), he writes about the Paul Morel kind of dilemma, and, as usual, generalizes it into a common problem of the time by saying:

You have done what is vicious for any parent to do; you have established between your child and yourself the bond of adult love ... When Mrs. Ruskin said that John Ruskin should have married his mother, she spoke the truth. He was married to his mother. Pp. 120-21

Lawrence's own attachment to his mother, from which he was never able to release himself, meant that he was unable to relate to women as people. Given that he took the man-woman relationship as his great theme, this is rather a serious limitation. Insisting as he had to do because of his theoretical views, on total polarity of the sexes, he fell into the trap of producing diagrams, rather than portraits. Lawrence's psychic history meant that, in spite of his often brilliant insights, he was unable to present women as they are. Frieda Lawrence (1934), in her book *Not I But The Wind* (1934), has given a succinct summary of Lawrence's own sense of his dilemma: "In his heart of hearts I think he always dreaded women, felt that they were in the end more powerful than men. Woman is so absolute and undeniable" (pp. 52-3).

In conclusion, one can say that, instead of examining the interactions of real men and women, what Lawrence actually wrote about was the relationship between man and a series of female stereotypes. And that a healthy and successful relationship between men and women is a dream that is difficult to achieve, and is not possible unless both acknowledge the identity of the other, and unless it is built on respect and mutual understanding.

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- her, and unless it is built on respect and mutual understanding.

Semantic Shift in Moroccan Arabic The Cases of Verbs of Movement, *yemken* and *yeqDer*¹

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Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the status of verbs of movement in Moroccan Arabic (MA) as well as the forms *yemken* and *yeqDer*. Generally speaking, these expressions have failed to obey the laws governing the use of auxiliaries. These verb forms will be studied in relation to their polysemous aspect. It is only when there is a second meaning that the relation of auxiliation² might be said to occur. Furthermore, some instances within this verb subclass involving the imperative mode are considered as semi-auxiliaries³. As far as the forms *yemken* and *yeqDer* are concerned, they have achieved an advanced level to become frozen structures.

KeyWords: Moroccan Arabic, polysemy, semi auxiliaries, verbs of movement

Introduction

Verb +Verb structures in Moroccan Arabic (MA) display various degrees of formal freezing and semantic transfer, that clearly illustrates their auxiliating function. Auxiliaries (Aux) constitute one of the grammatical categories in which the action of the dynamic synchrony is actively at work, renovating the collocational patterns and lexical stock of the language. The M.A. Aux are not directly involved in the making of "compound tenses" as this is the case, for example, with English *be* and *have* or French *être* and *avoir* used respectively for the passive and the perfect. Referred to sometimes as Semi- auxiliaries (S-Aux) -and again, unlike English or French in which the number of Aux has been circumscribed long ago and their patterning clearly defined-, MA candidate forms display idiosyncratic features. They primarily express miscellaneous semantic values. In this paper, we will focus particularly on the different uses of those forms initiating movement and possibility, notably *yemken* and *yeqDer*.

Verbs of movement

In MA certain verbs of movement are characteristically idiosyncratic as, e.g. they may be "neutralized" in relation to the notion of time. Verbs like *m\$î* "go", *ji* "come" *qeRReb* "get near", *lHeg/wSel* "arrive at", etc., can function as nuclear HV with a clause predicate function as the optional subordinating conjunctions, between square brackets, can show in :

1 (a)- *m\$a-t [ba\$] t-jib ma-ta-kul*
go (perf.) [so that] she bring (perf.) what she eat (perf.)
She went to buy the medicine from the pharmacy.

1 (b)- *ja_u [ha\$J y-bark-u li-na Dar-na j-jdida*
come (perf.) [so that] they they congratulate (imperf.) to us house our the new
They have come to congratulate us for our new house.

The quasi-totality of the forms inventoried, as verbs of movement are not strictly confined to these uses. They cannot only function as head verbs, but as semi- auxiliaries as well. The list of verbs of movement delimited for this study is presented as follows:

The form

ji
m\$î
sir
zid
duz
Jerri
NuD
TiH
RuH
Dur
Zreb
xleT
ugef/wgef
gçed

The gloss

To come
To go
to go
To approach
To go through, to pass.
To run
To rise
To fall
To come back
To turn
To hurry-up
To pass by
To stand up
To sit down

<i>gles</i>	To sit down
<i>brek</i>	To sit down
<i>hBeT/nzel</i>	To descend
<i>xrej</i>	To go out
<i>dxel</i>	To enter
<i>tbeç</i>	To follow
<i>Tleç</i>	To ascend
<i>Safer</i>	To travel

The reference to polysemy (i.e. The possibility for one form to have more than one meaning) in this context has outstandingly differentiated those verbs of movement as semi-auxiliaries.

As S-Aux, these verbs undergo relative aspectual constraint (they co-occur also with Imperf. forms only) and semantic shift which will result in substantial notional distance with, the regular, lexical meaning. Thus *m\$î*: “to go”, for example, a. verb of movement, is also a S-Aux that modifies a HV by defining its process as one that, while it was imminent or on the verge happening, eventually does not occur. Thus

1 (c)- *m\$a-t t-dir ksid-a dak n-nhar*
go (perf.) she she do (imperf.) accident that the day.
The other day, she nearly got involved in an accident.

A closer examination of the contexts in which verbs of movement occur (and which may generally involve coordination or subordination), reveals that they lose this movement feature for the rather attitudinal value bearing on the PVP. This morpho-syntactic and lexico-semantic, polysemic behavior (i.e. the possibility for one form to be governed by grammatical constraints and to have more than one meaning) are all criteria that determine their status as S-Aux. Within this list, only the following verbs have displayed this feature. *m\$î* : “be about to” *ji* : “decide, think”, *nuD* : “make up one’s mind”. The following examples illustrate this further:

2- *ji-t n-m\$î buHd-i ma kain-a meçna*
decide (perf.) I I go (imperf.) alone me (neg.mod.) existing meaning
Were I to go alone it wouldn't be a smart thing to do.

3- *naD-u dewwr-u li-h t- tilifun Hit ma-bqa-\$ ta-y-ban*
decide (perf.) they dial (perf.) they to him the phone as (neg.) remain (perf.) he (repet.) he show up (imperf.) . .
They decided to phone him since he hadn't shown up (in long time). :

4- *mel li \$Reb duk l-ç\$ub m\$a y-mut.*
when drink (perf.) he those the herbs be about (perf.) he he die (imperf.)
When he took those herbs, he nearly died.

Interestingly enough, sometimes, the verb could simply correlate to a conjunction as it is

the case with *ji*: « if » as illustrated in the following example:

5- *ji-ti* *t-xaSem mça-h* *&adi* *t-XSer*
 decide (perf.) you you quarrel (imperf.) with him (fut. mod) you lose (imperf.)
 If you quarrel with him, you will be the loser.

This is a clear instance to show how the ongoing process these verb forms undergo to become of frozen structures

yemken and yeqDer:

These forms, obviously have achieved what may be considered as total freezing in the 3rd person singular of the Imperf. They are quite distinct from the rest of the verbs in terms of their syntax as well as in their semantics. Consider the following examples:

6- *nta weHd-ek* *lli yemken t-xelleS-ni* *men had* *l-werTa*
 you alone who can you release .<imperf.) me from this the problem
 You alone can get me out of this predicament.

7- *yeqDer* *y-tçeTTel*
 may he be late (imperf.)
 He may be late.

In fact, *yemken* and *yeqDer* are widely employed to express possibility; probability, and polite/tentative requests. The fact that they function as S-Aux 'is still maintained since their deletion and also their substitution with adverbial or prepositional elements is feasible.

From a pragmatic standpoint, the use of a S-Aux in polite request can be explained differently. It may be said to reflect the speaker's concern to make his utterance as explicit as possible, and/or it may also be used to indicate the hierarchical, status ruled relationship between interlocutors. The forms *yemken* and *yeqDer* stand as the best candidates to mark this aspect as it is exemplified in what follows:

8- *wa\$ yemken n-sewl-ek* *çla n-nata?ij*
 is it possible I ask (imperf.) you about the results
 May I ask you about the results?

9- *n-qeDr-u* *n-\$uf-u* *\$i Hell* *munasih*
 we can (imperf.) we see (imperf.) some solution appropriate
 We may (perhaps) think of a convenient solution.

Once again, the optional character of these structures, which reveals their Aux-status, is attested since they can be replaced by adverbial elements, prepositional syntagms, or by zero. What is more, new members have found their way to this subclass such as *yestaHil* "it is impossible", and the more classicizing *yuHtamal* "it is probable", etc.

Conclusion

To sum up, it has become obvious by now that most of the verb forms that have acquired the status of Aux or S-Aux in MA have done so after undergoing notable grammatical shifts and semantic, metaphorical alterations. But is this not exactly what happened in many languages, beginning with English, for example, where most of the modal Aux are the result of exactly these phenomena in a matter of hardly five centuries. What has taken place in the dialects of Arabic in general, and in MA in particular is simply a tremendous reshuffling of the verbal system.

Endnotes

¹ The ad-hoc phonic notation used in this paper is: /S, Z, T, D, R/: the so-called emphatic or inflated consonants of Moroccan Arabic; /ʃ/: voiceless palato-alveolar fricative as in "she", /j/: its voiced counterpart as in "rouge"; /ç/: and /H/: respectively, voiced and voiceless pharyngeal fricatives; /&/: voiced velar fricative. Gemination and vowel length of Literal Arabic are indicated by doubling the letters. The other letters indicate their IPA values.

² For the sake of clarity, we use the neologisms *auxiliation* and *auxiliating*, which, while referring specifically to the process involved, permit the ease and economy of formulation.

³ The concept of S-Aux is discussed with regard to its current definition as a verb with a dual behaviour, i.e. a verb form that normally functions both as head verb (HV) and as Aux. In its Aux- like function, it is considered an optional element that primarily contributes to introduce certain semantic values such as those usually expressed in modals and moods.

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Implementing A Computer Assisted Language Learning Training Program for English Teachers

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Abstract

The trend of acquiring English as a Foreign Language (EFL) through Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has encouraged different educational institutions to develop strategic plans and directions for its onsite implementation and evaluation in order to promote the quality of instruction, enhance student achievement, and better inform and promote society. This paper focuses on the challenge of creating a CALL training program for English faculty members at a major university in Saudi Arabia. The goal of the program was to introduce CALL to English teachers and evaluate its effectiveness on their attitudes towards the integration of technology in their classes. A group of English teachers ($n = 30$) who were involved in teaching advanced level classes participated in a multiple-phase training program for seven weeks. The analysis of the data from a survey and a semi-structured interview revealed that the participating teachers developed positive beliefs towards the use of CALL in their classes. Although a majority of teachers believed that the skilled use and integration of CALL could lead to more effective language teaching, they reported that lack of appropriate technical, financial, and training supports could be the factors that inhibit the effective implementation of CALL in EFL classes. In the end, several implications of the findings for English language institutes, program administrators, and English teachers at Saudi universities were discussed.

Keywords: CALL, EFL, ELI, teacher training, Saudi Arabia

1. Introduction

While the use of computer-based technological applications and tools in language learning programs has been extensively investigated (Chen, 2014; Li, 2012; Liu, 2009; Nami & Marandi, 2014; Smyth, 2011; Wu & Marek, 2010), little attention has so far been paid to the teachers' contribution and their perceptions of incorporating technology into their instruction. This is, however, more evident in EFL contexts (Aydin, 2013; Celik, 2013), where the conventional approaches to language teaching are still prevalent. Indeed, teaching new generation of students can be challenging for the teachers who are not technologically literate or well prepared for the challenging job of employing technology in their classes (Prensky, 2001). In other words, while the educational institutions have to integrate technology into their programs, teachers need to learn how to keep up with and integrate technology into their instruction. Barksdale (1996) argued that it is the responsibility of the institutes to offer teachers the means of integrating technology into their work. However, to help teachers integrate such technology into their teaching demands adequate and suitable technology-based training and support (Ebsworth, Kim & Klein, 2010).

Among the services the educational institutes can offer, Blanco (1996) referred to computers and wire offices with telecommunications capabilities for electronic mail and access to the Internet. These facilities have already been installed at English Language Institute, (ELI) King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Saudi Arabia for the staff and faculty. As per the new policy, ELI has linked the language teaching classes to the new blackboard teaching system, and it is compulsory for faculty to use and facilitate the students' language learning using this system. In addition, the university provides incentives and allows teachers to attend conferences and symposiums in technology and technology-related issues. Despite these provisions, the use of CALL in English language teaching is still limited to a few teachers who predominantly use it as a drill-and-practice software. There are several limiting factors that affect the use of CALL at ELI. The most significant factor noticed is that most of the faculty members have little or no training in the use of CALL for EFL instruction. In fact, the main factor hindering the use of CALL in this educational context is a lack of training for the teachers. While previous research in the Middle-Eastern context (e.g., Albilirini, 2006; Al-Kahtani, 2001) reported that the faculty members held positive attitudes towards the use of computers for EFL instruction, a big number of instructors at ELI have not received any CALL training before getting appointed at KAU.

The purpose of this article is to present a new training scheme for EFL faculty members at KAU based on the information gathered by the researcher in the last couple of years as a faculty member. The idea of introducing CALL at ELI was considered because this school is still facing practical problems that prevent the faculty from using available software and hardware effectively in EFL instruction. The target audience of the proposed CALL training program is ELI faculty at Women's main campus in Fall Semester 2014–15. The main goal of this project is to propose and implement a CALL training program for the female faculty members to facilitate their use of CALL in teaching English.

2. Literature Review

The rapid development of technology in different spheres of today's life has attracted the educators' attention to use it for educational purposes (Aydin, 2013). Since 1960s, different pre-service and in-service training programs have focused on training teachers to use multimedia applications and computer-based technologies in their classrooms (Milone, 1996). However, the effective and efficient use of technology for educational purposes depends on

many factors (Bordbar, 2010; Park & Son, 2009). One of these influential factors is the teachers' awareness and ability to use technology in their classes. Kinnaman (1995) believed that, "Teachers and technology each have vitally important, but different, roles to play in education" (p. 96). In other words, it could be argued that training in the use and integration of technology into teaching maintains a balanced link between the good teachers and good technology. In addition to having an awareness of the impact of technology on their teaching routines, teachers should be provided with the skills and knowledge necessary for operating and using technology. This is important for language learning classes where students can enhance their exposure to the authentic use of language and increase their access to various resources to practice and improve their learning.

However, the integration of CALL into EFL teaching can improve learning if employed with full support and understanding. Davies (2010, p. 261) defined CALL as "an approach to language teaching and learning in which computer technology is used as an aid to the presentation, reinforcement, and assessment of material to be learned, usually including a sustainable interactive element." CALL could also refer to learning software applications such as using E-mail and the Internet to help EFL language learners develop various skills. In particular, they can improve these learners' reading and writing skills, build their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, and broaden their knowledge of the world (Levy & Stockwell, 2006). Previous research (e.g., Alm, 2008; Tozcu, 2008; Yamauchi, 2009) also suggested that the integration of CALL (mainly the Internet-based technology such as blogs and wikis) motivates EFL language learners. Moreover, many scholars discussed different ways of implementation CALL in language learning programs (Ducate & Arnold, 2006; Levy & Stockwell, 2006). These various approaches mirror the ongoing growth and expansion of the CALL technology (Chylinski, 2005). However, while the use of technology can help learners expand their learning opportunities beyond the physical walls of the classroom, one of the challenges in EFL programs is concerned with keeping abreast of new technological advances. Some of these technological tools that could be used in EFL classes are explained in the following sections.

2.1 The Use of the Internet

The availability of multiple educational resources so freely has revolutionized the learning experiences of the new generation of students. Learners and teachers have virtual wings to go beyond the classroom walls and to access and share information all over the globe. In this era, teachers can navigate the instructional technology through varying applications. Searching and linking through different search engines can help teachers add more graphics and variety to their instruction delivery. EFL teachers can have additional benefits by joining online training programs and attending webinars available at different professional developmental sites. This has become much easier for EFL teachers to transform their teaching by exploring different teaching approaches. In addition, asynchronous (e.g., email) and synchronous (e.g., chatting) online media can provide a broader platform for these teachers to share their ideas and thoughts on enhancing learning (Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson, & Freynik, 2014). This also offers teachers more opportunities to receive feedback from experts in their special fields. Such facilities can turn language teaching and learning into more appealing experiences for both teachers and students. More specifically, the use of email and chatting applications provides a common platform to EFL and native speakers of English to communicate in ways similar to those of the target language context.

2.2 The Importance of Multimedia

In addition to engaging them in invaluable learning opportunities, multimedia applications offer EFL students a chance to communicate, share, as well as enhance their access to the sources of information and knowledge. The application of multimedia in EFL teaching as a new tool is not confined to certain skills; rather it:

can be used as tool that is appropriate for all levels of education and it follows a mechanism for integrating a variety of media into the curriculum. This tool provides an interactive learning environment where students can learn and advance at their own pace (Perreault, 1995, p. 62).

By designing multimedia activities, teachers can encourage students to engage in collaborative tasks of pair and group work, which are the effective learning tasks for receiving feedback, solving learning problems, and building the knowledge of a particular discipline. Furthermore, students can design and share their learning materials with others and have access to the other language users and native speakers to improve their English (Horwitz, 2008; Kern, Ware & Warschauer, 2008).

2.3 The Skilled Use of Software and Hardware Technology

The selection of suitable software and hardware is equally important besides training and dealing with other technical issues in using technology in language learning programs. Depending upon the culture and the level of students, teachers should be able to perform a need analysis to see what software package(s) will be suitable for their students and match with the course goals. Due to the dramatic and rapid change in type and application of technology, EFL teachers should adapt themselves with the demands of the modern technology (Park & Son, 2009). This includes their awareness of the new and upgraded versions of the same technology they have used in their classes before. However, there should be training programs for teachers to help them keep abreast of the new educational technologies for language learning and teaching.

2.4 The Advanced Use of Author Ware

Due to the exceeding demand for advanced technology, the value of commercial software is decreasing. This puts pressure on teachers to become familiar with the authoring systems that help them design and tailor their programs to fit the real needs of their subject matter as well as the learning needs and demands of their students. The good news is that having such authoring programs in hand requires teachers only little knowledge in computers and no knowledge in programming. Put simply, teachers need only to be concerned with the content and the most effective ways to integrate their subject content into technology. Incorporation of hypermedia and hypertext and importing the objects into presentations or subject content are some of the helpful features of these authoring systems. As another example, teachers can insert objects such as clip art or movie clips created in other application programs to their presentations in order to add variety to their course delivery and to develop students' motivation in learning (Alm, 2008; Tozcu, 2008; Yamauchi, 2009).

2.2 Factors Affecting CALL Use and Integration in EFL Programs

According to Bandura (1986), there is a strong understanding that individuals' beliefs about certain issues are the best indicators of their decisions that they make during the course of everyday life. An EFL teacher's role inside the classroom as a facilitator or conventional teacher can be therefore determined by investigating their acceptance or resistance to the

implementation of CALL. Previous studies (e.g., Lam, 2000; Lee & Son, 2006; Suh, 2004) found that different variables such as teacher training, the existence of computer facilities, and the teachers' attitudes towards CALL affect their use of computer-mediated technology in their classes. Additionally, Al-Shammari (2007), who examined EFL learners' attitudes toward CALL at the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) in Saudi Arabia, found that learners' attitudes were positive and female EFL learners had more positive attitudes towards CALL than their male counterparts.

However, as Graus (1999) stated, the availability of computers should not be considered the "be all and end all" of integrating CALL into language learning programs. That is to say, various factors such as the type of access to technology, attitudes towards change, the amount of time allocated, the suitability of software, the availability of technical support, the possibility of information sharing among users, and most of all, the quantity and quality of faculty training are decisive in utilizing this facility. In addition to these overt factors, there exist some beliefs (e.g., cultural, social, and religious) strongly held by the faculty and students regarding the use of CALL at English learning programs. For example, some teachers and students are concerned about the influence of Western culture on the local culture. As a result, some students and teachers seem to resist the integration of CALL even when its content is considered culturally revised and turned suitable.

Moreover, the integration of CALL at language learning classes is affected by institutional plans and policies. The CALL integration should be included in the mission of an educational institution. In this way, these institutions will assume the responsibility of procuring, installing, and training the use of the required hardware and software. The institutional policy should also include some technical support and network management without which the complete integration will not be materialized.

3. Methodology

3.1 Context

This training program was run for the ELI female faculty members at Women's main campus at KAU during the Fall Semester 2014–2015. This language institute is equipped with different CALL facilities such as computers and the Internet connection, and the faculty members are required to incorporate them into their teaching. However, these technological applications are only used for text processing or sharing PowerPoint presentations because of operating problems or lack of knowledge about CALL. A lack of training and tight-pacing routine are the other hindering factors affecting the faculty's effective use of technology in their classes. The teachers at ELI come from different parts of the globe, and their technology integration knowledge varies due to their training and teaching experiences.

3.2. Participants

A total of 30 advanced level (104) teachers participated in this training program. The teachers at the advanced level were selected because it was assumed that integrating CALL in such classes would be more effective than lower level classes. The endeavor was made to use CALL for teaching both productive and receptive skills of reading and writing, as well as other areas of language learning such as grammar and vocabulary. The training was scheduled for between 6 to 9 hours per week, which was half of the teachers' 18 hours of teaching load. The participants were chosen from five different nationalities (Saudi, Egyptian, Tunisian, American

and Pakistani), and they all held Master's degree in English (Literature, Linguistics, TESOL). The teachers had teaching experience of between 5 to 15 years.

3.3 The Proposed CALL Training Project

The proposed program was a one-semester long in-service CALL training designed for ELI faculty (Women's main campus). This multiple-phase program covered three classes (3 hours per class = total 9 hours) per week over a course of seven weeks. The entire project was divided into five stages: Alignment (Introductory), Preparation (Skills sorting), CALL Training, Implementation of CALL, and Evaluation stage. The program stages, subjects, and time blocks were designed based on the research recommendations and the CALL teaching experience of the researcher. The goal of the program was to introduce ELI faculty to CALL and to investigate the impact of CALL on their attitudes towards its integration in their classes. This project was initially launched as a pilot study only for 30 advanced level teachers. However, it will be later implemented for the training of the rest of the faculty members. The following requirements were of essential importance to the CALL training program:

Trainers: Qualified trainers who had knowledge in computer skills and applied linguistics. They had practical experience in using technologies in EFL instruction.

Computer labs: The labs were equipped with up-to-date computers, smart boards, a data show projector, two printers, and one scanner. Headphones or ceiling speakers were also added.

Adequate CALL software: CALL software that was evaluated compatible with hardware available in the computer lab. For the training program, CALL software should cover all language skills and range in complexity where they are not boring or overwhelming.

Internet connections: Local and global connections were of essential importance for the success of the CALL training program. Trainees needed to communicate with colleagues and other teachers via the Internet. In addition, Blackboard system was used.

Technical support: Professional technicians were readily available in the computer labs to maintain equipment and solve technical problems.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

Two data collection instruments, a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, were utilized to collect the quantitative and qualitative data from the participants. The questionnaire was administered to all 30 EFL female 104 instructors who were given CALL integration training and were asked to implement it in their classes. This survey consisted of four positive and four negative statements to examine the participants' opinions and their attitudes towards the likely impact of CALL on their instruction and students' language learning. The questionnaire was administered at the end of the training program, and all teachers filled in and returned it. The descriptive analysis was conducted to find out about the teachers' perceptions on each statement.

As another data collection instrument, a semi-structured interview was employed to gather information about the teachers' opinions on CALL integration and to triangulate the findings from the questionnaire. This semi-structured interview included four core questions along with several follow-up questions to obtain more in-depth information on the factors affecting the teachers' use of CALL in their classes (see Appendix B). The researcher, who was one of the trainers, interviewed all teachers. Each interview lasted for 10-15 minutes and was

conducted in a friendly atmosphere. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed before they were content analyzed for detecting the recurring patterns and themes.

4. Results

The analysis of the teachers' opinions on the first question in Table 1 show that all 30 teachers strongly agreed that the integration of CALL can help to bring variety and quality to EFL teaching and learning at ELI. Also, the results from the second question indicated that 83.3% of the participants agreed that the integration of CALL into EFL programs could help students relate their learning to the real life situations. In response to the third question, 22 teachers (73.3%) agreed that the integration of CALL enables EFL teachers to address their students' needs with a clear understanding of their lessons. Additionally, 20 teachers (66.6%) endorsed the idea that the use of computers with CALL technology would bring about positive changes in the teachers' teaching styles and in addressing the students' response issues (question 4).

Table 1. Results of teachers' beliefs on positive statements of the questionnaire

Variables	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Rank
1. Integration of CALL can help to bring a variety and quality to EFL teaching and learning at ELI.	0 0%	0 0%	30 100%	0 100%	1
2. Relating ICT to CALL in EFL teaching helps students to relate their learning with the real life.	0 0%	1 3.3%	25 83.3%	4 13.3%	2
3. Integration of CALL enables EFL teachers to address their students' needs with a clear understanding.	1 3.3%	1 3.3%	22 73.3%	6 20%	3
4. Use of computers with CALL technology will bring about a positive change in teachers' style of working and addressing the students' response issues.	1 3.3%	2 6.6%	20 66.6%	7 23.3%	4

Table 2. Results of teachers' beliefs on negative statements of the questionnaire

Variables	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Rank
1. I don't feel comfortable with the use of computers in language teaching.	5 16.6%	25 83.3%	0 0%	0 0%	1
2. CALL technology is not better than any other teaching support system.	10 33.3%	18 60%	1 3.3%	1 3.3%	2
3. Computers technology will replace teachers in future.	12 40%	17 56.6%	1 3.3%	0 0%	3
4. Use of CALL shifts the learning process to computer techniques learning instead of language learning.	10 33.3%	15 50%	4 13.3%	1 3.3%	4
5. Use of CALL exposes the students to culturally and linguistically unsuitable material.	8 26.6%	10 33.3%	5 16.6%	7 23.3%	5

5. Discussion

Given that the EFL instructors at ELI – KAU have limited experience in the use of CALL and its integration into EFL instruction, and that there should be special arrangements to help them attain more experience before integrating CALL as a part of their routine teaching methods, this training program was run and implemented to help them develop the basic computer skills or knowledge in the integration of CALL applications into their teaching. The findings of this project gave a clear indication of the impact of training on developing positive beliefs towards the use of CALL in EFL instruction. Majority of ELI 104 faculty members who were selected to participate in this study believed that the skilled use and integration of CALL could be an effective way of EFL teaching at ELI. This finding was consistent with previous research (e.g., Albilirini, 2006; Ebsworth et al., 2010; Kim, 2011; Oh, & French, 2007; Park & Son, 2009) on the instructors' positive beliefs towards the use of CALL after taking part in the training programs.

However, as suggested by scholars in different contexts (Bordbar, 2010; Kinnaman, 1995; Lam, 2000; Lee & Son, 2006; Park & Son, 2009; Suh, 2004), there were some factors affecting the faculty's use of CALL. The faculty members reported that the lack of appropriate

technical, financial, and training supports could affect the success or failure of these training programs. In addition, while the general attitude of the ELI faculty towards the importance of CALL was positive and all agreed that the conventional teaching approaches have fallen short of providing students in EFL contexts with appealing learning experiences, the current teaching practices at ELI women's main campus did not reflect those positive beliefs. This observation implies that teachers' positive beliefs are affected by some other factors that could be the topics for further research on the integration of CALL in this context.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study proved that training can help teachers develop positive attitudes towards the acceptance of CALL integration into their teaching. The successful outcome of this project suggests that EFL teachers can benefit from offering students technology-enhanced education to improve different areas of their language learning. The findings also suggest that instead of buying commercial programs to add technology to language teaching, authoring systems should be provided to language teachers to help them design and tailor their instructional materials to fit the subject matter at hand and to cater for the real learning needs of their students. Such authoring programs are usually user-friendly and require the faculty to have a basic knowledge of computers rather than mastering the skills of computer programming. Likewise, incorporating hypermedia and hypertext and importing the objects into presentations or subject content is another helpful feature of these authoring systems. In order to bring variety to their classrooms and motivate students (Alm, 2008; Tozcu, 2008; Yamauchi, 2009), EFL teachers can insert objects such as clip art or movie clips created in other application programs to their presentations.

In conclusion, with the growing interest and positive attitudes towards the use of technology in language learning classes, more training and future projects are needed to maximize the benefits of technology in EFL classes. Further studies are also needed to delve into the EFL teachers' actual classroom practices in order to find out about the challenges they face while blending or integrating technology in their instruction. However, students' perceptions of CALL or technology-enhanced learning should not be overlooked. Thus, addressing students' attitudes towards technology can lead to better decisions and adoptions while choosing the technological applications in language learning programs.

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Appendix A

Specific Timeline for Fall Semester, 1435-1436 (2014-2015)

Stages	Details	Targeted
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		Time
Alignment phase	Alignment of the newly proposed specifications with the current guidelines from the CEA and NCAAA and proposing the outline for the preparation of the training program suitable to the current system.	Week 1 Module 1
Preparation phase	- Selection of materials and teaching resources according to the newly devised system. Sorting out the academic materials as per the target level of the students. - Needs analysis after the selection of trainees. - Selection of trainers and arrangements for the availability of all required equipment, software.	Week 2 Module 1
	Subject	Objectives
Training Phase 1	Introduction to teaching and learning aids: - Traditional aids. - New technologies. - Benefits of instructional technologies.	Trainees will be able to identify the difference between traditional and new teaching aids and the arguments for using them in the language learning classrooms.
Training Phase 2	Computer components: - Input devices - Processing - Output devices - Operating systems and computer applications	Participant will be able to: - Identify key computer components and its devices. - Open and close different type of computer applications.
Training Phase 3	Training for required computer skills before learning the CALL skills.	Participants will be able to master key computing skills necessary for CALL use.
Training Phase 4	Strategies of using search engines: - Asynchronous - Synchronous - Communication medium	Participant will be given a cognitive perspective of Internet use in EFL instruction.
Training Phase 5	Introduction to CALL - What is CALL? - History of CALL - Visiting some selected English learning websites. - Discussion lists on teaching EFL - CALL software - Using CALL for EFL teaching.	Participant will be given a cognitive perspective of CALL use in EFL instruction.
Implementation Phase	Implementing the CALL in advanced level (104) classes Using CALL for productive and receptive skills of reading and writing as well as for other language learning areas such as grammar and vocabulary for Module 4, 6 or 9 hours per week out of total 18 instructional hours.	Week 1–4 Module 2

Analytical Phase	Analysis of the collected data from the experimental 104 sections; comparison of specification and evaluation of the findings.	Week 5–6 Module 2

Appendix B

Semi-structured interview protocol

1. What is your opinion on the integration of CALL in language learning programs?
2. How do you evaluate the implementation of this training program at this institute? What would be the impact of this training on your teaching in the future?
3. Would you recommend the integration of CALL to your colleagues?
4. What do you think about the challenges of integrating CALL at this institute?

Factors Demotivating ESP Classrooms at the Preparatory School of Sciences and Techniques, Tlemcen, Algeria

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Abstract

The present research tries to provide a clear idea about factors affecting student's motivation in the teaching of English in ESP institutions and universities. This study took place at the Preparatory School of Sciences and Techniques, Tlemcen, Algeria. The aim of this research is to highlight the nature of 'demotivation' and identify the causes of this lack of interest to the English module. The data are collected from the students of the first-year under the form of questionnaires and classroom observation. Two steps are followed during this research; the first one is to gather information from a sample unit composed of twenty students and the second one is to analyse the results collected. The findings indicate that despite the importance of the English language, there are many students who remain demotivated to learn it mainly because of their low level and the syllabus which remain for them inappropriate.

Key words: Demotivation, ESP, the English language

1. Introduction

Motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign language learning. The original impetus in second/foreign motivation research comes from the social psychology since learning the language of another community simply cannot be separated from the learners' social dispositions towards the speech community in question. The present paper intends to consider the failure in learning English as a foreign language at ESP schools. Therefore, the aim of this research is to understand the demotivating factors that those students encounter during the learning of the English language. Theories of motivation generally seek to explain why and how students are not motivated to learn English and which reasons make students lose their motivation. Indeed, teachers are interested in finding-out what they can do to overcome weaknesses in students' motivation. More specifically, teachers are eager to find ways of increasing students' engagements in learning activities since students' active participation in class helps a lot in learning efficiently and makes teaching more pleasant in the classroom.

2. Historical Background

Language is a medium of communication and a means of expression that is why today learning a foreign language especially the English language becomes a basic necessity of every student who is ambitious. The reasons of learning the English language are various and as English is the most spoken official language in the world and has official status even in nations where it is not the primary spoken language. English is indisputably the primary language in the world and it is important to learn it. Despite its importance, the English language remains and is still in perpetual competition with the French language in Algeria.

After the Algerian revolution in 1962, our society is still marked by the French colonization, Algerian people are affected by the French culture and the French language is mixed with our language and dialects. "Language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value, speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language, they view their language as a symbol of their social identity... thus we can say that language symbolizes cultural reality". (Kramsch, 2000:3)

It is clear that language is not only a means by which people express their ways of thinking, it is more than this, language is a symbol of culture and of a personal identity that is why the English language in Algeria is considered as the second foreign language because of the French heritage which is rooted. Horne claims about language and culture;

Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world... language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world. (F.Horne, 2003:15)

From this point of view, we can see that language and culture cannot be analysed in isolation because culture constitutes an integral part of language teaching. Language learning is an intercultural experience as far as it allows us to interact with other persons from different cultures. Algeria is aware of the importance English has in the world, that is why, the schools and universities are equipped with computers, books and magazines are more and more available in the libraries and at universities, internet exist in nearly each home and institution; an important number of people are learning English.

3. Factors demotivating ESP classrooms

In most ESP classrooms where the language in question is a required school subject, there is the problem of demotivation. However, the weakness of English language learners in general is attributed to various factors such as teaching methodology, learner's environment, and learner's attitudes towards the language. Therefore, it is important for the teacher to be aware of the possible factors that may affect students' motivation in order to be able to develop strategies to help them to learn English or another foreign language. Many researches has been conducted on language learning motivation but less on demotivating factors,

Dornyei perceived demotivation as; "If we think about demotivation, is not at all infrequent in language classes and the number of demotivated L2 learners is relatively high." (Dornyei, 141:2001)

As demotivation is considered to be a frequent phenomenon related to the teacher's interaction with students, in ESP studies, in particular, the interest in demotivation has been aroused by different reasons. The L2 domain is most often characterised by learning failure, in the sense that merely everyone has failed in the study of at least one foreign language. So, language learning failure could be related to demotivation which may play a crucial role in the learning process, and there are many factors that affect learning such as the teacher personality, negative attitudes towards the L2 or the foreign language, negative attitudes also towards the target community and the materials used as the coursebook. The list of factors is various and endless, this is why it is important to understand the reasons which make a motivated student becomes demotivated as described by Dornyei; "A demotivated learner is someone who was once motivated but has loss his/her commitment for some reason." (Dornyei, 2001:142)

The table below shows some demotivating factors identified by Dornyei ,generally most studies concerning the field of motivation and demotivation are concentrated especially on the personality of the teacher, teaching methods, learning context in addition to the learner's attitudes toward the L2 or foreign language which play an important role in students' motivation or demotivation.

Table 1. Main Demotivating Factors Identified by (Dornyei 1998:152,153).

Demotivating factors	Examples
1-The teacher (personality, commitment, competence, teaching method)	-The teacher shouted all the time. -The teacher always had his favourite and he concentrated on them.
2-Inadequate school facilities (group is too big or not the right level, frequent change of teachers)	-It was really off-putting that in 10 years we had 11 teachers, they kept changing... every body tried out a new method.
3-Reduced self –confidence (experience of failure, or lack of success)	At first, I was confident in learning English and I worked very hard but I got always C or D during the four years.

4-Negative attitude towards the L2	When I studied German, I worked very hard but I realised that I didn't like the whole structure of the German language.
5-Compulsory nature of L2 study	In secondary school, we had to choose one foreign language, I didn't really want to choose German I want French but German was the second useful language
6-Interference of another foreign language being studied	German is similar to English in many ways, and this really irritates me because I keep saying German words instead of English.
7-Negative attitude towards L2 community	The American culture we get is not very attractive to me
8-Attitudes of group members	I always felt embarrassed in class because my English wasn't very good and neither was my pronunciation, I always felt that the others were laughing at me.
9-coursebook	We used I think the worst coursebook in the world, I have seen several coursebook and this is one of the worst.

4. Methodology

Our research work attempts to examine the factors demotivating the first-year students at the Preparatory school of sciences and techniques, Tlemcen to learn English. It is important to mention that this School has just been introduced in Algeria in 2010; it is a new system introduced in Tlemcen in order to teach students the basis of Scientific and Technical modules as physics, mathematics and many other modules, therefore, English is introduced because of its importance over the world; unfortunately, many students failed in learning the English language. This article discusses some of demotivating factors concerning the English module. This study tries to answer the following research questions:

- 1- Are first- year LMD students motivated to learn the English language?
- 2- How students' motivation is affected?
- 3- What can be done to improve their motivation?

As a teacher of English at the preparatory school of Tlemcen, I have remarked students' demotivation in studying English; therefore I decided to make an investigation in this field by administrating a questionnaire to the students in order to collect necessary data.

4.1. Teaching English at the Preparatory School

The research study took place in Tlemcen; since this kind of institutions exist only in four Wilaya among them Algiers, Oran, Annaba and Tlemcen and in each wilaya has only one preparatory school. The teaching of the English language at preparatory school is not an easy task; the teacher should take into consideration many factors that may influence student's learning of the English module; therefore, students at the preparatory school are somehow uninterested to learn English, despite its importance in the world as well as in Algeria as mentioned by Backer; English has become firmly established as the international language of the present time. (Baker, 2003:2)

The teacher is always in perpetual struggle with his students to teach English. As mentioned above, the Preparatory School is equipped with labs for the teaching of second and foreign language as English and French, in addition; the teacher has a modern audio-visual material as to display videos or pictures, each student has his/her proper computer to do activities with their teacher. Also, the students can look for scientific words and most importantly they are taught how to write a scientific report or article.

4.2. Participants

Concerning students, we have selected thirty participants from the first-year level because the problem of 'Demotivation' is accentuated. Students' age is from eighteen to twenty. The questionnaire was addressed to twenty students during the English session otherwise; the students wouldn't give back the questionnaire. The questions were formulated in English but the students were free to answer either in English, French or Arabic, the most important is to obtain their answers, their most important objectives are the scientific modules; however, few of them show interest in learning the English language. Even with the most motivating methods, the students do not any effort to participate in the class. Therefore the teacher's role at the preparatory school is central and difficult, it involves providing a positive learning environment and also facilitating learning by adopting a motivating methods. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of teaching in this case is trying different ways to motivate the students but with a few positive results.

4.3. Instruments

The data collection instruments used in this survey is a questionnaire administered to the students in order to collect necessary information for the needs of the research work; however, during the investigation; a questionnaire is not sufficient to get some important information as participants level in English or some lacks in grammar. Therefore; the investigator decided to add a classroom observation method to the survey and thus to complete the research work.

5. Findings and Results

Our present research is particularly significant because it raises a crucial point in learning English and without it learning may be a hard task or impossible, this point is motivation. The purpose of our study is to collect significant data, the information gathered will be studied and analysed to determine the demotivating factors present at the preparatory school of sciences and techniques encountered by the first-year students.

Question N°1: Which of the following reasons make you learn English?

Table 2. *Students' motivation to learn English*

POSSIBILITIES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Studying English can be important because it may allow me meet other people from different countries	05	15.62%
To know the English civilization and culture	03	9.37%
To get a good job in the future	07	21.87%
May be useful sometime in the future	04	12.5%
Help me in my career or studies	10	31.25%
Travel to other countries	01	3.12%
I like the English language	01	3.12%
Other reasons	01	3.12%
Total	32	100%

English is considered as a universal language, it means that it is used everywhere such as companies, universities and societies, students are aware of its importance in their studies or career, therefore, 31.25% respond that they learn English for their studies behind 21.87% who think that it can be useful for getting a job in the future. However, 15.62% of the students want to learn it in order to meet other people from different countries and 12.5% think that English may be useful someday in the future followed by 3.12% who need it for travelling and, 3.12% who learn English for the simple reason because they like it and finally 3.12% for other unknown reasons.

Question N°2: Do you think that the module of English is necessary for the first-year students at the Preparatory School?

Table 3. *The utility of English for the First- year students at the Preparatory School.*

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Yes	30	93.75%
No	02	6.25%
Total	32	100%

The answers are evident since 93.75% of the students agree on the utility of English for the first -year students, however, 6.25% do not agree.

Question N°3: Which of the following reasons demotivate you when studying English

Table 4. The frequency distribution and percentages of the demotivating factors facing students when learning English.

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
The syllabus	04	12.5%
The methods used	02	6.25%
Vocabulary is very large to remember	03	18.75%
English structures are complicated	06	18.75%
Difficulties to understand the English language	07	21.87%
My environment doesn't encourage me to learn English	06	9.37%
Social and religious reasons affect my learning of English	01	3.12%
Other reasons	03	9.37%
Total	32	100%

As referred in the table above, the demotivating factors mentioned by the students when learning English varies between the difficulties to understand the English language by 21.87%, English complicated structures and the vocabulary is large to remember by 18.75%. Moreover, some aspects of syllabus and methods used are still considered demotivating with a percentage of 12.5% and 6.25% respectively. Demotivating factors related to other reasons are mentioned by 9.37% as well as my environment doesn't encourage me to learn English 3.12% feel demotivated because of social and religious reasons. Comparing between these factors, the most demotivating factor is the students' difficulty to understand the English language.

Question N°4: Lack of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary affects our motivation to learn English?

Table 5. Deficiencies in grammar and vocabulary affect the learning of English.

Possibilities	Number	Percentage
Agree	24	75%
Disagree	08	25%
Total	32	100%

To see if the students' lack of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary affects their motivation, they were asked to give their opinion concerning the above statement. The results reveal that the majority of the students agree that it is in fact a handicap to learn English with 75% and 25% disagree with this statement.

6. Data Analysis

As mentioned in the last tables, the questionnaire gives the students the opportunity to express their point of view especially their disagreement about their lacks in the teaching of English. Being aware of the importance English has in the world and the need to use it in their studies and research. The students' expectations are not very fastidious. Thus, it is not evident for the teacher of English to improve their language proficiency because first; the English module is taught only one hour and a half in the week, also the teacher cannot remedy all the deficiencies but can motivate his/her students by using some different approaches, also the inadequate or not specific syllabus concerning the English module increases their demotivation, in addition to students' weaknesses in grammar and vocabulary and many of them don't like speak English because they don't know how to formulate correct sentences. It is important to mention that the Preparatory School is equipped with two laboratories of languages which may facilitate learning for those students Also; there is a defining syllabus but not adequate according to students' lacks.

The teacher in question has to take into consideration the students' level before applying the syllabus; his primary concern in preparing the lecture and in carrying out class activities is to maximize the amount of learning that takes place, to involve the greatest number of students. Once the objectives have been determined, the teacher selects appropriate lesson activities in order to attain these aims, therefore to hold the interest of most students, it is necessary to provide a large number of varied activities. The teacher can select interesting drills or texts; he can introduce games, proverbs or dialogues. Such activity can provide extra-language practice and be a great deal of fun, thus, the students learn much more with fun than when the course is following the classical way of learning each time.

For some students demotivation had a very strong impact that destroyed their interest in learning English whereas for others it decreases their interest in learning English. In all cases, it is evident that demotivation has a negative impact on students' learning. It can be seen that demotivation is a significant language problem that needs to be taken into account, it is important to mention that teachers have to face many problems such as the student uninteresting towards the English module or their low level in other words students' poor language proficiency; it means that students display a great lack in learning the English language mainly due to grammar and vocabulary.

For instance, the majority of the first-year students are not able to write even a simple sentence or to remember the vocabulary of the English language. According to the present paper, it can be seen that the participants are not motivated to learn the English language and those for many reasons. It means that their motivation is affected by their weaknesses in grammar and vocabulary. From the questionnaire and classroom observation, we have taken into consideration some students' points of view. Here are some expectations;

- ✓ Propose lectures appropriate to students' needs.
- ✓ Determine an appropriate syllabus of English for the ESP students.
- ✓ Induce the learners to practice English at class and outside class.
- ✓ Vary the activities according to the students' deficiencies in order to improve the language.
- ✓ Use labs as often as possible to stimulate students' learning.
- ✓ Introducing games during the lectures arouse students' motivation and interest.
- ✓ Creating an enjoyable environment when teaching.
- ✓

7. Lack of Motivation: Causes

Motivation is seen as a source of attention (Baily, 1998:64) because once the subject is interesting for the student, he will devote all his/her energy and time to learn whereas a demotivated learner on the other hand, had loose all the interest in learning a given language. Therefore, the student will be present at the lecture but without contributing to the learning situation as asserts by Corria: Unfortunately, many students dislike learning English, and although they attended lessons, they are not interested in speaking properly. They only want to pass the compulsory exams. (Corria, 1999:17)

After the identification of the problems encountered when teaching the English module at the preparatory school, it is necessary to find some solutions in order to improve the teaching situation. The causes of the students' lack of motivation may be summarized as follows:

1- Difficulties to understand the English language is seen as the first obstacle in the eyes of the learner's .many students show difficulties to speak or write in English. Thus is mainly due to their low level in this language.

2-Learners' poor language proficiency, as far as grammar and vocabulary are concerned are among the principal causes of their demotivation; their poor performance of that language decreases motivation and affect their desire to learn.

8. Conclusion

To conclude, it is important to stress that motivation is an important variable in second or foreign language success. It should be noted that making learners recognise a real need to accomplish learning goals and providing them with motivation to learn is one of the best steps we can take into consideration to facilitate learning success. Inspired from the work and experience of many psycholinguists on 'demotivation', it exists many ways to motivate the students since the concept of motivation may be the most important key in the learning of foreign languages. It can be seen that students are motivated to learn English but their motivation is affected by several parameters such as the inadequate syllabus to students' needs also students' lacks in grammar and vocabulary or the students' attitudes. Therefore, many solutions exist to help teachers who encountered this problem of 'demotivation' in the future by improving the learning conditions for the teachers and the students in providing them with an appropriate syllabus for ESP, also to make teaching materials available for an enjoyable learning. Moreover, the teacher plays an essential role in enhancing students' motivation by using the adequate methods depending on students' deficiencies. Despite the importance of demotivation in learning in general and ESP in particular to date, few studies have focused on student demotivation. Thus, future researches are needed to shed more light on demotivation from different perspectives.

About the Author:

Nouzha Yasmina Soulimane-Benhbib is a teacher of English at the Preparatory school of Sciences and Techniques at Tlemcen, Algeria. Her current major research topic includes the teaching of English in ESP classrooms and also motivation of those students to learn English. She has participated at some international conferences in Finland and Scotland. She has published an article on motivation at Abou Bakr Belkaid University of Tlemcen review. She is also preparing a doctorate thesis in TEFL and applied linguistics where she is dealing with autonomous learning and motivation.

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Appendix

Students' questionnaire:

The aim of this questionnaire is to collect necessary data about the student' comments and it contains five items.

1. Which of the following reasons make you learn English?
 - a- Studying English can be important because it may allow me meet other people from different countries
 - b- To know the English civilization and culture
 - c- To get a good job in the future
 - d- May be useful sometime in the future
 - e- Help me in my career or studies
 - f- Travel to other countries
 - g- I like the English language
 - h- Other reasons
- 1- Do you think that the module of English is necessary for the first-year students at the Preparatory School?
- 2- Which of the following reasons demotivate you when studying English?
 - a- The syllabus
 - b- The method used
 - c- Vocabulary is very large to remember
 - d- English structures are complicated
 - e- Difficulties to understand the English language
 - f- My environment doesn't encourage me to learn English
 - g- Social and religious reasons affect my learning of English
 - h- Other reasons
- 4- Lack of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary affects our motivation to learn English?
 - a- Agree
 - b- Disagree
- 5- What can be done to improve your motivation to learn English?

Assessing the Communicative Competence of Advanced EFL Students at the Faculty of Education in Hodeidah University

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Abstract

Communicative competence is one of the major goals which learners of English language seek to achieve. The aim of the present study is to explore the level of communicative competence among English majors in the Faculty of Education in Hodeidah University in Yemen. The participants in this study are third and fourth year students in the English department of the Faculty of Education. The data collection instrument was an Informal ESOL Speaking Assessment Test by Susan Bulp (2007) a coordinator in Adult Education Mini- Grant Projects. The findings of the study reveal that the students in the advanced levels in the Faculty of Education have a very poor degree of communicative competence in English language. Based on the findings the study suggests some pedagogical implications to improve the communicative competence of English majors.

Key words: assessment, advanced levels, communicative competence,

Introduction

As early as 1972, Hymes defined communicative competence as the ability to use appropriate and socially acceptable language, knowing when to speak, what to speak about and what manner should one adopt at a certain time, in a certain place and with a certain person. Today, in times of rapid globalization of culture, science, economy and education in the 21 century, English has become entrenched as an international tool. Communicative competence in English is more needed than ever, and is considered as one of the necessary qualifications which college students in Yemen need to develop to confront the demands of the society. In the Faculty of Education in Hodeidah University the English majors in their training program as teachers take four courses in spoken English. These courses end in the second semester of the second year. So in the advanced levels i.e., in the third and fourth year, students do not take any courses in spoken English. However students feel that without a sound knowledge of grammar, which is the major component of linguistic competence, they cannot effectively complete the task of interacting with people in English. Therefore the assumption that after taking different courses in the English language the students' communicative competence will empower them to attain their goals as teachers is false, because many students in the English Department in the Faculty of Education graduate with low degree of communicative competence. The purpose of the present study is to provide an assessment of the communicative competence of the students in the advanced levels of the Faculty of Education in Hodeidah University. The Informal ESOL English Speaking Assessment Test by Susan Bulp an ALS coordinator was conducted by the researcher. The researcher skipped some questions and added some to match with the culture and nature of Yemeni Students. The number of participants was 60 students from third and fourth year English majors in the Faculty of Education. Students were very enthusiastic to have an oral test as this was a new experience for them. Usually their performance in English is measured through written tests.

The aims and significance of the study

The present study aims to investigate the level of communicative competence in English among the third and fourth year English majors in the Faculty of Education in Hodeidah University and to find out whether they are competent users of English or not. Also to know their capability of relating what is learnt in the classroom to the outside world to attain their goals as English language teachers?

The Question of the study

What is the level of communicative competence of third and fourth year English majors in the Faculty of Education? From this main question, a number of sub- questions emerged:

- a) What is the level of Fluency and Accuracy of the students in the advanced level?
- b) What is the level of Pronunciation and Vocabulary of these students?
- c) What is the level of Structural and Grammatical sentences of the concerned students?
- d) Is there any difference in the level of communicative competence between third and fourth year students?

Theoretical background

The term communicative competence was introduced by Hymes (1972) as the ability of speaking a language or being a competent speaker of a language. He described the competent language

user as the one knows when, where and how to use language appropriately rather than merely knowing how to produce accurate grammatical structures. Hymes theory of communicative competence has been widely acknowledged and accepted by English educators and scholars (Canale & Swain, 1980; Kunschak, 2004; McKay, 2002). In addition, Malmkjaer (2002) explicates that Hymes' concept of communicative competence consists of grammatical competence, the speaker's ability to form and interpret sentences and pragmatic competence, which is the ability to use expressions to achieve a desired communicative effect. As the concept of "communicative competence" is being further developed, different language skills such as linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic and pragmatic competences are receiving increasing focus (Davies, 2005; Hedge 2000). In the same vein, Wilkins (2002) posits that speakers of a foreign language may attain a less than full competence as a second language learner. It is explicated that speakers should possess a partial competence in all aspects of language use. Wilkins thus states that in a fully communicative and spontaneous use of language that is associated with being monitored, the learner's language shows characteristic features of the development stage of language acquisition at which the speaker has arrived rather than the direct effect of pedagogic input. Furthermore, Wilkins (2002) posits that the situation which places the greatest demands on the learner's language system is that of attempting to use the spoken language for spontaneous communication. Hence, effective and efficient use in this situation requires that as much of the language as possible should be internalized. This means that the learners or users of a language should have an unconscious mastery of as much of the mechanics of the language as possible, so that conscious attention can be given almost wholly to the content of the communication rather than to its form. Recently some Asian researchers attempted some studies which highlight the language learner needs to be fluent as well as accurate in the use of the language. For example, Nguyen Thi Mai Hoa (2008) stresses the increasingly important role of intercultural communication in ELT and the necessity to develop students' intercultural communicative competence. Yuko Iwai (2009) highly recommends for teachers to understand and teach communicative competence within the frame of grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. He examined how to effectively teach English communicative skills to students in the Japanese setting. Fan Fang (2010) explains that the objective of College English Teaching in China is to develop students' communicative competence so that in their future work and social interactions they will be able to exchange information effectively through both spoken and written channels, and at the same time they will be able to enhance their ability to study independently. Olga Tostykh & Anastasia Khomutova (2012) compared the integrated-skill approach with the segregated skill approach and found that the integrated skill approach applied in the South Ural State University is considered to be most efficient method of language teaching in the modern world. Besides, Salma Saleh (2013) discussed the development of the term "communicative competence" and its implication among many language courses to end up with students' development of communicative competence. Furthermore, Suhair AlAlami (2014) suggests a helpful role of literature as an effective device which practitioners can utilize to promote communicative competence on the part of learners. All these necessitated the need of this study to investigate and assess the communicative competence of the students in the advanced levels in the English Department in the Faculty of Education to meet the needs of Yemen's social development and international exchanges and reform English training programs in Yemen.

Methodology and procedure

Sample and population:

The population of the study is third and fourth year students in the Faculty of Education, English department. The study sample was chosen randomly. The names of the students were alphabetically ordered. The researcher started choosing from number 6 and its multiples i.e. 6,12,18.....etc. till 30 students from third year and 30 from fourth year with this 60 students participated in the test from both third and fourth year in the Faculty of Education .

Instrument and Data Analysis:

The Informal ESOL English Speaking Test by Susan Bupp (2007) an ALS coordinator was selected by the researcher as an instrument for this study because it can informally measure students' speaking ability. The test was approved by experts in the English department. The test consisted of seven parts. Part one in isolation aimed to find out the Fluency and Accuracy of the students using authentic pictures. Parts 2,3and 4 aimed to discover the students' Pronunciation and Vocabulary. Finally, parts 5,6 and 7 aimed to find the level of the Structural and Grammatical competence. The overall parts of this test were conducted orally. Some questions were skipped and replaced by other items that match with the nature and culture of Yemeni students. Each item was scored on a 0-3 scale:

0= No response

1= Response does not model what a native speaker would answer. The grammar has many errors which drastically interfere with the meaning. Pronunciation is often difficult to understand. Response is limited, and many vocabulary items are not known.

2= Response has some grammar errors which don't drastically interfere with meaning. Pronunciation has some errors, but still can be understood. Answer is complete, but not expanded. Some vocabulary items are not known or not accurate.

3= Response models a native speaker. The grammar has no or few errors. Pronunciation is clear and easy to understand. The response is not only complete, but also expanded. It is clear that many vocabulary items are known and understood.

The total score was classified as follows:

0 - 14= Beginner

Students who have scores that fall in this range are minimally able to address some questions on this test. Their pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary frequently interfere with their communication.

14 – 17 = Low Intermediate

Students who have scores that fall in this range are able to minimally answer most questions on this test. Their pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary frequently interfere with their communication, but they are able to be understood with interpretation on part of the examiner.

28 – 43 = Intermediate

Students who have scores that fall in this range answer most of the questions on the test. The answers are complete, but have room to be more fully expanded. Pronunciation only occasionally interferes with communication. The vocabulary used is basic and there are some inaccurate uses of words. Control of basic grammar structures is emerging.

44 – 59 = High Intermediate

Students who have scores that fall in this range answer many questions fully and accurately. Their pronunciation does not interfere with communication. They accurately use vocabulary and some questions are expanded. Their control of grammar is expanded.

60 – 75 = Advanced

Students who have scores that fall in this range answer most questions fully and accurately. They are able to respond appropriately with elaboration using rich vocabulary. It is clear that they have control of basic grammatical structures.

Result and Discussion

The result of the test was obtained and analyzed. Table (1) displays the rank, score, final result and percentage of the students who participated in the test.

Table 1. Classification and percentage of participants

classification	Score	Final Result	Percentage
Beginners	0 -14	-----	0%
Low Intermediate	14 – 27	12 students	20%
Intermediate	28 – 43	35 students	58%
High Intermediate	44 – 59	10 students	17%
Advanced	60 – 75	3 students	5%
Total		60 students	100%

According to the total score it can be observed that there is no beginners rank among the students who participated in this test. 12 students got low intermediate rank, 35 students got the intermediate rank which is considered as the highest score, 10 students got the high intermediate rank and 3 students got the advanced rank. So according to these results it can be noticed that the highest rank was between low intermediate and intermediate and this is considered to be so low for students in the advanced levels in the Faculty of Education. This also shows the low degree of communicative competence of the students. The researcher also calculated the mean of the students with the Std. Deviation and theoretical mean according to their levels (3rd and 4th year) and this is shown in table (2):

Table 2. The Level and Statistical measurement of the Participants

Level	Means	Std. Deviation	Theoretical Mean
3 rd year students	28.2400	7.98060	37.5
4 th year students	38.6288	12.24285	37.5
Total	34.3000	11.78810	37.5

It can be noticed from the table above that the mean of all students is 34.3 with Std. deviation 11.78 and the theoretical mean was 37.5. This indicates a decrease in the level of communicative competence. So the figures displayed in table (1) and (2) clearly answer the main question of the study.

In order to find out the level of students according to the criteria of fluency and accuracy, the researcher calculated the mean with Std. deviation and the theoretical mean for this discipline as shown in table (3)

Table 3. The Fluency and Accuracy Level of the Participants

Level	Means	Std. Deviation	Theoretical Mean
3 rd year students	9.4400	2.59936	12
4 th year students	10.7429	3.76	12
Total	10.2000	3.36	12

It can be noticed that the mean for all the students in this discipline was 10.2 with Std. deviation 3.36 and the theoretical mean was 48.57. It can also be noticed that third year students' mean was 9.44 with Std. deviation 2.59 and the theoretical mean was 12. The mean of fourth year students in this discipline was 10.74 with Std. deviation 3.76 and the theoretical mean was 12. This indicates the low level of students in this discipline.

Table 4. The Pronunciation and Vocabulary level of the Participants

Level	Means	Std. Deviation	Theoretical Mean
3 rd year students	7.4000	3.82971	12
4 th year students	11.8000	4.63237	12
Total	9.9699	4.8080	12

So it is clear that the total average score for all the students regarding pronunciation and vocabulary was 9.96 with Std. deviation 4.80 and the theoretical mean was 12. Also, it can be noticed that 3rd year students have the mean 7.40 with Std. deviation 3.82 and the theoretical mean was 12. For fourth year students the mean was 11.8 with Std. deviation 4.63 and the theoretical mean was 12. This indicates that the level of pronunciation and vocabulary of the students in the advanced level is very low.

In order to find out the level of structural and grammatical sentences of the third and fourth year students as framed in question (c) earlier, the same procedure was followed and the answer is displayed in table (5):

Table 5. Structural and Grammatical level of the participants

Level	Means	Std. Deviation	Theoretical Mean
3 rd year students	11.4000	3.81881	15.5
4 th year students	16.0808	5.85798	15.5
Total	14.1381	7.57543	15.5

It can be noticed from the table above that the mean of all the students in this discipline was 14.13 with Std. Deviation 7.57 and the theoretical mean was 15.5. In isolation, third year students' mean was 11.400 with Std. Deviation 3.81 and the theoretical mean was 15.5. Regarding fourth year students it can be noticed from the table that their mean score was 16.08 with Std. Deviation 5.85 and the theoretical mean was 15.5. These results show the weak level of students in framing grammatical sentences though they are in the advanced levels in the Faculty of Education.

Finally, to answer the last question in this study which is: Is there any difference in the level of communicative competence between third and fourth year students in the Faculty of Education? The researcher used the T.TEST technique to point out the differences, if any, between third and fourth year students in the Faculty of Education as shown in table (6).

Table 6. The Difference between Third & Fourth Year Students

Discipline	Level	Means	Std. Deviation	T. Test	Sig.
Part 1	3 rd year students	9.4400	2.59936	1.492	.062
	4 th year students	10.7429	3.76784	1.585	
Pronunciation & Vocabulary	3 rd year students	7.4000	3.82971	3.891	.029

	4 th year students	11.8000	4.63237	4.017	
Grammar & Structure	3 rd year students	11.4000	3.81881	3.499	.077
	4 th year students	16.0857	5.85798	3.747	

It can clearly be noticed that there is no statistical differences in the average score of the students in the advanced levels and this answers question number (d) which the researcher framed earlier. So, the communicative competence of the students in the advanced level in the Faculty of Education majoring in English is not strong enough to attain their goals as English language teachers. In fact there is a serious problem regarding the speaking ability of English majors in the Faculty of Education.

The main reason of these weakness is that the English language department accepts high school graduates without taking into consideration their proficiency level and whether or not they will be able to manage in a program of English studies. In other words no oral assessment is conducted to measure the proficiency level of the applicants. They are accepted into the department through written proficiency tests. Moreover the large number of students admitted to the English department around 200 students in each level without enough facilities also makes the problem more complicated. As a result it is very difficult to have competent users of English to help in the development of the society. Furthermore many course designers plan and design language courses to end up with students' development of communicative competence. However, the realization of this objective is not feasible for all language learners, especially the foreign ones. Many of them end their language courses without developing the required level of the communicative competence. Different factors may contribute to this failure including teachers' and students' low language proficiency, the traditional teaching methods with teacher-centred instruction, the lack of opportunities for active language practice and the high expectations regarding the development of the communicative competence in comparison with native speakers.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that students need a sound knowledge of English to practice their roles as English language teachers in Yemen and this can be attained with emphasis on improving learners' communicative competence; hence, instructors involved in the teaching training programs in Yemen are recommended to self – evaluate their teaching performance on a regular bases in order to ensure quality performance. Moreover to develop our students' communicative competence there is a need to have intensive exposure in spoken English courses

with periodic oral assessment exams which emphasize on improving learners' communicative competence in formal and informal contexts of usage to exceed with the speed of the modern world development.

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A Cognitive Study of Happiness Metaphors in English, Tunisian Arabic and Spanish

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Abstract

Traditionally, metaphors were perceived as a mere ornamental device used by poets to embellish their language. With the advent of cognitive linguistics, the perception of metaphor has been “revolutionized.” Metaphor has ceased to be considered as a purely linguistic device. It is studied as a cognitive instrument, shaping our language, thought and action (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2002). Metaphors are found to be very pervasive in everyday language. They are used by native speakers to express abstract concepts such as emotions and time. This paper aims at filling this gap, at least partially, by providing a cross-linguistic analysis of happiness metaphors in these three unrelated languages. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (the CMT), as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), is adopted in this study as the analytical framework. Thus the methodological tools provided by the CMT, such as “conceptual metaphors”, “linguistic metaphors”, and “cognitive transfer” are used for the analysis of the data at hand. The results suggest that English, Tunisian Arabic and Spanish share many conceptual metaphors for happiness, such as HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, HAPPINESS IS LIGHT, HAPPINESS IS BEING OFF THE GROUND. Some differences are observed at the conceptual and linguistic levels, which can be attributed to cultural differences.

Key words: English metaphor, Happiness, Metaphor, Tunisian Arabic, Spanish metaphor

Introduction

Metaphor has a long history. Traditionally, it was perceived as a purely linguistic phenomenon, as a matter of language, and “an extraordinary” device used by poets for the sake of linguistic embellishment. Aristotle, for instance, one of the earliest philosophers, states that metaphor is a “deviant” rhetorical device that serves as an emotive instrument. However, with the advent of Cognitive Linguistics (CL), this traditional definition of metaphor has been challenged. In fact, since the emergence of Cognitive Linguistics in the 1970s, studies have started to be concerned with the way our human conceptual systems are organized. One of the areas that have triggered the interest of linguistics is related to metaphor. Scholars, such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Kovecses (2002) have “revolutionized” our conception of metaphor. They have shown, on the basis of language data, that metaphor is not a merely linguistic device used by poets to embellish their language, rather, metaphor is a matter of language, thought and action. It is shaping our actions and thoughts. For them, metaphor is a conceptual mapping of a source domain to a target domain, where elements of the source correspond to elements of the target domain. These cognitive correspondences enable us to think about the target domain in terms of the source domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff & Turner, 1989). To illustrate with an example, English native speakers understand and conceptualize the concept of *LOVE* in terms of the concept of *JOURNEY* through the conceptual metaphor *LOVE IS A JOURNEY*. This metaphor is based upon a set of correspondences that characterize a mapping. Thus, “the lovers correspond to travelers, the love relationship corresponds to the vehicle, and the difficulties in the relationship correspond to impediments to travel” (Lakoff, 1993, p. 207).

With this novel conception, the study of metaphor has evolved from the early comparison, substitution, and interactive theories to the current conceptual metaphor. CL has attributed so much importance to metaphor that it has been labeled “the Conceptual Metaphor Theory” (the CMT).

This paper aims to compare the conceptual metaphor for happiness in three unrelated languages: English, Spanish and Tunisian Arabic. The choice of this subject is motivated by several factors. To start with, despite the continuing interest in metaphor, on the one hand, and the growing interest in emotion studies, on the other hand, to the best of our knowledge, no study has provided a systematic comparative analysis of happiness metaphors in English, Spanish and Tunisian Arabic. This paper will address this gap by pinpointing the conceptual metaphors for happiness underpinning the linguistic metaphors in these three unrelated languages. Secondly, comparing metaphors in different languages exposes what is universal and what is language-specific with respect to abstract concepts, a result which cannot be obtained from monolingual studies. Thirdly, by comparing metaphors, one reveals how these linguistic communities express their conceptualizations of happiness, how they think about it and how they act with respect to it simply because metaphor is not a mere linguistic device; rather it is a matter of language, thought and action.

Methodology

In this paper, the research methodology is mainly qualitative. The comparative analysis is based upon linguistic data derived from ordinary language used by and familiar to native speakers. The data are taken from folk popular songs and everyday language used by native speakers to express the emotion of happiness.

This paper comprises three main sections. The first section will define the basic tenets of the study’s theoretical framework, i.e. the CMT. The second section will survey a few significant

studies conducted within the CMT framework on emotion metaphors cross-linguistically. The third section will analyze the linguistic metaphors for happiness in the three unrelated languages in order to identify the conceptual metaphors underlying these linguistic metaphors of happiness.

Conceptual metaphor theory (the CMT)

Since this paper is conducted within the analytical framework of the CMT, this section will define the CMT and expose its basic tenets.

With their seminal book *Metaphor we Live By* (1980), Lakoff and Johnson have marked a turning point in the history of metaphor by defining it as a basic cognitive instrument used by native linguistic communities consciously or unconsciously in order to express the most mundane concepts in their everyday life. For them, “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In other words, the locus of metaphor is not in words but in our way of conceptualizing and comprehending one domain in terms of another. For instance, the conceptual metaphor TIME AS MONEY underpins many linguistic metaphors for time in English, such as “a waste of time,” “to save time,” “time is precious.” In this conceptual metaphor, the abstract concept of *TIME* is understood and expressed in terms of a more concrete, experiential and tangible concept, *MONEY*.

What makes the CMT an appropriate analytical framework for metaphor analyses is the distinction it has drawn between linguistic metaphor and conceptual metaphor. What native speakers say is linguistic metaphor. A conceptual metaphor has to do with the mental representation of a concept in the native speakers’ mind. For instance, expressions such as “a waste of time” and “to save time” are linguistic metaphors that reflect the conceptual metaphor TIME AS MONEY. For the CMT, emotions are metaphorically structured, as stated by Kövecses (2000, p. 4):

...Although a sharply delineated conceptual structure for space emerges from our perceptual motor functioning, no sharply defined conceptual structure for the emotions emerges from our emotional functioning alone.... Metaphors allow us to conceptualize our emotions in more sharply defined terms.

According to the CMT, conceptual metaphors can be classified into three main categories: orientational, ontological, and structural. To start with orientational metaphors, they are also labeled spatial metaphors because they derive from our perception of space. They are the result of our constant interaction with the environment and our experience of the physical space. HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN are, for instance, two orientational conceptual metaphors underpinning the linguistic metaphors “My spirit rose” and “I am feeling down,” respectively. As for the second category of conceptual metaphor, i.e. ontological metaphors, they are based on our basic experiences with physical objects and with our own bodies. Indeed, with these metaphors we conceptualize and understand abstract concepts in terms of objects and substances. Thus, intangible and abstract concepts, such as emotions, states, ideas, psychological activities, and time are conceptualized in terms of concrete tangible objects and substances.

With structural metaphors, the target domain is understood and expressed in terms of a structured and “sharply defined” domain, as in ARGUMENT IS WAR underlying the expressions “You attacked every weak point in my argument” and “His criticisms were right on target.”

The CMT is a good analytical framework for this metaphor study for several reasons. To start with, it provides good analytical tools that help distinguish between metaphor and “non-metaphor.” These tools are: linguistic metaphor, conceptual metaphor, and metaphoric extension. The application of these tools to metaphor analyses has yielded good results in the CMT literature. Secondly, the CMT’s basic tenets have been corroborated by psychological and empirical studies. For instance, research has shown that our human reasoning about the abstract concept for time is metaphorical in nature. Finally, the CMT has moved the study of metaphor from a berating and peripheral status into a central status by showing, on the basis of attested language data, that metaphor is a cognitive instrument we live by in our everyday life. As such, and as stated by Sauciu (2013), the CMT is “one of the most prolific frameworks” for the study of emotions.

Since this paper is concerned with the similarities and differences in the conceptualizations of happiness in three unrelated languages, the next section will deal with dimensions for metaphor variations and the universality of metaphor in order to clarify why certain metaphors are universal, and are, therefore, shared by different languages, while others tend to be culture-specific and they, therefore, vary from one language to another.

Dimensions of metaphor variation

Kövecses (2006) defines two dimensions for metaphor variation: the cross-culture dimension and the within-culture dimension. To start with cross-cultural dimension for metaphor variation, Kövecses states that cross-cultural variation in metaphors is caused by the general cultural context, which consists of “the governing principles and the key concepts in a given culture” (Kövecses, 2002, p. 186), as well as the natural and physical environment wherein the culture is situated. Kövecses identifies “congruent metaphors” (2006, p. 157). These are metaphors that “are filled out in congruence with the generic schema” and “when the generic schema is filled out, it receives unique cultural content at a specific level”. To put it differently, “a generic-level conceptual metaphor is instantiated in culture-specific ways at a specific level” (Kövecses, 2005, p. 68). Kövecses identifies alternative metaphors. When a source domain is used for a specific target domain in a language and a different source domain is used for the same target domain in another language. In this case, the mappings constitute alternative metaphors. As for “within-culture dimension” for metaphor variation, Kövecses (2006, p. 161) argues that “languages are not monolithic but come in varieties that reflect divergences in human experience.” Metaphors differ not only across diverse cultures but also within the same culture. According to Kövecses (2006), several social, regional, ethnic, stylistic, subcultural, diachronic, developmental and individual factors generate variations within the same culture.

As for the universality of metaphors, cognitive linguists argue that humans can understand several human experiences, emotions and thoughts within the range of conventional mechanisms, universally. Emotion metaphors, for instance, tend to be universal and shared by unrelated languages because they are accompanied by physiological and bodily effects that are shared by all humans. In fact, all humans, regardless of their cultures and individual differences, get red, for instance, when they experience the basic emotion of anger.

Interestingly enough, the presence of main similarities and differences in the conceptualizations of emotion concepts within and across cultures has been widely searched in the CL literature (Kövecses, 2000; Yu, 1995). The similarities of conceptualization of emotions across languages are attributed to the notion of embodiment. In fact, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) were the first to propose that conceptual metaphors derive from our human embodied cognition, i.e. how the

human body and brain interact with and react to the physical space surrounding them. Consequently, universal human experiences, such as human emotions, generate universal conceptual metaphors.

Literature review

Since the publication of *Metaphors we live by* (1980), the CMT literature has witnessed an upsurge of comparative studies on emotion metaphors. However, a complete review of these studies is beyond the remit of the paper. Thus, in the following section, a few cross-linguistic studies conducted within the CMT framework on emotion metaphors will be summarized.

Mashak and al's paper (2012) aims at studying the universality of emotion conceptual metaphors and at identifying the dominant pattern in English and Persian by using Kovecses's (2003) model for linguistic metaphors. The emotions investigated in this paper are happiness, anger, sadness, fear, and love. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT is used as a model for the purpose of comparison. 782 emotion linguistic metaphors are compiled from diverse literary texts and articles as well as dictionaries in both languages. The study is carried out through two main phases: categorization and comparison. First, the linguistic metaphors are categorized according to their general and specific target and source domains. Then, in each category, they are compared on the basis of their conceptual metaphors and literal meanings. In this phase, three patterns of "totally the same," "partially the same," and "totally different" are identified. Interestingly enough, Chi-Square results are applied to these three patterns and showed that anger ($= 108.85$, $P < 0/000$) is the most universal emotion, and that sadness ($= 31.40$, $P < 0/000$) is the least universal emotion according to this study's findings.

Chen's paper (2010) purports to investigate happiness metaphors in two unrelated languages: English and Chinese. Situated with the CMT framework, the study demonstrates that despite the cultural, etymological and geographical differences between the two languages, they share a few conceptual metaphors, such as HAPPINESS IS UP and HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER. These metaphors tend to be "universal" because they are based on a common universal bodily experience shared by all humans.

Liu and Zhao (2013) pinpoint similarities and differences in the conceptualizations of two basic emotions: happiness and sadness in two unrelated languages: Chinese and English. Both languages conceptualize the emotion of happiness through the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS UP. However, at the specific-level, English has the metaphor HAPPINESS IS BEING OFF THE GROUND, a metaphor which is not shared by Chinese because it regards "being off the ground" as a socially inappropriate attitude reflecting haughtiness and a lack of modesty. The study suggests that both languages construe the emotion of sadness through the orientational conceptual metaphor SADNESS IS DOWN. However, some cultural differences are observed with respect to this sadness metaphor. For instance, the metaphor SADNESS IS BLUE exists in English, but it is not used in Chinese. In the same vein, SADNESS IS PAIN IN HEART exists in Chinese but it is absent from the Chinese conceptualizations of this basic emotion of sadness. This study corroborates Kövecses's (2002) statement that some metaphors are universal because they derive from our universal embodied experience, and others tend to be culture-specific.

Yu's paper (1995) presents a comparative analysis of linguistic metaphors for anger and happiness in English and Chinese. It shows that English and Chinese share the same generic conceptual metaphor ANGER IS HEAT. However, English uses FIRE and FLUID metaphors, Chinese has selected FIRE and GAS for the same metaphor. In the same vein, both languages

share the metaphors: HAPPINESS IS UP, HAPPINESS IS LIGHT and HAPPINESS IS A CONTAINER in their conceptualizations of happiness. The study suggests that both languages share the metonymic principle in expressing anger and happiness by describing these emotions' physiological effects. The results show, however, that Chinese tends to use more body parts, mainly internal organs, than English in its conceptualizations of anger and happiness. Yu explicates these differences between English and Chinese in the light of the theories of yin-yang and of the five aspects of Chinese medicine. These theories constitute a model underpinning Chinese conceptualizations. This study demonstrates that metaphors of anger and happiness are mainly based upon a universal embodied experience, with a few observed culture-specific differences.

Beger and Flensburg (2009) investigate the emotion metaphors of SADNESS, LOVE and ANGER. The data consist of English expressions extracted from psychology guides which are accessible on the internet. The study's main objective is to investigate the metaphorical models underpinning the discourse between experts and laypersons in order to spotlight the ubiquity of conceptual metaphor. The results suggest that a more important number of different conceptual metaphors is present in the experts' data. Even though experts and laypersons share some of the conceptual metaphors of LOVE, ANGER and SADNESS, they reflect remarkable differences in the frequency of linguistic metaphors emanating from those concepts.

Similarities of happiness metaphors in the three languages

Happiness is defined as a basic emotion experienced universally. It is defined in psychology as pleasure and comfort experienced by individuals once their objectives have been accomplished and the stress is gone. This section will deal with the happiness metaphors that are shared by at least two languages. These are: HAPPINESS IS UP, HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, HAPPINESS IS BEING OFF THE GROUND, HAPPINESS IS LIGHT, and HAPPINESS IS AN OBJECT.

Happiness Is Up

There is no linguistic realization for this conceptual metaphor in Spanish according to the data at hand. However, this metaphor is pervasive in English and Tunisian Arabic. Both languages construe and express the abstract concept of happiness through the orientational conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS UP. Thus, happiness is conceptualized as being up in a high location. This conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS UP is reflected by the examples (1) - (4) below:

1. I am feeling up
2. Cheer up, boy!
3. She was over the moon
4. Thaz bel farha

“He is up out of happiness”

The examples (1) - (4) demonstrate that happiness is construed in terms of an upward orientation as reflected by the adverb UP and the preposition OVER in English, and the verb HAZZA (to lift) in Tunisian Arabic. These metaphors are conventionalized and they are, therefore, used unconsciously by native speakers. It can be argued that they are shared by these two languages because they are grounded in a human embodied experience. Indeed, all humans, regardless of their cultures and individual differences, have upright bodies and tend to have “an erect posture that goes with a positive emotion”, as stated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 15).

Happiness Is a Fluid in a Container

The three languages are found to share the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, as reflected in examples (5) – (10) below:

5. My heart is full of joy
6. I was overwhelmed with joy
7. Joy welled up inside her
8. Wakharraj al-farha illi fi qalbu

“And he expelled the happiness he was enclosing in his heart”

9. Qalbu miibi belfarha

“My heart is full of joy”

10. Me gusta hablar de la felicidad en la vida

“I enjoy talking about happiness in life”

As shown in examples (5) – (10), the emotion of happiness is conceptualized and expressed as being located in a container. As such, the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER is a specific-level instantiation of the generic conceptual metaphor EMOTIONS ARE IN A CONTAINER. In examples (5), (8), and (9), the container is the internal organ, HEART. In examples (6) and (7), the container is the body or the Self. In the Spanish example (10), happiness is conceptualized as enclosed and contained in life.

Kövecses (1986) asserts that the body is conceived of as a container and the emotions are the fluid inside this bounded container. When emotions grow strong and get beyond the limitations of the container, they “overflow” and “burst” as in the linguistic metaphor “He is bursting with joy” in English. The Spanish and TA data contain no such conceptualizations of emotion as “overflowing” or “bursting.” This is not the only descriptive difference between the three languages. TA, for instance, tends to use more body parts, such as HEART, than do English and Spanish, when expressing the emotion of happiness as in examples (11) and (12) below:

11. Qalbi bish yokhroj min blastu

“My heart is getting outside its place”

12. Wsayeb el-farha ili fi qalbu

“And he released the happiness that he was enclosing in his heart.”

In these examples the internal organ, HEART, is construed as capable of getting outside the body and as a container for happiness. This is no surprise since, as stated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), if people are containers, the different parts of the body are containers as well.

Happiness Is Being Off The Ground

The three languages share the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS BEING OFF THE GROUND, as reflected by examples (13) - (19) from the corpus:

13. They were in the clouds
14. He was six feet off the ground
15. I was floating
16. Walla yimshi winagez min el-farha

“He was jumping while walking out of happiness”

17. Tar bel farha
 “He flew out of happiness”

18. Wallah inatter bilfarha
 “He was jumping out of happiness”

19. Saltó de alegría
 “He jumped out of happiness”

The existence of this conceptual metaphor in these three unrelated languages reflects its universality. The emotion of happiness makes people feel light like a bird, a symbol of freedom and peacefulness. In TA, being off the ground is expressed through the verbs TAR (to fly) and NATAR (to jump) as in examples (17) and (18). In Spanish, the verb SALTAR (to jump) is used to portray a happy person feeling off the ground. In English, more descriptive details are encoded in these linguistic metaphors. Thus, a happy person is conveyed as being in the clouds, “six feet off the ground,” and as “floating,” as in examples (13) - (15).

Happiness Is Light

The three languages share the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS LIGHT wherein the effects of happiness stand for the emotion, as in examples (20) – (24) below:

20. Her eyes were sparkling like diamonds

21. Amusement gleamed in his eyes

22. Ayneh yilmou bil farha
 “His eyes were shining out of happiness”

23. Sus ojos brilaban de alegría
 “His eyes were shining out of happiness”

24. Sus ojos brillan de felicidad, de presunción desborda su corazón.
 “His eyes are shining of happiness, presumption overflows his heart”

The conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS LIGHT tends to be universal because it is grounded in a common bodily experience. Shining eyes are a natural and universal reaction to the emotion of happiness. For this reason, it tends to be shared by the three unrelated languages.

The metaphors HAPPY IS UP, HAPPY IS OFF THE GROUND, HAPPY IS LIGHT attribute a highly positive evaluation for the concept of happiness. Indeed, being light, feeling up and off the ground are all very positive.

Happiness Is an Object

In English and Spanish, the abstract concept of happiness is construed and expressed in terms of a physical entity, i.e. an object that can be possessed, given, brought, shared, lost then looked for, as reflected in the examples (25) – (30) from the corpus:

25. The news has brought them joy and delight

26. In search of lost happiness

27. Me ha dado much alegría verla
 “Seeing her has given me much happiness”

28. Su felicidad es mi felicidad
« His happiness is my happiness »

29. Todas la criaturas de la tierra buscan la felicidad
“All creatures of the earth are looking for happiness”

30. Querría compartir mi felicidad con ustedes
“I would like to share my happiness with you”

According to the data at hand, the reification of the abstract concept of happiness through the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS AN OBJECT is more pervasive in Spanish than in English. The majority of linguistic metaphors for happiness in Spanish fall into the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS AN OBJECT wherein happiness is construed as an entity, an object that individuals can possess, lose, look for, give. Interestingly enough, this metaphor is not shared by TA. The TA corpus contains no linguistic metaphor for the conceptual metaphor HAPPINESS IS AN OBJECT.

Some characteristics which are typical to possessions are hidden in the metaphor HAPPINESS IS AN OBJECT. For instance, possessions are controlled entities. They can be manipulated. Thus one can buy happiness or he can see it stolen as people would normally do with possessions. These features of happiness as stolen or bought are not highlighted in this metaphor in the two languages. In the same vein, a possession can sometimes harm its possessors if it is not wisely used; this feature is also hidden in this metaphor in the two languages.

Different happiness metaphors

Each language has its specific metaphors for happiness. One can argue that these are culture-specific metaphors and this variation could be attributed to the cultural differences among these three unrelated languages.

Spanish has conceptual metaphors for happiness that are not shared by English and TA. In Spanish, happiness is conceptualized as a path, a virus, a building, a medicine, and a flower as reflected by examples (31), (32), (33), (34) and (35), respectively:

31. Algunas personas seguirán el camino a dinero et otras seguirán el camino a verdadera felicidad

“Some people will follow the road of money and others will follow the road of true happiness”

32. Me contagias tu felicidad

“Your happiness is contagious”

33. Podemos permitirnos contruir nuestra propia felicidad cuando esa felicidad provoca la infelicidad de tantos otros ?

“How could we allow ourselves to build our own happiness when this happiness could lead to the unhappiness of so many others?”

34. La alegría es el mejor medicamento que existe sin receta médica.

“Joy is the best medicine without any prescription.”

35. La sonrisa es la semilla que crece en el corazón y florece en los labios.

“The smile is the seed that grows in the hearts and flowers on the lips.”

In these Spanish linguistic metaphors, the abstract concept of happiness is conceptualized and expressed in terms of more concrete concepts. In fact, paths, medicines, flowers and buildings are more tangible, experiential and concrete than the abstract concept of happiness. This finding

corroborates the CMT's claim that the essence of metaphor is to understand an abstract concept through more tangible and concrete concepts.

In the same vein, the source domains used by Spanish to conceptualize happiness are all positive. For instance, a path is always associated with a positive goal, thus one can talk of the path of success and the path of progress. Medicines allow people to be in a good health and to recover from diseases. Flowers are universally lovely and are symbols of beauty, youth and freshness in life. Building is a positive term referring to construction as opposed to destruction. On the basis of these source domains which are selected by Spanish to construe and express happiness, one can notice that happiness is perceived and conceived of in Spanish as a positive concept.

In English, happiness is construed as Heaven, as in examples (36) – (37) below:

36. He was in Heaven

37. He is in seventh Heaven

In English, the conceptualization of happiness as a heaven is related to the feeling of ecstasy that humans experience when overwhelmed by a strong feeling of happiness. Here again, the image is positive and thus reflects the positive perception of happiness in English. Thus being happy is feeling good.

In TA, the excess of happiness is construed and expressed in terms of craziness as in example (38) and as leading to death as in example (39) below:

38. Hbel bil-far7a

“He is getting crazy out of happiness”

39. Shimut bel-far7a

“He is going to die out of happiness”

The TA linguistic metaphors for happiness refer to the resulting effects of this emotion in case of an excess of happiness. In example (38), one feels so overwhelmed by happiness that he loses control of himself and becomes like a crazy who does not realize anything. Associating death with happiness in example (39) is based upon the fact that when the heart gets weak and gets overwhelmed by a strong emotion, it might stop functioning and, thus, causes the death of the “excessively” happy person. The same can happen when a person gets shocked by an unexpected happy event or news. Even though this effect might be experienced universally, it is not shared by the two other languages, i.e. Spanish and English. In other words, it is common that sometimes humans feel overwhelmed by an emotion as if they were controlled by external forces, and, therefore, they have no control over that emotion.

Conclusion

The objective of this paper was to compare the conceptual metaphors for happiness in three unrelated languages: Spanish, English and Tunisian Arabic within the analytical framework of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Kövecses (2002). The findings suggest that despite the etymological, cultural and geographical differences between the three languages, they tend to share five conceptual metaphors. These are: HAPPINESS IS UP, HAPPINESS IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, HAPPINESS IS BEING OFF THE GROUND, HAPPINESS IS LIGHT, and HAPPINESS IS AN OBJECT. It has been argued that these similarities in conceptualizing and expressing the abstract concept of happiness in terms of more concrete domains are experientially motivated and bodily derived. They tend to be shared by the three languages since all humans experience the same physiological effects of happiness regardless of their cultures and individual differences.

The study has pinpointed some differences among three languages with respect to the conceptualizations of happiness. For instance, it has been found that the Spanish native speakers conceptualize happiness in terms of a virus, a medicine, a building, a flower and a path. English construes happiness as a Heaven. Thus feeling happy is feeling in Heaven, which portrays the positive perception of the emotion of happiness in English. TA perceives the excessively happy person as being on the verge of death or craziness. These metaphors can be said to be “culture-specific”. For this reason, they are not shared by the three unrelated languages.

This paper has contributed to metaphor studies from different perspectives. To start with, it has shown, on the basis of language data, how three different linguistic communities conceptualize and express the concept of happiness. Secondly, this study has provided evidence from languages other than English for the CMT’s claim that humans live by metaphor and that humans comprehend abstract concepts through more concrete and experiential concepts. Thirdly, this study is a comparative enterprise that has not only described how linguistic communities construe and express the abstract concept of happiness, but it has also pointed out where similarities and differences lie. It has, as such, revealed divergent ways of conceptualizing and expressing happiness in three different linguistic communities. Finally, this study has provided evidence for the efficiency of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory as an analytical framework for metaphor analyses and for comparative enterprises.

However, as any work, this study is not without limitations. To start with, the corpus consisted of seventy four examples only. Thus, the results could not be generalized. Secondly, for space constraints, many comparative studies conducted on emotion metaphors within the CMT framework could not be included in this paper.

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Challenges of Literary Translation: Kahlil Gibran's the Prophet as a case study

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Abstract

The preservation of the aesthetic value of literary works especially poetry remains the main difficulty that translators face. Literary translation is in fact very challenging. The study compares three translations, two in Arabic and one in French, of Kahlil Gibran's the Prophet, a wonderful book of poetry originally published in English in 1923 and translated into more than forty languages. The purpose of this study is to see to what extent those translations have managed to assert and preserve the artistic essence of the original text. Besides, the study has examined the main strategies used in those translations. The data are drawn from some passages randomly chosen, of those translations. Relying on the structuralist approach, the study revealed that all the translations have succeeded in a way or another in maintaining the aesthetic value of the source text. But, one translation has been considered more creative than the other ones according to the study.

Keywords: aesthetic value, structuralism, poetry, translation.

Introduction

Literary translation is regarded as the most challenging type of translation. In addition to all the problems that exist in all translations mainly at the lexical, grammatical, cultural and semantic levels, literary translation has to deal also with the aesthetic aspects of the literary text, a task which requires special competence and skills of the translator.

Despite the fact that Gibran's *The Prophet*, which is a work of poetic philosophy on love, marriage, freedom, time and friendship, was originally published in English in **1923**, it still gains more interest from the part of translators and has been translated into more than forty languages. So, the researcher's choice of this project is based first on this assumption and second because little research has been conducted on literary translation especially on poetry translation. Thus, bearing in mind that literary translation is the most challenging and difficult type of translation (Newmark, 1988), the attempt is to make a comparative study between Arabic and French translations of Gibran's *The Prophet*.

The analysis will be focused on two Arabic translations; one is old and the other is recent and then a French translation.

The main research question is therefore the following:

Is the artistic device of the original text preserved in those translations?

Borrowing Jacques Derrida's (The French philosopher) concept of "deconstruction", my intention is to try somehow to deconstruct those translations and look for their particularities.

To answer this main research question, the study seeks to address the following questions:

- What are the main strategies made in those translations?
- What are their prominent features in terms of: lexical choice, sentence structure and metaphors?

As far as the interest is concentrated on language and how this poetic language is maintained or "faithfully" transferred in the translated versions, structuralist analysis approach was used to analyze the data. The choice of this approach is based on the fact that the purpose of the study is to deal with translations as structures. Therefore, what matters more is the form rather than the content which can be achieved only via the form. To discuss the form means to shed light on the aesthetic features of the literary text and how these features are maintained by the translators. From this perspective, the analyses revealed similarities and differences between those translations.

Besides, those analyses reveal that all the translations have managed in a way or another to keep the artistic and the aesthetic value of the original text but one translation has gained attractiveness for its poetic language and creativity.

1. Literature review:

1.1. *Literary translation*

Literary translation is the type of the translation which deals with any of the literary genres represented in poetry, drama and prose. In this respect, Johnson (1999:1) says that literature is: "an apparently nebulous body of knowledge in oral or written form, an imitation of life, which reflects civilization and culture, and which covers every angle of human activities-culture, tradition, entertainment, information among others." It is necessary then to point out that literary translation is a very challenging activity mainly because creative writing is itself characterized by a very sophisticated, symbolic and figurative language. In this respect,

Widdowson (1984, p. 151) says that "no matter how literature may be expressed, its effects are certainly attained via language. Literary translation for Goethe is "one of the most important and dignified enterprises in the general commerce of the world."

Therefore, a literary translator for Peter Newmark (1988) :

Generally respects good writing by taking into account the language, structures, and content, whatever the nature of the text. The literary translator participates in the author's creative activity and then recreates structures and signs by adapting the target language text to the source language text as closely as intelligibility allows. He needs to assess not only the literary quality of the text but also its acceptability to the target reader, and this should be done by having a deep knowledge of the cultural and literary history of both the Source and the Target Languages.(p.1).

Talking about literary translation means discussing constraints in translating the aesthetic features of literary texts; Landers (1999) says:

Only literary translation lets one consistently share in the creative process. Here alone does the translator experience the aesthetic joys of working with great literature, of recreating in a new language a work that could otherwise remain beyond reach.(p. 4)

According to Jackson (2003): one of the central requirements of literary translation is to afford a firm interpretation about both meaning and effect. Hence, literary translators are usually much more involved in finding out a corresponding mood, tone, voice, and effect than in literal translation (p.4).

On the other hand, Mona Baker (1992) whose translation theory is based on equivalence proposes many strategies for translating texts among which literary ones. In this respect, she suggests strategies mainly at the word-level such as: paraphrase, translation by cultural substitution and translation by omission (26). These strategies are in fact among the important ones that professional translators make recourse to.

As far as translation strategies are concerned, As-safi () argues that translation strategies can be divided into two categories: general and specific strategies. General ones are useful for any text type whereas specific strategies are used for definite purposes, texts and for target language readership. He cited many specific strategies mainly: domestication, which is very used by literary translators, compensation, addition, and compromise and elaboration strategy (pp.47-52).

2.1. Structuralist approach

Structuralism is a theory which owes its existence mainly to Ferdinand de SAUSSURE and especially by his book: **Cours de Linguistique Générale** (Course in General Linguistics, 1916). Saussure is basically concerned with what he calls language, that's "a system of signs that express ideas," and this language according to him can be divided into two constituents: "langue, referring to the abstract system of language that is internalized by a given speech community, and parole, the individual acts of speech and the "putting into practice of language".(p. 25).

Structuralism has had a prominent place in the field of literature and it is defined then as a theory which tries to explain the structures underlying literary texts. Among the figures of this literary movement the French theorist Roland Barthes (1963) who argues that:

The goal of all structuralist activity, whether reflexive or poetic, is to reconstruct an 'object,' in such a way as to manifest thereby the rules of functioning (the 'functions') of this object. The structure is therefore actually a simulacrum of the object, but it is a directed, interested simulacrum, since the imitated object makes something appear which remained invisible or, if one prefers, unintelligible in the natural object. (p.149-150)

2. Methodology

In choosing the structuralist approach, the study seeks to focus on the form of texts. That is to say, on the features that exist within the text as a structure. So, other external issues such as context and the poet's intentions for instance have less importance.

2.1 Data sampling and collection

The primary data of this study are passages from three translations of Gibran's *The Prophet* which are the following:

- A French translation: *le Prophète* by Janine Levy (1993)
- Arabic translations:
 - 1) النبي by Anthonious Bachir (1987)
 - 2) النبي by Sargon Boulous (2010)

2.2 Analytical method

As poetry in general, and Gibran's "*The Prophet*" particularly is based primarily on language, the study makes recourse to the Structuralist approach which is in fact an aesthetic theory that focuses on artistic elements characterizing literary texts. By using this approach, the study seeks to shed light on how these artistic values are represented in the TL.

3. Results and Discussion

The study revealed that all the translations have successfully preserved the artistic quality of the source text. They have shown a proficiency in translating Gibran's *The Prophet*. Besides, these translations are an attempt to rewrite the text or to be a "double original" to borrow Stancev's expression. In other words; they have managed to render the original text as if it was originally written in Arabic or in French. The study revealed also that two translators used mainly a literal translation, which was regarded as a good procedure as far as the artistic features of the SL were maintained in the TL. In this respect, the study showed that literal translation is not always a negative translation strategy. Furthermore, the study argued that one translator who is Sargon Boulous used many strategies among which expansion strategy and literal translation which made in turn his translation more creative and innovative. The discussion of those findings will be through the following examples taken from those translations.

3.1 The main strategies used in those translations:

As it has been just pointed out, Janine Levy and Anthonious Bachir have relied upon one strategy which is particularly a literal translation. As for Sargon Boulous, many strategies were used by him among which reduction (omission) and expansion (addition).

Let us see the following example:

3.1.1 Sentence structure

Gibran's The prophet belongs to what is called "prosaic or free verse" الشعر المنثور أو الحر represented by many poets like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman and others. This type of poetry focuses on language more than musicality. So, we can talk about the structure of the sentences. All the translators kept the same sentence structure used in the original text except for Sargon Boulous who broke this in some passages as shown in the following examples:

3.1.1.1 Example

ST

From: **The coming of the Ship**

Almustafa, the chosen and the beloved, who was a dawn onto his own day, had waited twelve years in the city of Orphalese for his ship that was to return and bear him back to the isle of his birth. And in the twelfth year, on the seventh day of Ielool, the month of reaping, he climbed the hill without the city walls and looked seaward; and he beheld the ship coming with the mist.(p.1)

- **Janin levy's translation:**

Almustafa, l'élú et le bien-aimé, cette aube qui commençait à poindre à la rencontre de son propre jour, avait attendu, 12 années durant dans la cité d'Orphalèse, le retour de son vaisseau, lequel devait le porter à nouveau vers son île natale. Lors de la douzième année, au septième jour de Ayloul, le mois des moissons, il gravit la colline hors des murailles de la cité. Scrutant l'horizon, il aperçut son vaisseau voguer avec la brume sur les eaux. (P.15)

- **Anthony Bachir's translation :**

وظل المصطفى , المختار الحبيب , الذي كان فجرًا لذاته , يتربقب عودة سفينته في مدينة اورفيليس اثنتي عشرة سنة ليركبها عائداً إلى الجزيرة التي ولد فيها .
و في السنة الثانية عشرة , وفي اليوم السابع من أيلول شهر الحصاد صعد إلى قمة إحدى التلال القائمة وراء جدران المدينة و ألقى نظرة عميقة إلى البحر , فرأى سفينته تمخر عباب البحر مغمورة بالضباب (ص.15)

- **Sargon Boulous's translation :**

أمضى المصطفى، الذي لثان هدياً لحاضره، هو المختار والحبيب، اثني عشر عاماً في مدينة أورفليس بانتظار سفينته التي كانت ستعود لتأخذه إلى الجزيرة التي وُلِد فيها .
وفي العام الثاني عشر، في اليوم السابع من أيلول، شهر الحصاد، ارتقى التلّة الواقعة خارج أسوار المدينة وتطلّع صوب البحر؛ فإذا به يلمح سفينته تتهاذى آتية مع الضباب (ص.16)

3.1.1.2 Example

ST

Then said Almitra, "Speak to us of Love."
And he raised his head and looked upon the people, and there fell stillness upon them.
And with a great voice he said:
When love beckons to you follow him,
though his ways are hard and steep.
And when his wings enfold you yield to him,
Though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you. And when he speaks to
you believe in him.
Though his voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays waste the garden.
For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is
he for your pruning.
Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the
sun, so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth. (p.7)

Janin levy's translation

Alors Almitra dit, Parle-nous de l'Amour.
Et il leva la tête et regarda le peuple assemblé, et le calme s'étendit sur eux. Et d'une
voix forte il dit :
Quand l'amour vous fait signe, suivez-le.
Bien que ses voies soient dures et rudes.
Et quand ses ailes vous enveloppent, cédez-lui.
Bien que la lame cachée parmi ses plumes puisse vous blesser.
Et quand il vous parle, croyez en lui.
Bien que sa voix puisse briser vos rêves comme le vent du nord dévaste vos jardins.
Car de même que l'amour vous couronne, il doit vous crucifier.
De même qu'il vous fait croître, il vous élague.
De même qu'il s'élève à votre hauteur et caresse vos branches les plus délicates qui
frémissent au soleil.
Ainsi il descendra jusqu'à vos racines et secouera leur emprise à la terre. (p.23)

Antonio Bachir's translation

حينئذ قالت له المطرة : هات لنا خطبة في المحبة
فرفع رأسه و نظر إلى الشعب نظرة محبة وحنان فصمتوا جميعهم خاشعين فقال لهم بصوت عظيم
إذا أشارت المحبة إليكم فاتبعوها . و إن كانت مسالكها صعبة منكذرة
و إذا ضمتكم جناحيها فأطيعوها . و إن جر حكم السيف المستور بين ريشها
و إن عطل صوتها أحلامكم و بددها كما تجعل الريح الشمالية البستان قاعاً صفصفاً لأنه كما . و إذا خاطبتكم المحبة فصدقوها
أن المحبة تكالكم فهي أيضا تصلبكم . و كما تعمل على نموكم هكذا تعلمكم و ستأصل الفاسد منكم و كما ترتفع إلى أعلى شجرة
حياتكم فتعاقق أغصانها اللطيفة المرتعشة أمام وجه الشمس .
هكذا تنحدر إلى جذورها الملتصقة بالتراب وتهزها في سكونة الليل. (ص.23)

Sargon Boulous's translation

الحب
آنذاك، قالت المطرة
ألا فلتكلمنا عن الحب
فرفع رأسه وتطلع إلى الجمع، فخميت عليهم السكينة
وبصوت عظيم قال
عندما يومئ إليكم الحب اتبعوه، حتى لو كانت طرقاته وعرة وشائكة

وإذا ما طواكم بأجنحته فاخضعوا له، رغم أن السيف الخبيء بين براثنه قد يجرحكم
 (...). وعندما يكلمكم، صدقوه، رغم أن صوته قد يحطم أحلامكم كما تقتلك ريح الشمال بالحديقة
 "عندما تحب، لا تقل: "الله في قلبي"، بل قل بالأحرى: "إنني في قلب الله
 ولا تفكر أنك تستطيع أن توجه الحب في مساره، فالحب، إن وجدك جديراً به، هو الذي يوجه مسارك
 ليست للحب رغبة أخرى غير أن يحقق ذاته(ص.23)

If we read carefully those translations, we discover that the two first ones kept the same sentence structure. Concerning Boulous, he violates it especially in the end of the passage. He even added his point of view about love (see the underlined sentences).

Therefore, the two translators adopted a literal translation in the sense that they kept the same syntactic structure, the same word order and they tried to be in a way or another "faithful" to the original text but with respect to the specificities of each language in terms of syntactic structures and sentence word order (SVO or VSO). Concerning Boulous's translation, it is characterized by a sense of creativity; the translator broke the original structure and gave the text a new spirit through a very good vocabulary and a sublime narrative style.

3.1.2. Lexical choice

Translation in general is a matter of choices. In this respect, a word especially in poetry has a great importance both at the semantic and the artistic levels. The study revealed that the translators came up sometimes with different alternatives of the same word.

3.1.2.1.Example

Most of the translations into arabic translated the word: love by the word: المحبة but Sargon Boulous translated it by : الحب ;in the French version ,it is translated by the word :amour.

يا أهل أورفليس، عم يمكنني أن أتكلم سوى عن ذاك الذي تختلج به
 نفوسكم في هذه اللحظة بالذات؟
الحب
 :أنذاك، قالت المطرة
 .ألا فلتكلمنا عن الحب
 .فرفع رأسه وتطلع الى الجمع، فخيمت عليهم السكينة
 :وبصوت عظيم قال
 .عندما يومئ إليكم الحب اتبعوه، حتى لو كانت طرقاته وعرة وشائكة
 وإذا ما طواكم بأجنحته فاخضعوا له، رغم أن السيف الخبيء بين براثنه
 قد يجرحكم
 وعندما يكلمكم، صدقوه، رغم أن صوته قد يحطم أحلامكم كما تفتك ريح
 (...). الشمال بالحديقة
 "عندما تحب، لا تقل: "الله في قلبي"، بل قل بالأحرى: "إنني في قلب الله
 ولا تفكر أنك تستطيع أن توجه الحب في مساره، فالحب، إن وجدك جديراً
 به، هو الذي يوجه مسارك
 ليست للحب رغبة أخرى غير أن يحقق ذاته (ص.24)

which is used in other translations. Hence , المحبة is stronger than الحب The use of love or we can speak of what the French critic **Marc Gontard** refers to as the violence of the word

remains in المحبة here is used in its philosophical dimension ;« la violence du mot » So, Boulous's translation an aspect of this strong feeling. This resembles in a way Zarathoustra's love in Nietzsche's masterpiece : « Ainsi parlait Zarathoustra » which was translated by : لسان العرب (المحبة). Besides, and as it is stressed in the famous Arab dictionary : lissan Al Arab (المحبة) : the word محبة is regarded as an aspect of the real feeling which is الحب.

3.1.2.2. Example

ST

Then said Almitra , “Speak to us of Love”and he raised his head and looked upon the people, and there fell a stillness upon them.(p.7)

Anthonio Bachir's translation

حينئذ قالت المطرة: هات لنا خطبة في المحبة .
فرفع رأسه ونظر إلى الشعب نظرة محبة وحنان، فصمتوا جميعهم
خاشعين . (ص.23)

Janin levy's translation

Alors, Almitra dit : Parle-nous de l'Amour. Et il leva la tête et regarda le peuple

assemblé, et le calme s'étendit sur eux.(p.23)

Sargon Boulous's translation

آنذاك، قالت المطرة :
ألا فلتكلمنا عن الحب.
فرفع رأسه وتطلع إلى الجمع، فخيمت عليهم السكينة. (ص.24)

When comparing those translations, the study revealed that Sargon Boulous succeeded in using the rights words (the underlined ones) which made his translation very poetic and very symbolic. A good choice of words was used by him in order to present two different situations, one of manipulation, represented by Almitra and one of stillness symbolized by the audience .As for the other translations, they succeeded in transferring the metaphor in the target language but without much more creativity.

3.1.3. Metaphors

Metaphors are artistic features that give much beauty to poetry. So, the transfer of their effect from SL to TL is very challenging. A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that actually means one thing is used to refer to another one, thus making an implicit comparison. In fact, the study revealed that Gibran's The Prophet is full of imagery especially metaphors. In general, the translators have succeeded in preserving this beauty in the TL even if they used different strategies among which Literal translation.

3.1.3.1. Example

ST**From: Joy and sorrow**

And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your tears.

And how else can it be?

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.

Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?

And is not the lute that soothes your spirit, the very wood that was hollowed with knives?

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.

When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

Some of you say, "Joy is greater than sorrow," and others say, "Nay, sorrow is the greater."

But I say unto you, they are inseparable.

Together they come, and when one sits, alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed. (p.22, 23)

Anthony Bachir's translation

البئر الواحدة التي تستقون منها ماء ضحككم قد طالما ملئت بسخين دموعكم
وهل في الإمكان أن يكون الحال علي غير هذا المنوال ؟
فأعلموا أعمال وحش الحزن أنابه في أجسادكم تضاعف الفرح في أعماق قلوبكم
لأنه أليست الكأس التي تحفظ خمرتكم هي نفس الكأس التي أحرقت في أتون الخراف
قبل أن بلغت إليكم؟
أم ليست القيثارة التي تزيد طمأنينة أرواحكم هي نفس الخشب الذي
قطع بالمدى والفؤوس؟

فإذا فرحتهم فتأملوا ملياً في أعماق قلوبكم تحدوا أم ما أحزنكم قبلاً يفرحكم الآن و إذا
احاطت بكم جيوش الكآبة بصائرهم ثابته إلى أعماق قلوبكم وتأملوا جيداً تروا هنالك
بالحقيقة أنكم تكون لما كنتم تعتقدون أنه غاية مسراتكم على الأرض
و يخيل إلي أن فريقاً منكم يقول : " إن الفرح أعظم من الترح " فيعارضه فريق آخر : " كلا , بل الترح أعظم من الفرح " أما أنا فالحق أقول لكم : انهما توأمان لا ينفصلان يأتيان
معاً و يذهبان معاً فإذا جلس احدهما منفرداً إلى مائدتك فلا يغرب عن أذهانكم أن
رفيقه يكون حينئذ مضطجعا علي أسرتكم (ص.40)

Janin levy's translation

Et le puits où monte votre rire a si souvent été rempli par vos larmes.
Et comment pourrait-il en aller autrement? Plus profond le travail de la peine dans
votre être, plus de joie vous contiendrez.
 Car la coupe qui renferme votre vin n'est-elle pas celle-là même qui brûla dans le four
 du potier? Et le luth qui apaise votre esprit n'est-ce pas le bois même naguère évidé
 par le couteau?
Quand vous êtes joyeux, regardez au fond de votre cœur et vous verrez que votre joie
résulte uniquement de ce qui a causé votre chagrin.
 Quand vous êtes malheureux, regardez encore une fois votre cœur et vous
 comprendrez en réalité que vous pleurez pour d'anciens délices.
 Certains d'entre vous disent «La joie dépasse la peine.» ; d'autres disent : «Non c'est
 la peine qui domine.»
 Et moi je vous dis : elles sont indissociables.
Elles arrivent ensemble et quand l'une s'assied à table en votre compagnie, rappelez-
vous que l'autre est assoupie sur votre lit.(p.47)

Sargon Boulous's translation :

و نفس البئر التي كانت ترتفع منها ضحكاتكم، كانت مليئة بدموعكم في أكثر الأحيان،
عندما تحس بالفرح، أنظر عميقاً في قلبك، وسوف تجد أن ما أعطاك حزناً في السابق، وحده الذي
يعطيك الفرح الآن.
عندما تشعر بالحزن، تطلع ثانية في قلبك، وسوف ترى أنك في الحقيقة تبكي من أجل ذلك الذي
كان بهجة لك.
 البعض منكم يقول: "الفرح أعظم من الحزن". ويقول آخرون: "كلا، بل الحزن هو
 الأعظم."
 لكنني أنا أقول لكم، لا يمكن الفصل بينهما.
 معاً باتان، وحينما يجالسك واحد منهما بمفرده على الطاولة، تذكر،
 أن الثاني ينام في سريرك.(ص.41)

A careful comparison of the ST and the TT show that the translators have managed to transfer the effect of the metaphors. For instance, the first metaphor which concerns the combination of joy and sorrow, all the translators came up with a good alternative which is replacing the "word: selfsame" by "word: selfsame". They made indeed recourse to TL to look for equivalence which made their translations very poetic. Concerning the other metaphors, even if the translators used literal translation and kept the same sentence-structure, they succeeded in preserving the artistic features of those metaphors; the last line can be a good example in which there is a personification of joy and sorrow.

3.1.3.2. Example:

ST

A voice cannot carry the tongue and the lips that give it wings. Alone must it seek the
ether? And alone and without his nest shall the eagle fly across the sun. (p.2)

Janin levy's translation

La voix ne peut emporter la langue et les lèvres qui lui ont donné des ailes .Elle doit partir seule à la recherche de l'éther .Et l'aigle doit voler seul et sans son nid au-delà du soleil. (P.16)

Anthony Bachir's translation

فإن الصوت لا يستطيع أن يحمل اللسان والشفة اللواتي تسلحن بجناحيه ولذلك فهو وحده يخترق حجب الفضاء أجلاً، والنسر يصاح لا يحمل عشه بل يطير وحده محلقاً في عنان السماء، (ص.16)

Sargon Boulous's translation

الصوت لا يقدر أن يحمل معه اللسان، والشفاه التي منحت الأجنحة عليه وحده أن يتقصى الأثير. ووحيداً، من دون عشه، سيطير النسر تلقاء السماء. (17)

When comparing these translations, we find out that the first ones, because of their use of a literal translation, have rendered the same metaphor in the target language without any change or addition. Boulous on the other hand, for the sake of preserving the aesthetic effect, .These two words وحده and وحيداً has used two alternatives of “**alone**” rather than one which are: are meant to differentiate between two cases or two images.

3.1.3.3. Example:

ST

And he heard their voices calling his name and shouting from the field to field (p.3)

Janin levy's translation

Et il entendit leurs voix qui l'appelaient par son nom et qui criaient d'un champ à l'autre (p.17)

Anthony Bachir's translation

وسمعه يصرخون بعضهم ببعض من حقل إلى حقل، مرددين اسمه (ص.17)

Sargon Boulous's translation

وتعالت الأصوات في كل حدب وصوب تهتف باسمه (ص.16)

What can be said is that the French version kept the same structure of the sentence and made word for word translation. So, the metaphor is faithfully transferred in the target language. The same thing can be said about Bachir's translation. As for Boulous, he has made a kind of expansion to the source text by adding a word stronger than “**call**” which is gives a very positive connotation.

3.1.3.4. Example.

ST

Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself. (p.9)

Janin levy's translation

L'amour n'a pour seul désir que de s'accomplir. (p.27)

Anthony Bachir's translation

والمحبة لا رغبة لها إلا في أن تكمل نفسها. (ص.25)

Sargon Boulous's translation

ليست للحب رغبة أخرى غير أن يحقق ذاته. (23)

As we can see two translations have managed to preserve the form and meaning of the metaphor by choosing the appropriate words; Janin Levy has translated :to fulfill by: accomplir

which ذات and added the word يحقق which goes well in the context and Boulous has opted for :
 Anthonio .does not only have a semantic connotation but a philosophical dimension as well
 Bachir's translation seems to be ambiguous and weak because he has not well chosen the right
 and this is due to his word for word translation; he إكمال النفس words; in Arabic we cannot say:
 . نفسها and itself by يكمّل translated fulfill by

3.1.3.5. Example_

ST

nor tarries with yesterday. (p.12) For life goes not backward

:Janin levy's translation

Car la vie ne retourne pas en arrière ni se s'attarde à hier. (p.32)

Anthonio Bachir's translation

لأن الحياة لا ترجع إلى الوراء، ولا تلتذ لها الإقامة في منزل الأمس. (ص.29)

Sargon Boulous's translation :

لأن الحياة لا تمشي إلى الوراء، ولا تتلذذ بصحبة الأمس. (ص.30)

All translators used literal translation in order to convey the meaning of the metaphor which implies the continuity of life. They also made recourse to addition strategy by adding some relevant words so as to preserve the aesthetic features of the metaphor. Anthonio Bachir added two words: الإقامة و منزل. Boulous added: بصحبة.

3.1.3.6. Example_

ST

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.(p.12)

Janin levy's translation

Vous pouvez loger leurs corps mais non leurs âmes,

Car leurs âmes habitent la demeure de demain, que vous ne pouvez visiter, pas même dans vos rêves.(p .32)

Anthonio Bachir's translation

وفي طاقتكم أن تصنعوا المساكن لأجسادهم
 ولكن نفوسهم لا تقطن في مساكنكم.

فهي تقطن في مسكن الغد، الذي لا تستطيعون أن تزوروه حتى ولا في أحلامكم،(ص.28)

Sargon Boulous's translation

يمكن لكم أن تقدموا مأوى لأجسادهم، لا لأرواحهم، لأن أرواحهم تسكن في بيت الغد، ذلك الذي لا تستطيعون زيارته، حتى ولو في الحلم. (ص.29)

The adoption of literal translation by all the translators was a good a strategy because the implication of the metaphor and its beauty are highly maintained. The personification of bodies and souls are well transferred from the SL to the TL.

3.1.3.7. Example

ST

Pleasure is a freedom song (p.61)

Janin levy's translation

Le plaisir est un chant de liberté (p.88)

Antonio Bachir's translation

اللذة أنشودة الحرية (ص.83)

Boulous's translation

اللذة نشيد حرية (ص.84)

The metaphor is well translated by the translators by adopting literal translation and by proposing good equivalents ;say alternatives for the word: song which are:chant, أنشودة and نشيد.

3.1.3.8. Example**ST**

It (pleasure) is the blossoming of your desires,(p.61)

Janin levy's translation

Il (le plaisir) est l'épanouissent de vos désirs,(p.88)

Antonio Bachir's translation

اللذة زهرة رغباتكم،(ص.83)

Boulous's translation

إنها (اللذة) أزهار رغباتكم(ص.84)

The translators used literal translation to define pleasure. The same aesthetic effect is therefore maintained in the TT.

3.1.3.8. Example**ST**

It (pleasure) is a depth calling unto height,(p.61)

Janin levy's translation

Il (le plaisir) est une profondeur appelant une hauteur,(p.88)

Antonio Bachir's translation

اللذة عمق ينشد علوا (ص.83)

Boulous's translation

هي(اللذة) عمق يتنادى نحو علو(ص.84)

The definition of pleasure as being “a depth” looking for “height” was translated literally by the translators. They succeeded in fact in preserving this poetic image engendering two contradictory situations ;one of “depth” and the other of “height”.

3.1.3.10. Example**ST**

It (pleasure) is the caged taking wing.(p.61)

Janin levy's translation

Il (le plaisir)est l'encagé prenant son envol,(p.88)

Anthony Bachir's translationاللذة طائر قد أفلت من قفصه (ص.83)**Boulous's translation**إنها (اللذة) ذلك المخلق خارجا قفصه (ص.84)

All the translators maintained the implication of the metaphor which associates pleasure to a bird (طائر) looking for freedom by adopting of course literal translation

Conclusion

Talking about poetry, Aristotle says that "Beauty is the gift of God", and the translations which have been examined have succeeded in many ways to preserve the beauty and the aesthetic value of a book of poetry full of images and metaphors. Literal translation has been reconsidered according to the study and it must not be always treated from a negative perspective. The structuralist approach was very helpful in the sense that the "Prophet" is written in a very good English by an Arab poet who possesses two different cultures. This element makes his language "universal" in as it is full of wisdom and advices that can be useful for all human beings. That is why the element of culture does not create many problems for the translators. A limitation of this study is that it cannot be generalized on all the translations of Gibran's *The Prophet* if we take into consideration that the book has more than seven Arabic versions and ten French ones. Besides, all the metaphors that exist in Gibran's *Prophet* and which are more than one hundred could not all be dealt with in this study. Further research may be conducted to analyze the other translations and other aesthetic features that characterize Gibran's poetry like the style and similes.

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How to Change Students' Perception of Classroom EFL Learning

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Palestine

Abstract:

This paper describes basic classroom practices that would change and reshape EFL learners' perception of language learning at university level. Additionally, it seeks to reroute EFL teachers to get rid of unnecessary complexities that make classroom language learning difficult. Specifically, the paper attempts to give answers to questions related with ways EFL teachers can use to gear their learners towards a positive change of classroom EFL learning. The classroom practices suggested in this paper are designated to help teachers explore pedagogical alternatives that would improve their learners' performance, and eventually motivate their learners. In order to pinpoint the preferable practices in EFL classroom, the paper used two questionnaires distributed to a sample population of Birzeit University (BZU) EFL teachers and students. Apparently, the findings indicate that there are good practices that teachers need to approach systematically in classroom; on the other hand, the questionnaire results draw the teachers' attention to abandon some of their needless classroom behaviors. Based on these paper findings, alongside other major findings of studies in this respect, it is possible to objectively highlight certain classroom behaviors, if employed, would change our learners' negative attitude towards classroom EFL learning. These behaviors, to be examined in the discussion, are confined to five themes: fostering classroom-centeredness, spoon-feeding elimination, reflecting learners' learning preferences, promoting independent learning, and reconsidering 'wrong' evaluation practices.

Keywords: classroom-centeredness, learning preferences, perception, spoon-feeding

Introduction

Like too many EFL learners, Palestinian students face serious problems in English learning at almost every level, all through their schooling (IIEP, 1997). Low proficiency in English among Palestinian learners is evident in their inability to communicate in English following many years of learning at university level (see Birzeit University English Placement Exam results 2005-2011). Although learning English has long been the centre of attention of educationalists, linguists and EFL teachers and learners as noticed in the large number of studies geared towards difficulties encountered by EFL learners (Hamdan 1994), much more work is needed to address these difficulties at every level.

EFL teachers agree that language learning, as Allwright (1983) argues, is 'hardly' an easy task. Therefore, there is no need to make this task more complicated. In his classroom-centered research, Allwright (1983) "tries to understand the processes that happen in classroom and why and how they take place that way." (p.191)

This paper is more concerned with our practices, as EFL teachers, that make classroom EFL learning difficult, and it also tries to explore behaviors that can hopefully lead to the elimination of undesired habits through introducing certain ways university EFL teachers can employ in classroom to change their learners' perception of learning English.

It is true that not too many teachers realize that their efforts should be geared towards a more productive trend in teaching, rather than spending too much time on theoretical teaching methods and pedagogical assumptions. Therefore, to avoid being victimized, EFL teachers can reconsider some of their behaviors in classroom and consider '*alternatives*' that may minimize difficulties EFL learners encounter.

The paper discusses five ways – from a teacher's perspective- that may be tried and practiced in classroom to 'promote' language learning. However, the number may go far beyond the stated, as learning in classroom environment varies in terms of teaching quality, teachers' professionalism and learners' motivation among other variables. Still, as Rivers (1992) puts it, it is 'the teacher's work to foster an environment in which effective language learning may occur.' (p. 374)

Research questions

The paper tries to explore '*alternatives*' that may help EFL teachers shift their learners' awareness of learning English so that a better learning could take place. Specifically, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- How can we, as EFL teachers, help our university learners change their view towards learning EFL?
- 2- What *solutions* can EFL teacher use to overcome classroom English learning complexities?
- 3-

Significance of the study

The significance of this study stems up from the need to overcome classroom complexities and practices performed by some EFL teachers that seriously hinder smooth EFL learning. Not only does the paper try to give an insight into background issues to do with EFL learners' perceptions of the classroom learning, but it also urges EFL teachers to link certain applicable classroom positive behaviors with classroom learning environment that would motivate learners and give them a clear sense of their classroom learning.

Literature review

EFL teachers' teaching classroom practices may unintentionally make EFL learning difficult. In fact, EFL teachers are largely responsible for English learning/teaching process. In her review of principles of interactive language teaching and learning, Rivers (1992) argues that,

It is imperative in the present period of rapid change that language teachers study the language learners in their classes- their ages, their backgrounds, their aspirations, their interests, their goals in language learning, their aptitude for language acquisition in a formal setting. (p. 376)

The argument here focuses on preventable habits practiced in classroom, rather than spending too much time studying the rival methods of teaching English as a foreign language. Presumably, Palestinian EFL teachers have spent too much time of their schooling in colleges and universities studying methods of TEFL, alongside other subjects in education, educational psychology, and teacher training. Nevertheless, EFL learning in Palestine encounters serious problems reflected in the poor linguistic proficiency among our EFL learners. However, our university learners' EFL learning preferences indicate that there is a bad need to introduce ways that may change their attitude towards EFL learning. One of these ways is related with encouraging classroom-centered approach to language learning. Allwright (1983), Senior (2002) and Abu Ayyash (2011) agree that a major critical issue in teaching EFL is not the teaching methods that language teachers employ in class, neither it is the classroom management in terms of discipline or physical setting, but teachers' ability to intertwine learners' social needs with their learners' pedagogical wants. This assumption gives a rough definition of what is known as *classroom-centeredness* approach which explores and studies the actual daily behaviors and practices teachers perform in classroom. In his article on this approach in the Palestinian context, Abu Ayyash (2011) argues that EFL teachers at home need to give responses to questions such as: Why do teachers find some classes easier to teach than others? Why do teachers believe that no two classes are identical, while they have the same teacher with the same course syllabus? What experience, other than pedagogical, makes learning more effective? How can experienced teachers deal with individuals as learning communities that share more than they differ?

Introducing classroom-centeredness approach partly answers these queries which ultimately aim to create effective learning. Senior (2002) believes " that teachers are sensitive to the social needs of their class groups, and that their pedagogically and socially-oriented behaviors are closely intertwined." (p. 399)

Another way that EFL teachers have to reconsider is getting rid of spoon-feeding. EFL teachers at home agree that one way of making classroom EFL learning difficult is spoon-feeding. This way is conceived, in a way, as a technique through which teachers plan their lessons to minimize the learners' mistakes. Spoon-feeding is not found in strict aural-oral approach (Doggett.1986), but it is anywhere teachers correct their learners by telling them what they you should have said. By doing so, teachers must be unable to understand that the significance of the learner's mistakes is part of the learning process. Corder (1978), Brown (1994) and Hamdan (1994) agree that errors significantly give an indication on EFL learning progress and feedback on the effectiveness of teaching. On the other hand, spoon-feeding makes learning so easy that it is entirely hampered as the learners will not be given the chance to learn from their errors, and to look for alternatives. In fact, spoon-feeding is an obvious implementation of teacher-centered teaching standard denied by the communicative approach that stresses the role of the teacher that

ranges from an organizer to a facilitator of learning (Littlewood 1986, Hutchinson and Waters ,1997).

A third way an EFL teacher can employ to motivate learners is reflecting their learning preferences practices. Some teachers may argue that it looks naïve to consult inexperienced learners on what they want to learn, how and why? Learners can be easily consulted by means of, for example, questionnaires on all the previous issues before teachers start classes. Hutchison and Waters (1997) insist that identifying and analyzing learners' learning preferences are cornerstones of any *successful* learning/teaching process, as this learner-centered approach will deeply consider the principle of teach each according to his/her abilities. The previous way would develop autonomous and independent learning needed to create motivating classroom learning. On the other hand, fostering learner's dependence is responsible for undermining critical thinking and exempting learners from taking responsibility for their learning. Learner's dependence emerges in the first place from the fact that we rarely take learners' needs and wants into consideration when we design a syllabus. The basis of any course design is the target group's needs analysis (Hutchison and Waters, 1997) which we do not often conduct. Therefore, our learners depend on what we, as teachers, want them to learn. How often do we 'ask' or consult our learners on the content of their textbooks, or the approach to be employed in classroom, or their needs of English? Definitely, the answer is not too often or never. However, some may argue that teachers have to abide by a syllabus externally imposed on both teachers and learners by, for example, ministry of education or departments/centres of English. In this case, teachers definitely have to adapt themselves and curriculum to the learners' needs. (Abisamra, 2003).

The last way that EFL teachers can employ to change the learners' negative attitude towards classroom learning is reconsidering some of their 'wrong' evaluation practices. EFL teachers always tend to uncover what their learners do not know or cannot remember at once, instead of giving them the chance to show what they are able to do. One of the most common evaluation tools is testing. Teachers should agree with Rivers (1992) that testing is an aid to learning, not punitive. Unfortunately, some evaluation practices we employ in classroom make EFL learning difficult. Testing is only a way of guiding both learners and teachers to what has been achieved throughout a course. In addition, a test should reflect the course objectives. Sadly, we often teach our learners one thing, but we test them on another. This partly explains the learners' nervousness about tests, instead of viewing tests as ordinary classes that have pedagogical aims. In short, we should test what we teach. Lantolf (2006) states that there is a recent call among researchers to bring teaching and testing into a closer connection. In this case, as we care to make teaching more exciting and interesting, it is our duty to make students enjoy the test which should be interesting as well. With tests being 'motivating', learners will get rid or reduce stress that discriminates against learners with certain temper.

Methodology

The study target population is EFL teachers and university learners at the Palestinian universities of the West Bank. To highlight both EFL teachers' and learners' current learning and teaching preferences inside language classroom at university level, the study used two questionnaires distributed to a sample population of EFL teachers and learners at Birzeit University- Ramallah- Palestine. The first questionnaire (14 items) serves as a basic tool to get first-hand information from EFL teachers on their language classroom behavior preferences and practices (see Table 1), while the second questionnaire (13 items) targets university EFL

learners in order to conclude their learning preferences and classroom learning attitudes. (See Table 2).

Results

The two questionnaires below were distributed to the sample of 17 EFL teachers and 70 learners at BZU. The questionnaires have come up with the results shown in the tables below.

Table 1. Percentage of EFL Teachers' Current Classroom Teaching Practices

No.	Item	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
1	I always manage to identify my learners' learning needs.	83.33	8.33	8.33
2	My learners' errors are significant indicators for my teaching preferences	58.33	16.67	25.00
3	I always help my learners do the textbook exercises.	75.00	25.00	0.00
4	I can easily explain why I feel relaxed when teaching certain classes	75.00	25.00	0.00
5	My learners' favorite learning style is the use-learn method.	75.00	16.67	8.33
6	Meeting my learners' pedagogical needs is my ultimate goal of teaching.	100.00	0.00	0.00
7	My learners' actual language competence decides on the teaching approach I use in class.	83.33	8.33	8.33
8	Immediate correction in class is part of my classroom teaching techniques.	50.00	8.33	41.67
9	The best workable and fair evaluation tool is exam.	8.33	16.67	75.00
10	My learners learn better when they do the textbook practices each on his/her own.	33.33	8.33	58.33
11	Some of my classes are pedagogically frustrating.	25.00	33.33	41.67
12	I follow different teaching approaches for similar classes.	91.67	0.00	8.33
13	Meeting my learners' social demands help me overcome teaching obstacles.	83.33	8.33	8.33
14	Getting good grades is my learners' top priority in L2 learning	66.67	8.33	25.00

Table 2: Percentage of EFL Learners' Current Classroom learning Practices

No.	Item	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
1	I feel that my EFL teacher realizes my learning needs.	81.82	9.09	9.09
2	My errors are helpful in deciding my learning preferences.	90.91	0.00	9.09

3	I always ask for help from my teacher to do the textbook exercises.	54.55	9.09	36.36
4	I can easily explain why I feel relaxed in my English classes.	68.18	22.73	9.09
5	My favorite learning style in English courses is the use-learn method.	63.64	13.64	22.73
6	I feel that having my pedagogical needs met is my ultimate goal of EFL learning.	40.91	4.55	54.55
7	I learn better when my teacher employs the teaching approach in accordance with my actual language competence.	81.82	4.55	13.64
8	I prefer immediate correction in class because it helps me realize my errors.	59.09	9.09	31.82
9	I think that the exam is a fair evaluation tool.	9.09	9.09	81.82
10	I learn better when I do the textbook practices on my own.	72.73	4.55	22.73
11	Getting a good grade is my top priority in L2 learning	27.27	18.18	54.55
12	My EFL teacher uses different teaching approaches in class.	72.73	27.27	0.00
13	I learn much better when my EFL teacher meets my social demands.	90.91	9.09	0.00

Discussion

Ways of changing university students' perception of classroom EFL learning

The results of the two questionnaires above (Table1 and Table 2) indicate that there are ways, from a teacher's perspective, that are expected to positively change EFL learners' view of classroom learning. These can be summed up in the following five ways:

1.Fostering classroom-centeredness

Abu Ayyash (2011) concludes that effective learning is realistic once EFL Palestinian teachers and their learners establish friendly ties in classroom. In their response to the significance of meeting social needs on their learning (see Table 2, item 13), the majority of university EFL learners agree that positive response to their social concerns make their learning much better. Likewise, 83.3% of EFL teachers think that realizing their learners' social needs help in overcoming teaching obstacles.

While it is apparently easier for learners to set up good social relationship within their classmates through language pair-tasks or group ones, teachers are the best people to set as examples for their learners, to show respect to the members of their learning groups, to be good listeners to them, to stand at the same distance from each learner, and basically to treat them in a humanistic way. The social demands are best realized in classroom everyday behavior through teachers' employment of a humanistic teaching context which cultivates values that foster learner's self-esteem, self-confidence, respect, participatory trend in the learning community (class), sense of belonging, democracy, and equality-oriented practices. Classroom research has shown that pedagogical experience is only one part of the 'complicated' learning process. In summing up her major findings of classroom observations she conducted for different EFL teachers' performance in classes, Senior (2002) believes that there is a correlation between

quality of class groups & quality of learning; she concludes that "language teaching is a highly complex business that not only involves teaching effectively, but also attending to the social well-being of their class groups." (p. 402)

2. Eliminating spoon-feeding:

If we understand spoon-feeding as doing for learners what they could and should do, then learning is often time-wasting with too little outcome. We, as teachers, usually check and practice our skills and linguistic competence, forgetting that our learners' competence and previous knowledge should be a priority. Teachers who speak for more than twenty-five to thirty-five minutes in a 50-minute class must know that they have deliberately taken the right of their 25 learners (as in most classes) to practice their skills, and eventually have created 'passive' recipients who never promote critical thinking in its simplest form. More than 72% of the respondents to the students' questionnaire (see Table 2, item 10) think they learn better when they do the textbook exercises on their own. Apparently, this result indicates that learners are ready to take responsibility for their learning, away from their teachers' help. Responsible learners usually employ their different learning strategies that they find appropriate for their actual competencies and linguistic repertoire. They may practice and train themselves on strategies that range from high-order thinking to critical and creative thinking.

Unlike the learners' preference of 'doing-it-yourself' learning strategy, 75% of teachers (see Table 1, item 3) agree that they always help their students do the textbook exercises. Although the notion *help* in this context may indicate that teachers are spoon-feeding, it may refer to teachers' interference in clarifying and/or simplifying the language tasks in the textbook. Unfortunately, more than half of teachers disagreed that their learners would learn better when they do the textbook exercises on their own (see Table 1- item 10). The obvious contradiction between our learners' learning preference and teachers' teaching inclination over doing textbook exercises may trigger the need for reconsidering some teaching practices on the teachers' part. Another response to spoon-feeding is avoiding what Mcleod (1986) describes as 'search and destroy method of correction.' (p. 9) She adds that reformulating and reconstructing 'acceptable' language production can be a very efficient way to avoid immediate harmful correction. Although 59% of the respondent learners (see Table 2, item 8) prefer immediate correction, more than 40% of the teachers have another view (see Table 1, item 8).

When a teacher is not happy with a learner's answer, for example, it is a good idea that he/she asks for another response by saying, "Let's try another answer." After all, a good learner is necessarily a risk-taker, and this makes it unacceptable to let learners feel exempted from responsibility for their learning.

3. Reflecting learners' learning preferences practices

In their response to the issue of their ultimate goal of teaching, all respondent teachers agree that meeting their learners' pedagogical needs is their main purpose of teaching (Table 1, item 6). Surprisingly, more than half of the learners disagree with their teachers' response to the same issue (see Table 2, item 6). The learners state that having their pedagogical needs met is not their ultimate goal of EFL learning. Therefore, there are needs and preferences that need to be fulfilled—at least from learners' perspective. These wants presumably go beyond teaching/learning approaches employed in class, and definitely it is the teacher's role to identify and analyze these needs. Failing to do so is a way that confuses learners as they expect to learn in a way that is contrary to their expectation. One example of conflicting needs of both teachers and learners is

that when teachers talk about the language, while asking their learners to use this language. Lantolf (2006) agrees with the argument that learning and use are intertwined as components of the same process. He believes that language is learnt through using it.

To solve the problem of the conflict in goals between teachers and their learners is very important. In the first place, we should make sure that our textbooks have authentic content that would help our learners know more about how the target language is used. In certain occasions, teachers can adapt some content to make it easier for learners to interpret and use. Secondly, we should avoid as much as possible making our learners talk about the language, instead they should be encouraged to use it, even with some minor inaccuracies. (Littlewood 1986). Finally, it is more productive to teach language rules inductively without the need for teachers to deductively explain such rules vaguely or insufficiently. The procedures for such teaching/learning tasks are best described in the approaches and methods of teaching EFL.

4.Promoting independent learning:

In theory, most EFL teachers claim that pedagogical studies, educational and linguistic theories guide us in the teaching/learning process. Upon this claim, it is not surprising to see that more than 80% of respondent EFL teachers think that they manage to identify their learners' learning needs (see Table 1, item 1). Although a similar percentage of the learners (81%; see Table 2, item 1) show that teachers realize their learners' wants, both teachers and learners have different outlooks over the ultimate goal of learning English. While two-thirds of the teachers see that the learners' top priority of EFL learning is getting good grades (see Table 1, item 14), more than 54% of the learners do not agree (see Table 2, item 11). The apparent conflict in learning priorities between teachers and learners is a serious issue that needs to be addressed objectively. In addition, fostering learner's dependence can be noticed through our claim that we are the only source of linguistic and pedagogical knowledge in classroom. This is practiced through many ways of which immediate correction and quick answering of our learners' questions are most prominent. Some may argue that learners need a reliable linguistic resource; otherwise, they will go astray. Again, learners need to be responsible for their learning with its merits and demerits. That is, let our learners realize and be responsible for their linguistic mistakes, as this will teach them to be more independent, which is considered an ambitious goal education seeks to achieve. Unfortunately, we do not often teach our learners the principle, 'learn how to learn'.

5.Reconsidering 'wrong' evaluation practices:

Both teachers and learners apparently share the same view towards the unfairness of exam as an evaluation tool, where 75% of the teachers (see Table 1, item 9) and 81% of the learners (see Table 2, item 9) disagree that the exam is a fair evaluation tool. It is true that good evaluation would provide helpful information to teachers and feedback for the learners.

EFL teachers realize that the exam is an evaluation tool used as a part of the teaching/learning process, and it is subject to the same criteria followed when planning teaching. In short, an exam is a learning experience that is used to check how the process is proceeding and what has been achieved. However, teachers can practically employ other evaluation tools that most of some educational institutions use, such as portfolio, class work, participation and accumulative evaluation.

Conclusion:

The paper has presented five ways- from an EFL teacher's perspective- that could give answers to questions like: How can we help our university learners change their view towards learning EFL? What solutions can EFL teacher use to overcome classroom English learning complexities? The answers have dealt with ways that teachers can promote and motivate university learners towards EFL learning through changing their views towards classroom learning/teaching quality. The 'ways' described here are definitely part of other classroom habits discussed by too many applied linguists, educationalists, teachers and learners all through their work on EFL and ESL.(Allwright,1983, Gardner (1991)). One way, for example, is fostering class-centeredness which can be best realized through providing learners with continuous classroom social roles tasks that get all learners involved in activities no matter how small the role may be, as this will stimulate the perception of a positive learning environment. Class-centeredness means that each class has its own atmosphere and chemistry; therefore, it is the teacher's role to study this environment through identifying all the learners' needs and wants, either social or pedagogical.

Another way discussed is the elimination of spoon-feeding habit which ultimately aims at reducing the learner's mistakes through correcting them by teachers. With the emergence of learner-centered methods, focus has shifted to which directly state that the learner is the core of the teaching/learning process. (Doggett, 1986, Lantolf 2006). The paper also discussed that promoting independent learning, fostering learner's independence and considering learners' needs and wants in EFL course design are major characteristics of learner-centered approach which is currently advocated by language learning and teaching theories. To foster the learner's independence in learning, we should help EFL to be responsible for their entire learning right from the very beginning. EFL teachers are also strongly asked to change their role in classroom from an authority to a learning facilitator; from the only source of knowledge to an organizer and consultant of knowledge; and from a lecturer to a skill capacity-builder.

Finally, this paper has examined five applicable ways that could motivate EFL learners to have better classroom learning environment; still, further study on other motivating ways is needed to be addressed.

About the author:

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The Road to Understanding Intercultural Sensitivity in English Language Teaching (ELT) Pre-existing Frames for Intercultural Sensitivity

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Abstract

This study explored intercultural sensitivity in a natural English teaching environment in a Saudi Arabian university. A total of nineteen expatriate teachers took part in this case study. Descriptive qualitative data were generated through focus group discussions, interviews, observations and diary entries. Secondary data as well as anecdotal data were also used to describe the context of the study. The data showed that the context plays a major part in shaping the contextual frame of teaching and that all teachers bring to their work pre-existing biographical frames of reference for intercultural sensitivity. When these two relatively static frames converge in the ELT context, they essentially create a circumstance of discordance.

Keywords: cross-cultural communication, English Language Teaching (ELT), intercultural communication, intercultural sensitivity, TESOL, worldview

Introduction

There is a common belief among educators that language learning is indeed culture learning. Due to the importance of this intricate relationship (Buttjes 1990; Kramsch 1993), the pedagogical implications are challenging and teachers need to be both cognisant of their own intercultural competencies and considerate of their culturally heterogeneous group of learners. In other words, there is a need for teachers to be cognisant of their intercultural sensitivity with regard to teaching in general and concerning culture teaching more specifically. Intercultural sensitivity, therefore, becomes a core cognitive, behavioural and affective characteristic required by teachers.

Without delving into the complications the literature shows with culture as a term, for the purposes of this paper, I accept Moran's (2001) conceptualisation of culture as:

the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts (p. 24).

This definition includes the distinction made between big *C* culture (products) and little *c* culture (perspectives and practices) based on Stempleski and Tomalin's (1993) report on the ELT perspective by Robinson (1985).

In addition, to reduce further complications with another term for which there are many definitions, intercultural sensitivity is defined, based on Bennett's (1993) conceptualisation of it, as a continuum of the awareness, understanding, and response that a person has towards people of other cultures. On account of this, the teachers' intercultural sensitivity frame denotes the frame that shapes their potential to notice and make sense of cues in the teaching context, and respond appropriately to them.

It is important to note here that culture is learnt through a process called enculturation, which is the process of becoming socialised into one's culture from childhood (DeCapua & Wintergerst 2004, p. 13) and includes the development of cognitive skills and patterns of thinking (Schütz 2004). The question of context is therefore particularly integral to the development of a teacher's culture, which makes it the basis required for any investigation into the relationship intercultural sensitivity has with ELT at any teaching context. As Duff and Uchida (1997) noted:

teachers' sociocultural perceptions, identities, roles, and images have an established biographical and professional basis but at the same time are subject to change in response to unexpected questions/problems or critical incidents that arise in each classroom context as the curriculum is lived out (p. 473).

This paper will look at what I have termed 'pre-existing frames' for intercultural sensitivity, the first of which relates to the context of ELT which is the context that teachers must be accountable to and which is widely recognised to regulate their teaching. The second frame is derived from teachers' own biographies which include their culture, education and teaching experience. This analysis of contextual and biographical frames drew secondary data from literature about Saudi Arabia and its ELT context, including some primary anecdotal data about the institution (X University hereon) of my case study, as well as primary data from the biographical survey and various interviews and observations of teachers who took part and given pseudonyms in this study.

Context of English language teaching (ELT) as a frame for intercultural sensitivity***Societal context***

I have acknowledged that culture is a complex term. Thus, to make our discussion less problematic, culture here will be discussed in terms of the dominant culture found in each society and not the smaller subcultures based on shared interests or particular orientations that groups of people may have. Within this perspective, Hofstede (2005), identified five cultural dimensions that are an imprint on people based on their cultures. These are:

- *Individualism/collectivism*– a distinction that explains societies whose ties between individuals are either loose (individualistic as in Australia and the US) or tight (collectivistic as in Japan and China).
- *Power distance*– the degree of equality, or lack of, among individuals holding different status in the society, illustrated, for example, in the degree of criticism a subordinate can/cannot make of their superior in different societies.
- *Uncertainty avoidance*– how people deal with uncertainty and ambiguity, illustrated by situations where people in some societies prefer clear instructions to follow while people in others can tolerate ambiguity and use their own initiative with instructions.
- *Masculinity/femininity*– how roles of the different genders are distributed in societies, for example, some societies may see a woman as a home person while in others she is a career person.
- *Time orientation*– the degree individuals in societies value long-term or short-term time orientations.

An important feature of culture to note for any context of ELT is whether it operates as more individualistic or collective. The basic difference between an individualist society and a collectivist one relates to where the emphasis on self is. In individualist societies, emphasis is on the individual, and relationships with others are loose. People in such societies 'are primarily motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights, and the contacts they have established with others' (Triandis 1995, p. 2). In collectivist societies, however, emphasis is on the group and the interest of the group as a whole. People are closely tied and family oriented; they see themselves as part of one or more groups (Triandis 1995, p. 2.). An example of such a society is Saudi Arabia, the context for my study. To detail, Saudi Arabia is a country ruled by a monarchy founded in 1932 by King Al-Saud, and is tribally oriented (Haniffa & Hudaib 2007, p. 185). The country's constitution is based on the Koran. The official language is Arabic and the official religion is Islam. These characteristics of a society are important to identify as they are core to the makeup of the fabric of the context of teaching for which teachers coming from abroad will need to be aware and work within those constraints which the next section will detail.

Educational context

The broader contextual features of a society no doubt influence education and the context of teaching. In the study I carried out in Saudi Arabia (Etri 2012), there was ample evidence to show that the country's official religion, Islam, had a particularly strong influence on education. Before the development of the modern Saudi state, education was mainly provided in mosques by clerics and religious teachers through their *khuttab* (lessons/weekly addresses) and Koran recitation and memorisation circles. Education centred mostly on religion and the method of teaching was through rote memorisation (Hussain 2007, p. 11). Despite major developments in

the latter half of the twentieth century on education mainly due to the wealth gained from oil discovery and export revenue, religion has played a cardinal role in shaping Saudi Arabia's present educational system as educational institutions continue to be segregated upholding an ingrained Islamic value. A main reason for that is societal since the country's constitution is entirely the Koran and Islamic scripture found in Prophet Muhammad's example. I would suggest that such levels of cultural and more specifically, religious influence on education are likely to be significantly less when governments intentionally seek this limit by adopting non-religious values such as those found in secularism. To illustrate and compare to another Islamic country, in Turkey, headscarves for women, which are considered a symbol of faith, were banned since the 1980's in government institutions and universities. Quite recently however (2008), there has been a move to lift the ban for essentially the reason of upholding the freedom of religion principle as the government and Turkey's Constitutional Court continue to dispute its ban legality (Library of Congress, 2012). Such examples illustrate how the fabric and broader societal context has an influence on the context of education.

Summary of the context of English language teaching as a frame for intercultural sensitivity

For the expatriate English teacher who comes from abroad, teaching in a context like Saudi Arabia may indeed be a challenging experience. Advancing to a modern state after the discovery of oil has done little to change Saudi Arabian fabric as a contextual frame for intercultural sensitivity. These contextual characteristics are also reflected in X University, the site of my research; it is permeated by Islam and Arab culture. Saudi gender segregation laws are fully implemented by the university, which has separate campuses for males and females. It also supports a teacher-centred educational culture. Being a natural product of enculturation, the Saudi ELT context is undeniably an ethnocentric one. Knowledge of this contextual frame for the expatriate ELT teacher is vital since it will require teaching to be within its confines and, as Paige et al. (2003) affirm, teachers may be required to work in ethnocentric environments or be constrained by institutional and societal factors (p. 222). The degree to which these notable characteristics of the Saudi context of ELT are familiar and acceptable to foreign English language teachers is clearly likely to be a factor in their display of intercultural sensitivity. Just as likely to be a factor are the biographical frames of reference teachers bring with them to this unique context of teaching, which is the focus of the next section.

Teachers' biographical context as a frame for intercultural sensitivity

This section details the teachers' biographical frames of reference as another pre-existing frame for intercultural sensitivity. It begins with their countries of origin and their education. This is followed by a discussion about their teaching experiences in Saudi Arabia, co-educational teaching experience and intercultural experience. The teachers' relationship with students is then discussed and the section concludes with a discussion about their experience and educational preparation for teaching in Saudi Arabia.

Countries of origin

Teachers in my study came from a number of countries: the US, UK, Pakistan, Philippines, Jordan, Morocco, Malaysia and Sudan (see Appendix).

For some of these teachers, Saudi Arabia is the first country they have lived in outside their country. For others it is not; especially those who left their countries to study abroad. Nearly all of X University's English teachers are non-native speakers of English, that is, English is their second language. Teachers from India, the Philippines and Malaysia, experienced the use of English as an official second language, as is typical of such Outer Circle countries. The remaining teachers, apart from those from the US and the UK, were enculturated in Expanding Circle countries where English was taught as a foreign language (Kachru 1998 p. 93–94).

Worldview and religion

The way teachers see the world is based on the enculturation process they experienced in childhood and progressively throughout their lives, and this view is heavily influenced by religion (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel 2005, p. 4). Most scholars agree that religion is the most pervasive 'determinate of worldview' and that even secular people are influenced by old religious traditions (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel 2005, p. 4). Because Moslem teachers share the same religion as Saudis, their worldviews are similar. Moslem teachers felt a connection with the Saudi contextual frame, had similarities with how Saudis viewed the world, and were easily adaptable, 'I mean for me the basic bond is the same religion. I share the same religion with them' (Amjad), and:

As I said, because most of us come from Islamic background[s], so practically it's a done deal. We're not really going to change ... or introduce that much (Amir).

This case is similar to one found with Chinese students who studied in Singapore. Ward and Kennedy (1999) found that sociocultural adaptation problems decrease as a function of ethnic and cultural similarity (p. 667). Although the Moslem teachers had much in common with Saudi people, not all had the same absolute understanding of Islam as Saudi people, for example, Saeed's view about gender segregation, 'And that [gender segregation] is not related to Islam' (Saeed).

Nevertheless, Moslem teachers seemed to have a general connection with their Saudi counterparts, especially the ubiquitous key status of religion in Saudi Arabia; some Moslem teachers elucidated a similar status for their religion with their teaching:

I think as a Moslem, our religion has got ... a lot to do with ... culture. Our culture is driven by our religion. So, in my case my religion helps me teaching (Sohail).

Religion for some Moslem teachers not only influences their teaching, but is at the core of the language they produce as well, '... the language we produce actually reflects a worldview or culture' (Saeed). Such a view affirms the notion in the literature (Buttjes 1990; Byram 1994; Kramsch 1993) that language and culture cannot be separated and are in fact, dimensions of each other.

Although the literature demonstrates that teachers are not always conscious of the cultural messages they transmit in class (Kramsch 1993), some teachers seemed conscious of the influence their culture, and specifically their religion, had on their teaching, '... I use morals of

our own religion ... in class' (Sohail); 'And being a Moslem, we have to keep intact those particular moral aspects' (Maheer).

Education

Teachers' education levels in X University are generally high. X University has strict recruitment criteria and basically aims to fill teaching vacancies with teachers who have post-graduate qualifications. Table 1 shows that the majority of teachers (84%) had their Masters degrees; only one teacher had a PhD while the remaining teachers had a Bachelor degree and a Graduate Diploma.

Table 1 *Education levels*

Education	Number	Percentage
BA Gdip	2	11
Masters	16	84
PhD	1	5
Total	19	100

X University's recruitment policy accepts qualifications in teaching, and in English literature and linguistics as well. A number of the English staff had qualifications and experience in teaching English literature, '... we Pakistani, ... all three have got our Master's degrees in literature' (Sohail); 'Back in Pakistan ... I was teaching ... *Hemingway* [and] *the Sun also Rises*' (Maheer). Only a small number of teachers had post-graduate qualifications in ELT, '... (it) relates to something that I studied for my Masters ... called International English' (Saeed). Just under a third of the teachers had post-graduate qualifications in ELT. Most teachers who came from non-native English speaking countries were qualified in linguistics and English literature, while it seemed common with teachers who completed their post-graduate studies in the UK or US to specialise in ELT. Other teachers came with post-graduate qualifications in linguistics and translation.

Besides formal qualifications, some teachers had completed some training in intercultural education, '... I took a class in intercultural teaching' (Safia); '... we had similar courses from a multicultural education' (Dania). There were a number of teachers, especially those from the Indian subcontinent and North Africa, who spoke more than two languages; usually Pashtu in the subcontinent, and French in North Africa (see Etri, 2012). The majority of teachers, however, were bilingual and spoke a native language and English as their second language.

Teaching experience in Saudi Arabia

Most universities in Saudi Arabia contract foreign teaching staff for a minimum of two years; others set the minimum contract period to one year. This means that any teacher who taught in Saudi Arabia before moving to X University would have had a minimum of one year's

experience of English teaching in Saudi Arabia, assuming they met their contractual obligations. The majority of teachers, however, were fairly new to the Saudi ELT context; most had less than six-months experience. Table 2 shows the breakup of the total ELT experience in Saudi Arabia.

Table 2 *ELT Experience in Saudi Arabia*

Time	Less than 6 months	6 months to 2 years	2 years to 5 years	More than 5 years	Total
Number	7	2	6	4	19
Percentage	37	11	32	21	100

The advantages of having experience teaching in Saudi Arabia revolve around adaptation to its ELT context, which means having knowledge of the culture of education and the culture of Saudis in general, which as Hofstede (1986) maintains is core to developing intercultural sensitivity. Teachers with some experience in Saudi Arabia already come to X University with a biographical frame of reference influenced by, and with knowledge about, the general teaching context; a teaching context which may not be identical to their last, but in the same country bound by the same government, and religious laws and customs. Others, however, come with a biographical frame based on their native contexts, and hence Saudi Arabia is a whole new teaching context for them; they are still bound by their home customs and culture of education, and only starting to adapt to a new context. Thus, the Saudi ELT context is more challenging for these teachers because the cultural and educational values of experience, as Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) assert, are not universal and cannot simply be automatically transferred and assumed valid in other cultures and contexts.

Co-educational experience

Most of X University's English teachers were educated in co-educational institutions and taught in them as well, 'I have been teaching co-education in Pakistan for the last four years' (Nasreen); '... we had female teachers teaching us' (Sohail). None of these experiences, however, are possible in Saudi Arabia due to the country's segregation laws (explained earlier). Thus, teachers come to X University with extensive co-educational learning and teaching experiences, but are unable to capitalise on these skills in a gender-segregated setting. When asked whether teachers could experience possible problems teaching co-educational classes in Saudi Arabia, Jake viewed the question as a nonstarter, based on his biographical frame of reference, and was firmly opposed to the idea of segregation, '... our job is to teach both sexes equally. I don't think we should seek justification for segregation or sexism' (Jake).

Similar sentiments could be seen in the statements of Moslem teachers. It is worthwhile remembering that not all people of the Moslem faith adhere to the Islam understood and practiced in Saudi Arabia. Amir, for example, has a view that Islam permits co-education, 'I

don't see anything ... prohibited, [with] a male teaching a female' (Amir). This point illustrates that although Moslem teachers have an advantage because they share the same religion as Saudis, it does not mean their biographical frame of reference enculturated the same understanding of it. And whatever the notion of gender segregation in Islam is, Amir's understanding of it clearly does not entail the context of education.

Experience of curriculum and methodology

The biographies of teachers from Outer and Expanding Circle countries showed different experiences of curriculum and methodology to those from Inner Circle countries. Teachers who came from Outer and Expanding Circle countries seemed to rely on books to the extent that books were the syllabi, controlled by governments, and whose cultural contents were tailored to suit the culture of the local people, '... I remember from primary school for instance, everything is ... custom-made ... culturally' (Amir):

Even in my country, all the primary books ... have to be localised on the specific culture of the country because of the policy made by the government and I understand that for the tertiary (Suhaimi).

One difference in Suhaimi's case is that the books at the tertiary level were also restricted to the local culture. These circumstances were unlike other teachers' previous contexts, especially concerning English literature courses, which is in essence about learning English-associated cultures, '... I used to teach the students of literature [at] the masters level' (Maheer). Due to the absence of control of the cultural content of some teaching books, some teachers provided an account of the advent of culturally offensive material in their teaching, '... when you are teaching Hemingway you have to be careful about all that' (Maheer); '... in one of the units, there was ... mention of ... boys and girls dancing together and drinking ... I was confused whether I should do it or not' (Khan). Culturally offensive material found in teaching materials was not uncommon despite government control and the religiosity of certain communities. Control of such content meant teachers had to make pedagogical decisions to strike a balance between the books that constituted the syllabi, and degree of censorship:

in one ... important book I was confused whether I should do it or not! I talked to one of my seniors, and I consulted him ... because there were boys and girls sitting together ... my senior told me to skip the activity ... so I had to skip that (Khan).

The attitude towards culturally offensive material by Inner Circle English teachers markedly differs from that of Expanding and Outer Circle teachers. Based on their biographical frame of reference for intercultural sensitivity, there is no such thing as altogether offensive material and any assertion that there was could only be considered immaturity:

It is irrelevant if something is contrary to your beliefs. You're there to learn. Some things are different. You're here to learn about them. The world is not all like you. You learn about the differences in university. That's the point (Jake).

For some teachers, such negative views and practices towards foreign cultures were a cultural obligation. For others, they were not, especially at the university level where the concept of student maturity also plays a part.

Intercultural experience

Some teachers were fortunate to have had wide intercultural experiences, 'I should call myself a little ... fortunate that I have a better chance to be in different places, Nigeria, Dubai, Sharjah ... Canada ... Oman' (Zarina). Jake had overseas teaching experience in Korea, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, and the Philippines, (Jake) while Saeed had taught in Spain, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, France, Italy, Portugal, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and the UK (Saeed). For many other teachers however, Saudi Arabia was their first teaching context outside their native country, '... when I was teaching, culture ... was ... not so much of an issue because I [was] teaching my own people' (Suhaimi). Table 3 shows that over one third (37%) of teachers had no prior experience teaching overseas before coming to Saudi Arabia.

Table 3 *Experience outside native country*

	Number	Percentage
No experience	7	37
Experience	12	63
Total	19	100

An absence of foreign teaching experience did not necessarily denote that teachers had not previously interacted with culturally diverse people or had underdeveloped intercultural skills. Some teachers like Dania, despite Saudi Arabia being the first country she taught in outside the US, had previous intercultural experiences with large sub-cultural and minority groups in her country:

like in the States you have Latinos who even though they are amongst this culture of ours they really hold on to that identity ... They don't assimilate so much that you can't tell the difference. These are some of the only people who in America if everyone is speaking English, they will make you speak Spanish ... for me ... having lived around Arabs for so long [in the US] that I feel like I'm always conscious of certain things (Dania).

Other teachers explicitly had intercultural teaching experiences within their own countries, '... I have been teaching Saudi students in Pakistan' (Maheer). Maheer was one of the more fortunate teachers who had specific exposure to Saudi students before coming to Saudi Arabia. Although the context of intercultural communication was in the context of teaching, he had also visited

Saudi Arabia previously for religious reasons, ‘And I have been here thrice before, once for *hajj* and twice for *umrah*’ (Maheer).

Amir echoes similar views about intercultural competence from his previous English learning experience, and has strong views about how experiences of a language context helps understand the language better:

I think culture ... [is] crucial ... to ... fully understand the language itself. And this comes from my own experience ... when ... I studied ... English prior to ... studying it in an English ... environment; it’s absolutely crucial that for you really to understand ... the language ... you have to ... understand the cultural elements (Amir).

Various studies show that the more interaction a person has with people of other cultures, the more competent they become when dealing with different people (Martin 1987; Ward & Kennedy 1999); they begin to develop skills of empathy, become well prepared for culture shock and the acceptance of differences, are open to learning about others, and are quick to adapt to their new contexts. Crucial to developing these skills, although not automatic (Halse 1999, p. 69; Nunan 2000, p. 140), is the experience of extensive periods of intercultural interaction, especially when an individual chooses this experience (Sowden 2007).

Relationship with students

Hofstede (2005) mentions that teachers from individualist societies tend to experience problems with students from collectivist societies who have different learning cultures, and where people are closely tied (Triandis 1995, p. 2). Except for the three native speakers, all teachers in this study came from collectivist societies (see Appendix). The biographical frame of reference held by some of these teachers saw the relationship between teacher and student as being similar to one tied by blood; a parental relationship, ‘... I ... definitely would have censored that ... considering her as my daughter’ (Maheer). Others had a more moral view of the status and relationship between teachers and students. Saeed confesses that it is not just language materials that are discussed in his classes, but other things relating to general life experiences, human development and maturity. Teaching to him encompasses more than just teaching the subject content, ‘Because I believe I’m not just a teacher, I’m also an educator’ (Saeed). Similarly, Susi believes teachers have more than a traditional chalk and talk role to play in their teaching, ‘And a teacher should be described as an ambassador of human values’ (Susi).

There are others, however, who see the respect of students not as the result of discovering the sincerity of the teacher, but as a response to the power of the teacher:

Everyone in my country Pakistan, they’re really respectful ... of the teacher. But, again, the reason for that can be because the teacher has a lot of power (Amjad).

This relationship sometimes resembles one that may be found in schools. Furthermore, Amir views parents as crucial for his relationship with his students. For example, he views parents as part of ensuring student progress, and teachers are therefore not enough, ‘... I contacted the parent because the student was doing so poorly and there was no chance for him to progress’

(Amir). Such level of care for the students was echoed by others whose previous experience was to organise special meetings among the teachers to tackle issues with students:

When we used to have meetings in Pakistan about our students, we used to discuss the same things about the students (like) not studying, not learning hard, not paying attention, not (being) interested (Amjad).

The biographical frame of these teachers places importance on the teacher in the learning process and reflects collectivist ideals. Teachers are viewed as solely responsible for curriculum development and students' education and progress; students seem absent from this equation.

Experience and educational preparation for teaching in Saudi Arabia

Making a shift from one's native country to a foreign one is a considerable change for a teacher: a change in culture, language, climate, pedagogies, and the whole context of teaching, calling for some kind of familiarisation process which could aid in reducing culture shock and allow smooth transition. Identifying some of the teachers' contact experience and educational preparation made before embarking on a minimum two-year contract with the university in Saudi Arabia, provides further details about their biographical frames of reference for intercultural sensitivity.

There were a number of teachers who had prior experiences with Saudi and Arab people. Some teachers had experience teaching Saudi students and as a result learnt a lot from them about their culture:

Saudi student[s] ... go to Pakistan and they study in Pakistani universities as well ... so to some extent, we also know about their own lifestyle and everything as well (Maheer).

It seemed common with the Moslem teachers from the Asian subcontinent that studying Islam and the Koran entailed studying Saudi culture as well. Sohail comments that studying about Saudi people is part of the religious study curricula found in Pakistan, '... we study a lot about them and here in our country ... we study Koran, we study the religious mythology and all that' (Sohail). Their biographical histories, which included knowledge and experience of learning about Saudi people, seemed to be sufficient for these teachers in terms of preparation for the Saudi context. Although other teachers did not have contact with Saudi people as such, nor formally learnt about them, they did teach people of similar Arab cultures, and also interacted with them back in their countries, 'Somehow I was mentally prepared because I taught like two years in Oman and I was exposed [to] ... some Arabs in Canada' (Zarina); 'having lived around Arabs for so long [in the US] ... I feel like I'm always conscious of certain things' (Dania). Because both teachers were Moslem, and as a result shared similar worldviews as Saudi people, coming to teach in Saudi Arabia did not pose a considerable challenge to them as it would have for non-Moslems unfamiliar with the Saudi context.

Teachers generally asserted that they engaged in background reading about Saudi Arabia before deciding to commit to working there. The internet seemed to be the main hub where information about Saudi Arabia was sought, '... the internet and other places where you can get a lot of information about the culture' (Amjad). Both Moslem and non-Moslem teachers acknowledge the importance of reading as part of their transitional preparations for the Saudi context, 'So, obviously I think most of us, we have been studying about the culture, about the Saudi people' (Maheer); 'I studied the language and the culture in great detail, without the cloud of religion

making everything incomprehensible' (Jake). Jake's reading evidently did not prepare him for the way in which he later saw Islam permeating nearly everything about Saudi culture.

No mention of the formal learning of Arabic was made except by Jake. One reason that could be given for this is that non-Arab Moslems generally know how to read and write Arabic because of the Koran. The Koran is in Arabic and hence readers must learn Arabic in order to read and memorise it. So most, if not all, of the Moslem teachers knew how to read Arabic because of their Koran education. Some teachers did not take formal Arabic lessons like Jake, but did try to learn, on their own accord, basic conversational Arabic words:

I was quite prepared to that extent ... I bought some basic Arabic books just to understand some words like, 'be quiet in class' or 'just listen to me' ... daily Arabic conversation (Suhaimi).

Moslem teachers were seen to have a high expectation of the religiosity of Saudi people, stereotyping Saudi people as all equally religious:

We start expecting too much from this society. We ... associate that every person over here walking in the streets, moving along ... would be so religious ... so I believe ... we are all stuffed [with] these different ideas (Maheer).

One reason that could be given for this high expectation of religiosity is that Saudi Arabia is home to Islam's holiest mosques, so that foreigners may believe there is a strong connection between the general Saudi population and these sites.

Summary of teachers' biographical frames for intercultural sensitivity

The biographies of teachers participating in my study showed that they came from eight different countries and are each a product of a unique enculturation process. Only a small number of teachers (three) in X University came from individualist societies of whom two were of the Islamic faith and one Christian. Most teachers, however, were of the Islamic faith and came from collectivist societies. They shared the same religion as Saudi people and similar collectivist enculturation processes and worldviews. Although Moslem teachers had similar religious understandings to Saudi people, they also had many differences as well. For Moslem teachers, Islam permeates their lives and indeed their teaching. Teachers often held high their culture and felt threatened by other cultures, particularly English-associated and Western cultures.

Most teachers had their masters degrees. Experiences were mixed between having no intercultural teaching experience to having many years in different countries, including Saudi Arabia. Nearly all teachers had co-educational teaching experiences and unlike the view shown in the Saudi ELT context, Moslem teachers generally believed Islam permitted co-education. Teachers from Outer and Expanding Circle countries shared a history of textbook reliance and a consciousness of their culture in their teaching. Because their societies are collectivist, their biographical frames of reference for intercultural sensitivity indicated teacher-centred education as a standard and that student progress is the responsibility of teachers. Unlike the three teachers whose biographical frame was fashioned by individualism, teachers from collectivist societies treated offensive cultural materials as threats to their, and their students', cultures and consequently engaged in censorship pedagogies. Relationships with students were viewed by teachers from collectivist societies as close and even family-like; even at the tertiary level of education, parents were seen as integral for student progress. Many teachers, especially those

from Pakistan, were familiar with the Saudi ELT context and some had experience teaching and interacting with Saudi people. Others learnt about Saudi culture and the Arabic language in preparation for their new teaching context.

The preceding accounts of teachers' biographical frames demonstrate that they are fundamentally represented by three constituents: society, religion and worldview, and educational experiences as depicted in Figure 1

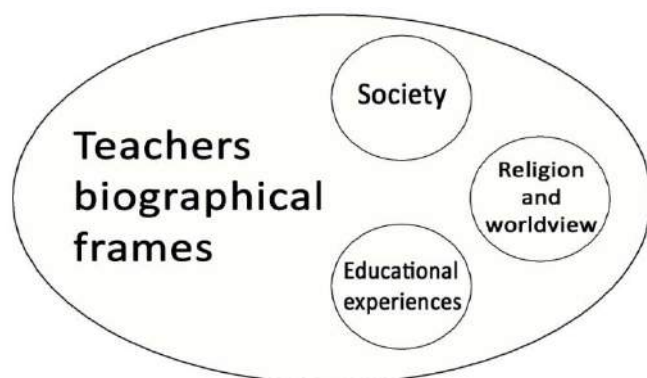


Figure 1 Teachers biographical frames

The society's imprint includes the level of individualism and collectivism teachers experienced during their upbringing. The data also show that for those from collectivist societies, as found by Canagarajah with his Tamil students (1999, p. 61), the religion and worldview constituent has a greater imprint on the teachers' biographical frames than is the case with teachers from individualist societies, except for the Moslems who lived in such societies. The teachers' own educational experiences, whether in their native context or more broadly, is another notable imprint on the teachers' biographical frame. These imprints make this frame static and not easily changeable except through ongoing biography. It is thus distinguishable from other more dynamic frames that teachers bring to ELT.

Summary

This paper discussed two important pre-existing frames of reference for intercultural sensitivity: the ELT contextual frame, and the teachers' biographical frame. The importance of identifying and detailing an understanding of these two frames is a prerequisite for the investigating of intercultural sensitivity in the context of ELT. In the introduction, intercultural sensitivity was conceptualised as the awareness, understanding and response that a person has towards people of other cultures (Bennett 1993) which includes being 'sensitive to cues that are often subtle or unfamiliar and to adjust behaviour and expectations accordingly' (Stone 2006). When teachers come to teach in the Saudi ELT context, this creates a circumstance of discordance between two different frames (the shaded area in Figure 2 below).

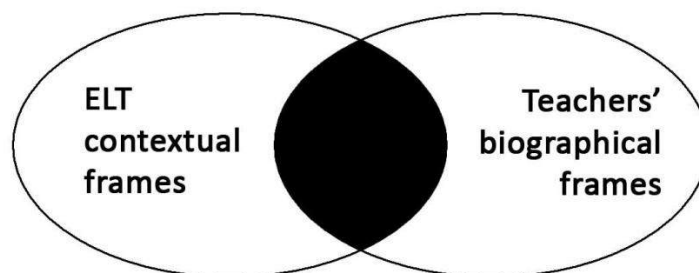


Figure 2 Pre-existing frames of reference for intercultural sensitivity in English language teaching

The teachers' biographical frame is no longer in its normal zone of function but in a foreign one, and hence teachers will require awareness, understanding and appropriate response (i.e. intercultural sensitivity) to the new set of contextual conditions imposed by the ELT contextual frame to function harmoniously and effectively inside it. Because these two pre-existing frames are static and not easily changeable, intercultural sensitivity in this circumstance of discordance will be a dynamic process and therefore likely to emanate from more dynamic frames of reference. Hence, identifying such dynamic frames of reference is crucial for the path to understanding intercultural sensitivity in practice: these will be discussed in the next part of this series with particular reference to X University.

About the Author

Walead Etri holds a PhD in Education from the University of South Australia. His main interests are the relationship between language and culture, and how this relationship affects English teaching around the world. He has taught in Australia and while heading an English department for the Saudi Arabian Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, he became drawn to the importance of intercultural sensitivity in the English teaching context.

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Appendix

Nationality, gender and religion						
Country	Male	Religion		Female	Religion	Country Total
Jordan	Bassam	Islam				1
Malaysia	Suhaimi	Islam		Susi	Islam	2
Morocco	Saeed	Islam				1
Pakistan	Maheer Amjad Sohail Azzam Khan	Islam Islam Islam Islam Islam		Nasreen Zarina	Islam Islam	7
Philippines	Corey	Christianity		Jane	Christianity	2
Sudan	Hakeem Bashir	Islam Islam				2
UK	Amir	Islam				1
US	Jake	Christianity		Safia Dania	Islam Islam	3
Total	13			6		19

An ICT-Based Approach to Teaching Civilisation to EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present paper, which is based on an experiment conducted with thirty-six third year undergraduate students majoring in EFL, proposes an approach to teaching civilisation to make it an important subject that enhances content and skills, both of which are necessary in the education of well-versed, thoughtful, and judicious students. In this method, small groups of students combine the use of various books and multimedia assets to investigate a given topic covering a specific time period and dealing with a major development in American history. Students are expected both to find a video clip or a film and to prepare an original PowerPoint presentation on the basis of predefined questions to explore the main themes and deal with key elements, such as events, facts, dates, terms, treaties, regulations, and people. Contrary to conventional approaches, this method, which partly depends on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), can support a student-centred learning environment in which students become more active and self-motivated learners and critical thinkers of historical events and facts. Other anticipated secondary benefits from such a pedagogical endeavour in the American civilisation class are the promotion of students' reading, thinking, writing, and speaking skills, as well as the increase of their abilities to navigate the internet and master digital technologies.

Keywords: blended learning, ICT, language skills, student-centred learning, teaching civilisation

Introduction

In recent decades, research in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning and teaching in higher education has provided a variety of concepts, methods, and findings that are of both theoretical interest and practical significance. Research has also provided a range of digital tools that can be exploited for developing teachers understanding of learning and teaching in particular contexts and for assessing and enhancing the student experience on specific courses and programmes.

The effective integration of new technologies into the learning/teaching process is currently much more challenging than providing computers and securing classroom connection to the internet. Finding the appropriate mode of integrating ICT into classroom practices is also one of the impediments twenty-first century teachers will face. In fact, the integration of digital technology is also associated with a shift from a teacher-expert to a student-centred approach of teaching and learning.

Given these facts, EFL teachers are in front of the imperative necessity to drop traditional ways of teaching and learning and adopt the active learning approach which has become the basics of education. However, so that the active learning method can be successfully implanted in the Algerian context, there need to be changes in both university instructional materials and in teachers' and students' perceptions of teaching and learning.

During the last decade, the Algerian higher education authorities have progressively implemented the License- Master- Doctorate (LMD) system in its higher educational system. They expected university teachers to combine modern teaching methods and learning approaches with the use of new technologies to meet with the local reforms in higher education. Algerian educators believe that the diffusion and use of ICTs would make language classes more vivid, enjoyable, and attractive to both teachers and students. They also think that the reliance on new learning approaches would endow students with new skills required for the 21st century labour market such as the ability to inquire, discover, investigate, and interpret facts.

However, while teachers and students in the developed world are in an advanced stage in the use of digital tools and resources in their modern language classrooms, in Algerian universities, the use of ICT is still limited. Moreover, in developed nations there is a shift from a teacher-centered to a student-centered setting, where teachers become collaborators instead of dispensers of knowledge; and where students become actively involved in their own education instead of passively receiving learning. Most of language learners in Algerian universities, however, still study in traditional classrooms at particular times to passively listen to their teachers lecture in front of large classes.

Relying on a literature review of previous research on ICT and the teaching of language, this paper draws on the changing conceptions in language teaching and learning and rapid technological advances to describe an experimental approach to teaching American civilisation. The method integrates some technological tools and focuses on active learning in order to advance the learning process and thus raise the quality of the language teaching experience in the department of English at Guelma University in Algeria.

This work provides an overview on the unprecedented growth and tremendous use of these new digital tools in language teaching and learning. It also examines the benefits and advantages these technologies and their applications in the language classroom offer to educators and learners. The aim is to show how these new forms of digital technology led to the redefinition of the meaning of literacy in the digital 21st century world, and enabled teachers to propel the reach

of their classrooms and immersed their learners into an environment of authentic language use where they can develop their skills to communicate, collaborate and take part in activities.

Overview of the Use of ICT in FL Teaching and Learning

Nowadays, most of the foreign language learning environments throughout the world are supported by ‘digital technology’ or ‘information and communication technology’. The former term is commonly employed in the United States and the latter is generally used in the United Kingdom. The abbreviation ICT has been adopted and used by everyone in education circles. The term ICT broadly encompasses technologies such as radio, television, DVD, fixed and mobile telephones, satellite system, computer and network hardware and software; as well as the equipment and services connected with these technologies, such as video conferencing and electronic mail (Tinio, 2002).

The widespread adoption of ICT in education stems from the firm belief that the integration and use of ICT in the teaching and learning process can positively enhance and modernize educational systems and methods of learning (Pearson & Somekh, 2006). Educators also commonly perceive that the widespread use of ICT by current students, known as the digital generation, can have a positive effect on the complete learning process.

In the field of EFL, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) became the specific term in foreign language teaching and learning. CALL has been defined by Levy (1997) as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (p. 1). At first, CALL referred to the use of computers by language learners, a process that started to materialize in the 1980s (Davies et al., 2013). CALL has however encompassed broader uses of new technology in language learning.

Other expressions of this hyphenated description have been put forward to illustrate different roles for computer technology in the language-learning process: ‘computer-based language learning’, ‘computer-enhanced language learning’, ‘technology-enhanced language learning’, and ‘technology-based learning’. The latter has been broadly defined as the learning of content via electronic tools, including the internet, intranets, satellite broadcasts, audio and video tape, video and audio conferencing, internet conferencing, chat rooms, e-bulletin boards, webcasts, and computer-based instruction.

In recent years, technology-based learning (TBL) has come to encompass the concept of blended learning which involves combinations of technology-based resources (i.e., e-learning and m-learning resources), face-to-face lessons, and other traditional materials (e.g., print materials). Other recent concepts of learning and teaching through the use of digital technology include ‘web-learning’, e-learning’, ‘m-learning’, ‘virtual-learning’, and ‘distance-learning’, ICT-enabled learning’, and ‘online or digital training’ (Macaro et al., 2012).

Digital Tools and Resources Currently Used in Language Learning

Nowadays, digital technology-based learning uses a series of delivery methods and hardware and software tools to manage and deliver learning content and manage and track learner progress, as well as learner-to-learner and learner-to-instructor communication. In view of that, it is useful to provide a description of the range of technologies that are now regularly used in foreign language classrooms throughout the world.

W.D. Haddad and A. Draxier (2002) showed that teachers-in countries where digital media is used often have easy and fast access to the use of updated and genuine materials in the language taught, such as audio/video tapes, CD/DVDs, smart boards, or interactive whiteboards,

PowerPoint, Skype and video conferencing software. The latter is considered as a very resourceful way of inviting foreign lecturers into classrooms and for allowing students to work in partnership with each other at distance. In countries like Algeria, where English is taught as a foreign language, this can serve as a means for exposing students to native English speakers.

The prevalence and diversity of digital technologies has led teachers in developed countries to adopt Virtual Learning Environments (VLE). These ready-to-use e-learning platforms (e.g., Moodle) allow teachers to combine traditional resources with interactive practice activities. Teachers have their own spaces in these learning platforms, where they can supply the content of their courses, and post instruction and reference resources for the learners, and create blogs and forums for further discussion.

In addition to blended learning, which has become a common practice in all developed nations, other approaches to language study have recently emerged and include e-learning and distance learning. Blended learning is perceived as an additional element to the classroom, one that supports existing teaching practices while integrating them with new technologies. Blended learning combines many of the best elements of face-to-face teaching and allows greater variety and flexibility than a traditional classroom (Finn & Bucci, 2004). One of its major advantages over other modes of language study is that it gives learners more opportunities for useful study away from the classroom, and also provides a new role for the teacher in the learning classroom (Hartman, 2010). The teacher's new role changes from that of a lecturer to a facilitator who supervises and evaluates students' progress while allowing them to learn for themselves.

E-learning, which plays an important role in distance learning, provides teachers with access to resources, courses, tools, training programmes, online communities, and opportunities to collaborate with other educators around the world (Kante, 2002). It is defined as the delivery of learning through electronic means involving the use of a greater variety of equipment such as computers or other digital devices (e.g. mobile phone, iPads, or tablets) to provide training, educational or learning materials regardless of physical location, time of day or choice of digital reception and distribution device (Stockley, 2003).

M-learning, which has usually been regarded to be synonymous with the use of mobile phones, includes any sort of learning which is done on mobile and handheld tools either in or outside the classroom (O'Malley et al. 2003). As such, m-learning has become the same as blended learning and it can be used in educational institutions which struggle to afford technology investments. As all learners carry their own mobile phones, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) has also become in Western countries a useful option for integrating technologies into the learning process in schools or universities which do not possess an ICT policy (Alberta, 2012).

Opportunities and Benefits of Using Various Electronic Tools

There has been an immense growth of ICT throughout the world in the past two decades. This development is the result of the recognition of numerous studies that the use of information and communication technology as an instructional means can serve as a means for educational transformation, and can offer new opportunities for improving the quality and effectiveness of language teaching and learning (Volman and Van Eck, 2001). Moreover, changing notions of learning and non-stop technological innovations have led to continuous changes in language teaching and learning methods.

Numerous studies have been carried out to weigh up the educational impact of digital technology on teachers, students, and EFL classrooms (Becker, 2000; Tinio, 2002; Davis, 2006; Collins & Halverson, 2009). Most of these research studies gave tangible evidence that new

technologies can produce positive effect on learners' enjoyment and interest in learning. Becker (2000), for instance, advanced four main benefits for digital technology use in education: increased commitment to the learning task, increased independence and motivation for self-directed learning, enhanced self-esteem, and improved behavioural habits (pp. 5-17). ICT has become a fixture in many homes around the world, and its influence has pervaded into all facets of our lives, including educational settings. This trend has been acknowledged by many as the wave of the future in which language instruction will be conducted by new developments in computers, the internet, and mobile technologies (Davis, 2006).

In addition, knowledge resources and productive capabilities are available on an "anywhere, anytime" basis (Geddes, 2004), inside and outside the school. These capabilities have significant implications for the transformation of educational structures and practices (Collins and Halverson, 2009), and tremendous implications for the role that education, so transformed, can play in a society and economy where everyone has the potential to produce, collaborate on, and consume knowledge products.

In short, ICT has many potential roles to play in education in general and in foreign language learning in particular. It can provide basic ICT knowledge and skills to prepare students for professional life. It can be used as a teaching and learning tool in a wide range of subjects at different levels. It can have positive benefits for learning and learners in many areas such as motivation and skills, concentration, cognitive processing, independent learning, critical thinking, and teamwork (cooperation and collaboration).

Use of ICT by Algerian Educational Institutions

While many countries in Europe, North America, and Asia have devoted both effort and resources to the integration and promotion of ICT in the broader context of foreign-language teaching and learning (Balanskat et al., 2006), evidence gathered from Algerian universities revealed that the use of new digital technology in education is not yet deeply implanted in teaching practices (Hamdy 2007).

In light of the globally emerging knowledge and information society, the Algerian authorities have given emphasis to the development of ICT resources. In this logic, "The Algerian scientific system has benefited from most of the programmes devoted to ICTs by the government, including three major projects: the implementation of a 'technological infrastructure for communication and scientific and technical information', of a 'distance-learning infrastructure' comprising videoconference tools, and of a 'virtual library', targeting in priority social and human sciences" (Khelfaoui 2).

Many of the institutions of higher learning in Algeria, however, have not played an adequate role to equip their institutions or support their language teaching staff and their language learners in the meaningful use of ICT. Consequently, higher education in Algeria is still struggling with the challenges of receiving adequate ICT infrastructure and electronic or mobile tools. A majority of Algerian teachers are also still hesitant to change their teaching practices to fit these new digital literacies, despite the ability of their students to use them effectively.

In Western countries, foreign language teachers never solely relied on the written word, but now also have access to film, TV, tapes, videos, official papers, power point presentations, and access to online libraries throughout the world via the internet. The key factor-for foreign language teachers-is to exploit the many possibilities that ICTs provide to foreign language teaching and learning. However, despite the availability of a modest amount of material for teachers' use through digital technology, and despite the fact that research studies have revealed

that ICTs are an effective means for widening educational accomplishment, most language teachers in Algerian universities, for one reason or another, do not regularly use these technologies as an instructional delivery system.

Civilisation and the Teaching of EFL in Algerian Universities

In Algeria, the content of American or British civilisation courses taught in the departments of English often focus on history or government instead of conventional views of everyday life and popular culture. This has led to a limited understanding of the Anglophone culture of the United States or Britain. However, regardless of its content, the civilisation course, if well-exploited, can serve as a vehicle for teaching and learning critical analysis, culture, and history. Accordingly, students can develop an awareness of the United States and Britain as richly varied and refined civilisations. The civilisation course can be used to address a variety of pedagogical issues, such as historical information, academic discussion, critical thinking and analysis, reading or listening comprehension, and vocabulary development. In essence, civilisation can function as an effective agent for English language learning and academic preparation.

The American or British Civilisation is a required course for all EFL undergraduate students in almost all of the departments of English in Algeria during their three years of studies towards a bachelor's degree, and also during an additional two years leading to a Master's degree. It has been usually taught in a conventional manner, that is teachers are required to give classroom lectures. In this traditional setting, lecturers usually face the monotony of ever-repeating the same lectures which could easily turn into superficial talk, and students frequently complain about the boredom of being exposed to tiresome lectures. Besides, when course materials and digital tools are lacking or nonexistent, teachers can barely benefit their students with their teaching experiences as they ought to, and inevitably become exhausted and indifferent. And so will become their students, who then will view the course as an undesirable must. The end result is that our departments face situations where teachers dislike teaching and students hate learning.

Teaching Civilisation with Digital Technology: A Literature Review

The multimedia assisted learning environment, which is greatly based on the use of the new technologies, involves various activities such as interactivity, entertainment, investigation, communication, knowledge and active learning. Multimedia typically refers to the presentation of material in two forms: auditory/verbal and visual/pictorial (Mayer, 2001). Both strategies include PowerPoint (Mayer & Johnson, 2008). In such learning settings, students go through a process of interactivity, involvement and motivation in their learning (Clark, 1994).

It is also argued that, currently, there is no place in the teaching career for teachers who are not able to use the new technology in their classes. A prominent advocate of multimedia in education predicts that "in the future, there will be two sorts of teachers, the IT literate, and the retired" (Cochrane, 1995). In the words of Charles Clarke: "our extensive and continuing research shows that learners who use ICT in the classroom get better results than those who don't" (p. 2). Similarly, it is posited that the "regular use of multimedia across different curriculum subjects can have a beneficial motivational influence on students' learning" (Cox, 1997).

The use of multimedia in history or civilisation classes is not a magic instrument in itself (Cuban, 1986). However, the propensity of students and teachers to use technology, their skills, and beliefs about using it properly in classes can be beneficial for both; and can help enhance teaching and learning. Besides, civilisation teachers do not anymore depend exclusively on

written documents, but also on other materials available for use through ICT such as “TV, newspapers, tapes, primary sources, and access to digital libraries throughout the world via the web” (Fisher, 2004).

The empirical findings of research on the effectiveness of videos implanted in multimedia classes are very encouraging. For instance, it has been reported by many research studies that teachers who use the video as a teaching aid in the classroom offered many benefits. Their students retain more, become more interested, and improve their reading and literacy skills (Moreno and Valdez, 2007). If effectively used, videos can successfully convey information to learners, in particular if students are assigned tasks to carry out while or after watching which will help them engage with the video content.

Another new innovation, being brought into the classroom to help students learn more efficiently for some time now and continues to be used heavily, is the PowerPoint programme. It is a very powerful and flexible teaching and learning support tool and a technology that enables teachers to present lectures in a more dynamic way than simply lecturing and writing on the blackboard (Brock & Joglekar, 2011).

Another way to use PowerPoint in educational settings is to have the students create their own presentations, and use them effectively to enhance their overall comprehension because PowerPoint presentations have a focal point, and command the students’ attention (Jones, 2003). In short, using the PowerPoint is an effective way to teach students how to use visual aids while working on their presentation, and to develop their public speaking abilities. Accordingly, the most important factor for civilisation teachers and their students is to take advantage of the many possibilities that multimedia learning offer to enhance the teaching and learning of civilisation and make it more relevant to the needs of today’s students.

Statement of the Problem

The subject of civilisation has evolved in many ways over the past century. New theories, methodologies, and approaches have changed the dispensing of this course in ways that would have surprised previous teachers. However, in many ways, the teaching of civilisation in Algerian universities still depends on traditional methods. The book, the document, and the article remain the main tools for civilisation teachers in their research, and the teacher-expert approach, characterised by the widespread use of traditional methods such as formal lectures and hand-outs, prevail in their teaching activities as well. It should be of no surprise, therefore, that Algerian EFL university educators have been slow to recognize the value of non-traditional instructional tools and modern teaching methods in the teaching of civilisation. In many Algerian universities, civilisation is a subject under constant strain. It is a failing subject and many question its significance in actual syllabi. What can be done about this situation?

A Potential Remedy

To address these problems, an ICT, web-based, and multimedia teaching approach has been put into practice in the civilisation course. The essence of this approach is to make students actively participate in a process of learning in which they have to manipulate the latest information technology as a medium for the learning of civilisation. The benefits of such an approach manifest themselves in several aspects.

Firstly, the use of technologies helps both teachers and students increase the quality of education and meet the requirements set by the contemporary knowledge society. Secondly, the web-based, multimedia way of instruction combined with the teaching and learning method,

known as student-centred learning; solves the problem of repetitive and monotonous lecturing featured by the traditional teacher-centred classroom teaching which dominated classrooms in Algeria in previous decades. Thirdly, this teaching method is not costly because it only needs classrooms that are equipped with a computer and an LCD projector device with a white screen. And finally, the greatest strength of ICT instruction lies in the fact that it does not only facilitate the acquaintance of students to active learning but enables them as well to develop their different language skills, and become experts in online technologies.

The Theoretical Approach to the Experiment

The benefits of the suggested approach are drawn from the perspectives of many authors who ascertain that the use of ICT in the learning of EFL in a student-centred learning environment can make learning more active, authentic and cooperative and can render students self-motivated learners and critical thinkers of historical events and facts. Moreover, it is also assumed that effective teachers and students are those who draw on the most advanced technology and communication tools available to them.

Hence, the method adopts the concept of ‘active learning’, also known as ‘the student-centred approach’, which refers to the technique in which students do more than simply listen to a lecture (Bonwell & Elison, 1991). In this regard, several techniques supporting active learning, in particular in civilisation lessons, have been verified to positively affect students’ attitudes and achievements.

Many researchers in the field of education support the view that a student-centred approach has positive consequences on learning. Darling (1994), for instance, argues that the student-centred approach promotes class participation, allows students to become more open, more efficient at making decisions on their own, and also recognises that interaction between teacher and student are natural, therefore breaking the psychological barrier whereby students see their teachers as experts (p. 116).

In order to be actively involved, students must take part in thinking activities, such as investigation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Many studies revealed that there are various factors and conditions associated with the multimedia assisted active learning environment and these include enjoyment, focused attention, engagement and time distortion, associated with the notion of flow (Novak et al., 2000) which is a psychological state, in which a learner feels cognitively efficient, motivated and happy (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

The experiment also draws on the theory of CLIL, which is an approach where learners gain knowledge and understanding of the curricula subject while simultaneously learning and using the target language (Coyle, 2007). Content-based instruction (CBI) is also a major force in English as a Foreign Language pedagogy today, with the rationale for CBI resting on the notion that integrating language and content has pedagogic value, as the use of meaningful language will motivate students and enable content learning along with language learning (Davison & Williams, 2001). As Stoller (2004) points out, the common rationale for adopting instructional approaches that include both content and language objectives is the notion that CBI “provides a means for students to continue their academic development while also improving their language proficiency” (p. 262).

Methodology

In this experimental method of teaching the American or British civilisation course, thirty-six third year Licence students were divided into fourteen small groups, eight groups of three

students each, and six groups of two students to explore a given major era in American history. Each group was given a research notes' hand-out containing guidelines, objectives, and questions about key elements of the suggested period, such as names of Presidents and Congressmen, battles and treaties, laws and court decisions, events and important dates, and key terms. Then, after thorough research, students gathered these facts together into one story, prepared an original PowerPoint presentation, and found an appropriate video clip in the Web that provided an authentic context about key elements of the selected topic. In this learner-centred method the teacher assumed the role of a coach, a counsellor, a delegator, and a facilitator. In short, teacher and students had to evaluate learning together.

Materials Needed

Students were provided with documents covering their topics to be used as a starting point in their research. Commonly, this is a chapter divided into three or more sections, taken from a textbook dealing with the history of the United States or Britain. They were also required to go to the library, and to use the internet for further research in order to collect more reading materials, maps, pictures and videos. They were also provided with a laptop and a LCD projector with speakers to be used the day of the presentation, despite the fact that most students are equipped with a personal computer.

The Main Objectives

The main objectives of this method, which is based on the use of audio/video media, are to enable EFL learners to:

- Investigate a given topic in depth;
- Identify and put together key facts, events and people in a well-planned framework;
- Assimilate the content according to their specific needs;
- Become an active participant in the acquisition of knowledge;
- Integrate language and skills, and receptive and productive skills;
- Base their lessons often on reading texts, writing passages, speaking or listening abilities.
- Master new technologies

Method Procedure

As a first step to this experimental teaching process, several workshops were organised in the computers' lab where students were assisted to learn the basics of conducting systematic research on the web. They were also guided to gain knowledge of the correct manipulation of the PowerPoint system to enable them create presentations with good design, content and delivery. Then, using different sources, a PowerPoint presentation was developed by the teacher and his students, and a video was selected from the internet. This step provided a model of the product the students were expected to produce. As a next move, the teacher presented the first PowerPoint presentation and the students in the classroom took notes to fill in a listening notes' form with key facts from the presentation. Ultimately, each student used his notes to write an individual extended paper.

The second step started after the distribution of topics on the different groups of students. Each group was also provided with a research notes' hand-out-a kind of a roadmap containing a set of general guidelines to be used as a basis for achieving the required presentation-to be further developed by reading the chapter provided by the teacher, looking for books in the library, and collecting other reading materials from the internet.

While searching the internet, students were also expected to collect pictures reflecting the mood of the period of American history described in that chapter to be included in the PowerPoint presentation, and to look also for an appropriate video on the topic to be projected as a backup to the presentation. In the final process of creating their PowerPoint presentation, the students coordinated with their teacher for the originality and quality of their work, and for feedback. Likewise, the teacher and students are required to view in advance the video material to be shown in class, to decide whether the video selected to depict the topic under study; did it concisely and efficiently.

The Presentation

At the beginning of each presentation, the teacher provided students with a listening notes' handout to be filled with required key notes. They were asked to be respectful when other students presented their work. The presenters stood up and spoke loudly. They listened to one another and helped each other, and often included all the required details. In doing so, they enabled their classmates to collect almost all the details needed to fill in the gaps in their listening notes' handout.

At the end of each presentation, students in the audience conducted a discussion by asking and answering questions. The presentations were assessed according to a rubric which took into account the extent to which the presenters included all the research notes, the quality of the slides, their oral skills, and their abilities to reply to questions raised by their classmates. Ultimately, students used the notes from the different listening notes' handouts as well as other sources and wrote extended essays, which they submitted as a booklet containing the totality of their essays for an eventual evaluation and feedback.

Data Collection Process

Data needed for this study were gathered through a questionnaire which is annexed at the end of this paper. Other data were collected from achievement scores of students' essays, which demonstrated students' benefits from this multimedia method. The questionnaire was developed to identify students' views on the use of multimedia, learning outcomes, difficulties, or provide suggestions related to this experimental approach to teaching the civilisation course.

After a literature review, a 14 item questionnaire was conceived. Statements in the questionnaire were categorised in two parts. The first 11 questions were prepared to evaluate students' opinions on the contribution of the use of digital tools and the active learning approach, whereas the remaining 3 questions were designed to assess their views both on the difficulties encountered, and the proposed suggestions or recommendations to improve this method. The students were asked to rate the first 11 items on a scale ranging from 0 to 5.

Preliminary Evaluation

Students' anonymous assessments of this experimental approach to teaching civilisation gathered at the end of the academic year revealed the following facts: for the first 11 items, 21 out of 36 students, or more than 58 percent of respondents, rated their answers as good. The

remaining 15 students, which account for more than 41 percent of the whole sample, rated the 11 items as very good.

According to the students' answers to the second three items, it appeared that the method confronted some barriers in terms of resources, and time constraints. Students admitted that the method is very beneficial but time-consuming. They complained about being overwhelmed by too much homework imposed by their different teachers to fulfil one of the requirements of the LMD system, namely individual work.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the result of the study, it appears that the students in the study group were largely satisfied with the method. Taken together, their answers revealed that the method:

- Enhanced their language skills;
- Caught their attention;
- Focused their concentration;
- Generated interest in class;
- Improved attitudes toward content and learning;
- Fostered deeper learning;
- Inspired and motivated them.

Furthermore, the majority of participants also declared that the approach enabled them to:

- Become more involved in technology and competent in navigating the web
- Become skilled in the essentials of the Microsoft PowerPoint system
- Become more interested in the subject of civilisation
- Become more active and critical thinkers of historical events and facts.

Difficulties Faced

In the context of the department of English at Guelma University, issues of large-size classes, instructional materials' limitations, and syllabi coverage proved to be potential causes that would hinder the implementation of the student-centred method. Moreover, as far as this teaching and learning method is concerned, essay evaluation and feedback turned to be practically impossible because of time constraints.

Conclusion

Evidence from this on-going experiment suggests that learning a foreign language can be assisted by multimedia when this use is supported by appropriate learning theories and careful adaptation of the curriculum. If used in a knowledgeable way, ICT can help promote civilisation to its significant place in today's curriculum. Moreover, the adoption of new teaching and learning approaches will certainly foster EFL students' talents, and produce future workers with adequate scientific knowledge, with sound professional skills, creativity, and discipline.

Further, the results were consistent with the reviewed literature. Most of the literature highlighted that the integration and use of new available technologies and their support with modern learning theories could help with teaching problems, sustain interest, and motivate both

teachers and learners. (Bonwell & Elison, 1991; Darling, 1994; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Novak et al., 2000; Davison & Williams, 2001; Coyle, 2007).

For the experimental method suggested in this paper to work, teachers and students must adhere in a process of sound and ongoing professional training in ICT. There must be also a dedication from educators, students, university managers and policymakers, and everyone involved in the educational process to see this transformed into a perceptible reality for all.

There must be renovation in teaching and learning at Algerian education institutions. As educators, we need to combine ICT with the student-centred learning approach to teach students the methods of self-learning, and provide them with new language skills so that they will be more active, cooperative, and creative, and be better equipped to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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Appendix

Evaluation Form (For students)

1-The objective of this form is to enable the student to give his opinion on the use of multimedia, learning outcomes, difficulties, or provide suggestions related to this experimental approach to teaching the civilisation course. Students are expected to be objective and honest in their answers.

NB: For your answers, just put a cross (X) in the appropriate square.

		Very low	Bad	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent
		0	1	2	3	4	5
1	How do you rate your participation in the accomplishment of the PowerPoint presentation?						
2	How do you evaluate your contribution in the team?						
3	How do you assess the material means available?						
4	How do you evaluate the pedagogical benefits of this teaching approach?						

5	How do you evaluate your appreciation of learning the civilisation course content through audio-visual materials?						
6	How do you evaluate the impact of this method on your language skills?						
7	How do you evaluate the impact of this method on your ICT skills?						
8	How do you assess working in a team?						
9	How do you assess your mastery of research in the internet?						
10	How do you evaluate the use of video as a medium for teaching and learning?						
11	How do you evaluate the contribution of ICT use and the active learning method to your knowledge?						

2-State any difficulty or barrier you may have faced during all the steps involved in the process of realising and presenting your PowerPoint presentation.

.....

3-What suggestions would you recommend to improve or make this teaching method more rewarding?

.....

3- What is the learning value of PowerPoint and video clips in the classroom?

.....

Saudi Tertiary Level Students' Cognition of Modal Auxiliaries Expressing Epistemic Possibility in English

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Abstract

The importance of studying modality as a tool that speakers use to convey their attitudes and evaluations is well documented. However, research on learners' cognition of modality is at its beginning. This paper concentrates on the cognition of possibility in epistemic modal auxiliaries. It relies on what it calls utterance completion test to study the cognition of epistemic modality by 29 Saudi students and by 3 native speakers – one British and two Canadians. The data analysis shows that while the native speakers' cognition is largely in line with linguists' descriptions, the Saudi students' cognition conforms very less to the linguists' descriptions. It reveals that students tend to confuse epistemic modality with deontic modality, and within epistemic modality itself, they confuse possibility with necessity. Saudi students also have difficulties with past epistemic possibility and they confuse the present perfect with the past proposition residue carried by modals. The study attributes this confusion to L1 transfer and lack of familiarity with some pragmatic aspects related to the target language culture. To help learners develop their cognition of modality, the study recommends that grammar textbooks and grammar teachers focus in the first place on the semantic subtleties of modal auxiliaries, without ignoring the pragmatic dimension that accompanies the utterances in which they occur. The study does not question by any means teaching language in context to develop speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills.

Key words: cognition, epistemic modality, language acquisition, meaning cognition, semantics

I- Introduction

Unlike many aspects of grammar, modality crosses the boundaries of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (Harris et al., 2002: 1). Textbooks for teaching speaking and listening to second and foreign language learners give importance to the pragmatic dimension of modal auxiliaries. Textbooks for teaching grammar often concentrate on the semantic dimension of modal auxiliaries (e.g. Werner's textbook, 1996). Textbooks for speaking stop short of covering their pragmatic significance in contextualized speech acts and in exchanges (Elenezi, 2004: 22). Textbooks for teaching reading and writing often pay little attention to modality (Hyland, 2000). As a consequence, defects are glaringly evident in students' composition (Rouissi and Abdesslem, 2010) and academic writing (Chen, 2012; Rouissi, 2014).

Epistemic modal auxiliaries are means the lexico-grammar of English makes available for the assessment of the likelihood of the proposition (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, 116). They contribute to the progression and validity of the ideas (propositions) in the text. This paper concentrates on foreign language learners' cognition of epistemic modal auxiliaries expressing possibility; it seeks to answer the following questions: Do features of epistemic modal auxiliaries expressing possibility which teaching materials provide correspond to the features basic semantics books ("the classics") provide? Does students' cognition of semantic features of these modal auxiliaries differ from those features available in teaching materials and basic semantics books? How different is students' cognition of semantic features of modality from native speakers' cognition? To answer these related questions, (i) we reviewed possibility in epistemic modal auxiliaries in basic semantics books (Palmer, 1979; Perkins, 1983; Palmer, 1986; Huddleston, 1984); (ii) designed an utterance completion test on possibility in epistemic modal auxiliaries; (iii) administered the test to Saudi learners and to native speakers of English; and (iv) examined the grammar textbook (Werner's book, 1996) used in teaching Saudi students at the College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University.

II- Mood and modality: an overview

Palmer (1979: 4) distinguishes between "mood" and "modality". He maintains that mood is a grammatical term while modality is a semantic term relating to the meanings that are usually associated with mood. Mood, for him, refers to the grammatical system of the verb, i.e. indicative, subjunctive, imperative, interrogative, while modality refers to function, i.e. assertion, non-assertion; factuality, non-factuality.

Huddleston (1984: 166-176) distinguishes between three kinds of modality: deontic, dynamic, and epistemic. Other scholars group deontic and dynamic modals in what they call root modals (e.g. Perkins, 1983).

Deontic modality has the character of an action (Huddleston, 1984: 168), i.e. something to be done.

- 1- You must work harder.
- 2- You may take as many as you like.

Example 1 represents deontic necessity, i.e. "Speaker S requires that action A be performed by hearer H" while example 2 represents deontic possibility, i.e. "Speaker S gives permission to hearer H to perform action A."

Perkins (1983:12) defines deontic modality in terms of social or institutional laws,

- 3- You must appear before a magistrate (in case you have committed a driving offence in Britain).

He also defines it in terms of relations between individuals; where S has authority over H, as examples 1 and 2, above testify.

Palmer (1979) uses the term dynamic modality, which he borrowed from Von Wright (1951: 28, cited in Palmer, 1979), "to refer to the relationship which exists between circumstances and unactualized (sic) events in accordance with natural laws."

4- John can speak German

John has the ability to speak German and he has demonstrated it at least once. He is also disposed to speak German if circumstances arise, i.e. if he meets a German person whose English is poor, for instance. Palmer (1979: 4) maintains that "under dynamic modality we shall consider not only "possible for" but also "necessary for" ... and in addition the volitional sense of will." Epistemic modality "is often concerned with the speakers' assumptions or assessment of possibilities, and in most cases, it indicates the speaker's confidence (or lack of confidence) in the truth of the proposition expressed" (Salsbury and Bardovi-Harlig, 2000: 58). Palmer refers to epistemic modality as an "indication by the speaker of his (lack of) commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed" and "as the degree of commitment by the speaker to what he says" (1986: 51). Perkins (1983: 8) asserts that epistemic modality has to do with what S knows about a state of affairs in the world. Huddleston (1984: 166) notes that the residue in epistemic modality has the status of a proposition. That proposition could be either true or false.

5- John must have lost his way.

5a- L (j,w)

5a is the proposition residue (p), according to Huddleston (1984). It can be deciphered in these terms: "a person, John (j) and a location/direction, way (w) are related by a predicate / verb, lose (L)." X, the speaker knows/believes that p.

Huddleston (1984: 167) affirms that with epistemic possibility "I imply that, minimally, I do not know that the proposition is false." For him, the auxiliaries "may", "might", "can", and "could" are the typical modals that express epistemic possibility. "May" is usually paraphrased as "It is possible that p" and is used to refer to states of affairs either in the present or the future. "Might" usually expresses either factual or theoretical possibility, (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 53). "Could" may refer to what is theoretically possible. "Can" is preferred in non-assertive contexts, (Palmer, 1979: 157).

III- Teaching materials and informants

The grammar textbook in use to teach Level Four students (corresponds to second semester of second year) at the College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University, is Werner's (1996) Mosaic Two: a Content Based Grammar. The book is one in a series of textbooks called Mosaic Two. The series, which the College of Languages and Translation has been using to teach language skills, contains books in reading, in writing, in speaking, and in grammar. The series claims that it targets students who have high-intermediate to advanced proficiency in English. It is designed for students who are capable of scoring 480 points and above on the TOEFL. It anticipates that students who use Mosaic Two have already reached a stage where they are comfortable in taking part in conversations, but who may experience some difficulties in rapid discussions. Students can read authentic materials with ease, but may experience some difficulties when topics are unfamiliar to them.

Werner's (1996) grammar book has a chapter (Chapter 4) on modal auxiliaries, but the chapter is by no means exhaustive as shall be shown in the data analysis and discussion section, below. For

instance, epistemic “can” is not included, while deontic “can” and dynamic “can” are, and “must” is included as an epistemic modal auxiliary that has just the function of probability.

The subjects were Fifth Level (corresponds to first semester of third year) Saudi students of English at the College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University. They were from the male section, and their ages ranged from 20 to 22. All the subjects who participated in this study passed their language and grammar skills exams at Level Four. Levels Five to Ten are devoted to content subjects, with a concentration on linguistics (introduction to linguistics, stylistics, semantics, and text-linguistics) at Level Five, and nothing but translation and interpreting at the remaining levels, i.e. from Level Six to Level Ten. Our choice of Level Five students was motivated by the fact that the subjects completed their language skills modules, including their grammar module. Studying students' cognition of epistemic modal auxiliaries expressing possibility could contribute to an appraisal of the success of the grammar module and the language skills modules that are taught at the College of Languages and Translation. It could lead to decisions, such as (i) to improve the teaching of the language skills modules or (ii) to introduce more advanced or remedial language skills modules in parallel with the content modules.

The number of the students who participated in the study was 29. The total number of Level Five students was 35. Three native speakers – one British and two Canadians – took the same the test. The participants were male university students aged between 20 and 22, and none of them was registered in a department of English language or linguistics. By involving male adult native speakers, we sought to add additional insight to the data analysis and discussion. It was not possible to involve these native speakers in the assessment of the students' work, especially that contact with the three informants was done by e-mail and through a third party; a university professor at the University of Leicester, UK. And in any case, native speakers' assessment of non-native speakers' modal auxiliary selections would make access to the non-native speakers' cognition even more remote.

IV- Methodology

The utterance completion test did not intend to focus on the students' ability to write modals correctly, i.e. spelling and order of auxiliary / auxiliaries and past participle. However, cases where past modality was not written correctly (spelling and order of auxiliaries) were found. The test looked like a cloze-test, or to put it less technically, a fill in the blanks exercise. But unlike in traditional cloze-tests, the omissions were not random. Random deletions yield inconsistent results (Bachman1982: 64). The test was not a discourse completion test (Nurani, 2009) either, because it did not provide the informants with hypothetical contexts and then asked them to produce a speech act, e.g. to apologise, to promise, or to request. A discourse completion test would have gauged learners' use of modals rather than their cognition. The test was between a cloze-test and a discourse completion test. We prefer to call it a utterance completion test. It tried to make sure that each sentence would be treated by itself and in itself as an unambiguous utterance . It provided students with a sentence-long utterance for each blank they had to fill in, but as shall be seen below, in some cases, an utterance with two sentences was judged necessary to provide optimal (i.e. prominent, minimal, and sufficient) elements of context that anticipated the use of one possible modal auxiliary. However, as the literature shows, optimal elements of context do by no means block alternative modal auxiliaries, because some modal auxiliaries are interchangeable while retaining each subtle nuances of meaning, (see discussion of “could” and

“might” in Palmer, 1979: 156, and discussion of 13, below). The informants were thus instructed to write down alternatives they thought applied to filling each blank.

The data obtained could be considered “clean data”, as the test tried to exert control over elements of context within and around the sentences /utterances. It contained sentences/utterances from the students' Level Four grammar book written by Werner (1996). It also included examples of sentences/utterances from classic books (e.g. Perkins, 1983) and maintained the semantic description of the auxiliaries provided in those books.

We made some sentences/utterances easier to read and understand. That was meant to prevent diversion from the task in which the subjects were engaged. We changed, for example, sentence 6 (in the students' book, p. 105) by 6a.

6- Physically fit people should be able to stay the same weight.

6a- Healthy people should be able to keep the same weight.

We thought that the preposition phrase “to stay the same weight” might be difficult to process at least for some students. We added some elements of context to some sentences to reduce the use of appropriate alternative auxiliaries to a minimum. We changed 7 (students' book) by 7a.

7- You cannot treat a disease unless you know its cause.

7a- “You cannot treat a disease unless you know its cause,” says a professor of medicine to his students.

By adding the reporting clause “says a professor of medicine to his students”, we thought we could block auxiliaries such as “could”, “should”, or “may” on account of the professor's “solid knowledge and unchallengeable authority” and the students' “noviceness”.

The original test covered both epistemic and deontic modality and lasted for two hours. A male teacher at the College of Languages and Translation administered the test to 29 students. All the 29 students completed the Fourth Level modules and accepted to take part in the test. All the students who took part handed in the sentence/utterance completion test when they felt they had completed the whole test. The students who handed in their papers were allowed to leave the classroom. This prevented “exchanges of answers”! However, those who could not finish on time were granted extra time. We thought that by giving students ample time to do the test, we did not prevent them from digging into their cognition.

As said earlier, this paper concentrates on the cognition of possibility in epistemic modality. We maintain that epistemic modality is least subjective and we believe that its cognition helps students produce accurate translations, especially when it comes to the translation of technical and scientific texts. It also prepares those among them who choose to engage in graduate studies to produce research work where they “weigh propositions” with accuracy (Hyland, 2000, Rouissi, 2014).

V- Analysis and discussion

We will refer to each sentence/utterance as listed in the test (see appendix I), discuss the learners' answers and refer to the literature and the native speakers' responses. Because the instructions suggested that informants could provide more than one possibility for the utterances they thought allowed for alternatives, the number of the answers was in some cases superior to the number of the subjects. In a few cases, the number of answers was less than that of the Saudi subjects. In these latter cases, difficulty in filling the blank with an auxiliary was encountered.

(i) Epistemic can

Utterance/sentence 8, (1 in the test, see Appendix I), was taken from Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 53 and Palmer, 1979: 153).

8- Anybody can make mistakes.

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 53), modality here expresses theoretical possibility. It indicates what is conceptually true and theoretically possible, but not what is factually possible. Palmer (1979: 153) paraphrases 8 above as "It is possible for people sometimes to make mistakes." Only 7 (21.8%) out of 32 responses provided by the 29 students (informants) contained the modal auxiliary "can" (Table I in appendix II). Most students' responses went for "may" (13 out of 32). With reference to the total conformity of the native speakers' responses (3 out of 3) and the literature, it is safe to claim that "may" and "can" are not interchangeable here. They are interchangeable in deontic modality: hence, perhaps the Saudi informants' erroneous answers.

Utterance/sentence 9 (2 in the test) was taken from the students' textbook, but received more contextualisation (see discussion in relation to 7, above).

9- "You can not treat a disease unless you know what has caused it," says a professor of medicine to his students.

This utterance/sentence has the paraphrase: "You never treat a disease unless you know its causes" or "It is not possible that you treat a disease if you do not know its causes." Although many students' answers were in conformity with the native speakers' – 15 answers with "can", 3 with "must", and 3 with "should" – bringing thus the total of correct answers to 21 (63.63%) out of 33, the wrong answers represented 36.37% of the total of the students' answers. Some informants opted for "could" (6 out of 33) which is clearly inappropriate here since "could" has a deontic flavour and expresses a high level of indeterminacy, which the context available excludes. One of the 4 responses provided by the three native speakers opted for "should", and that may be in conformity with the literature, but definitely not in conformity with the context of the utterance: a professor of medicine speaking to his students can not be tentative. One of the native speakers used "must" (Table II, Appendix), and this indicates that she confused necessity with possibility.

Utterance/sentence 10 (6 in the test) was adapted from the students' grammar book (p. 104).

10- "By changing your eating habits, you can lower the risk of having high blood pressure," says the doctor to her patient.

A possible paraphrase for the above utterance is "It is possible for you..." Another interpretation that is dynamic and does not concern us here is "You have the ability/capacity..." According to Palmer (1979: 157), "[T]he epistemic can would not be used to refer to a proposition in the present which is known to be untrue." The doctor in 10 has enough evidence, we think, to assert that what she is saying is true. Her use of "may" may lower her patient's trust in her. Furthermore, as Palmer (1979) maintains "can" emphasises the speaker's engagement, while "may" is more discourse-oriented. The native informants' responses were rather varied: 2 answers had "can", 1 "may", 1 "might", 1 "will", and 1 "could". This variation indirectly boosted the correct answers that the students produced to 25 (86.20%) out of 29. The answer with "can" was high among the students' responses (12 out of 29). It can be considered high among the native speakers too, since two out of the three informants opted for it. It seems that medical doctors can be less assertive and less authoritative today without losing their patients' trust in them. We suggest that that epistemic modality, which, given its nature, is least controversial, may very well be affected by cultural changes in society. Whether the doctor is

female in the utterance has something to do with the “may”, “might”, and “could” options requires confirmation and further investigation.

Utterance/sentence 11 (8 in the test) was from Perkins (1983).

11- Pigs can eat anything.

Like 10 above, this utterance/sentence expresses epistemic possibility and dynamic ability. The latter does not concern us here. The utterance is an assertion. “Can” is very appropriate here. “Will” is also very appropriate because it conveys the speaker’s confidence. The native speakers’ responses were in conformity with the literature: 1 use of “can” and 2 uses of “will”. Although more than half of the students’ answers were correct, 16 (55.17%) out of 29, there was no choice of the modal auxiliary “will”. The students’ textbook does not introduce “will” as an epistemic model auxiliary expressing possibility. We are not sure that when the Saudi students chose “can”, they thought of it as expressing epistemic possibility. It is more likely that they considered it as expressing dynamic ability. Meziani (1981: 270) observes that modals in Arabic “express ‘obligation’ and ‘permission’ in the decision component and ‘ability’ in the knowledge component”. There were 6 uses of “may” out of 29. This may very well point to a cultural phenomenon: the students’ background makes their knowledge of the eating habits of pigs vague.

(ii)- Epistemic may

Utterance 12 (4 in the test, Appendix 1) was originally from the students’ grammar book.

12- One person may need more calories than another. People’s metabolisms are not the same.

The modal auxiliary “may” here has the paraphrase “it is possible that p”. Perkins (1983: 38) asserts that “the epistemic use of may indicates that the evidence available to the speaker is such that the proposition expressed by the sentence can not currently be inferred to be true, but nor can it be currently inferred to be false.” The three native speakers opted for “may”, but they mentioned other alternatives: 1 “should”, 1 “might” and 1 “could”. One native speaker was more imaginative than the other two. He seemed to have thought of people who are either cautious about what nutrition specialists say, or people whose knowledge about health matters is not very firm, or people who do not want to offend an interlocutor who is very thin or perhaps too fat. The native speakers’ overall variation made the overall variation of the Saudi students’ responses seem quite in order: 26 out of their 29 answers were with “may” and 7 with “might”. However, the Saudi students’ responses did not show unanimity on the use of “may” as is the case with the native speakers, and it is hard to imagine that the Saudi students thought of a number of contexts, as did their native counterparts.

Utterance/sentence 13 (5 in Appendix 1) was originally from the students’ grammar book.

13- “The patient is dizzy and bleeding, he may have a head injury,” says the nurse to the doctor on the phone.

The use of “may” in the utterance above indicates that the speaker expresses an objective epistemic possibility, where she formulates a conclusion that is not a mere opinion or tentative inference, but rather presents itself as an objective fact. The nurse-doctor relationship is very important here. If two doctors were speaking on the phone, then necessity, which the auxiliary “must” expresses, becomes possible (see V.I.II., below). If a passer-by were speaking to a doctor, then modal auxiliaries such as “could” or “might” would be adequate. Indeed, if the degree of probability is low, “might” becomes appropriate. According to Palmer (1979: 156), “could” and “might” are interchangeable, but while “might” commits the speaker to a judgement

about the possibility of the truth of a proposition, “could” says that such a judgement would be a reasonable one, without committing the speaker. The native speakers’ responses represented very well the nuances discussed above: 2 uses of “may”, 3 uses of “could”, 1 use of “must” and 1 use of “might”. Although 21 (63.63%) out of 33 of the Saudi students’ answers had modal auxiliaries that native speakers’ responses included, there was only one answer with “could” and most of the answers (20 out of 21) were with “may” (14) and with “must” (6) (Table I, in appendix). The Saudi students did not seem to have internalised the subtle expression of the possibility of a reasonable judgement that does not go as far as committing the speaker. Such possibility is weaker than that expressed by “may” and is expressed by “might”. Lack of cognition of such subtlety is compounded by what Meziani (1980: 250) and Badran (2001: 5) consider a paucity of Arabic in terms of modal auxiliaries.

So far, we could deduce that although the discrepancy between the literature and the native speakers’ responses was little, that between the Saudi students’ responses and the literature was sizable.

(iii)- Past epistemic possibility

Utterance 14 (number 3 in the test, Appendix I, below) was not taken from the literature or the students’ grammar book. It was fabricated.

14- He was not at home when I went to see him. He might have gone away for the weekend.

Because the proposition residue is in the past, the anticipated modal auxiliaries were “may”, “might”, and “could” followed by “have + verb-en”. The native speakers chose the three possibilities (Table II in Appendix I), but there was one choice of “must” + “have” which the literature does not include in epistemic possibility. The Saudi students’ responses contained 13 erroneous answers (out of 32). The 13 answers that we classified as “Others”, (Table I, below), contained forms such as “has”, “would be”, and “has been”. This may very well reflect the expression of modality in Arabic without modal auxiliaries. It might also point to a difficulty in producing syntactically correct complex auxiliaries. Only 6 answers out of the 32 answers corresponded to the native speakers’. They represented 18.75% of the Saudi students’ total answers. This meager result confirms the students’ lack of cognition of the subtleties encoded by the modal auxiliaries “may”, “might” and “could” to express epistemic possibility, let alone past epistemic possibility.

Utterance 15, (7 in the test), like the previous utterance, was not taken from the students’ grammar book or the literature. The comparatively abundant elements of context that come with this utterance were not sufficient to give rise to one single choice of modal auxiliary.

15- The little girl does not know what caused the pain in her wrist. Her mum says, “Mariam might have sprained her wrist when she fell off the chair the other day.”

The Saudi students’ answers that corresponded to the native speakers’ responses were 6 (11.53%) out of 26. Past modals, whether they express epistemic possibility or epistemic necessity, represent a major obstacle for learners of English as a second / foreign language. First, students tend to confuse the present perfect, where the action has a past time reference that stretches to present time, with the past conditional (modal + have + past participle), where the propositional residue is in the past. Second, as Fehri (2003: 1) points out, in Arabic “simple past/perfect forms of normal verbs can be interpreted either as simple pasts or present perfects.” Third, students, perhaps owing to the above-mentioned semantic difficulties, do not find it easy to produce formally correct verb groups that have past epistemic modal auxiliaries.

VI. Implications and suggestions

Saudi students confused epistemic modality with deontic modality, and within epistemic modality itself, they confused possibility with necessity. As far as epistemic possibility is concerned, they had some difficulty in distinguishing subtle differences conveyed by the auxiliaries “may”, “might”, and “could”. They did not know that the auxiliary “will” expresses assertion or factuality. Their cognition of past epistemic possibility rendered by modal auxiliaries was often inadequate. The difficulties could be attributed to the fact that often the same auxiliary is used to express deontic modality and epistemic modality, and often it expresses specific features and nuances within deontic or epistemic modality. The difficulties could also be due to the fact that within the same sentence/utterance two or three modal auxiliaries are interchangeable. All these difficulties are compounded by fewer modal auxiliaries in Arabic and an absence of tense forms that equal (or correspond to) the present perfect and the past perfect in English and contribute to realisations of past modality.

Though there was little discrepancy between native speakers' cognition and linguists' descriptions, the small differences between the two groups could be taken as lending additional support for corpus-based research, but they do not rule out intuition-based research in linguistics, and particularly in semantics. We believe that both methods combine to help researchers have access to native speakers and non-native speakers' cognition of language.

To develop solid cognition of the various semantic traits of modality and its realisation in English, Saudi students need explicit teaching/learning of the meanings carried by modal auxiliaries, especially epistemic modality, in addition to implicit teaching/learning that takes place when language is in use. This contributes to making them efficient translators and prepares them to become competent academic writers.

Notes

1. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 116-118), in dealing with the Clause as Exchange, consider Subject and Finite (present, past, future) as elements of Mood and Predicator (the infinitive Verb), Complement, and Adjunct as elements of Residue.
2. The borderline between semantics and pragmatics is fuzzy (Brown and Yule, 1983, 25-26, cited in Abdesslem, 1992, 58) ask, “Do we not immediately and quite naturally, set about constructing some circumstances (i.e. ‘context’) in which the sentence could be acceptably used?” The present paper claims that cognition can be gauged at the semantics border with pragmatics.
3. Martin and White (2005, 98-99) use the term Proclaim, as writer (speaker) engagement, which presents the proposition as compelling, valid, and agreed upon.
4. Arabic has syntactic and lexical means to express modality.

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Appendices

Appendix A

I- Read each of the following sentences and then fill in the blank with the appropriate modal auxiliary. In some cases, there might be more than one alternative, please write the possible alternatives.

Epistemic modality

Possibility

- 1- Anybody make mistakes.
- 2- "You not treat a disease unless you know what has caused it," says a professor of medicine to his students.
- 3- He was not at home when I went to see him. He gone away for the weekend.
- 4- One person need more calories than another. People's metabolisms are not the same.
- 5- "The patient is dizzy and bleeding, he have a head injury," says the nurse to the doctor on the phone.
- 6- "By changing your eating habits, you lower the risk of having high blood pressure," says the doctor to her patient.
- 7- The little girl does know what caused the pain in her wrist. Her mum says: "Mariam sprained her wrist when she fell off the chair the other day".
- 8- Pigs eat anything.

Appendix B

	C an	M ay	Mig ht	W ill	M ay ha ve	Mig ht hav e	Co uld Ha ve	Co uld	Mu st	Mu st Ha ve	Sh all	Sho uld	Wo uld	Oth ers	Tot al
1	7	13	4					6			1		1		32
2	15	2						6	3		1	3			33
3		4	5		2	2	1	2	1	1			1	13	32
4	2	17	9											1	27
5	9	14						1	6			1	1	1	33

6	12	3	1	2				8	1			2			29
7		3	6			3	1	3	1	2			1	6	26
8	16	6	1					2					2	2	29

Table I: *Epistemic possibility; students' responses.*

	Can	May	May have	Might	Might have	Will	Must	Must have	Should	Could	Could have	Total
1	3											3
2	2						1		1			4
3			1		1			1			1	4
4		3		1					1	1		6
5		2		1			1			3		7
6	2	1		1		1				1		6
7			1		2			1			1	5
8	1					2						3

Table II: *Epistemic possibility; native speakers' responses*

On the Relevance of Universal Grammar in L2

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Abstract

There is growing evidence that Universal Grammar (UG) is heavily involved in second language acquisition (SLA). However, current research in applied linguistics still explores various issues in interlanguage, particularly the initial state (the representation that learners use to make sense of second language input). That is, do the properties of interlanguage come from UG or the first language (L1)? Does this count as access to UG? Does L1 grammar constitute the initial state? Does UG count as the initial state? In this paper, I will provide evidence from the production of Arab learners of English to support the fact that UG is undoubtedly involved in the development of L2, and to challenge the claim that UG is irrelevant in L2 acquisition. I will outline the evidence put forward in the published literature indicating that universal grammar principles shape the processes of acquiring a second language. More specifically, I will provide evidence from the linguistic behavior of Moroccan learners of English, showing that L2 learners transfer their pre-existing knowledge to the target language, which indicates that they indirectly pick up from UG, a cognitive move that can be considered as an indirect access to UG. However, I by no means claim that our understanding of the nature of UG itself is clear enough in any conclusive way, as more research should be conducted in this connection.

Key words: initial state, interlanguage, parameter-setting, second language acquisition, universal grammar

Introduction

The potential similarities in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) shown by subjects of various mother tongues have been the subject of serious debate in recent years (White 2003, Cook 2010, Parodi 2012). Linguists who have striven to tackle this issue have been concerned whether SL learners make errors similar to those made by children acquiring their native language or not. Such a conclusion has led many researchers to seek evidence so as to confirm that universals definitely exist in SLA. White (1985, 1986, op.cit) is the leading figure who has confirmed this issue, followed by a number of linguists such as Parodi (op.cit).

The purpose of this paper is to outline the evidence put forward in the published literature indicating that universal grammar (UG) principles shape the processes of acquiring a second language. It also provides further evidence in this regard from the linguistic behavior of Moroccan learners of English. The structure of this paper can be seen along the following lines. Section 1 summarizes the relevance of UG in SLA. Section 2 discloses the various pieces of evidence put forward in the applied linguistics literature, which indicate that UG cognitive processes constitute a fact of life. Specifically, it outlines the relevance of UG principles and parameters in SLA. Section 3 provides further evidence from L2 behavior of Moroccan learners of English, with a view to corroborating the fact that UG is clearly involved in L2 processing.

1. Relevance of universal grammar in SLA

White (op.cit:55) and Cook (2010) maintain that universal grammar (UG) is involved in the process of SLA. This innate ability which enables children to acquire their native language, White claims, can “explain and predict incidences of interference from the L1, so that language falls within the scope of explanations that are oriented towards linguistic universals”. This seems to support the claim that language transfer confirms the idea that UG exists in SL learning. But how can we prove that such a phenomenon exists in L2? Before tackling this issue, the theoretical construct of UG in L1 is outlined below.

1.1 Universal Grammar in L1

Chomsky (1965:26) argues that UG consists of two types of universals:

- a- substantive universals,
- b- formal universals

The formal type includes fixed features such as the syntactic categories Noun, Verb, Subject and Object. The former type, on the other hand, is an abstract category which states possible grammatical rules. In other words, it is made up of certain means whereby grammars have to be constructed. However, the child still has to choose from the options available to him/her so as to suit the setting of his/her language.

Following Chomsky (1981b), it could be argued that UG consists of abstract and “linguistically significant principles” that entail all natural languages. It also determines the initial state of the learner's mind, namely his/her pre-linguistic state prior to being exposed to any language. In this respect, Chomsky (op.cit :7) points out that “in a highly idealized picture of language acquisition, Universal Grammar is taken to be a characterization of the child's pre-linguistic state.

Chomsky (1965, op.cit) argues that UG enables the child to acquire their native language easily and successfully. Once born, the child is exposed to an impoverished input data which do not suffice to form a basis for constructing certain grammatical rules. To solve this problem,

Chomsky, along with his collaborators, claims that any normal human being is born with abstract principles constraining the ways in which he/she can conceive language. These abstract principles are activated through a person's contact with the environment; it is this encounter of these abstract principles, UG, together with this person's experience that allows him/her to reach the steady state or competence.

This line of reasoning has found its echoes in the realm of second language acquisition. By way of illustration, Krashen (1980, 1981, 1982) develops a model referred to as the "Monitor Theory", whereby the learner may attain the acquired competence. In this theory, Krashen aims at showing that there is another factor that may affect the learning process of L2, called the filter. More specifically, to reach competence of his/her L1, the child needs not only UG but also some clear cut evidence about a language s/he is in the route to acquire. In Krashen's terminology, the learner cannot reach the acquired competence unless s/he has acquired sufficient input. In other words, the learner has to learn the lexicon of his/her language, the words and their meanings so as to put his/her abstract knowledge into operation. This is done under certain hypothesis testing. He claims that the child builds up his/her knowledge of his/her L1 via a series of hypotheses which help him to convert his innate knowledge into the surface forms of his/her mother tongue passing through transformations. Thus, the child builds up his/her competence by "successive approximation, passing through several steps that are not yet English" (McNeill 1966: 61).

While acquiring L1, the child encounters certain types of evidence. Following Chomsky (1981b), the child has to face two kinds of evidence: positive and negative evidence. Positive evidence involves the actual sentence of a language. For instance, when an English child hears the sentence given in (1), he/she will automatically judge that English has subject-verb-object order. However, when an Arab child hears a sentence such as the one in (2), he/she will implicitly understand that Arabic has verb-subject-object order.

- (1) Mary loves John
- (2) ?akal-at Fatimal-xubza
eat- past- fem Fatima-the - bread "Fatima ate bread"

In this respect, Cook (1988: 14) claims that "UG is crucial in the organization of the primary linguistic experience. UG determines the way the child will interpret and organize the language he/she is exposed to".

Negative evidence falls under the heading of two categories:

- direct evidence.
- indirect evidence.

Indirect evidence stands for the structure of a language that seems unfamiliar to the child because he has never heard such a construction before. For instance, an English child would find that verb-subject-object is a "strange" construction in English, and therefore, he rejects it. Thus, under those empirical findings, it is worthwhile mentioning that an L1 learner relies basically on positive evidence rather than on negative evidence because the child at an early stage of his/her acquisition receives "little direct negative evidence in the form of correction of syntax" (Brown and Hanlon 1970, cited in Cook: 1985).

1.2. Universal Grammar in L2

SLA has received much attention in recent years since SL research has proved to be an especially complicated endeavor due to the fact of understanding the various factors that might influence a language learner's performance while learning a second language. Such factors can be presented along the following lines:

- Native language
- Social variation
- Regional variation
- Age at which the learner is exposed to the foreign language
- Type of exposure to the foreign language.

Besides the factors just cited, Generative linguists' main interests center around the putative discussion whereby UG exists in L2, (Parodi 2012, White 1986, 2003; Cook op.cit, 1988, 1991, 1995, 2010, Tsimpli and Roussou 1991, Platt 1993, to name but a few). Their investigations lead us to raise such a question: Can we talk about UG in SLA?

It seems that we can. Since the errors which adult second language learners make resemble those made by children in the course of their native language acquisition, we can assume that both of them follow a similar, though not identical, process in learning. Increasing evidence indicates that language acquisition, first or second, depends mainly on the language faculty which all humans possess at any stage of their life. Therefore, it is worth noting that L2 learners might have access to UG either directly or indirectly through the first language. In this respect, Bley-Vroman, (1989: 42) points out that L2 learners follow the same route as those acquiring their L1. He takes it that "a consensus has developed during the last decade that the same fundamental process controls both the child's learning of a first language and the adult's learning of a foreign language.

To the extent that our assumption here is along the right lines, we are in a position to ask whether L2 learners start learning the target language from scratch or depend on their previous existing linguistic knowledge of L1. To confirm this assumption, it has been claimed by many linguists such as Broselow (1988) that SLA is a process which is governed by the properties of the two languages in question, namely the native language and the target language. Broselow (op.cit: 194) points out in this regard that "error patterns are associated with particular native language backgrounds; these errors provide some reflection of the grammatical system of the first language.

However, a difficulty arises when the structures of L1 differ from those of L2. So much so that we can predict the problems that L2 learners will face. Thus, properties which are identical to all or many languages can be easily learnt. On the other hand, language specific properties are difficult to learn since these are exceptions in some sense. A Moroccan student learning English as a foreign language, for instance, may encounter many problems, especially when approaching structures that differentiate English from his/her mother tongue, Moroccan Arabic (MA). In such cases, the learner will presumably pick up structures and patterns from his L1, i.e., he would resort to transfer. Despite this claim, it is worth stating that there are some aspects that cannot be transferred to the target language but rather they are dependent on L1. Such aspects are fully discussed in Cook (op.cit). Cook points out that "clustering of vocabulary" is not allowed to be transferred to L2, while "short term memory" is a type of capacity that is transferable to a second language.

In the light of what has been established so far, language transfer confirms that UG is involved in SLA. When the learner transfers from his L1, he indirectly picks up from UG. This can be considered as an indirect access to UG which satisfies our earlier assumption about the "indirect access to UG" mentioned above.

Having discussed the main issue of UG, let us turn our attention to discuss the other side of the coin, namely principles and parameters.

1.2.1. Principles and Parameters in Universal Grammar

UG consists of a set of principles and parameters that helps to explain both the acquisition and the learning process of a language. The current theories in LA are targeted at characterizing these principles and parameters to provide a more developed account of linguistic competence. This idea is advanced in Cook (1987):

While the principles of UG lay down the absolute requirements that a human language has to meet, the parameters of UG account for the syntactic variation between languages. English does not just instantiate UG principles; it also has particular setting for all the UG parameters (p. 37).

Principles are seen as a closed class. They do not vary across languages and their function is to describe the underlying grammatical system. For instance, all languages have lexical categories such as nouns, verbs, objects, etc. Thus, principles do not change from language to language. Their use, however, changes. Parameters, on the other hand, are considered as an open class because they can be remodeled. White (2003) takes it that the adoption of a particular parameter leads us to a range of consequences in the grammar. Whilst the parameters are thought of as "open", the possibilities of parametric variation are themselves constrained by UG.

It is worth mentioning that the learner is provided with parameters to be fixed. For instance, an L2 learner will have to specify the value of a given parameter, and say whether it has a plus or minus value. Each parameter might contain at least one or more variables, which are fixed via exposure to positive evidence discussed above in the sense of Chomsky (1981b). Once the parameter of any language is fixed, the innate structures will emerge and then will be set by the child acquiring such language. As implied above, the principles of UG will interact with those parameters which contribute to the determination of a core grammar.

The difference between UG and Core grammar is that UG couches the pre-linguistic state of the mind, whereby the parameters are still open, while core grammar is determined once the parameters are fixed. Following this argument, Chomsky (1986a) states that UG is "a system of sub-theories, each with certain parameters of variation. A particular (core) language is determined by fixing parameters in these sub-theories (p.2).

Chomsky implies that not all the rules children form constitute core rules, but there are some elements that are not constrained by UG (such as borrowings and history of language). Core rules, on the other hand, as Chomsky argues, are more general and they constitute the grammatical competence of the learner, which is "covered" by the principle of UG. Core rules are unmarked (this will be further elaborated below), while periphery rules are exceptional, i.e., they are marked.

It is worth noting that UG mediates between the language input and the grammar formed by the child. This assumption solves what is often referred to as "the Logical Problem of Acquisition" mentioned earlier in our discussion. To conclude this section, it is worth stating Chomsky's statement about the principles and parameters of a language:

What we "know innately" are the principles of the various sub-systems and the manner of their interaction, and the parameters associated with these principles. What we learn are the values of the parameters and the elements of the periphery (along with the lexicon to which similar considerations apply) (1986b, 150-151).

1.2.2. Markedness in SLA

There has been much awareness of the development of a theory of markedness within syntactic theories in the recent inquiries in SLA because markedness has been one of the most-discussed paradigms in the language acquisition literature.

Central notions to the theory of UG are the notions of core and periphery. Core grammar is considered to be made up of unmarked features while periphery is made up of marked features. Indeed, this dichotomy between core and periphery raises the issue of the theory of markedness. Before indulging in our discussion, the concept of markedness deserves consideration.

Following Cook (op.cit), markedness stands for "a departure from the usual "neutral" form in one way or another". What has been mentioned above about the difference between core and periphery grammars will be elaborated in this section and related to language acquisition.

The distinction between core and periphery grammars is that the core grammar is unmarked since it is determined via the interaction of pre-linguistic knowledge and positive evidence. On the other hand, the periphery is marked because as we depart from 'the heart' of UG which entails core rules (unmarked features); the other acquired knowledge (periphery) becomes marked, since it is not defined by either any interaction of the principles of UG or linguistic experience. Such a peripheral knowledge has to be learned via both experience and positive evidence. On the basis of the theory of UG, it could be claimed that the unmarked features can be learned based on very limited evidence; whereas marked features require more evidence.

On the basis of the theory of markedness, it is assumed that children usually start acquiring the unmarked aspects of their mother tongue which comprise the core grammar of their L1. Via a positive exposure to language, the child starts resetting those aspects which prove to be more marked than others (Cook 2010). This explains the fact that he/she has to reset those parameters which are considered to be more marked in the language he/she is acquiring. To support this argument, Cook (op.cit) claims that the child prefers to learn 'unmarked' knowledge that conforms to Universal Grammar, rather than 'marked' knowledge that is less compatible with such grammar.

1. Evidence from Moroccan learners of English

Jmila (1993) conducted an experiment aiming at testing the validity of parameter setting in L2 acquisition. Specifically, it tests whether the pro-drop parameter explains transfer in Moroccan learners of English or not. Besides, it challenges one of the hypotheses put forward by Clahsen (1990) and his collaborators that UG does not exist in L2.

The results obtained from two groups, i.e., the 6th and 7th form levels, where the 7th form represents learners of higher proficiency, whereas the 6th level represents the level of lower proficiency, indicate that the 7th form shows more accuracy in judging sentences with missing subjects compared to 6th form learners. The 7th level scored 52% as a mean value for correct sentences and 48% for incorrect sentences, while the 6th level shows equality between the correct and incorrect sentences. Their mean value is 50% for both sentences. However, it seems that both groups have difficulty in judging those sentences. This relative difficulty is probably caused by the great distance between the native language, Arabic, and the target language, English. In such circumstances, L2 learners have a tendency to resort to the structure of their L1, which violates the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) stipulating that the subject is an obligatory constituent of a sentence. This, in fact, induces the phenomenon of "interference" to occur, in the sense of Selinker (1972). But how can we account for the fact that 7th form learners show more or less accuracy in judging those sentences than the 6th level do? A possible answer would be that 7th form learners seem to be equipped with more knowledge of the TL and have relatively richer resources in distinguishing grammatical sentences from those ungrammatical ones since they have been exposed to English for 3 years. This also explains the fact that they appeal less to the native language compared to the 6th form students.

Noteworthy is that this property of pro-drop language shows difficulty for both levels, the 6th and 7th forms. However, it seems from the results obtained that the 7th form scores are about 55.9% in all the tests for correct sentences, 38.8% for incorrect sentences and 5.5% show no responses at all. By way of illustration, 7th form students who show high proficiency are able to estimate the linguistic knowledge that they have at their disposal. They are relatively aware that the complementizer THAT should be deleted from embedded clauses while the subject [NP] has been extracted from sentence(4) below:

(4) Who do you think (that) [e] killed Jim?

As for the 6th level, their limited linguistic knowledge of the TL encourages them to rely heavily on their pre-existing knowledge of their mother tongue where the complementizer THAT should not be deleted before the trace [e]. As a result of their extensive reliance on the knowledge of their mother tongue, they come up with incorrect sentences in the TL, which exemplifies a kind of interference.

Based on the results obtained in this study, it is safe to claim that learners of high proficiency (7th level) are more efficient in the use of the three characteristics of the pro-drop parameter than the learners who represent the low proficiency level (6th level). This explains the fact that learners of high proficiency are more equipped with more knowledge of the TL and, as a consequence, they appeal less to the native language. On the other hand, low proficient learners show deficient knowledge of the TL. Therefore, they resort more frequently either to the use of French, L2, or Arabic, L1, to express themselves.

Conclusion

It emerges from this short exposition that the resetting process of L2 is gradual since L2 learners seem to rely heavily on their pre-existing knowledge about other languages known to them. To put it differently, L2 learners at their early stage of learning the TL (English) seem to transfer structures from both languages, either from their mother language (L1 = Arabic) or from their L2 (L2 = French), to the TL (English). However, a cogent observation that should be made

is that as the learning process increases, the degree of transfer decreases, which implies that L2 learners are in their route to reach the stage of competence.

Secondly, the evidence presented in this paper challenges Clahsen's claim (op.cit) that UG does not exist in L2. For one thing, that L2 learners transfer their pre-existing knowledge to the TL means that they indirectly pick up from UG, which can be seen as an indirect access to UG.

Another piece of evidence that supports the view that UG exists in L2 learners comes from the data presented in this study. Though data collection is based on classroom settings, the findings seem to correlate with the ones observed in "the naturalistic environment", where L1 learners acquire their mother tongue without formal instruction (Cook 2010). In other words, L2 learning is a developmental process where L2 learners go through similar (though not identical) stages that L1 learners pass through during the process of L1 acquisition.

Nonetheless this paper does not claim that these findings are conclusive. For one thing, the concept of UG itself is understood differently by various scholars. Hence, only through further research on UG and related theoretical constructs can these findings be corroborated.

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Investigating the Topic Area Focus of PhD TEFL Dissertations at AAUGS

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Jordan

Abstract:

This paper aimed at exploring the standing of TEFL research in Jordan in terms of topic area of PhD dissertations awarded by Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies (AAUGS). The researchers scrutinized the topic area of all TEFL dissertations of AAUGS from 2003 till 2010 (82 dissertations) regarding their compliance with the technological, cultural, academic, pedagogical variables and challenges of the 21st Century. More precisely, the questions of the study were: 1) What are the major topic areas of Jordanian TEFL dissertations, considering Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies as an example? 2) What topic areas of TEFL dissertations at Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies are: over researched, satisfactorily researched, neglected areas or need more research? Is there is any statistically significant differences at $\alpha = 0.01$ due to topic area? To answer these questions the researchers scanned almost all AAUGS PhD dissertations from 2003 till 2010 for the title and the abstract to be able to define the topic area. The findings of the study revealed that the focal point of most TEFL dissertations is on reading as an over-researched area and on writing (a separate and integrated skill) as satisfactorily researched areas while others considered either neglected or poorly researched areas. .

Key Words: English proficiency, Higher Education in Jordan, TEFL Dissertations at AAUGS.

Introduction

Current status of English as an International Language (EIL), feasibility of the outcomes, the roles of culture and technology along with other factors underscore the pressing need for a dynamic teaching methodology. It should consider the aforementioned variables in addition to others such as students' level, interests and affective needs, learning styles, contextuality and authenticity of input, fluency and accuracy of output etc. However, such a viable methodology ought to be based on a solid and dynamic ground. This superficial contradiction of the solid and dynamic nature of the intended ground of teaching English methodology fades away by incorporating all standards, principles, hypotheses and guidelines of TEFL to pave the way for a strategic teaching and learning of English so as to empower the teaching practices inside the classroom.

To a certain extent, it could be stated that there is no single theory or teaching method upon which the 21st century's EFL is based on due to the huge number of variables. Consequently; insights and implications are elicited from research findings in areas of language acquisition, TEFL, personal teaching experiences, and implications resulting from students' achievements. These insights and implications are collected and casted in a feasible shape of hypotheses, principles, standards, guidelines. etc which keeps updating and altering to match the demands of the post-method era in TEFL(Figure1).

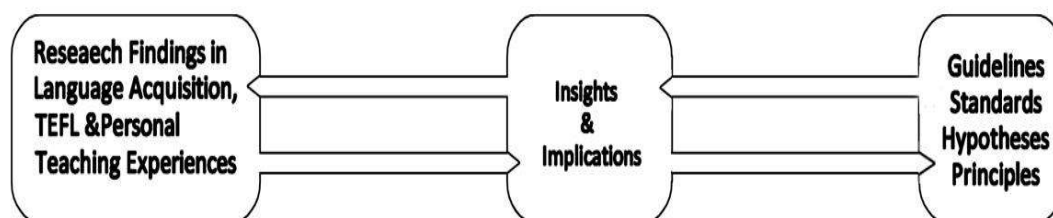


Figure 1: The continuous altering of guidelines, standards, hypotheses, principles.etc according to the up-to-date research findings

These guidelines, standards, hypotheses and principles are manifested in the American Council on the Teaching of the Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines (APGs), Standards of Foreign Language Learning (5Cs), Brown's Principles of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning (Brown's Principles) (Brown 2001), & Omaggio's Five Hypotheses of Learning and Teaching (Omaggio's Hypotheses) (Omaggio, 2001). They collectively reflect the challenges of 21st century and set the scene for proficiency-oriented teaching and learning approach. Teaching includes all the variables pertaining to the teacher and curriculum; learning embraces all variables related to the learner.

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (APGs) are issued by The American Council on Teaching a Foreign Language to "define and measure language ability in speaking, listening, reading and writing" (Omaggio, 2001:12) and are classified into superior, advanced, intermediate, and novice levels. Each of these levels is classified into sub-levels of low, med and high. Thus they help to determine students' levels, upon which teachers draw up outcomes and activities to contextualize and achieve these outcomes. Omaggio (2001:12) reveals that "[l]evels of proficiency on the ACTFL (Proficiency Guidelines) scale can be distinguished by considering the four interrelated assessment criteria underlying the proficiency descriptions: global tasks/functions, context/content, accuracy and text type".

Standards for Foreign Language Learning empower students with universal concepts to consolidate their 2nd or foreign language learning so as to communicate proficiently. They are "standards for foreign language education to outline the content of instruction and are arranged into five major goal areas; Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities" (5Cs) (Omaggio,2001:36). Communication Standard consists of three levels, while each of the other standards consists of two levels. Each level is subdivided into three levels; Grade 4, Grade 8 and Grade 12. Communication Standard highlights the significance of learning English in order to communicate properly in real life situations. Cultural elements are integrated into students' curriculum in various forms to raise sensitivity to the other culture which will facilitate teaching-learning processes and thus communication. The Connections Standard underlines the vital role of language in learning other disciplines. The Comparisons Standard assists learning by making students continually compare their language and culture to the other language and culture. Finally, Communities Standard empowers learners to use language in multilingual communities inside classroom and around the world. Upon preliminary considering of the APGs and the 5Cs, it could be said that the APGs are the skeleton for teaching and learning process whereas the 5Cs are the flesh of such skeleton.

Omaggio's five working hypotheses along with their corollaries are developed by Alice Omaggio Hadley to help in designing English language teaching and learning practices that foster learners' proficiency in all skills at various situations inside and outside the classroom. They are published in her book "Teaching Language in Context" in 2001(p.90-91). These hypotheses are dynamic in the sense that they enhance proficiency-oriented instructions which are subjected to a large number of variables; the notion that will lead to bolster learners' communicative competence. The first hypothesis highlights contextual and authentic input and early opportunities for learners to express their own meaning through active interaction among students which encourages creative language use. The second hypothesis emphasizes practice through functions and tasks. The third hypothesis is related to accuracy, precise use of language and use of evaluative feedback. The fourth hypothesis is concerned with affective and cognitive needs of learners and significance of considering learning styles. Finally the fifth hypothesis underlines the students' sensitivity to other cultures and communities.

Brown (2001:54) states that "a great number of teachers' choices are grounded on established principles of language learning and teaching." These principles are derived from research to function as rudiments upon which actual teaching practices inside the classroom are relied. They are classified into three major areas of cognitive, affective and linguistic principles which will be respectively illustrated. Automaticity principle stresses the automatic and subconscious production of language for effective communication. Meaningful learning principle promotes long-term retention of meaningful input. The third cognitive principle is the anticipation of reward which means that the learner knows that whatever s/he learns will be rewarded, accordingly, it will be part of the learner's cognitive structure. The well-established intrinsic motivation in the learner facilitates and accelerates learning as the learner needs, wants and desires are fulfilled. Strategic investment is the last cognitive principle that boosts strategic teaching and learning; the teacher should develop strategies and should be as well be acquainted with his learners' learning strategies to teach accordingly; i.e. promotes effective learning strategies and eliminates the ineffective strategies.

The affective principle is related to the learner, it includes: language ego, self-confidence, risk-taking and language-culture connection. Sometimes, first language ego is highlighted in the learner's mind which will hinder foreign language learning. Teacher ought to use strategies to

bridge the gap between first language and foreign language learning. Teacher needs to design activities to bolster Learners' self-confidence by challenging the learner to take risks and be rewarded accordingly. The last principle in the affective domain is the inseparable relation between culture and language as teacher is supposed to compare and contrast the cultural elements in both languages whenever they rise.

The Linguistic principles are the native language effect, inter-language and communicative competence. The learner's first language may affect learning positively by highlighting similar elements between the two languages or negatively through interference to compensate for communication gap. The inter-language principle is associated with stages of learning; every level has its own features that demand appropriate feedback. As

the communicative competence is the goal of a language classroom, instruction needs to point towards all its components: organizational, pragmatic, strategic and psychomotor. Communicative goals are the best achieved by giving the attention to language use and not just usage, to fluency and not just accuracy, to authentic language and contexts, and to students eventual need to apply classroom learning to previously unrehearsed contexts in the real world (Brown,2001:69)

It is apparent that Figure 1 constituents are interrelated and they complement each other. The deficiency in any of them is compensated in another. Nevertheless, there are some elements that are underscored in all of them; cultural component, for example, is explicitly reinforced in the 5Cs, Brown's Principles and Omaggio's Hypotheses while implicitly stated in the APGs. Moreover, the learner's domain is deeply implanted in all of the components both covertly and overtly; the philosophy of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and the Standards of Foreign Language learning totally depend on the final achievement of the learners by stressing their level and the needs for the teacher to design appropriate activities to the level per skill (APGs) and per concept (5Cs). On the other hand, Brown's Principles and Omaggio's Hypotheses overtly underline affective needs; the third, fourth, sixth, seventh and eighth principles in Brown (2001) and the fourth hypothesis in Omaggio are in congruence in this respect. The contextualization of the input is promoted in the second criterion of APGs and the first hypothesis in Omaggio, whereas meaningful learning and communicative competence principles on one hand, and communications and communities standards on the other hand mirror contextualization of the input.

As for language use, functions and tasks, they are apparently promoted in APGs first criterion and in Omaggio's second hypothesis along with third hypothesis that demands accuracy. The first principle in Brown (2001) is automaticity which fosters the automatic processing of unlimited number of language forms (Brown, 2001). Authenticity of the input is stated clearly in the fourth corollary of the Omaggio's first hypothesis, the last principle of communicative competence and finally in the advanced and superior levels of APGs. Fluency and accuracy of the output are stressed in the communicative competence twelfth principle, in criteria and advanced and superior levels of APGs, in the third hypothesis and the twelfth levels of the 5Cs. Creativity is highlighted in the third corollary of the first hypothesis, superior levels of APGs, twelfth levels of the 5Cs. Eventually, strategic learning is enhanced in the fifth principle of strategic investment and under the umbrella of communicative interaction in Omaggio's hypotheses, the communication standard in 5Cs and all levels of APGs.

Literature Review

Upon considering Figure 1, undoubtedly EFL research is the cornerstone of developing students' English proficiency provided that it is steered on right direction to reach its destination, i.e. the students' classrooms; then, it takes feedback from real classrooms to the researcher's desk. Consequently, such TEFL research life circle ought to be survived if researchers benefited from what could be called "collective research" or "overall research" as to be acquainted with the state of the art of research in general and TEFL research in particular. Unfortunately, these studies are very rare; the researchers of the current could hardly find related literature of EFL/TEFL research evaluation in Jordan.

Maani (1990) evaluated ESP/EFL/ESL research in the 1980s with special reference to Jordanian context. At that time, he stated that the "purpose of [his] study was to make an attempt to investigate this important, but apparently neglected area in ESP/EFL/ESL program research...namely the thesis/dissertation"(p.viii). In order to find out how ESP fits this kind of research, the researcher analyzed 90 dissertations written by Jordanian researchers from 1980 – 1989 in terms of their topic areas focus. The four major categories of investigation were linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and language pedagogy. Maani's question related to language pedagogy included 12 areas: "1. Artificial Intelligence / Language Computer Models. 2. Classroom-Centered Research. 3. Curriculum / Course / Syllabus Design / Administration / Evaluation: Syllabus & Materials. 4. Distance / Off-Campus Learning. 5. ESP / ESP & Content-Based Syllabuses. 6. Language & Technology (Computers, Videos, Audios, etc.). 7. Materials Analysis / Productions/ Evaluation: Materials and Syllabuses. 8. Methodology / Research Methodology/ Methods & Materials. 9. Profession / Professional Standards & Concerns. 10. Teacher Preparation / Training; Observation & Evaluation. 11. Teaching Aids (Cartoons, Posters, Flash Cards, etc.). 12. Testing" (1990:71)

Among the findings, Maani (1990) concluded that "Jordanian researchers have avoided certain areas, especially in the fourth category, language pedagogy...[particularly] dissertation writers seemed to avoid certain topic areas because they considered them difficult topics" (p.113) such as course and syllabus design. Although his study is not directly connected with the focus area of the current study, it is considered among the early and almost solely research dissertation that focuses on research evaluation as a means to improve teaching and learning process in Jordanian context.

Alptekin & Tatar (2011) investigated foreign language teaching and learning research in Turkey (2005 – 2009). They qualitatively studied the most common and frequent interests of academics and practitioners in foreign language teaching and learning from three major sources: local professional journals, conference proceedings and papers and Ph.D. dissertations. The interests of Turkish researchers in foreign language teaching and learning are classified into seven major categories; namely, "foreign language teaching and teachers, foreign language learning and learners, foreign language teacher education, listening and speaking, reading and writing, measurement and evaluation and finally language and culture" (p.331). The researchers concluded that practical research has dominance among Turkish researchers with focus on learning and teaching.

Although Maani (1990) and Alptekin and Tatar (2011) were the only studies that have connection with the current research (to the best knowledge of researchers), the scope of their studies is rather comprehensive when compared with the current study. Such limited approach could be attributed to the lack of a national database for research, in general, and for TEFL

research, in particular, in Jordan. Even with visiting the libraries of universities or departments that issue TEFL dissertations, researchers can get nothing but to go the shelves.

Statement of the Problem

EFL learners' proficiency is a day dream as confirmed by almost all scholars who investigated the arena of English as a foreign language in Jordan. The obsession of mastering English is transmitted from parents to their children starting from pre-school stage to university regardless of the learner's specialization. At this point, research in EFL ought to gain a prominent emphasis in order to understand the reasons that make English proficiency lags behind. Hundreds of higher education dissertations and theses along with journals articles have been issued in the last decades and the onset of the new millennium with a major aim that is to improve students' proficiency in English. However, their broader goal is not fully achieved due to many reasons including the lack to what could be called "overall studies" or "evaluative studies" of research topic area. Except for Maani (1990) study and to the best knowledge of the researchers, almost no studies have been conducted on evaluation of EFL research in Jordan. Consequently, the current study aims at answering the following questions:

Questions of the Study

- What are the major topic areas of Jordanian TEFL dissertations, considering Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies as an example?
- What topic areas of TEFL dissertations at Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies are: over researched, satisfactorily researched, neglected areas or need more research? Is there is any statistically significant differences at $\alpha = 0.01$ due to topic area?

Significance of the Study

Upon highlighting the viable role of research in upgrading the students' proficiency in English, upon considering Maani (1990) study which focused on ESP/EFL/ESL research that made reference to Jordanian context in the 1980s and to the best knowledge of the researchers, the present study is among the early studies which aimed to evaluate the state of the art of EFL research in Jordan through focusing on TEFL dissertations. The impact of the state of the art studies is observed on the philosophy of education, educational policy makers, curriculum designers, teachers, learners and researchers.

Limitation of the Study

Due to the scarce studies conducted on the status quo of TEFL research in Jordan, this study tackles Ph.D. dissertations issued by Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies from 2003 to 2010 as a representation of other TEFL departments at the Jordanian universities since most of the supervisors are from different public and private universities in Jordan. Consequently, generalization of the results could be – to a certain extent- restricted to AAUG.

Moreover, the scope of TEFL dissertations covers English proficiency at both schools and universities for two reasons. Firstly, English proficiency differences among schools are wide and could be attributable to various factors; public vs private in favor of private schools, city vs village in favor of schools in cities...etc. Secondly, English proficiency at universities is not necessarily to be advanced. Freahat (2012) compared between the level of difficulty of reading passages at secondary schools and language center at Yarmouk University to find out that school passages are more difficult and advanced.

Method and Procedures

In this study, the researchers scanned almost all AAUGS dissertations from 2003 till 2010 for the title and the abstract to be able to define the topic area. Access to these dissertations was made possible by two ways: 1) Reviewing all AAUGS dissertations' abstracts directory (Jaradat & Khawaldeh, 2007) that contains all dissertations titles along with their abstracts awarded by the university from 1999 – 2005. However, the researchers focused on TEFL dissertations. 2) Going directly to the shelves where dissertations of higher education of four faculties (Educational Studies, Financial and Administrative Studies, Law Studies and Computer Studies) are placed. Again, the researchers focused on TEFL dissertations. In order to define the topic area and answer the questions of the study, the researchers followed the following stages:

1. Compiling titles along with their abstracts.
2. Identifying the topic area from the title then checking it with the abstract.
3. Preliminary identification of topic area was tested for validity. To obtain inter and intra reliability of the identification of topic area, the researchers asked two TEFL PhD holders to match the title of the dissertation and its topic area in order to measure their consistency for inter-reliability. As for intra-reliability, the researchers, themselves, identified the consistency of the title of the dissertation and its topic area twice keeping a period of one month between the first and the second identification. The intra and inter-rater consistency of the identification yielded acceptable percentages: 99.8 and 98.7 respectively.

Findings and Discussion Related to the First Question

To answer the first question which is "What are the major topic areas of Jordanian TEFL dissertations, considering Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies as an example?" the researchers examined the titles and abstracts of AAUGS TEFL dissertations. Identification of topic areas of AAUGS TEFL dissertation included the following categories:

A: Skills:

1. Reading
2. Writing
3. Listening
4. Speaking

B: Integrated Skills

1. Reading and Writing
2. Speaking and writing
3. Reading and vocabulary
4. All Skills

C: Learning Styles

D: Vocabulary

E: Grammar and Functions

F: English for Specific Purposes

G: Teacher Development

H: Culture

I: Teaching Translation

J: Teaching Literature

It is obvious that the scope of the topic area of dissertations is wide and covers almost most of the cultural, technological and pedagogical challenges. Assessment and evaluation are approached within categories like skills, vocabulary, grammar and functions.etc. Skills are

approached in separate and integrative manner. Classification discrepancies between Maani (1990) and the current research could be attributed to more than 20 years of research development in language pedagogy. The elements of culture, learning styles, teaching translation and teaching literatures did not overtly appear in Maani's study.

Moreover, it would be permissible to conclude that the focus on culture, context, and learning styles are reflected in the 5Cs, APGS, Omaggio's Hypotheses, Brown's Principles and Communicative Approach. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an eclectic and flexible approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) and (Brown, 2001) that considers authentic and meaningful communication, contextuality, fluency, accuracy, creativity of input along with sociolinguistic, pragmatic and communicative competence. Other factors such as autonomous learning and learning styles are also major features of CLT. Alptekin and Tatar (2011) classification of TEFL dissertations' topic area is rather comprehensive and reflects almost all standards, guidelines, hypotheses, principles and CLT but under broader categories.

Findings and Discussions Related to the Second Question

To answer the second question which is "What topic areas of TEFL dissertations at Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies are: over researched, satisfactorily researched, neglected areas or need more research? Is there is any statistically significant differences at $\alpha = 0.01$ due to topic area? the researchers calculated chi-square of goodness of fit to compare the observed frequencies with expected frequencies of AAUGS's dissertations topic areas categories. Table 1 presents the findings:

Table 1. χ^2 Values of AAUGS Dissertations' Topic Areas

Rank	Topic Area of the Study	Observed Number	Observed Percent age	Expected Number	Residual	Standard ized Residual	χ^2	d f	Sig.	Classification
1	Reading	20	24.4	5.125	14.875	6.571	43.174	1	0.000	Overflow
2	Writing	10	12.2	5.125	4.875	2.153	4.637	1	0.031	Overflow
3	Reading and Writing	10	12.2	5.125	4.875	2.153	4.637	1	0.031	Overflow
4	Culture	7	8.5	5.125	1.875	0.828	0.686	1	0.408	Balance d
5	Speaking	5	6.1	5.125	-0.125	-0.055	0.003	1	0.956	Balance d
6	Vocabulary	5	6.1	5.125	-0.125	-0.055	0.003	1	0.956	Balance d
7	Teacher Development	5	6.1	5.125	-0.125	-0.055	0.003	1	0.956	Balance d
8	All Skills	4	4.9	5.125	-1.125	-0.497	0.247	1	0.619	Balance d

9	Grammar & Functions	3	3.7	5.125	- 2.125	-0.939	0.88 1	1	0.34 8	Balance d
10	ESP	3	3.7	5.125	- 2.125	-0.939	0.88 1	1	0.34 8	Balance d
11	Listening	2	2.4	5.125	- 3.125	-1.380	1.90 5	1	0.16 7	Balance d
12	Speaking & Writing	2	2.4	5.125	- 3.125	-1.380	1.90 5	1	0.16 7	Balance d
13	Reading & Vocabulary	2	2.4	5.125	- 3.125	-1.380	1.90 5	1	0.16 7	Balance d
14	Learning Styles	2	2.4	5.125	- 3.125	-1.380	1.90 5	1	0.16 7	Balance d
15	Teaching Translation	1	1.2	5.125	- 4.125	-1.822	3.32 0	1	0.06 8	Balance d
16	Teaching Literature	1	1.2	5.125	- 4.125	-1.822	3.32 0	1	0.06 8	Balance d
Total		82	100.0	82	0	0	69.4 15	1 5	0.00 0	

Table 1 shows that there is a statistically significant difference at $\alpha = 0.01$ due to topic area in favor of reading skill with 24.4 percentage which could be considered as the only over-researched topic area. Writing as a separate skill along with reading and writing as integrative skills approached the expected number with chi-square value of 4.637 which could be regarded as satisfactorily researched areas. The other topic areas are regarded as either neglected or poorly-researched areas.

If initial analysis of Table 1 relies on the notion that there is nearly a one-to-one correspondence between research in EFL in Jordan and actual classroom practices, it will be tolerable to say that it shows that reading and writing skills are highly investigated as separate skills and integrative skills to reach 48 per cent of total dissertations. While speaking and listening research dissertations are less than 10 per cent of total dissertations. Such percentages reflect the dominance of reading and writing on English classes in Jordan at the expense of listening and speaking. Taking into consideration that most of this research is conducted on English classes at public schools; a proper justification will be attributed to the large number of students inside the classroom, lack of audio-visual equipment and almost unqualified teachers. The research on grammar, functions and language use is among the least of almost 4 per cent. Finally culture research reveals that it is gaining a growing emphasis upon considering the dates of research dissertations, i.e. four dissertations out of seven are in 2008. Going back to the lion's share of research "reading skill" indicates that almost one third of English lesson's time is on reading (almost 30 per cent of research). However, such a percentage is swollen by adding the 6 per cent of vocabulary research to be 36 per cent of total number of EFL dissertations' research at AAUGS.

Focus on Reading

There are 20 Ph.D. dissertations on reading in addition to 10 dissertations on the integration of reading and writing, about ten of them discuss strategic teaching of reading. Most of them measure the effect of certain factors on students reading comprehension, like the effect

of type and language of assessment, of computerized instructional reading problem, of generative teaching model, of teacher-student reading conferences, of text structure approach and of cooperative learning. The strategic themes are in congruence with Brown's fifth principle of strategic investment. There are nearly five dissertations that examine learning styles (12, 14, 15, 16, and 17) with focus on cooperative learning. There are five dissertations that investigate affective needs of the students (9, 13, 17, 18, and 20) with major focus on motivation. Text types of reading passages are discussed in one dissertation (5). On the other hand, these dissertations almost lack content analysis of text books to measure the contextuality and the degree of authenticity of reading passages and their effects on students' achievements, themes that are emphasized in APGs, Omaggio's Hypotheses and Brown's Principles. Furthermore, there is a salient deficiency in measuring the cultural elements in reading passages, thus the standards of communities, comparisons and communications are not almost tackled.

Focus on Writing

There are 10 Ph.D. dissertations on writing; all of them almost emphasize the strategic teaching of writing which is in line with Brown's fifth principle of strategic investment. An investigation of technology theme like Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and on-line learning program is examined in two dissertations (3, 4). Process approach to teaching writing along with examining students learning styles are introduced on a dissertation (9). Finally, the tenth study is an innovative one as it enhances students' self-assessment strategies in writing. Nevertheless, these dissertations lack studies on the students' needs and levels that promote designing activities to suit various levels (controlled activities -> guided activities -> creative activities) within the same class, a theme that is in compliance with all the constituents of Proficiency Quartet. Remarkable areas of study in a productive skill like writing are creativity and accuracy especially at high intermediate and advanced levels in addition to feedback and error correction strategies which are totally untouched.

Conclusion:

It could be concluded that the dearth of the research on the TEFL, i.e. accumulative research that scientifically traces the trends of EFL in Jordan indirectly affects EFL students' proficiency. Consequently, 50 percent of PhD TEFL dissertations focus which were awarded by AAUGS was on two skills, namely reading and writing leaving other areas as either neglected or poorly-researched areas. To the best knowledge of the researchers, there are no systematic accredited procedures to steer the wheel of EFL research into raw areas that take into account the international and up-to-date research findings in EFL, in particular the concept of World Englishes. Finally, there is a remarkable lack of equilibrium between research findings & recommendations and actual teaching practices due to the broken channels of communication between the Ministries of Education and Higher Education on one hand and Universities on the other hand, and even within the same university.

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Evaluating Capitalization Errors in Saudi Female students' EFL writing at Bisha University

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Abstract

English teaching – learning process in Saudi Arabia is often criticized for producing students with low proficiency. One of the most critical areas in which Saudi students demonstrate low proficiency is EFL composition which features low writing ability in content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Capitalization in mechanics is a micro feature of English composition which demands using upper case and lower case in English letters according to the English language conventions. This study evaluates capitalization errors in Saudi female students' EFL writing. The study is conducted in the College of Applied Medical Sciences (for females), Bisha University at Al-Namas in Saudi Arabia. A mixed method of research design is used to collect the data from the real classroom of 20 Saudi female students in the form of assignments, classroom tests and examination copies. The study is supported by the observation of writing process of the students in the EFL classroom and interview of 10 students. Ellis's procedure (1994 cited in Troike, 2006) has been used to describe and evaluate the errors of capitalization. The result reveals that capitalization errors constitute a significant area of errors in Saudi students' writing. In the composition of 12000 words by 20 students, 983 errors are committed across the 10 categories of capitalization. The study suggests that curriculum of English language in Saudi Arabia should implement new pedagogical techniques in capitalization teaching to develop mastery in the principle rules of capitalization and understanding of orthographic-linguistic-cultural conventions of English language.

Keywords: capitalization errors, EFL writing, interlingual & intralingual errors, orthographic malformation, Saudi female students

Introduction

English language has a prestigious status in Saudi Arabia although it is not recognized as the second official language. Al-Seghayer (2012) states that article 50 of the educational policy in Saudi Arabia recommends that students should learn at least one foreign language. English is the main and sole foreign language taught in public and private schools, universities, and different industrial and government institutions. English is used as a medium of instruction in most of the university departments in areas such as science, medicine, engineering, allied health, and other technical subjects. Furthermore, the demand for recruiting and training additional Saudi EFL teachers, translators, and more qualified graduates for various jobs that require English proficiency has grown significantly.

Discussing the present situation of English and attitudes of learners towards learning English among university students in Saudi Arabia, Alabbad & Gitsaki (2011) stated that Saudi Arabia is one of those EFL settings which need change in classroom teaching practices. The common belief among educators is that teaching English in Saudi Arabia is a fairly unsatisfactory process and students have negative attitudes toward the current EFL teaching method.

One of the critical areas in learning process of Saudi students is their low proficiency in EFL composition. Ezza (2010) found that lack of motivation and interests, poor educational policies and less effective approaches to teaching EFL writing are some of the main reasons. While teaching writing skill to Saudi female students, the researcher found that copying and memorizing writing paragraphs, product writing, mother tongue interference, and cultural preference of oral skills are some other reasons of low proficiency in EFL writing.

In EFL context of Saudi Arabia, ability to write accurately and appropriately is needed in order to enable learners to participate in academic discourse of higher education, business and medical sectors, and interaction with multi-national expatriates in Saudi Arabia. These social needs have been envisioned in English language programs at Saudi Arabian universities. For example, course specification for Intensive English for Health Sciences-019 states that the course should enable students to write different forms of composition, such as letters, recommendations, paragraph and emails. The writing content of the course is designed to make the students produce well structured and grammatically correct paragraphs with correct application of mechanics and rhetorical devices. (King Khalid University, 2010)

During the course of teaching, the researcher found that the students in the college of Applied Medical Sciences (Females) at Al-Namas produced writing tasks with multiple kinds of errors spreading across grammar, vocabulary, content, organization and mechanics. Many researchers also experienced that EFL writing of Saudi students contains different kinds of errors. Some of the research studies are summarized here. Al-Sindy (1994) analyzed syntactic interference errors in adult Saudi students' writing and found a great number of errors in their writing such as lexicon, semantics, phonology, and punctuation. Aljamhoo (1996) studied the English writing process of two Saudi graduate students and their problems during the stages of pre-writing, writing and revising. He found that Saudi students face many difficulties in organizational, lexical, rhetorical and punctuations. Al-Arfaj (1996) studied orthographical difficulties of Saudi students in reading and writing. Smith (2002) studied interference of 22 languages with reference to English language and highlighted problems of learners at different levels including Arab learners. Al-Kahtani (2002) studied literacy experiences of a Saudi learner in two different

settings and highlighted difficulties of L1 and L2 orthographic differences, the directionality of reading and writing, and instructional background. Sawalmeh (2013) found a variety of errors in 32 essays written by preparatory year students including capitalization errors which were due to transfer from mother tongue and interference. Raja & Zahid (2013) analyzed obstacles in writing of undergraduate students and found that students faced more difficulty in organization, capitalization, vocabulary and grammar. Mahmoud (2014) evaluated effectiveness of Cooperative Language Learning Approach in which he assessed Saudi students' mistakes of spelling, use of vocabulary, grammar, punctuation as well as coherence. It is evident from the review of these studies that many kinds of errors have been studied exclusively except capitalization errors. It has always been studied along with punctuation errors rather as an exclusive study.

This study is specifically focused on capitalization errors in Saudi students' writing. It recapitulates historical background of capitalization in English language, classification of capitalization errors in Saudi students' writing, identification of the sources of errors, and suggestions for change in teaching EFL writing and curriculum. Capitalization is a prime feature of English orthography which enhances readability of the text by separating the inner elements of the text to punctuate sentences and to distinguish proper nouns from other words (Ritter, 2002). Capitalization in English language distinguishes and integrates thought units. It is very important to rectify the errors of capitalization in order to develop students' composition. While teaching writing skill to the students, the researcher found that Saudi students often commit mistakes in applying capitalization rules. The researcher collected students' assignments, examination copies and classroom works to analyze the writing samples. The findings of the study suggest that the capitalization errors are wide spread across the different rules of capitalization and the errors tend to be intra-lingual. At the same time, L1 doesn't support positively in acquiring rules of capitalization. Students are not familiar with the significance of capitalization in communicativeness of EFL composition.

Literature Review

Writing is the most important productive activity for L2 learners. It is used as a medium of testing knowledge around the world, therefore acquiring a high level of writing proficiency is necessary for professional and academic success (Troike, 2006). Writing a text in L1 or L2 is a complex process which involves learners to communicate by producing content of thought in written form using letters of alphabet and various signs and symbols. Production of writing requires learners to use grammatical accuracy, selection of appropriate vocabulary, cohesion and coherence in the arrangement of content, proper use of punctuation and capitalization. While writing, the learners follow a process which includes planning, outlining a blueprint of composition, generating contents, drafting and putting the content on the paper, and correcting them by revising, editing and modifying. Writing is a mirror of cultural manifestation of the writer through which he communicates with the readers in linguistically accepted norms.

The difference of L1 and L2 is very significant in the context of teaching writing skills to EFL and ESL learners. It has been accepted that the process of writing in one's first language is not the same as the act of writing in one's second language (Kroll, 1994). Silva (1993, cited in Weigle, 2009) states that it is found in review of differences between first and second language writing that writing in a second language tends to be more constrained, more difficult and less

effective than writing in a first language: second language writers plan less, review less, and write less fluently and accurately than first language writers.

Ferris (2003) reviewed a number of studies on ESL writing and found that most of the studies in ESL writing came from L1 sources and ESL writing as a separate entity of research was still in developing stage. He investigated the influence of research in L1 writing on L2 writing and classified the findings in to two groups. First group of scholars (e.g., Raimes, 1985; Spack, 1988; Zamel, 1987) suggested to take the same types of instruction for L2 writers as L1 writers except that they need “more of everything”. He found that the second group of scholars (Eskey, 1983, Horowitz, 1986, Johns, 1995, Silva, 1988, 1993, 1997, and Raimes, 1985) contended that L2 writers were so different from L1 writers that every pedagogical technique advanced by L1 composition research needed to be carefully reconsidered to its appropriateness for L2 writers. Silva (1997, cited in Ferris, 2003) argued that ESL students write fundamentally distinctive and need to be (a) understood, (b) placed in suitable learning contexts, (c) provided with appropriate instruction, and (d) evaluated fairly.

Reviewing the development in ESL writing and its distinctiveness from L1 writing, Krapels (1994) studied L2 writing process research and conducted a survey of several studies and concluded the following findings: A lack of competence in writing in English results more from the lack of composing competence than from the lack of linguistic competence. (e.g., Jones 1982; Zamel 1982; Raimes 1985a)

1. The composing process of “unskilled” L2 writers are similar to those of “unskilled” L1 writers; likewise, the composing processes of “skilled” L2 writers are similar to those of “skilled” L1 writers. Therefore, differences between L1 and L2 writers relate to composing proficiency rather than to their first languages. (e.g., Zamel 1983)
2. one’s first language writing process transfers to or is reflected in one’s second language writing process. (e.g., Edelsky 1982; Gaskill 1986; Jones and Tetroe 1987)
3. The composing processes of L2 writers are somewhat different from the composing process of L1 writers. A finding that contradicts item (2). (e.g., Raimes 1985a,b, 1987; Arndt 1987)
4. First language use when writing in a second language, a fairly common strategy among L2 writers, varies. (e.g., Martin-Betancourt 1986; Cumming 1987; Friedlander) (Some studies offer contradictory findings on this issue.)
5. Using L1 when writing in L2 frequently concerns vocabulary, and enables the L2 writer to sustain the composing process. (e.g., Raimes 1985a; Martin-Betancourt 1986; Arndt 1987) L1 use is often an inventional (e.g., Johnson 1985), sometimes an organizational (e.g., Lay 1982) and occasionally a stylistic strategy (e.g., Cumming 1987).
6. Certain writing tasks, apparently those related to culture-bound topics, elicit more first language use when writing in a second language than other tasks do (e.g., Lay 1982; Burtoff 1983; Johnson 1985). (Krapels, 1994, p. 49-50)

Though these findings are contradictory but exhibit significant development to the overall growth in the body of knowledge concerning second language learning (Krapels, 1994). The findings differentiate between L1 and L2 composition and develop theoretical understanding about ESL/EFL composition with reference to the learning context of ESL/EFL composition, writing instructions, and cultural and linguistic background of the learners. Along with linguistic and cultural variations of the learners, L2 composition instructions also change. For example, studies on Arab / Saudi students’ EFL composition indicate the difference between L1 and L2

composition. Al-Sindy (1994) analyzed syntactic interference errors in adult Saudi students' writing and found that along with syntactic errors, Saudi students had committed a great number of errors in other linguistic aspects such as: lexicon, semantics, phonology, and punctuation. He found that the difficulty in learning EFL/ESL is not just because of syntactic interference, but it is, also, due to semantic, pragmatic, and cultural interference of Arabic. He suggested to EFL teachers to take the interference factor of L2 in all linguistic and cultural areas, as well as other factors in consideration when dealing with Saudi students, in particular, and Arab students in general.

Script of L1, shape of its letters, and directionality of writing in it also influence the process of writing and psychology of the learners. Al-Arfaj (1996) stated that ESL writers of Arabic background need more time to familiarize their eyes and brains with a different writing system of English than those who are native speakers of other languages which use the Roman alphabet (e.g. Spanish). Aljamhoor (1996) studied the English writing process of two Saudi graduate students and their problems during the stages of pre-writing, writing and revising. While describing organizational, rhetorical, and grammatical problems of Saudi students' writing, he found that his subjects were unable to master the usage of capitalization in their English writing as they did not capitalize many proper nouns and even did not begin the sentence with capital letter. One of the subjects wrote the sentence: ... *'where profet mohamed was bom'* and did not capitalize the proper name of the prophet Mohammed. (Aljamhoor, 1996, p. 85)

Smith (2002) has given a detailed account of characteristic difficulties of ESL learners who speak Arabic as their mother tongue and explained how these difficulties appear in their use of English language. Responding to orthography and punctuation difficulties, he stated:

"Arabic orthography is a cursive system, running from right to left. Only consonants and long vowels are written. There is no upper and lower case distinction, nor can the isolated forms of letters normally be juxtaposed to form words....Arabic speakers must, therefore, learn an entirely new alphabet for English, including a capital letter system; and then master its rather unconventional spelling patterns. All aspects of writing in English cause major problems for Arabic speakers, and they should not be expected to cope with reading or writing at the same level or pace as European students who are at a similar level of proficiency in oral English" (Smith, 2002, p. 199).

Smith (2002) has described a number of errors Arab learners usually commit in ESL writing and reading. One of them is capitalization errors evaluated in this study:

"Malformation of individual letters, owing to insufficient early training, or the development of idiosyncratic writing system.... This is most usually seen with capital letters (often omitted), with the letters o, a, t, d, g, and the cursive linking of almost any letters. Many adult Arabs continue to print in English rather than attempt cursive script" (Smith, 2002, p. 200).

Al-Kahtani (2002) studied literacy experiences of a Saudi learner in two different settings: Saudi Arabia and the United States. He elaborated the factors that affected student's growth as a reader and a writer focusing on both process and product. According to him, some problems that the

learner faced were L1 and L2 orthographic differences, the directionality of reading and writing, and instructional background. He recommended for language teachers to be aware of orthographic and linguistic factors of the learners because they may have some impacts on learner's writing ability. Nation (2009) confirmed Al-Arfaj (1996) and Al-Kahtani (2002) and found that Arab learners of English had greater difficulty in putting ideas into written form due to the difference between the writing systems of the learners' first language and the second language.

Al-Sindy (1994), Al-Arfaj (1996), Aljamhoo (1996), Smith (2002), Al-Kahtani (2002), Sawalmeh (2013), Raja & Zahid (2013), Mahmoud (2014) are some studies on Saudi students' writing and present different areas of errors in Saudi students' writing. They have also referred briefly to the errors of capitalization which has been extensively studied in this research.

Using correct form of capitalization is one of the prominent writing conventions in English language (Nation 2009) and capitalization errors is as significant as other areas of research in Saudi students' writing. But a review of these studies ascertains that capitalization errors have not been studied exclusively.

Historical background of capitalization

The convention of using capitalization in English language was developed in 16th and 17th century with the development of punctuation marks. Earlier they were used as a sign of elocution and were not necessary part of syntactics. It was Ben Jonson in 1617 who first recommended syntactical punctuation in England through his English Grammar. The 1625 edition of Francis Bacon's Essays also shows the use of punctuation as syntactical feature in his writings. Robert Monteith in 1704 and Joseph Robertson in 1795 published their influential treatises on syntactical punctuation. The system of punctuation which is used by the writers today has been completed since the 17th century. Three of the most important components were:

1. The space left blank between words
2. Indentation of the first line of a new paragraph
3. The uppercase or capital letter written at the beginning of a sentence and at the beginning of a proper name or a title. (Brown, 2013)

Defining capitalization and capitalization errors

Cambridge Dictionaries Online (2014), the word 'capitalize' (verb) means "to write a letter of the alphabet as a capital or to write first letter of word as a capital".

Capitalization refers to the peculiar feature of English language in which certain words are written in capital letters (upper case) and other words or letters are written in small letters (lower case). There are some particular rules of English language which dictate capitalization to be applied in writing. While teaching writing to EFL learners, the system of capitalization is a significant aspect of English language because it is used to punctuate sentences and to distinguish proper nouns from other words (The Oxford Guide to Style, 2002).

Capitalization makes communication clear, effective and impressive by giving the text a standard and distinctive appearance. It specifies proper and common nouns in the text and enables readers to skim and scan the text faster. Each sentence starting with a capital letter carries a new idea and helps readers to distinguish within different ideas in the text. Capitalization is also a medium to describe different kinds of moods and attitudes of the writer.

Capitalization errors means errors deviated from the established rules of capitalization in English. Viewing capitalization irregularities in the writing of Saudi students, the researcher decided to call them capitalization errors instead of mistakes.

Rules of capitalization

In the study, 8 major rules of capitalizations (1-8) are selected from students' book: Fundamentals of English Grammar by Betty Azar (2003) which is a reference book in the curriculum of the program. Other two rules (9-10) are common errors of capitalization concerned to orthographical differences (Smith, 2002, p. 200) and use of Arabic proper and common noun' (Ritter, 2002, p. 92).

1. The first word of a sentence will be capitalized for example '*We saw a movie last night*'.
2. The name of people will be capitalized for example '*I met George Adams yesterday*'.
3. Titles used with the names of the people will be capitalized for example '*Do you know Professor (Prof.) Alston?*'
4. Months, days, and holidays will be capitalized for example '*I was born in April*'.
5. The names of places. It applies to city, state, province, country, continent, ocean, lake, river, desert, mountain, school, business, street, building, park and zoo, for example '*They are from Mexico*'.
6. The titles of books, articles and movies will be capitalized '*The Old Man and the Sea*'.
7. The names of languages and nationalities and religion. '*She speaks Spanish*', *Buddhism*, *Islam*
8. The pronoun 'I' will be capitalized. '*Yesterday I fell off my bicycle*'. (adapted from Azar, 2003, p. 339)
- 9: malformation of individual letters (Smith, 2002, p. 200)
- 10: use of Arabic proper and common noun' (Ritter, 2002,p. 92)

Source of Capitalization Errors

English and Arabic originate from two different language families. English is an Indo-European language and Arabic is a Semitic language. English has 26 letters which are written with Latin script in Roman alphabets while Arabic has 28 letters which are written with Abjadiyya script in Arabic alphabets. English is written from left to right. Arabic is written from right to left. English follows strict rules of using upper case and lower case in writing while Arabic does not make any distinction between upper and lower case. The rules for punctuation in Arabic are flexible when compared to the English language (BBC, 2014). These fundamental differences between Arabic and English make writing skill complex for Saudi students resulting which they commit errors in many areas. One of the areas where errors are mainly found is in the application of capitalization by Saudi students. Many approaches and theories have been adopted to evaluate and explain the sources and reasons of errors. Contrastive analysis and error analysis are the two significant approaches used by the EFL/ESL writing researchers to explain sources and reasons of errors.

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is an approach used to explain ESL / EFL learners' errors based on comparison of L1 and L2 to determine similarities and differences. This theory is based on Structuralism and Behaviorism of the 1940s and 1950s. The founder of CA, Robert Lado (1957 cited in Troike, 2006) in "*Linguistics Across Cultures*" stated that the theory assumes that the patterns that cause difficulty and the one that do not cause can be predicted and described by

comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student (Troike, 2006).

Contrastive Analysis compares L1 and L2 in two ways. Firstly, it focuses on the surface forms of L1 and L2 i.e contrasting the phonology of L1 and L2 first, then morphology, then syntax, with the lexicon receiving relatively little attention, and discourse still less. The origin of this notion lies in behaviorist psychology of habit formation in the process of Stimulus – Response – Reinforcement (S-R-R). Secondly, it assumes that during learning L2, there will be transfer of acquired linguistic elements of L1 to L2. When the language elements of L1 facilitate appropriately in L2, the transfer is called positive. When the language elements of L1 cause linguistic inappropriateness in learning L2, the transfer is called negative (or interference). Lado (1957 cited in Troike, 2006) further elaborated that the easiest L2 structures are those which exist in L1 with the same form, meaning and distribution and the most difficult are those structures where there is partial overlap but not equivalence in form, meaning, and/or distribution (Troike, 2006).

Corder (1967 cited in Troike, 2006) article on “The significance of learners’ errors” launched Error Analysis (EA) as an approach. This approach described two causes of errors in L2: interlingual and intralingual. Interlingual errors happen between languages resulting from negative transfer or interference from L1. Intralingual errors happen within a language without any attribute to cross-linguistic influence. Intralingual errors are also considered developmental errors and often represent incomplete learning of L2 rules or overgeneralization of them. EA came into picture after the decline of contrastive analysis. Its emergence lies in the shift of language learning theories from Behaviorism to Mentalism. Unlike contrastive analysis, error analysis investigates not only the errors caused by learners’ L1 interference but also the errors which happen in learners’ mind during the process of constructing L2 or due to incomplete learning of L2 rules or overgeneralization (Troike, 2006).

Capitalization is a peculiar convention of English language which is not present in Arabic language. Thus, capitalization errors cannot be simply placed in the category of positive or negative interference because Saudi students do not apply their knowledge of capitalization from Arabic language to English language. But absence of capitalization in Arabic language causes difficulty for Saudi students as compared to those students whose languages use the Roman alphabet e.g. Spanish (Al-Arfaj, 1996). Thus, Saudi students have to learn capitalization rules from the beginning of EFL learning and they have to cautiously approach to the application of capitalization while writing in English. They have to develop a new habit of using capitalization which is dissimilar to the habit of writing in L1. Hence capitalization errors tend to be more intralingual problem than interlingual.

In this section, the review of literature covered the theoretical development of L1 composition and EFL/ESL writing, orthographical and mechanical differences of L1 and L2, and difficulties faced by Arab and Saudi learners in EFL composition process. The review concludes with the historical background of capitalization, definition of capitalization and capitalization errors, selected rules of capitalization, and theory of error evaluation (Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis). In the succeeding sections, the data and research design is presented.

Plan of Study

The present study evaluates errors of capitalization in Saudi students' writing. This study is conducted at the College of Applied Medical Sciences for females, Bisha University, Al-Namas, Saudi Arabia. A mixed method of research design has been used. The data has been collected from the real classroom of 20 Saudi female students in the form of assignments, classroom tests and examination copies. The students are enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Nursing and are taking English language preparatory program.

The researcher collected EFL writing samples, identified the capitalization errors, described the errors with reference to the 10 major rules of capitalization, and explained the errors taking into account the theories of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis. The data was evaluated and interpreted in the context of classroom learning and L1 background of the students. The study is supported with the EFL classroom observation and focused interviews of 10 students. Following procedures used by Ellis (1994 cited in Troike, 2006) have been used in the study:

1. Collection of sample of learner language:
2. Identification of errors
3. Description of errors
4. Explanation of errors (Interlingual and Intralingual factors)
5. Evaluation of errors (Troike, 2006 p. 39-40)

Rationale and Aim of the Study

Course description of Intensive English for Health Sciences-019 aims to enable students to produce a grammatically correct and well organized text that conforms to English writing conventions such as capitalization. In reality, Saudi female students of the course produce writing text with a variety of capitalization errors. It is an institutional need to identify areas of errors in EFL writing of Saudi students and to look for effective pedagogical implications in order to make changes in teaching – learning process in EFL writing classrooms.

Methodology***Participants***

The study includes writing sample of 20 Saudi female students between the ages of 16 to 19 years old. They are enrolled in Bachelor of Science in Nursing Level -1 and are taking English language preparatory program at the College of Applied Medical Sciences for females, Bisha University, Al-Namas Saudi Arabia.

Writing samples

Samples of students' writing were collected between the periods from September 2014 to December 2014. These samples included assignments, classroom tests and examination copies. The researcher randomly selected 5 paragraphs written at home as assignments, 2 paragraphs written in class hours and 1 paragraph written in the final examination.

The topics of the assignments were 'Myself', 'My Father', 'My brother', 'My city', and 'My country'. Word limit was 60 words for each single assignment and thus all five assignments consisted of 300 words. The topics of classroom work were 'My Dress' and 'My religion' with word limit of 100 words each. Thus, classroom work of each student consisted of 200 words.

The topic of writing task in the final examination was 'My car' with word limit of 100 words in descriptive format. Samples collected from each student consisted of approximately 600 words. That will be approximately 12000 words altogether for 20 students.

Procedure

To identify the errors of capitalization, 8 rules of capitalization were adapted from Azar (2003 p. 339). The researcher also included two exclusive categories of errors in Arab students' writing which are though not taught as a rule of capitalization but it is believed to acquire at early level of EFL learning. They are (1) malformation in individual letters highlighted by Smith, (2002, p. 200) and (2) use of Arabic proper and common noun discussed by Ritter (2002 p. 92). The researcher will use the term 'categories' to address these rules or above mentioned categories of capitalization errors. The term 'category' throughout the study has been used to refer to the rules of capitalization mentioned at the end of the literature review.

The researcher supported the explanation and evaluation of the data with the observation and responses of the students to the following questions in the interview:

1. What are the probable reasons for capitalization errors?
2. Do you find rules of capitalization difficult to follow in your writing?
3. What do you expect from your teacher to do to help students in capitalization errors?

Research Questions

1. What are the capitalization errors in Saudi female students' EFL writing?
2. What are the possible reasons?

Result & Discussion

The data shown in Table 1 was collected as a portfolio of 20 Saudi female students who composed approximately 600 words consisting of 5 home-written assignments, 2 classroom-written paragraphs and 1 paragraph written in final examination. Table 1 represents data of capitalization errors from two perspectives.

Firstly in Table-1, the numbers of capitalization errors committed by each student in each category of capitalization are presented horizontally. Total errors of each student are added together and presented in the percentage of errors. The percentage of errors is calculated manually out of the total number of 600 words composed by each student.

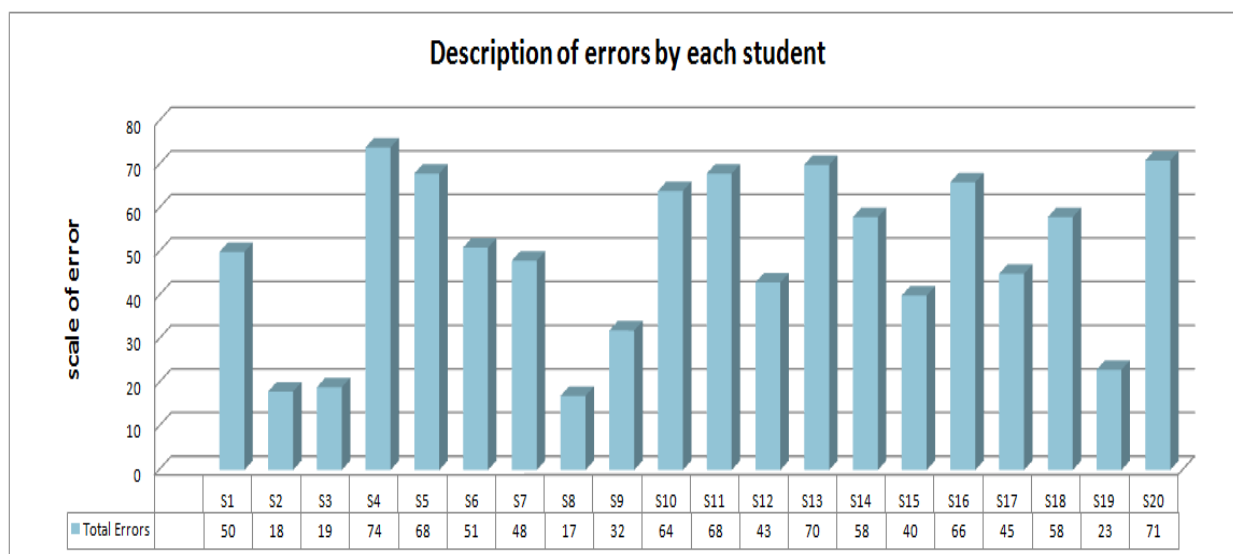
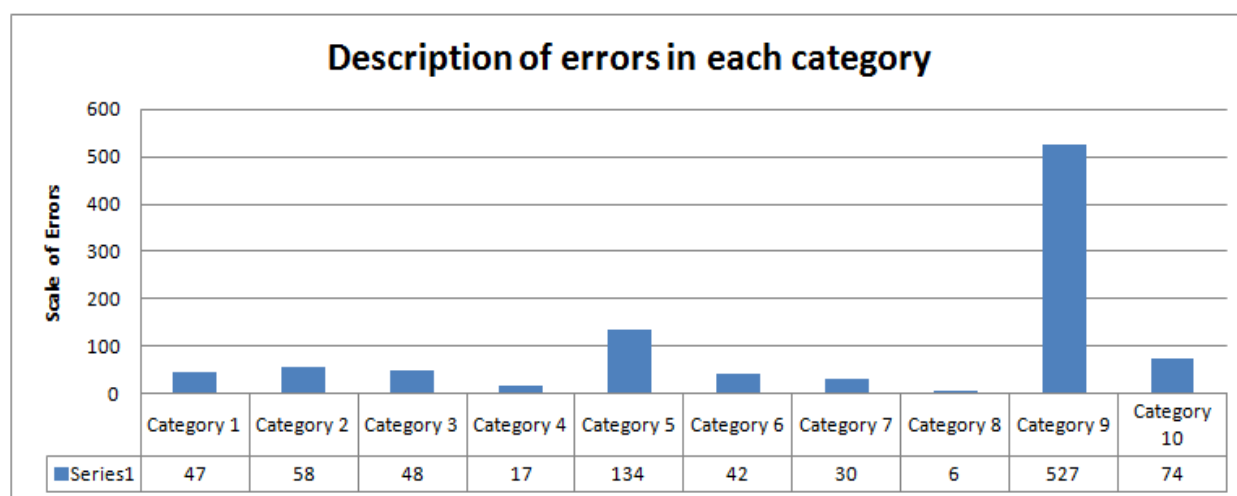
Secondly, the numbers of capitalization errors which are made in each category of capitalization by all the students are presented vertically. Errors in all categories of capitalization are added together and presented in the percentage of errors. The percentage of errors is calculated manually out of the total number of 12000 words (600 words X 20 students = 12000 words) composed by all students.

Table 1. Description of errors by each student & categories of capitalization

Students	Description of Capitalization Errors by Students and Categories (C)										Total Errors	Percentage
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10		
S1	4	6	2	0	9	0	1	0	27	1	50	8.33%
S2	2	4	3	1	2	3	0	0	3	0	18	3%
S3	1	0	1	3	4	4	0	0	6	0	19	3.16%
S4	0	2	4	1	9	5	2	0	44	7	74	12.33%
S5	0	4	4	2	14	0	2	0	40	2	68	11.33%
S6	1	0	3	0	8	1	2	1	29	6	51	8.50%
S7	2	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	35	5	48	8%
S8	1	0	2	0	6	0	0	0	6	2	17	2.83%
S9	6	0	3	1	5	0	0	0	13	4	32	5.33%
S10	2	1	0	2	5	4	1	0	47	2	64	10.66%
S11	7	11	9	0	16	5	3	0	16	1	68	11.33%
S12	0	1	4	0	2	3	4	1	18	10	43	7.16%
S13	0	3	4	0	9	3	1	0	44	6	70	11.66%
S14	3	3	0	1	9	0	4	0	33	5	58	9.66%
S15	0	9	2	1	6	2	0	0	16	4	40	6.66%
S16	2	5	4	0	13	1	4	0	34	3	66	11%
S17	11	0	0	0	7	4	0	0	21	2	45	7.50%
S18	2	5	2	3	3	3	3	2	34	1	58	9.66%
S19	3	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	14	2	23	3.83%
S20	0	2	1	0	4	3	2	1	47	11	71	11.83%
Total errors in each category (C)	47	58	48	17	134	42	30	6	527	74	983	
Percentage errors in each category	0.39%	0.48%	0.40%	0.14%	1.11%	0.35%	0.25%	0.05%	4.39%	0.61%	8.19%	
Total Students' errors = 983 out of 12000 words												8.19%

Table -1 states that out of 20 students, each student has committed errors of capitalization. Even though the students have mastered certain categories of capitalization in school education, they have committed errors in some of the categories of capitalization. Errors by all the students range between lowest number of 17 errors (2.83 %) to a highest number of 74 errors (12.3%) in all the categories of capitalization. The occurrence of errors by each student clearly indicates that capitalization errors are one of the significant areas of errors in EFL writing of Saudi students spreading across all categories of capitalization.

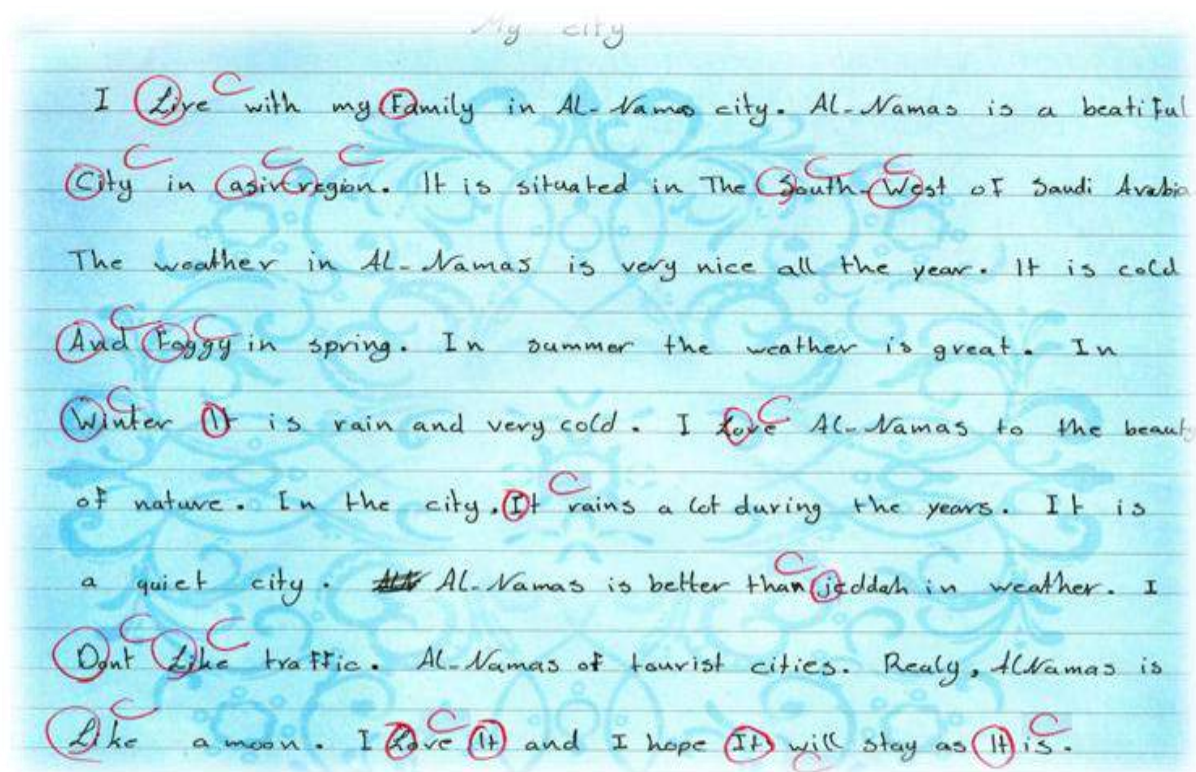
Graph -1 depicts capitalization errors of all 20 students. It displays the errors of each student identified from a composition of 600 words at undergraduate level. Graph – 2 depicts capitalization errors in all 10 categories (Categories refer to rules and convention of capitalization.). All errors in categories have been identified from the writings of 20 students which contain approximately 12000 words.

Graph 1. Description of errors by each student in capitalization**Graph 2. Description of errors in category of capitalization**

In table- 1, each category refers to a certain rule of capitalization and shows performance of the students in that particular category. The results reveal that category-9 contains the highest number of errors i.e. 527 errors which constitute 4.39% of capitalization errors. This category describes malformation of letters as indicated by Smith (2002, p. 200). The data of EFL writing of Saudi students in category-9 indicate that incomplete learning of L2 regarding orthographic convention of English language is a prime reason of errors. Differences between Arabic and English language also attributes to disregarding the application of capitalization. The errors are because of interference of mother tongue as well as incomplete learning.

During the assessment of EFL writing of Saudi students, it was found that malformation of the letters and words is one of the most critical areas of errors. Students face problems in distinguishing and using upper case and lower case. A sample of EFL writing with errors of category-9 is presented in Sample-1:

Sample 1. Student's writing



During the observation of EFL writing classroom, the researcher found that students face difficulty in shaping letters as upper and lower case, consequently their writing portray malformation of letters and words.

Results in table-1 indicate that category-5 is the second category with highest number of errors in capitalization. It contains 134 errors i.e. 1.11%. This category refers to the capitalization of names of places such as city, state, province, country, continent, ocean, lake, river, desert, mountain, school, business, street, building, park and zoo. Observation of EFL writing classroom revealed that Saudi students sometimes translate their knowledge of Arabic writing pattern into English and do not differentiate between the capitalization of proper noun and common noun. The pattern of errors seems confused and over generalized for example in Sample -1 and Sample -2, some proper nouns are capitalized while others are not. This category presents Interlingual and intralingual errors.

Category-10 is the third in the series of categories of errors. There are 74 errors which make 0.61% of errors in this category. This category states capitalization of words borrowed from Arabic language. Students used Arabic words such as *thob* and *al-hijab* in the composition, which are proper nouns and common nouns. No specific rule of capitalization was used for the words borrowed from L1. It can be accounted to the guidelines which are not provided by the course instructor or course materials. Consequently, the students get confused in using capitalization for the Arabic words which are common\proper nouns. These kinds of errors tend to interlingual errors. Sample-2 presents the errors.

Sample 2. Student's writing errors

Arabic common noun	Arabic Proper noun
Thob	Al-failiyah
Ghutra	Al-islam
Bisht	Al-roba Al-khali
kabsa	Al-omrah
Al-Hijab	Al-hajj
Abaya	ramzan

Category-2 is the fourth in the series of the categories of errors in which students have committed 58 errors i.e. 0.48%. Category-2 deals with capitalizing the name of people. During the observation, the researcher found that students were largely familiar with the rule stated in category 2. The possible reason behind the low occurrence of this error is that it is a less complex category of capitalization.

Category-3 is the fifth in the series of the categories of errors. Category-3 states that titles with the names of people should be capitalized such as Mr., Dr. etc. The responses show that students have committed 48 errors which make 0.40%. Topics of writing assignments, class work and examination had little use of application of this category. In spite of little scope of using titles in the writing, the occurrences of the errors reflect that students have incomplete knowledge about the usage of this rule.

Category-1 is the sixth in the series of the categories of errors. In this category, students committed 47 errors i.e. 0.39%. This category states that the first word of a sentence should be capitalized. It is a fundamental rule in English language and a cornerstone of the mechanics of EFL composition. The occurrence of 47 i.e. 0.39% errors is high because it confirms that students are disregarding or facing difficulty even to apply the basic rules of capitalization. It may be due to L1 writing habits.

Category-6 is the seventh in the series of the categories of errors. This category presents 42 errors i.e. 0.35%. This category states that titles of books, essays, articles and movies should be capitalized. This is an elemental need of EFL composition and errors in this category show students are not very well familiar with the application of the rules.

Category-7 is the eighth in the series of the categories of errors. This category states that the names of languages, nationalities and religion should be capitalized. Students committed 30 errors which amount to 0.25%. Use of this category was minimal in the composition but the existence of errors confirms unfamiliarity of students.

Category-4 is the ninth in the series of the categories of errors. This category identifies the number of errors in capitalizing months, days and holidays such as January, Saturday and National day. 17 errors i.e. 0.14% were revealed in this category. Amount of errors are minimal and the second least in the categories. The reasons could be its minimal use in the composition. Referring to the category -3, topics of the writing assignments, class work and examination had little scope of using this rule. Nonetheless, existence of the errors is intralingual errors.

Category-8 is the last in the series of the categories of errors. This category states that the pronoun 'I' should be capitalized even if it occurs in the middle of the sentences. There were 6 errors which make 0.05%. This category has the least number of errors in all the categories. Although the existence of the errors is negligible but it is possible to be related to the problem of malformation as described in category-9.

Students' Responses to Capitalization Errors

During the interview with the students, the researcher found that students commit errors in capitalization due several reasons:

1. When a writing task in classroom requires to be completed within a limited period of time, they could not concentrate on capitalization and their major focus is on the meaning, grammar, spelling and organization of the paragraph.
2. They started learning English from grade 6 where the focus of learning was more on grammar than on writing.
3. They used four line notebooks for practicing upper case and lower case for two years which was not sufficient to be able to write correct order of case.
4. They know the rules of capitalization but they forget while writing in English.

Findings of the study

According to Corder (1967), errors are considered a problem that should be eradicated as soon as possible. Like other errors, capitalization errors need to be addressed in ESL/EFL language programs. Findings of the study establish that capitalization errors are a critical area of errors in Saudi students' EFL writing and these errors are spread across all major categories of capitalization. The study presents the evidence that capitalization errors constitute notable part of errors in EFL composition of Saudi students. Errors from category-1 to category-8 indicate that Saudi students at undergraduate level commit errors in applying principle rules of capitalization. Errors in category-9 and category-10 confirm that orthographic differences of English and Arabic languages and low familiarity with linguistic conventions of English are main sources of errors. Highest numbers of errors of capitalization are found in the category- 9 which deals with malformation of individual letters and words. The result in category -9 corroborates the research of Smith (2002) who highlighted malformation as a specific problem in Arab learners' writing. Referring to sample -1 Student's writing, it is evident that Saudi students face problems in forming the letters such as /c/, /f/, /i /, /k/, /l/, /p/, /s/, and /w/. During analyzing the writing data,

the researcher found that the errors in forming the letters are due to unfamiliarity of distinctions between upper case and lower case. These errors have some similarity with the corresponding upper case such as C, F, I, K, L, P, S, W.

Errors of capitalization are interlingual as well interlingual. They are interlingual because orthographic differences of English and Arabic languages contribute negatively in the occurrences of errors. Errors of capitalization are intralingual because Saudi learners do not transfer rules of capitalization from Arabic language. Mastery in the rules of capitalization maximizes or minimizes the scope of errors. Learners generalize, overgeneralize and overextend in applying upper case and lower case against the established conventions of capitalization. Evaluation of students' writing and researcher's interview with the students reveals some of the following findings:

1. Malformation of letters prevails in the writing of Saudi students. It is noticeable in forming letters such as c, f, i, k, l, p, s, and w.
2. The differences of Arabic and English conventions cause malformation.
3. Saudi students do not have any fixed principle about capitalizing Arabic proper and common nouns.
4. Saudi students lack training in upper & lower case distinction and rules of capitalization.
5. Their primary focus remains on meaning, spelling, vocabulary and structure with the state of anxiety while secondary focus on capitalization and other mechanics.
6. They are more aware with capitalizing first word of the sentence, pronoun 'I' and name of the people than capitalizing name of places, geographical areas and locations.
7. Inadequate instructions at early education are one of the prime causes of the errors.
8. Mechanical parts of writing such as capitalization are considered insignificant at undergraduate level.

Recommendations

To ensure that Saudi students are able to produce well organized and structured text in compliance with rhetorical devices and mechanics which can enable them to participate in academic discourse and socialize them in the academic community, EFL teachers, researchers, and academic bodies will have to consider following recommendations:

1. It is recommended for EFL writing instructors to focus on capitalization along with other mechanics of writing in EFL writing classes.
2. Teaching capitalization should be made the point of focus in teaching EFL writing.
3. Focused feedback on capitalization should be given to the students. It will help learners to know their weakness and will provide an opportunity to correct.
4. Capitalization corrective activities such as encircling capital word in a news paper and matching rules of capitalization with examples should be given.
5. EFL writing classes are to be made more engaging in actual writing practices than explaining how to write.
6. EFL Teachers should be aware of orthographic and linguistic difficulties of learners and provide exclusive treatment in the required area of improvement.
7. EFL teachers should develop their understanding about L1 and L2 composition.

Limitations of the study:

This study included limited categories of capitalization and limited number of female students at preparatory year programs. If this study is conducted on different levels of students of both genders, results may ascertain the study.

Conclusion

The study presented a detailed analysis of errors in capitalization. It investigated interlingual and intralingual errors of capitalization. Awareness with the rules of capitalization, understanding of orthographic differences in English and Arabic languages, need of reinforcement of capitalization at undergraduate levels, and awareness with regional-linguistic complexities in EFL composition were issues addressed in this study. This study has highlighted the errors of capitalization as an exclusive field of study which needs to be investigated further. The study opens new directions of research with focused analysis of capitalization errors in different EFL settings and can find new dimensions in EFL/ESL composition.

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Core Request Strategies among Jordanian Students in an Academic Setting

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the pragmatics of politeness with reference to the core request strategies used by the Jordanian students in an academic setting. The respondents comprised 45 males and 5 females who are studying English language in the national university of Malaysia. The data was collected using a Discourse Completion Test, which the questionnaire consisted of 14 situations. These were combined with a rating scale to weigh the imposition for each situation. The data was analysed based on CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project) and the theory of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The results indicated that Jordanian students used a variety of strategies ranging from the most direct to indirect as the following, inquiry strategy, mind strategy, permission strategy, appreciation strategy and preparatory strategy. The preparatory strategy accounted for 335/700 or 47.86% of the total core request strategies used by Jordanian students. This strategy consider as a polite strategy and indirect. This guides us to say that the Jordanian preferred to be polite and indirect. The indirect strategy could also be attributed to their culture and religious values, whereas the use of direct strategies (the imperative) could be attributed to the closeness and the solidarity between the Jordanian students. This research could be extended to investigate the politeness phenomenon in Jordanian family and social contexts in relation to Islamic values.

Keywords: Politeness, request, culture, Jordanian culture, Core request strategies

I Introduction

Speakers of any language encounter situations in real life in which pragmatic competence comes into play. Making requests is one of these situations. This speech act is very situation-dependent. The speakers need to know how to perform the speech act taking into consideration such aspects as the hearer, the relationship with the hearer, the topic, the purpose of the speech, and the appropriate linguistic forms. Understanding different cultures is a very important factor in communicating successfully with other people from around the world. Misunderstanding a request sometimes leads to problems and causes negative reactions. For example, if an Arabic-speaking student requested a pen his fellow student for a pen in the class by saying, in English, "I want your pen for a moment" it may appear that he is obligating his classmate to give him the pen, and it may be considered an impolite request. When this sentence is expressed in Arabic it does not have the above connotations, but because the requestor does not know that, "Could I please borrow your pen for a moment", is a better way a misunderstanding could occur.

In the case of Jordanian students, misunderstandings may occur when they transfer their Arabic request strategies to other languages such as English or Malay, so the meaning of their requests may then be misunderstood or unacceptable to others. This phenomenon arises because speakers from different cultures hold differing degrees of politeness. Their sensitivity to social variables, also differ which affect their request realization and performance in terms of the content of strategies (Shazly 1993 cited in Eryani, 2007; Al-Ammar, 2000). The findings of Umar (2004), support this view by demonstrating that Arab students of English, even at advanced levels, tend to fall back on their cultural background when formulating their request strategies.

In light of the foregoing discussion, this present study aims to explore the aspects of pragmatics in requests made by Jordanian students in an academic setting. In particular, it aims to investigate politeness strategies in the requests that these students prefer during interactions in a non-native English-speaking country, in this case Malaysia. In this study, the students were provided with a situational questionnaire combined with a rating scale for weighing the imposition of each situation.

In addition to exploring the preferred request strategies used by Jordanian students, this study also investigates the possible causes of misunderstanding which may occur between them and the interlocutors of different cultural backgrounds such as those from Malaysia and other foreign students studying in Malaysia. These include Jordanian students, lecturers and staff of the Malaysian universities. There are students from different nationalities could also communicate with Jordanian, such Indian, Iranian, Pakistanis, and Chinese.

II Background to the Study

Arabic, an official language of the Jordanian society, is spoken in various dialects in Jordan. People in this country still practice Muslim-Arab values which encompass all aspects of their lives. The flood of greetings and ritual wishes heard in an encounter between two Jordanians is amazing. A simple 'thank you' is substituted by a host of expressions of gratitude and many prayers: *mashkuur* which means 'thanks'; *(?alla) yi 'Tiik ?il 'aafyih* which is translated as 'May Allah provide you with the best of health'; *(walla) maa qassart* which means 'You did your best for me'; and *alla yijzaak/yijziik ktheir and jazaaka allaahu khayran*, which are all forms of 'May Allah bless you'. This verbal generosity, wrapped in a predominantly religious discourse, is well-documented in manuals and travel guides pertaining to the Jordanian society.

In research on culture, many scholars relate politeness with the notion of high and low context cultures. According to Hall (1976), Arab culture is considered to be high context (i.e., less direct) and American culture is low context (i.e., more direct). Hall's study continues to be used by some communication scholars, in part because his study makes complex differences in communication understandable. Additionally, empirical research has supported many of Hall's

contentions (Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, Nishida, Kim, & Heyman, 1996). According to Cohen (1990), Arabic language reflects a high-context culture in which “what is not said is sometimes more important than what is said” (p. 42). English, on the other hand, reflects a low context culture in which “words represent truth” (Hall, 1976: 42). Cohen (1990: 43), points out that in Arabic culture directness is much disliked and great pains will be taken to avoid saying ‘no’. He further states that “circumlocution, ambiguity, and metaphor help to cushion against the danger of candor” (p. 43) since a refusal will cause embarrassment.

One of the most important explorations of politeness research can be found in the work of (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The distinction made by Brown and Levinson (1987: 63), between positive and negative politeness leads to another important distinction, that of positive and negative politeness societies. ‘Positive face’ refers to every individual’s basic desire to be wanted. In contrast, the ‘negative face’ represents the want of every actor that his or her person be unimpeded, or in other words, it is related to the desire for freedom from impingement. Brown and Levinson argue that England, for example, can be seen as a negative politeness society when compared to America. Al-Khatib (2001), assumes that Arab society in general, and Jordanian society in particular, is a positive politeness society when compared to England. El-Shazly (1993), in her study of the request strategies in American English, Egyptian Arabic, and English as spoken by Egyptian second language learners, shows that Arab societies express a high tendency towards using conventional indirectness which depends on the use of interrogatives. Most of the previous Arabic studies reviewed in this study show that Arabic societies prefer to be indirect in their requests: they try to be polite by using strategies which could be acceptable to others and make them react politely to them.

Abdul Sattar’s (2009), study indicates that ‘can/could’ is clearly the most prominent modal used by Iraqi postgraduate students to make requests. This means that the respondents prefer to use a preparatory strategy in their requests. Using ‘can or could’ indicates that they are polite students, and it evidently shows that they like to use indirect requests in their speech. In addition, they also prefer to use the supporting moves (internal and external modifiers) such as, grounders and imposition minimizers in their requests, which make the requests more acceptable.

Al-Ammar’s (2000), study reveals that native speakers of English and Saudi students change their requestive behaviour according to the social situations once they communicate with their communities. Directness increases with decreasing social distance and power between the interlocutors. The findings also indicate that English shares with Arabic a rich set of requesting strategies. This finding lends support to the issue of universality in speech act behaviour. Umar (2004), conducted a sociolinguistic investigation into the request strategies used by advanced Arab learners of English as compared to those strategies used by native speakers of English. It was found that native speakers of English used more semantic and syntactic modifiers, such as, “Excuse me sir, could you please lend me your dictionary for a while”, than their Arabic counterparts due to the linguistic superiority of the native speakers group. Moreover, the study demonstrated that Arab students might fall back on their cultural background when formulating their request strategies.

The current study focuses on the pragmatics of politeness in the core request strategies among Jordanian students in an academic setting. It is hoped that the research findings of this study will sensitive speakers of other cultures towards core request strategies used by Jordanians in their requests leading to more successful communication with the Jordanians in the future.

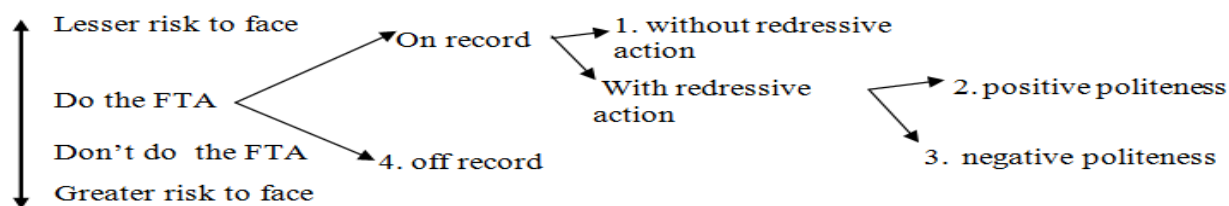
III Theoretical Framework

The authors believe that the abstract notion of ‘face’, which is central to their model, is universal (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 13). Nevertheless, in any particular society, face is expected to be the subject of much central elaboration. It is subject to cultural specifications of many sorts: what acts threaten face, which persons have special rights to face-protection, and

what kinds of personal styles are especially appreciated. Thus, despite its universality, the actual manifestations of politeness or the ways to realize politeness and the standards of judgement differ across cultures. Such differences need to be traced to the origin of the notion of politeness in each culture. Based on the types of face that Brown and Levinson (1987: 13), explored, researchers are able to identify which strategies showing a positive or a negative face according to the subjects' responses. It is reasonable to use Brown and Levinson's (1987), theory in this study because it successfully reflects the universality of the politeness phenomenon among societies all over the world. While some researchers have criticized (Brown and Levinson's, 1987) politeness theory, such as Locher and Watts (2005), for the missing of the contextual analysis; overall it is still applicable for enabling the researcher to analyse the politeness strategies that could be used in different cultures. Therefore, in this study, the researcher adapts this theory to analyse the pragmatics of politeness found in the core request strategies among Jordanian students in an academic setting.

At the centre of any work on politeness is the so called "face". It is exposed throughout interaction which consists of a set of common interactional events –termed 'face-threatening-acts' FTAs (Brown and Levinson, 1987). These FTAs include acts such as criticizing, disagreeing, interrupting, imposing, asking for a favour, or requesting for information or goods. A simple request for information such as, asking the time threatens the hearer face. The requestor presumes right of access to the hearer's time, energy, and attention. When 'performing' (phrasing) FTAs, speakers commonly draw upon linguistic politeness routines so as to defray or mitigate the face- threatening aspect. Phrasings such as: "Could you lend me your pen please" typify verbal interchange rather than: "I want your pen for a moment". Figure 1 below models the options (strategies) available to actors faced with performing a speech act they deem face-threatening.

Figure 1. Possible strategies for performing a FTA (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69)



Brown and Levinson (1987: 69), state that there are two basic aspects of face 'wants': positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to every individual's basic desire for their public self-image to be shown in engagement with, ratification by, and appreciation from others. In other words, this is 'the want to be wanted'. Negative face represents the want of every actor that his or her person be unimpeded or, in other words, it is related to– the desire for freedom from impingement. Positive politeness tactics thus address or invoke others' positive face wants, which are palliated through the demonstration of esteem. Negatively polite constructions contend with negative face, by demonstrating distance and circumspection. In order to protect the mutually vulnerable face needs and minimize the negative effects, the speaker will select the most appropriate strategy of the five strategies in the above figure by assessing the situations at hands and taking three general social variables into consideration: (1) the social distance (D) between the speaker and addressee; (2) the relative power (P) of the speaker and addressee; and (3) the ranking of the imposition (R). The weight of the imposition (W) is measured by the

formula $W = D + P + R$ Brown and Levinson (1987). So eventually, the single index W becomes the motive for the selection of one of these five strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 74-76).

In research on the structures of speech acts, requests have been frequently analysed in terms of discourse sequences consisting of 'head acts' and 'supportive moves'. According to Blum-Kulka et al (1989), head acts refer to the request proper or the main strategy employed to make the request while supportive moves are the peripheral elements and refer to the pre or post-posed moves or strategies that accompany the head act, to better account for the structure of requests. Request head acts are classified according to a directness continuum. Blum-Kulka et al's (1989), classification of request head acts includes three levels of directness: direct strategies, conventionally indirect strategies, and non-conventionally indirect strategies. Five head acts are considered direct (mood derivable, performative, obligation statement, need/ want statement), and two are considered conventionally indirect (query preparatory, suggestory formulae). Non-conventional indirectness, such as (hints), which are a form of or, in cases of extreme imposition, they can choose not to perform the FTA altogether.

Internal modification includes mitigators which soften direct requests and comprise both lexical (diminutives, please, mental verbs such as ethnic/believe) and syntactic conditional, imperfect mitigation. External modification includes optional supportive moves that modify the head act such as, "*I was sick and tired two days ago, could you give me a make-up exam, Prof Mohammad.*" The classifications of the internal and external modifications are explained as the following:

1 Internal Modification

Internal modifications are classified in (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989) CCSARP coding scheme as supportive moves in order to mitigate (downgraders) or enhance (upgraders) the illocutionary force of the request. The classification of external modifications is as follows:

i. Downgraders:

Syntactic Downgraders:

- _Play-down (e.g. "I was wondering if I could join your study group.")
- _Conditional (e.g. "... if you have time.")

Lexical/Phrasal Downgraders:

- _Politeness marker (e.g. "Can I please have an extension on this paper?")
- _Embedding (e.g. "It'd be great if you could put this on the door.")
- _Understate (e.g. "If you have a minute, could you help me with this stuff?")
- _Appealer (e.g. "I need your computer to finish my assignments, okay?")
- _Downtoner (e.g. "Is there any way I could get an extension?")
- _Consultative Device (e.g. "Would you mind lending me a hand?")
-

ii. Upgraders:

- Adverbial intensifier (e.g. "I would be most grateful if you could let me use your article.")

B. External Modifications

External modifications are classified in (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989) CCSARP coding scheme as supportive moves that may be attached either before or after the head act to mitigate the illocutionary force of the request. External modification might serve to either soften or emphasize the force of the whole request. The classification of external modifications is as follows:

- _Preparator (e.g. "Hey, you had this management class, right?")
- _Grounder (e.g. "I wasn't in class the other day because I was sick.")
- _Disarmer (e.g. "I know this is short notice")
- _Promise of Reward (e.g. "I'll buy you dinner.")
- _Imposition Minimizer (e.g. "I will return them in an orderly fashion.")
- _Sweetener (e.g. "Today's class was great.")
- _Pre-pre strategy (e.g. "Hello sir, how are you today?...")
- _Appreciation (e.g. "I would appreciate it.")
- _Self introduction (e.g. "Hey, I'm in your politics class.")
- _Confirmatory strategy (e.g. "I would be grateful if you could help me.")
- _Getting a pre-commitment (e. g., "Could you do me a favor? ...").
- _Apology (e.g. "I'm sorry I can't give you the lesson on Monday.")

In this study, the Blum-Kulka et al (1989), analysis framework is used to identify the preferred core request strategies used by Jordanian students in an academic setting, the discussion and findings concentrate on the core request strategies rather than discussing the requests' supporting moves and alerters, which is defined as the opening elements preceding the actual requests, such as terms of address or attention-getters as 'hi, hello'.

IV Research Design

This study uses a framework that has been used in some of the most important studies of speech acts and requests in particular. The Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989) has been the most extensive cross-cultural study of speech acts to date. It investigates two speech acts, requests and apologies, across seven different languages and cultures—four varieties of English (American, Australian, British, and Canadian), Danish, German, and Israeli—in the same 16 social situations: 8 for requests, and 8 for apologies.

In introducing the CCSARP, Kulka et al. (1989: 18), propose nine types of strategies for core requests, from the most direct to the most indirect: mood derivable, performatives, hedged performatives, obligation statements, want statements, suggestory formulae, query preparatory, strong hints, and mild hints. Among these request strategies, three levels of directness can be identified. Referring to the strategies in the above order, the first five strategies are considered direct while the sixth and seventh strategies are regarded as conventionally indirect. The last two strategies are viewed as non-conventionally indirect strategies. In addition to classifying requests by directness or indirectness, the CCSARP also makes the following distinctions regarding request strategies: hearer-oriented; speaker-oriented; inclusive, in which hearer and speaker are both included; and impersonal, when neither speaker nor hearer is mentioned.

50 Jordanian students participated in this research by filling out the DCT questionnaire. 700 request utterances were obtained ($14 \times 50 = 700$). The method of data collection of this study is the elicitation method. A DCT written questionnaire used to obtain data with a transcription. The DCT combined with a self-assessment method, namely, a rating scale that the respondents were asked to use to rate the imposition of their requests on a 5-point scale, with 5 being the highest. The students were invited to answer the questionnaire form in a lecture hall. I distributed the questionnaire to them then requested them to answer it. After they complete answering the form, I collected it from them.

1 Research Instrument

A. DCT Questionnaire

This study replicates the design of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Kulka et al., 1989). A DCT questionnaire was used as the primary method to obtain a sample of data on requestive features of the language used in this speaking act. A total of 14 request situations were included in the questionnaire and were designed to reflect the types of Jordanian interaction that would occur in the daily life of these students in an academic setting. These 14 request situations were designed to elicit the preferred core request strategy used by Jordanian students in an academic setting. The DCT was also combined with a self-assessment method, namely, a rating scale that the respondents were asked to use to rate the imposition of their requests on a 5-point scale, with 5 being the highest. A total of 50 Jordanian native speakers completed the questionnaire by providing 14 requests based on the 14 request situations. Each participant was given the questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of some questions to obtain demographic information about the participants. Table 1 shows that more men than women participated in this study.

Table 1. Distribution of the participants by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	45	86.0
Female	5	14.0
Total	50	100.0

Each participant also provided details of their age. On the basis of the information provided in the questionnaire, review appendix, each participant was allocated a code JS (number) = Jordanian student 1, 2, 3 which are used in the citation of examples in the analysis. Table 2 provides some examples of how each respondent in this study was identified.

Table 2. Gender and Age of the Participants

Abbreviation	Age	Gender	Abbreviation	Age	Gender
JS1	30s	Male	JS26	20s	Male
JS2	20s	Male	JS27	20s	Male

In this study, the researcher considered other strategies not mentioned in the CCSARP, name, inquiry strategy, permission strategy, mind strategy, and appreciation strategy. The inclusion of these additional strategies allows the incorporation of the element of culture, which was not taken into consideration in the CCSARP.

The names of the above strategies are based on the typical locutions used in the Arabic language. For example, the mind strategy is named after the word 'mind', which appears in the analysed utterances (e.g. 'Do you mind?' or 'Would you mind?').

V Findings

The findings on the usage and the distribution of the request strategies in the core requests are presented in Table 3. Although request is found in all languages, the realization of this speech act varies according to the culture of the community. As noted earlier, some adaptations were made to the process of analysing the data, which were not adapted in the

CCSARP ((Kulka et al., 1989: 278). As a result, these new strategies are considered culturally specific manifestations that characterized the request in the Jordanian society. The additional strategies are marked with an asterisk (*).

Table 3. Distribution of strategies used in Jordanian students' core requests

Strategy employed in core request	Frequency	Percentage
1. Preparatory strategies	335	47.86%
2. Inquiry strategies*	105	15%
3. Hint strategies	73	10.44%
4. Permission strategies*	49	7%
5. Mind strategies*	43	6.15%
6. Intention strategies	38	5.43%
7. Want inquiry	23	3.26%
8. Need statement	20	2.86%
9. Appreciation strategies*	7	1%
10. Mood derivable	7	1%
Total	700	100%

The following discussion elaborates on the findings presented in Table 3 As indicated in the table; Jordanian students employed all the 10 types of core request strategies investigated in this study. The findings for each of these strategies are explained in detail with some examples.

A Preparatory Strategy

The preparatory strategy (can, could) was by far the most frequent strategy employed in the Jordanian students' core requests. Altogether, the preparatory strategy accounted for 335/700 or 47.86% of the total core request strategies. This strategy conventionally checks on the preparatory condition for the feasibility of the request. The results show that the Jordanian students' requests typically involved the verbs of possibility (ممكن, هل من الممكن): "can" as in example (1) or "could" as in example (2).

(1) Can I borrow your dictionary for a moment? I just want to understand the meaning of this word. (JS 1)

(2) I am going to get a new job in a company and need a recommendation letter from my lecturers. Do you think you could write me a good one? (JS 5)

The use of internal modifications with the preparatory strategy is illustrated in example (3) below:

(3) I need a letter of recommendation. I was wondering if you could write it for me. (JS 4).

Some respondents' requests also contained internal modifications (linguistic elements or syntactical structures within the request proper) and they appeared to be widely used in this type

of request strategy. For instance in example (3), the internal modification, *akon mamnonanlaka, akon saeedan jedan, atmana katheran*, (أكون ممنونا لك, أكون سعيد جدا, أتمنى كثيرا), which means 'I was wondering, I hope, I wish' was added to the basic core request. In fact, a few internal modifications accompany the core requests with preparatory strategy, as illustrated in examples (4) and (5):

(4) Excuse me, I'm looking for a book, but I can't find it here. Do you happen to know where it might be? (JS 9)

(5) I was hoping you could tell me if the Chairperson is in. If not, do you know when he/she will return? (JS11).

A. Inquiry Strategy

As shown in Table 3, the inquiry strategy was the second most-used strategy accounting for 105/ 700 or 15% of the total core requests. This type of request was ordinarily used to ask for information, as in examples (6) and (7):

(6) Excuse me, is the Chairperson in the office right now? (JS 4)

(7) Hello, do you know where the medical centre is? (JS 2)

B. Permission Strategy

The permission strategy occurred 49 times, accounting for 7% of the total core requests. In this strategy, the speaker asks the hearer for permission to perform the requested action as in examples (8) and (9). Here, terms such as 'may I' or 'might I' were used:

(8) May I borrow your camera? I have an invitation to the International Students' Celebration this weekend. (JS9)

(9) Excuse me, might I borrow a pen for class? (JS11)

C. Mind Strategy

The mind strategy occurred 43 times, accounting for 6.15% of the total core requests. At this point, it is important to note that permission and mind strategies are functionally similar to the preparatory strategy in that they conventionally check on preliminary conditions for the realization of the request.

In employing the mind strategy, the speaker checks if the hearer has any objection to performing the request as in examples (10) and (11):

(10) I have a university conference that requires some photos; do you mind if I use your camera? It'll only be for a day or so. (JS 8)

(11) Would you mind if I ask you to help me move this weekend? (JS 9)

D. Hint Strategy

The hint strategy occurred 73 times or 10.44%. The relative frequency of hint was obviously a function of inferences in specific contexts, as in example (12), where the speaker was asking to borrow lunch money.

(12) I forgot to bring my wallet today. (JS 4)

E. Intention Strategy

The intention strategy, which occurred 38/700 times (5.43%) in the data, is used when the speaker wants to check a precondition, namely, the addressee's willingness to fulfil the request, as in examples (13) and (14):

(13) I forgot my wallet. Will you lend me 10 ringgit? (JS 2)

(14) Would you please extend the deadline? I have another exam in this course on the same day. (JS 7)

It is appeared in the data of this research that the requests involving the intention strategy were usually made from the hearer's perspective.

F. Want Inquiry Strategy

Want inquiries occurred 23 times (3.26%) and were more frequently used than the intention strategy. In this strategy, the speaker phrases the request locution as if they are checking to see whether the hearer would like to do the requested action, as in examples (15) and (16):

(15) Do you want to help me move? (JS 15)

(16) Excuse me Professor Salih, would you be willing to write me a letter of recommendation? (JS 3)

G. Need Statement Strategy

Need statements, as illustrated by example 17, occurred 20 times (2.86%).

(17) Hello Professor Ahmad, how are you? I need to make an appointment with you to talk about my thesis. Do you know when you will be free? (JS 5)

H. Appreciation Strategy

The appreciation strategy as in example (18), occurred in 7 instances, accounting for 1% of the total core requests.

(18) I would greatly appreciate your help Professor Salim if you could lend me the reference book. It is not in the library. (JS 22)

I. Mood Derivable Strategy

The mood derivable strategy as in example (19), also occurred 7 times (1%).

(19) Hi sir, you buy lunch today. I'll get it next time. (JS 6)

The use of the mood strategy (the imperative) is rare and it only occurred scenarios involving close friends (situational questionnaire 1 and 2), i.e., in contexts with no social distance. Jordanian students sometimes use this strategy because there is a strong friendship between the requester and requestee (for example, best friends), and also because there is solidarity between the requester and requestee.

VI Discussion of Results

The results indicate that the most preferred core request strategy was the preparatory strategy which conventionally checks on the preparatory condition for the feasibility of the request. The Jordanian students' requests in this category typically involved the verbs of possibility (ممکن, هل من الممكن) *Momkin, Hal mnalmomkin*, (can or could), for example, 'I forgot my wallet. Could you lend me 10 ringgit?' (JS 2). The usage of this strategy is a polite gesture to the requestee in the Jordanian culture. The other core request strategies which were used are mentioned in table. 3. All these strategies were identified in the analysis with examples for each strategy.

This study contributes to cross-cultural understanding in that it has identified the manner in which Jordanian students in a public university in Malaysia performed the speech act of making a request. In the context of other cultures, they might be perceived by others as impolite or insincere whenever they were engaged in this face- threatening act. An overall view of the request data collected from DCT questionnaire revealed that indirectness was the most preferred approach employed by the subjects in almost all situations. According to Reiter (2000), this "could be explained by the fact that in uttering a conventionally indirect request the speaker is balancing clarity and non-coerciveness, hence ensuring that his/her utterance will have the correct interpretation and the right impact, thus leading to success" (p.173). The preparatory strategy is the most preferred among Jordanian students in the academic setting, usually in the forms of 'can' or 'could' to check the feasibility of the request. This indicates that Jordanian

postgraduate students used strategies to make requests politely and indirectly. As claimed by Blum-Kulka (1989), conventional indirectness is often employed during the negotiation of face, which allows interlocutors to end the interaction successfully and politely.

As for the production of the requests, certain sociolinguistic principles characterized the performance of the Jordanian students in terms of semantic formulae including both “request head act strategies” and “request supportive move strategies” such as the following example, (4) *Excuse me, I'm looking for a book, but I can't find it here. Do you happen to know where it might be?* (JS 9). Jordanian students prefer to use the grounding external modifier as mentioned in the example (4) *"Excuse me, I'm looking for a book, but I can't find it here."* They Use this type of external modifier to be indirect in their request.

It was also found that Jordanian students utilized their preferred strategies in making requests; and it was clear that they used many external modifications (supporting moves) in their requests with the preparatory strategy being the most used modification strategy among the Jordanian students. This implies that it is their language norms and culture that determine the choice of certain speech act strategies because the culture of Jordanian society encourages a person to be more polite and indirect in their speech.

The discussion above would not be objective if it judges the directness or indirectness of the requests solely on the strategies used for the core requests, although it might be the most salient indicator. Keeping the similarities and differences in mind can help resolve possible misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication, and enable people from different cultures to make appropriate requests that comply with the rules of the target language so that, ideally, they can achieve their goals without seeming to be discourteous.

VII Conclusion

In this study, the features of the Jordanian students' requests in each of 14 situations were discussed, including the weight of imposition in each request, and the core request strategies chosen. It was found that the Jordanian students preferred to use the preparatory strategy which occurred in 335 out of 700 instances, regardless of the context and the change in social variables. However, there was an increase in the use of other strategies when the requestee had greater power than the requestor (situation 11) or when the weight of the request was relatively high (situation 5). Social distance in terms of familiarity and social power seemed to exert a lot of influence on the choice of core strategy employed by Jordanian students' when making their requests, as the preparatory strategy was the most used strategy regardless of the social variables, except in the case of requests for information.

The preparatory strategy was also used to alert the hearer about the ensuing request by announcing that he or she would make a request by asking about a potential availability of the hearer for carrying out the request. The external modification ‘imposition minimizers’ were also common.

This research provides insights that could be of use to other researchers working in this field. For instance, the data for this research was provided by native speakers of Arabic languages, in this case Jordanian students in an academic setting. This could serve as a base line for comparison with the learners' realization behaviour to detect possible deviant realization patterns which may be caused by interference from their first language. Moreover, future research could focus on defining the social variables or include more social factors in the study.

To conclude, it should be noted that Jordanian students in Malaysia interact with other students from different cultures, such as Malaysians, Chinese and Indian as well as English-speaking international students. In this broad cultural mix, the possibility of misunderstandings among students is high. Although there may be similarities in the strategies of requests, politeness and directness in all these groups, they perform requests differently. While some cultures prefer indirectness and politeness; the actual performance of politeness and indirectness

may be different from one culture to another. What is polite for the Jordanian students may be considered as impolite in the Malay or English cultures. When the Jordanian students in university try to be polite to their classmates and lecturers, they actually use the strategies of their first language in making requests. However, sometimes they rely on a direct and literal translation (word for word) of their native language into the target language, which results in some cases being misunderstood. It is hoped that this study will provide a better understanding of the request strategies of Jordanian students and contribute to improve cross-cultural understanding. This research could be extended to investigate the politeness phenomenon in Jordanian family and social contexts in relation to Islamic values.

VIII Implication

The responses of the participants to the DCT questionnaire revealed that they prefer the preparatory core strategies and grounding external modification. Jordanian preferred indirect core request strategy and evade being direct in their requests. It is clear that they used external and internal modification to make their request more suitable for the requestee based on their culture. This research could be extended to investigate the politeness phenomenon in Jordanian family and social contexts in relation to Islamic values.

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X Appendices

A. Appendix (A) DCT Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this survey. We have created **14 situations** to explore the preferred request strategies that the Jordanian students use in the academic setting. Please try to imagine that these situations are real and please write down what you would say in these situations in real life.

Part 1:

Personal information:

Age: 20s 30s 40s 50s

Gender: Male or Female

Are you an Undergraduate or Graduate student? Please circle: Undergraduate, Graduate

In which state of Jordan were you born?

Part 2: The following DCT Questionnaire contains the situations combined with the impositions ranking scale.

1. You are a student. Your best friend has just bought an expensive new camera. You ask your best friend to lend it to you since you are going to a club activity this weekend. What would you say to your best friend?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below.

	1 2 3 4 5
2. You are a student. You ask your best friend to lend you RM10 for lunch since you forgot bring your wallet and you are very hungry. What would you say to your best friend:	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
3. You are a new student on campus looking for the medical center. You ask a male student walking towards you where it is. What would you say to him?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
4. You are a student in a computer lab. You looked in your school bag for a pen, but could not find one. You see a girl sitting next to you with extra pens. You decide to borrow a pen from her. What would you say to her?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
5. You are a moving out next weekend. You would like to ask your friend to help you move out. What would you say?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
6. You need to know the time and you see a female classmate sitting behind you has a watch. You have only talked to her occasionally and do	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5.

not know her very well. What would you say to her?	1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
7. In a language class when you are reading an article, you come across an unknown word. You see that a male classmate sitting next to you has a concise dictionary on his desk, so you ask him if you could borrow it for a second. What would you say to him?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
8. Due to some family-related reasons you are not able to finish a paper on time. You would like to ask your male instructor for permission to extend the deadline. What would you say to him?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
9. You were sick and missed your exam, so you ask your female instructor if she would give you a make-up exam. What would you say to her?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
10. You are asking your advisor who is a male professor if he could lend you the reference book since you could not find it in the library.	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below.

What would you say to him?	1 2 3 4 5
11. You are a student. You want to make an appointment with your advisor who is a female professor regarding your thesis. You see her walking in the hallway next to the department's office. What would you say to her?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
12. You need a letter of recommendation for a job application, and you would like to ask your instructor who is a male professor if he would write a letter of recommendation for you. What would you say to him?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
13. You are a student. You ask a middle-aged male librarian to help you find a book which you could not find on the shelf. What would you say to him?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5
14. You are a student. You ask a female staff member working in the office of the Department's Chair if the Chair is in the office right now. What would you say to her?	Please judge the imposition in this request on a scale from 1 to 5. 1 is the LEAST imposing all the way to 5, which is the MOST imposing. Please underline the level chosen for this request below. 1 2 3 4 5

Could Explicit Training in Metacognition Improve Learners' Autonomy and Responsibility?

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Abstract

This paper aims at highlighting the importance of students' training in metacognitive learning strategies as a way to build their autonomy and responsibility. It concerns itself with providing a practical educational model for college preparatory year programs. The suggested prototype is informed by a small scale research that involved 44 students and 14 EFL teachers in a college in Saudi Arabia , the findings of which suggest that students who join the program need explicit training in the use of metacognitive language learning strategies. The model also draws on the experience of the author as a teacher and manager of the English language center where the study took place. The collected data confirms what has been reported in the related literature and suggest that explicit training in the use of metacognitive learning strategies would help new college students to develop both autonomy and responsibility.

Keywords: learning Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, EFL

Introduction

College students need to be empowered with the required knowledge, the suitable attitudes and the relevant skills to enable them to succeed in their education. A number of studies have highlighted the role of metacognitive learning strategies in increasing students' motivation, autonomy & responsibility (Cross & Paris, 1988; Eisenberg, 2010; Martinez, 2006; Paris & Winograd, 1990; Ray & Smith, 2010; Schraw et al., 2006; Whitebread et al., 2009). Most Saudi students who join a college Preparatory Year Program (PYP) find themselves lost and confused due to the cultural shock caused by the unfamiliar college life and study culture (Hassan, 2012). Both experience and research suggest that this class of students need to be trained in metacognitive strategies in order to succeed as college students. In addition, research evidence suggest that metacognition strategies are teachable (Cross & Paris, 1988; Haller et al., 1988; Hennessey, 1999; Kramarski & Mevarech, 2003). Informed by the results of a small scale study that involved 44 PYP students and 14 of their EFL teachers, this paper proposes a practical model to train students in metacognitive strategies through a learning-by-doing approach.

Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies have drawn the attention of researchers as early as the 1960s resulting from the influence of cognitive psychology on language learning (Burden, 1997). Since then, a great deal of literature has been published to classify, define and research language learning strategies (Rubin, 1975; Wong-Fillmore, 1976; Tarone, 1977; Naiman et al., 1978; Bialystok, 1979; Cohen & Aphhek, 1981; Wenden, 1982; Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Conti & Kolsody, 1997). However, the term metacognitive strategies was identified overtly only as a subcategory of language learning strategies (e.g., O'Malley, 1985; Oxford, 1990). Nonetheless, metacognitive language learning strategies have been the focus of many research endeavors (e.g., Goh, 1997, 1998; Goh & Yusnita, 2006).

In the context of EFL education in Saudi Arabia, there have not been studies bearing on the metacognitive learning strategies. On the other hand, there have been a number of studies bearing on language learning strategies (McMullen, 2009; Aljunaid, 2010; Aljhaisoni, 2012). This lack of focus on metacognitive learning strategies leaves a gap in the related literature. Hence, this paper is an attempt to fill this gap and to raise the awareness of all stakeholders to the importance of formally training college students, particularly PYP students, in metacognitive learning strategies.

Metacognitive Learning Strategies

Perhaps the simplest definition of metacognitive learning strategies is the one advanced by John Flavell who originally coined the term metacognition in the late 1970s to mean "thinking about thinking" (Flavell, 1979, p. 906). Since then, most suggested definitions remained in essence faithful to Flavell's. For instance, Cross and Paris defined metacognition as "the knowledge and control children have over their own thinking and learning activities" (1988, p. 131); while Kuhn and Dean suggested that metacognitive learning strategies are "awareness and management of one's own thought" (2004, p. 270), or simply as Martinez puts it, "the monitoring and control of thought" (2006, p. 696).

With relation to English language teaching, Richards considers metacognitive strategies to refer to 'those conscious or unconscious mental activities that perform an executive function in the management of cognitive strategies' (2008, p.11). Richards elaborates that these strategies are necessary for the management of cognitive strategies used by learners to process and store the

acquired input and therefore learn. Similarly, O'Malley defined metacognitive language learning strategies as the operational activities undertaken by learners to plan and think about their learning and to monitor their production and comprehension in order to evaluate their learning activities through self-monitoring and self-management (1985, pp.582-584). On the other hand, Oxford used the term to refer to actions taken by learners to focus, plan and evaluate their learning (1990, pp.9-17). This same classification was reproduced by Goh (1997, 1998) who suggested that metacognitive strategies for self-regulation by language learners in a listening class are exercised through planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning.

In this paper, the term metacognitive learning strategies is used to refer to the learner's learning needs and preferences as well as planning, self-regulation and organizational strategies; which include their ability to manage their time, prioritize their tasks, gather and organize study materials and arrange a study space, the ability to monitor mistakes, monitor the learning process and evaluate the degree of success of their learning. In fact, these strategies are used not only to learn in class but rather to manage the overall learning process.

Learner Responsibility and Autonomy

Learner responsibility and autonomy are two key characteristics that help nurture successful college students. The two characteristics are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. A learner is said to be responsible when he realizes that he needs to make efforts to learn and not just rely on his/her teacher or others to teach her/him. Learner responsibility is demonstrated through the steps learners initiate to 'consciously monitor their own progress' and the actions they take to 'use available opportunities to their benefit, including classroom activities and homework' (Scharle & Szabo, 2000, p.3).

Learner responsibility engenders learner autonomy. This concept implies that a learner takes initiatives and makes decisions about his learning freely and without help. However, he is aware that he is accountable for his actions. This definition suggests that responsibility is inherent in autonomy. An autonomous but irresponsible learner may misuse his freedom and end up with negative results. For instance, an autonomous learner may take the initiative to interrupt the teacher to ask a question or clarify an issue, which is encouraged for interactive learning, or he may interrupt him simply to disturb the lesson. The argument made here is that learner responsibility harnesses learner autonomy, and that the latter can only be achieved through formal training in the use of metacognitive learning strategies in order to raise learners' awareness towards their active role in consciously making decisions about their learning.

The research

This paper is based on two small-scale studies; one involving PYP students and the other surveying EFL teachers. The students' survey sought to find out what these students' English proficiency is low. On the other hand, the teachers' questionnaire aimed at establishing why learning strategies students make use of.

The Students' survey

The idea of seeking the students' opinions on this very important issue rests on the premise that the students themselves are better judges of their situation and can describe their learning experiences in a way that is genuine and authentic. In addition, the voice of the students is not often heard; although my personal experience and those of the colleagues I spoke to suggest that the students share some responsibility in their failure to learn English.

A number of 44 beginner students participated in the survey which sought to find answers to the above-mentioned question. In fact, these students have been placed in the beginner level based on their scores in the PYP English placement test. Prior to joining college PYP English, they have had the opportunity to study English for at least six years (or even 10 to 12 for some). The placement test used to screen and place PYP students in suitable levels, always suggest that 3/4 of these students need to start from the beginner level (Alswede & Daf-Allah, 2012).

The students were asked to list the reasons for their failure to benefit from the pre-college English classes. They proposed three main reasons for such failure:

- Teachers:
The Students have reported that their failure would be attributed to the fact that their EFL teachers were not qualified, were not motivated, were absent most of the time, used Arabic most of the time, taught the test, and did not seem to enjoy teaching.
- Teaching materials:
Students have reported that they did not find the teaching materials to be neither interesting nor attractive; adding that the learning context as well as the methodologies used were not conducive to learning English.
- Students:
The students also reported that they were also responsible for their failures to benefit from these English classes because of their lack of motivation and commitment, because of their frequent absences and because of their negative attitude towards English.

Without going into much details about these factors, this paper is only concerned with the students' related reasons as the two other factors could be dismissed given the strict recruitment policy and the fool-proof text book selection criteria that are implemented by the PYP English in the majority of the colleges in the kingdom.

It is worth noting that the situation in the PYP English is different from what these students have experienced in their pre-college education. First, the teachers are recruited through a process which allows only for suitably qualified and experienced EFL teachers to be employed. In addition, the syllabi have been carefully designed to suit the learning needs of the college students. Accordingly, textbooks and other teaching materials are evaluated and adopted judiciously. In fact, text books are evaluated and selected to match the learning objectives of the course they have chosen for. In short, the two first reasons advanced by the students as being responsible for their failures in pre-college EFL education are not found in the college PYP English.

The only reason that remains relevant therefore is the students' role in their learning. While issues related to motivations and attitudes were advanced by the students as reasons behind their failure to benefit for their prior EFL education, this paper will only focus on the role of metacognitive learning strategies and how they could be integrated in the EFL education. It has often been observed by the author and also reported by many EFL teachers that PYP English students behave as though they do not know how to study, nor do they show that they understand their role in the learning process. For instance, they rely on learning strategies, such as memorization and expecting their teachers to motivate them to perform, inherited from high school but which are not effective in college. To address the issue, many colleges have introduced a college study skills course for PYP students. However, the course fails to equip students with the useful study skills they need as it is mostly theoretical. In addition, the course is assessed through summative forms of assessment designed in the form of multiple choice

questions. In fact, it has been observed that the students do not seem to benefit much from this course as they often fail to turn the knowledge acquired into daily practices in the classroom. For instance, students who have just taken a lecture on note taking would attend subsequent classes without pens or notebooks.

Teachers' survey

In order to ascertain what effective learning strategies PYP students use, it was very important for this study to identify these strategies in order to compare them with the documented learning strategies that have reported to be used by good language learners. The findings of the study confirm the findings of two recent research studies on the topic (Hassan, 2012 & Khallid, 2004). The findings of these works suggest that the low achievements are mainly due to the students' learning culture of depending on others for motivation and evaluation, which they had inherited from pre-college educational experiences. However, the two studies did not make any practical suggestion on how the issue could be solved. This research came to fill that gap in the related literature.

On the other hand, the teachers' survey focused on finding what language learning strategies their students use. The results suggest that although some of the students could be using cognitive language learning strategies, very few of them use metacognitive learning strategies. In view of these finding, the argument is made for the inclusion of explicit training in metacognitive learning strategies in the PYP. This model could inform the existing college study skills courses by revisiting its instructional and assessment strategies. The paper concludes with a description of practical suggestions on how this model could be included in the English PYP program in the institution where the research took place.

In order to focus more on the students and learning strategies, a survey inspired by Rubin and Thompson's characteristics of good learners (1982) was distributed to 14 EFL teachers involved in the PYP and the raw results are shown by table 1.

Table 1. Language learning strategies used by PYP students as observed by their EFL teachers

Good learners' Characteristics	All (100%)	Most (66-99%)	Some (36-65%)	Few (1-35%)	None (0%)
1. Autonomous	0	0	1	9	1
2. Organized	0	0	5	6	0
3. Creative	0	0	2	9	0
4. Self-reliant	0	0	2	7	2
5. Motivated	0	0	5	6	0
6. Recall past learning		2	2	7	0

7. learn from errors	0	0	4	5	2
8. Use prior linguistic knowledge	0	2	4	5	0
9. Use contextual cues for comprehension	0	1	5	5	0
10. Make intelligent guesses	0	1	3	7	0
11. Use effective learning strategies	0	1	1	8	1
12. Use compensation techniques to communicate	0	2	5	4	0
13. Manage their time effectively	0	0	2	7	2
14. Vary communication techniques	0	1	2	5	3

The results suggest that the participating EFL teachers have observed that very few PYP students make use of good language learning strategies. With only 35 % of the student using most of the strategies listed above, it would be safe to conclude that 75% of the students need training in the use of learning strategies for their EFL as well as all the PYP classes, mainly metacognitive learning strategies.

While discussing these above findings with some of the participating teacher, it became clear that PYP students lack training in metacognitive strategies such as time-management, planning, taking responsibility for their education and organizing their priorities. PYP students need intensive and continuous training to be piloted for a semester to assess it and identify what needs to be added, changed or modified. These findings echo the conclusions reached by (Shawn, 2010) who reported that her Saudi students recommend orientation program to help them to the new educational environment.

Training in learning strategies

The role of learning strategies in rendering English teaching efficient and effective has been researched at length (Wenden, and Rubin, 1987; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Chamot and O'Malley, 1994; Oxford, 1996; Cohen, 1998, Stern, 2003)). These studies have all emphasized the relationship between the use of effective learning strategies and language learning. In addition, explicit instruction of metacognitive strategies has been found to contribute to improving learning (Commander and Valeri-Gold, 2001; Ramp and Guffey, 1999; Chiang, 1998; El-Hindi, 1997; McKeachie, 1988). In fact, the explicit teaching of metacognitive learning strategies contribute to deepening understanding and increasing learning confidence (Goh and Yusnita, 2006). However, according to (McKeachie, 1988), there is an assumption by the teachers in college that explicit teaching of metacognition is not required as the students learned that in high school. The truth for Saudi students do not demonstrate that they have received such instruction, and it is suggested that they need such training badly in order to succeed in their college studies.

The proposed training in metacognitive learning strategies aims at raising Saudi college students awareness about their role as autonomous responsible students, who are expected to take ownership of and make decisions about their education. The training seeks to provoke their self-awareness, their self-regulation, their consistent commitment and their continued disposition towards their education and towards life in general. The model builds on the strategies that the students already know and aims to help them to correct and develop them further. It focuses mainly on helping college students to rekindle three main skills which are at the core of the metacognition. These skills are organizational skills, motivational skills, and self-evaluation skills. The intertwined relationship between these skills is demonstrated by figure 1 below.



Figure .1 key components of learner metacognition

Although teachers in PYP may not always be aware of the importance of strategy instruction, this aspect of language learning is of paramount importance to the learners who need not only to learn concepts and skills, but also efficient learning strategies, especially metacognitive strategies, which are considered "the most basic of all skills because it is the key that unlocks future success.... Equipped with this skill, an individual can achieve competency in all other basic workplace skills from reading through leadership" (Carnevale et al, 1988, p. 8).

The rationale behind suggesting explicit training in metacognitive strategies takes its defense from both theory and practice. In fact, metacognitive learning strategies can have 'a significant, positive, direct effect on cognitive strategy use, providing clear evidence that metacognitive strategy use has an executive function over cognitive strategy use in task completion' (Purpura, 1999, p. 61). In addition, other studies of EFL learners in various countries (e.g., in South Africa (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996) and in Turkey (Oxford, Judd, & Giesen, 1998)) suggested that metacognitive strategies 'are often strong predictors of L2 proficiency' (Oxford,

2003, p. 9). As for practice, the findings of the research underpinning this paper bear testimony to the importance of such training in promoting the sense of both learner autonomy and responsibility.

The proposed training model is an educational and developmental process that seeks to raise learners' awareness about their roles and change their attitudes towards learning. As such, it should be part of any college preparatory program in order to help new students to go through the transition from high-school to college in a smooth fashion. Students are often shocked and confused by the new educational culture that requires them to be autonomous, organized and responsible learners. These students have demonstrated that they have not been made aware of this requirement. This lack of awareness becomes evident every time students are confronted about their absences, lateness or lack of commitment. They show signs of confusion and surprise as though they were not expecting to be held accountable for their actions.

Newly-recruited students who join the PYP from high school do so with the same learning strategies they used in high school only to realize that these strategies do not fit with the new educational environment. It has been observed for the last seven years that their educational difficulties are partly due to their lack of metacognitive skills such as self-motivation and self-regulation. While self-motivation refers to will students possess to learn and develop, Self-regulation refers to the learners' ability to monitor their learning and adjust their behavior to the new challenges (Hallahan et al., 1979; Graham & Harris, 1992; Reid Harris, 1989, 1993).

Self-regulation of learners is best illustrated through their autonomy and responsibility. The fact remains that most Saudi learners have grown up dependent and in a culture where others have been doing their tasks and duties for them. For instance, they have grown to rely entirely on maids, cleaners, drivers, and gardeners to do daily chores for them. They also hire private tutors to do their school assignments and homework for them. This could be one of the factors that prevent Saudi students from developing a sense of responsibility and self-regulation.

The proposed Cognitive LLS instruction model

Based on the findings of this study, the feedback of the students' counselor as well as the analysis of the end of semester results, this paper proposes a practical inclusion of training in the use of metacognitive learning strategies in College Study Skills course, currently offered as part of the PYP. The course is available to all new students who join the college PYP and runs for a full semester (16 weeks). The course is mostly theoretical and is delivered over two lectures per week and uses unsuitable assessment methods in the form of written quizzes, presentations, as well as midterm and final papers made-up only of multiple choice questions. Partly because of this students see it as a mere college subject for which they have to pass and forget. Based on the observations made by the author, the teachers and the Students Counselor, the skills imparted to the students through this course do not seem to manifest in the students' behavior either on campus or in class. Past years absence records for PYP students were very high. In addition, students often forget their study materials (books, notebooks, pens) and fail to do their homework or assignments and seem to see nothing wrong with these actions. I have been evaluating the College Study Skills course for the last three years and I have concluded that the way the course is delivered and assessed needs to be rethought. What is proposed here is a new design of the course syllabus to reshape it to achieve the goal it has been designed for, by including training in useful and key metacognitive learning strategies.

The proposed course should include its early chapters the four key metacognitive strategies listed below:

- 1- Time management strategies; including punctuality, steady attendance, working to deadlines and making good use of the time spent out of college
- 2- Preparation and organizational strategies to make room for revisions, homework and assignments, as well as quizzes and exams preparations
- 3- Communication and social strategies and these include class participation, asking questions and interacting with other students in and out of the classroom
- 4- Reflecting and self-assessment strategies which implies daily, weekly and monthly monitoring of their learning progress

It is anticipated that the above listed strategies should be introduced at the beginning of the course and in the order they are listed. These strategies are arranged in order of importance based on our observations and that of the other colleagues. For instance, the issue of attendance and punctuality is confusing to the new students as they feel they are free to attend class and they are always late. Addressing this issue as early as the first two weeks will set the record straight for the confused students. In addition, when the students learn that they will be assessed regarding their time management strategies by all their teachers, they will take the matter of attendance and punctuality more seriously.

In fact the second proposed change to the CSS is related to the assessment methods used to help the students feel that they are developing skills and nurturing their autonomy as learners, and not just studying a college subject. As this course will affect all the other courses offered to these students, and as the use of meta-cognitive learning strategies is useful for all these subjects, it is proposed that a monitoring sheet for each class will be provided to the other PYP subject teachers to fill up over a set period and return it to the CSS course teacher for his use in the evaluation of the students in the course.

The monitoring sheet, which will look like the one proposed below, could use marks or grades as the teachers prefer, but it is important that it is consistent in this regards.

Table2. Sample monitoring sheet for students' use of metacognitive strategies

Class : A		Subject: X		
Students	Metacognitive Learning Strategies			Total Evaluation
Names/IDs	Mark from 0-5			
	Time Management	Preparation and Organization	Reflecting and Self-evaluation	Total: /15
Student 1	1	4	0	5
Student 2	0	1	2	3
Student 3	4	2	3	9

Besides the above suggestions, it is also recommended that students' portfolios be included in the CSS course assessment to allow the students the opportunity to reflect on their learning and most of all to monitor and evaluate their own progress. It is very important to mention at this juncture that passed experience showed that students need to be aware of the purpose of these portfolios, how they should go about building them and how they be evaluated.

In addition to their participation in monitoring the students based on the sheet proposed above, to be provided by the College Study Skills course teacher, teachers of other subjects are also required to participate by raising their students' awareness towards metacognitive learning strategies through the use of classroom techniques and practices such as the ones suggested in table 2. The list of activities provided is not exhaustive, and teacher may use their creativity to design activities that would be more suitable to their students, bearing in that the objective is to foster the importance of metacognitive learning strategies.

Table 3. Metacognitive learning strategies

Metacognitive Strategy	Classroom Instruction
Asking Questions	Invite students to ask questions throughout the lesson to keep them involved and to raise their curiosity to learn.
Fostering Self-reflection.	Encourage students to reflect on their learning progress
Encouraging Self-questioning	Promote independent learning by asking learners to produce their own questions
Teaching Strategies Directly	Choose the relevant metacognitive learning strategy and teach it; for example, planning or evaluating.
Promoting Autonomous Learning	When introducing new concepts, create challenging learning experiences and encourage you students to participate.
Provide Access to Peer Assistance	Use pair and group work to encourage interaction, peer assistance and collaboration
Solve Problems with a Team	Instruct groups to work as a team and provide answers they have all agreed upon
Think Aloud	While performing challenging tasks, encourage students to think aloud and report the progress of their work.
Self-explanation	Ask students to write down or express orally their own explanations of challenging concepts
Provide Opportunities for Making Errors	Allow students to make errors and learn from them as this will promote reflection and self-monitoring

The argument is made here that Saudi students are perfectly capable of learning and using metacognitive strategies if the initiative is taken to afford them with the training mentioned above. The evidence in support of this was reported by Shaw (2010) who concluded that her Saudi students in Oregon university in the USA have managed to learn and use - among other skills and strategies - metacognitive learning strategies such as; time management and goal setting, developing and using study skills, taking advantage of campus resources and working hard and persisting (p.229).

Conclusion

Throughout this paper, I have argued the importance of including explicit training in cognitive learning strategies for PYP students. This training could be part of the currently offered college study skills course, after revising its instructional and assessment strategies. The proposition takes its legitimacy from the fact that explicit instruction of metacognitive learning strategies in the way proposed will undoubtedly help college students to become responsible and autonomous. I have also suggested that the monitoring and evaluation of such training should be undertaken by faculty members across the curriculum as well as students counselors, through a systematic monitoring and recording of the students' behaviors inside and outside the classrooms. It is hoped that once students' awareness vis-à-vis the importance of metacognitive learning strategies is raised, this will eventually impact on their cognitive skills, their responsibility and their motivation towards learning. This motivation will ultimately contribute to fostering autonomy and life-long learning that has become the focus of educational systems all over the world.

About the Author:

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Kuwaiti Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of ICT in Writing Classes

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Abstract

This study sets out to explore students' perceptions of a web-based instruction tool at a private higher education institute in Kuwait. The tool comprises a database of articles enriched with various reading and writing activities, and is the first attempt to integrate Internet Communication Technologies (ICT) in the university. Student perceptions were measured with qualitative and quantitative methods. In the qualitative strand of the study, 42 undergraduate students filled in a survey with short answers regarding their general attitudes towards web-based instruction, its advantages and disadvantages, and opinions about its contribution to their own learning. The quantitative strand used a questionnaire, which was completed online by 117 students. The data analyses reveal that students think the online program has contributed to the development of their English skills. Most of the students think the online tool is a rich resource which provides them with the flexibility and independence to learn on their own. Perceived disadvantages include the workload, difficult questions, long articles and technical problems. Variables such as gender and years in the university are linked to some differences in perceptions, but students' discipline and level of internet use were not linked to a significant difference in perceptions.

Keywords: academic writing, ICT (internet communication technologies), Kuwait, student perceptions, web-based learning

Introduction

The countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE) are the primary providers of education for their youth. These countries have been investing heavily in education with their oil wealth. GCC countries have made remarkable strides in providing their youth with access to education opportunities. Establishment of quality universities, burgeoning student enrollments, rising literacy rates, and female access to educational resources are promising for the future across the region, also more and more universities are integrating technology and open and distance learning methods into their program. In sum, the region has made incredible progress despite the conflicts across the region (Olcott, 2010).

Nevertheless, there are some problems in GCC education systems, and indicators such as the relatively low mean number of years of schooling (6.1 years in Kuwait) and high dropout rates indicate serious issues in the GCC region (AlMunajjed & Sabbagh, 2010). In a survey conducted in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates in 2010 by AlMunajjed and Sabbagh, participants were asked the reasons for their discontent with their education system, and 63% listed traditional methods of teaching as the main reason. Participants think traditional teaching methods in the GCC countries emphasize repetition and memorization rather than skills highly valued in the modern workplace, such as creative thinking, brainstorming, problem solving, and personal initiative. Outmoded curricula and textbooks were mentioned as another source of dissatisfaction because they are not preparing students to succeed in rapidly changing societies that aspire to become knowledge-based economies in competitive global markets (AlMunajjed & Sabbagh, 2010). These deficiencies require a commitment by Gulf societies to address curricula, teaching methods, and the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in schools.

Setting of the study

The software Achieve3000 is used in two consecutive courses in a private higher education institution in Kuwait, with the main focus on Academic English skills as a part of compulsory Freshman English Composition courses. According to the website, the program provides web-based, differentiated instruction solutions designed to reach a school's entire student population. Students who have a subscription to the web page receive daily content and they proceed with the guidance of their instructors. The materials of the program are geared to activate background knowledge; they mainly focus on vocabulary and reading strategies (Achieve3000, 2014).

Achieve3000 provides task-based instruction, integrated with authentic texts offered at students' proficiency level, as determined at the beginning of the term with a test. The tool could be used both in and out of class and it also offers extended writing tasks. The program has been used by the English Department since February 2011. The program targets reading 40 articles and answering comprehension and essay writing questions related to the article that has been read. This ICT tool comprises 40% of the course assessment, thus students are highly recommended to complete their reading and writing activities, so that they can gain higher grades at the end of the course.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out students' general opinions and perspectives towards the program they used for the entire academic term that consists of 16 weeks. Despite some similar ICT implementation experiences in English language teaching (ELT) all over the world, this has been an innovative approach for Kuwaiti undergraduate students, and finding out student

perspectives has been deemed quite significant in estimating the effectiveness of the program. The research objectives are summarized as follows:

1. What are students' perspectives towards the use of this ICT tool in an ELT classroom?
2. Are there any differences in their perspectives based on gender, major, years at school or time spent online?

Literature review

In 1983, the term Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) was first used. According to Kern & Warschauer (2000), CALL has gone through three phases and computers have been utilized in different ways for different purposes. The first phase was *behaviouristic*, focusing on drilling and practicing specific language points. The second phase, *cognitive CALL*, was prompted by the communicative approach to language teaching and learning, with CALL software emphasizing interaction and offering communication exercises for learners to form a mental linguistic system. After the 1990's, CALL moved into the current phase – *integrative CALL*, based on a socio-cognitive view of language learning. With each phase of CALL development, the computer's role changed, and the activities applied to language teaching and learning also varied. The activities became increasingly diversified to include multiple-choice and true/false quizzes, gap-filling exercises or cloze, matching, re-ordering/sequencing, crossword puzzles, and simulations. In the first phase, the computer was ideal for carrying out repeated drills, since the machine did not get bored with presenting the same material and it could provide immediate non-judgmental feedback. The computer was used as a tutor, presenting material and feedback on an individualized basis, allowing students to proceed at their own pace and freeing up class time for other activities. In the second and third phases of CALL, the computer was used as a tool or medium for students to become active learners (Fotos & Browne, 2004). Applications of the computer include writing and word-processing, e-mail exchanges, use of multimedia, Web search, test-taking, etc (Kern & Warschauer, 2000).

In higher education, the communication capability of the Internet has acted as an important driver for change. There has been high institutional investment in ICT infrastructure in higher education institutions to support more 'flexible' or 'blended' models of teaching and learning. ICT has been introduced into courses to support distributed or part time learners, or simply to supplement classroom-based teaching (Kirkup & Kirkwood, 2007).

It is important to ensure high levels of student learning and achieve a better understanding of students' needs in relation to their learning (Armstrong, 2011). Particularly in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) classes, which are offered as obligatory electives and non-departmental service courses, keeping students interested and engaged in an activity may be a challenge for teachers. Information communication technologies (ICT), an umbrella term for using computers, software and/or Internet for instructional purposes (Hew & Brush, 2007) provides new possibilities for assisting teachers to successfully meet this challenge.

ICT and computer aided language learning can energize students (Lee, 2000), and they offer some advantages, such as the reduction of long-term costs, and increased opportunities for access to various sources of information, increased opportunities for communication and personalization of the teaching process (Jorge et al., 2003). By using authentic materials with visuals and animations, posting and replying messages, writing and replying emails, learning is less constrained in time and space; rather, through the internet, learners are offered opportunities to communicate and learn collaboratively whenever and wherever they want. The students display an enhanced sense of achievement and an increase in self-directed learning, with the

ability to communicate, conduct research and present ideas effectively beyond the confines of the class (Shetzer & Warschauer, 2000).

Internet communication technologies, and in particular their application in language learning, have been reported to have a positive effect on learners' performance and attitude. According to Ayres (2002), CALL should be used more frequently in a range of language courses because it can be tailored to students' needs and provide them with useful materials and activities. According to his findings, the CALL environment is less stressful than the traditional classroom. Moreover, in computer-based learning there is more interaction among learners because students depend less on the teacher: the class becomes more student-centered than teacher-centered and chances for cooperation increase (Brandl, 2002). In another study, students' attitudes towards integration of ICT in a reading course were analyzed and the 30 students who took part in the study were observed to have built positive attitudes toward the use of ICT despite the difficulties experienced (Şimşek, 2008).

The general tendency is a positive attitude to the use of computers in academic settings. Education and technology are becoming more intertwined and the number of ICT applications is growing by the day. These benefits seem to be promising for educators; however, there are some problems in measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of ICT in the classroom.

Firstly, the effectiveness of ICT is highly connected to a successful implementation. Various factors should be considered while measuring the success and effectiveness of ICT, and human elements in the educational system, particularly teachers and students, seem to be the most influential agents in facilitating or impeding change (Pelgrum, 2001). Therefore, any successful transformation in educational practice requires the development of positive user attitude toward the new technology.

Moreover, positive attitudes towards language learning can raise learners' motivation (Merisuo-Storm, 2007), and as individuals', particularly learners' attitudes to e-learning and computer-based learning become more positive, they will have greater behavioral intention to use it (Liaw et al., 2007). Computers are useful for individual and student-centred learning, so it is important to determine student attitudes towards the use of computers, because student attitudes contribute to our understanding of why computers have enhanced achievement, performance and motivation. Computer attitudes are important because of the long-documented relationship between computer attitudes and motivation and performance (Usun, 2004).

Ayres (2002) suggests that learners appreciate and value learning through ICT, which results in high face validity for CALL. Students who see CALL as an important part of the course also have high motivation and perceive CALL work as relevant to their needs; therefore, it seems that attitudes towards technology can serve as a useful way to measure the effectiveness of technology in the classroom. Mitra (2001) suggests that learning can be measured by using some surrogate methods, such as changes in the attitudes towards learning and changes in the learning process.

Recognizing the importance of student attitudes in efficient integration of ICT, scientists have conducted research that focuses on students' attitudes towards learning language with computers. Although the construct of attitude towards computers has gained recognition as a critical factor in the use of ICT, there is no single clearly defined definition of computer-related attitude (Vandewaetere & Desmet, 2009). According to Chapelle and Jamieson (1991), researchers should investigate students' use of CALL by posing questions concerning its effects on second language learning, students' attitudes toward using CALL, and the learning strategies students use during CALL activities. The value of online education as an educational tool can be

increased by getting feedback from students and teachers on a regular basis. By investigating the ways that students perceive and interact with the learning environment, the design of the online learning environment can be better developed to support learning and cater to students' needs and expectations.

Despite the abundance of research on teacher and student attitudes and perspectives towards computers, studies regarding the use of ICT in teaching ELT in the GCC, and in Kuwait in particular, are scarce. Based on the literature review, the researcher concludes that there is a need for a study to assess student attitudes towards this ICT implementation in a private university in Kuwait for betterment of the ICT experience. For that purpose, this study sets out to explore the undergraduate students' perceptions of a commercial web-based instruction tool, Achieve3000.

Methodology

This study used a mixed methods research design, which means collecting, analysing, and combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem (Creswell, 2012). Mixed methods research does not involve simply collecting two distinct strands of research (qualitative and quantitative); it consists of merging, integrating, linking, or embedding the two strands.

Research methodology in fields like ICT has traditionally relied only on quantitative approaches. Many researchers have generally dismissed qualitative research asserting that this methodology gives no valid findings because they are based on the analysis of a few single cases (Eng, 2005); therefore, qualitative studies regarding attitudes and perceptions towards ICT are rare. However, qualitative approaches are required in some research cases where quantitative approaches fail to give us a vivid description of user perceptions and experiences. To analyse cultural values or social behaviours, there is a need for data collection methods like observation or interviewing, which would give us more detailed description of learning experiences (Cano-Parra & Nicolas-Alonso, 2012).

From among different types of mixed methods designs, the study reported here employed an exploratory sequential design, in which the researcher begins with qualitative data and then collects quantitative information. The purpose of this design is to explore a phenomenon and then collect quantitative data to explain relationships found in the qualitative data. Generally the qualitative data is used to identify themes, design an instrument and variables and subsequently test them (Creswell, 2012).

For this study, the qualitative strand of the study was conducted in three English classes of the university to obtain detailed student responses and to form the basis of survey items in the quantitative phase of the study. The survey statements were created based on the findings of the qualitative strand; and the second phase of the study was carried out with a wider group of students to check whether the findings of the qualitative phase could be generalized to a wider population of students and confirmed by statistical patterns.

Qualitative data collection tool

For the qualitative phase, participants were asked various open-ended questions aiming to evaluate their perspectives of the online instruction tool. Participants were chosen through the purposeful sampling method because qualitative researchers recognize that some informants are more knowledgeable than others on the topic that is studied and that these people are more likely to provide insight and understanding for the researcher. This is why the purposeful sample method is quite common in qualitative research in which the researchers actively select the most

productive sample to answer the research question (Marshall, 1996). The method was applied by asking the faculty members using the program in their classes to choose the students who attend classes and use the program on a regular basis. In the fall term of the 2012-2013 academic year, 50 students who met the faculty members' criteria were given a questionnaire that included four open ended questions asking their perceptions of the commercial ICT.

Literature and expert opinion were consulted in the preparation of these questions. Forty two students (18 males and 24 females) completed the surveys. All participants are either first or second year university students in a private Kuwaiti institution, taking Academic English class. All participants mentioned they had never used an ICT tool in their previous classes. The open-ended questions posed to the participants are as follows:

1. Did you enjoy using a web-based program for this course?
2. What did you most like about the program? (advantages)
3. What did you not like about the program? (disadvantages)
4. Do you feel the program has contributed to your English skills?

Researcher's role

In qualitative research, the "researcher is the instrument" (Patton, 2001; cited in Golafshani, 2003); therefore, explicitly identifying oneself assumes importance that it might not have in quantitative research. In this study, the researcher has been working in the aforementioned institute for four years and been familiar with the program for 3 years as an instructor. She included in this study her own students as well as her colleagues' students. Due to previous experiences working closely with the program, she may bring certain biases to this study. Although every effort has been made to ensure objectivity, these biases may shape the way she views and understands the data she collects and the way she interprets participants' experiences.

Qualitative data analysis method

All student papers were anonymous. The participants were given codes. When there are direct quotes from the participant, a code number is given at the end of each quote. Student responses were not corrected and grammatical errors were kept for authenticity.

Content analysis, a very popular form of attitude measurement which involves the systematic analysis of written texts (Akkawi, 2010), was carried out on the student papers. The documents were categorically analysed and key words and phrases reflecting attitudes were identified and underlined. By doing so, the raw data was converted into categories. Qualitative research findings and their interpretation were created by analysing the views of participants under certain categories. Direct quotations from student papers were taken and consistency was analysed to ensure internal reliability. Due to the word count limitations of the article, only four or five direct quotes were taken for each main theme to give the reader a general idea about student perceptions.

Quantitative data collection tool

In the quantitative phase, the questionnaire included twelve five-point Likert-scale statements and two multiple choice questions. One multiple choice question asked the students whether they had enjoyed using the program or not, and the second asked the students to describe the program with three adjectives. The questionnaire also asked four demographic questions about gender, major, year at university and the average length of time the student spends on the internet.

After the preliminary findings of the qualitative study, the questionnaire was constructed in collaboration with another faculty member using the program. It was first piloted with 50 students, and then sent to 250 students from eight different sections of the English course through a website named esurveycrator.com. The researcher sent a link to the electronic mailboxes of students. By clicking on the link, the students responded to the statements as *strongly agree* (5), *agree* (4), *neutral* (3), *disagree* (2) or *strongly disagree* (1). Out of 250 students, 117 students filled in the questionnaire (a return rate of 48%).

Population of the study

The questionnaire was filled out by 117 students who took ENG 100 in the spring term of 2012-2013. 73.5% of participants (86 students) were females, simply because there are more female sections in the university; 31 male students (26.5%) completed the questionnaire. Overall, 58 students were from the College of Arts and Sciences (English, Communication and Computer Science), while 59 students were from the College of Business Administration (Economics, Accounting and Business Administration). A great majority of the students (85.5%) are 1st year students as this is a course that is offered to first year students. 2nd year students (14.5%) are the ones who either have spent a year in the Foundation program to support their English or are repeating the composition course. When asked about the average hours they spend online every day, 1 hour was the most popular response (38.5% of respondents) with 30% of students estimating 2 hours online and a similar number, 3 or more hours.

Quantitative data analysis method

For the quantitative phase, the reliability of the questionnaire was checked with Cronbach's Alpha and was found to be 0.907. Factor analysis yielded two major factors. One of them is covering the positive statement and the other factor is covering the negative statements about the online program. Because the variables showed non-normal distribution in the Skewness test, non-parametric tests such as Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis were used for comparing the means and were tabulated. Frequency, percentages and mean scores are provided in relevant findings.

Qualitative data analysis results

Overall perceptions of the program

The first question of the qualitative survey was: "Did you enjoy using a web-based program as part of your course?" The question also asked students to give a brief explanation as to why they enjoyed or did not enjoy the experience. The analysis of responses did not elaborate on the reasons but only the positive or negative perception, as the next questions asked for a detailed explanation. 29 students said they enjoyed using the program, whereas 13 of them said they did not enjoy the program. The comments below exemplify the various positive perceptions towards the ICT experience:

"Yes, I enjoyed as I became able to improve my English not only at the university, but also at home." (St 19).

"Yes, I did because it is less stressful and I have learned to like reading" (St 21).

"I enjoyed using it because it made things a bit easier, like if we missed a class we can still do our class work at home" (St 22).

"I did as it gave the course a new, entertaining dynamic that made reading and comprehension all the more better" (St 5).

"I did enjoy using a web program for studying in this course because I always support using technology in schools and universities" (St 12).

Students who had a positive attitude towards the program generally had a variety of reasons ranging from the contribution of the program to language learning skills to the practicality of using computers in class or their interest in using technology in class.

The students who expressed their negative perceptions towards using the program gave the major reasons as mentioned below:

"No, I didn't, because it was boring and it was huge amount of articles to do with no use" (St 42).

"No, I didn't enjoy it at all, because it is time consuming, and we are not getting any new information from it" (St 33).

"No, I didn't enjoy, I think the demand for 40 articles by the end of this course was a bit too much, it honestly made me struggle focusing on my other subjects. The process of completing them felt a bit tedious; not that I didn't benefit from it; I did actually benefit" (St 15).

"I didn't enjoy using it because we should do a lot of articles in less time" (St 20).

Students seemed to be complaining about the workload as that was the most frequent response mentioned for not liking the online tool. A few students even said they were displeased with the workload only, not with the program itself. The only student giving a different reason for not enjoying the online tool is below:

"No, I prefer pen and paper" (St 26).

In general, the perceptions were positive. Students seemed to have enjoyed the experience for a variety of reasons, with the exception of some students preferring the conventional methods or feeling pressured because of the required workload.

Perceived advantages of the program

The second question asked the students about the advantages of the ICT tool. Table 1 displays the most frequently mentioned advantages that emerged from their comments.

Table 1. *Perceived advantages of the program*

Advantages	Frequency
Interesting and educational articles on various topics	25
Improving language skills	16
Independent learning / Freedom and flexibility	14
Multiple-choice questions	4

Table 1 shows that the most frequent advantage as perceived by students was the *variety of topics*. Students thought access to a rich database of articles on interesting topics was the greatest strength of the program. Some students make the following comments on this issue:

"It lets the students to increase their knowledge in many fields such as trade, cars, history and industry. I like reading the history of companies, people and nations. That's what I mean with history articles" (St 17).

"It is interesting on the topic choices that we have to read about, gives it an up-to-date feeling to it, and I actually learned many things I wasn't aware of, for example the topic about Afghanistan taught me a lot of things I had no idea about" (St 15).

Textbooks or course books may have a wide array of reading texts but the options that students have in an online program are beyond comparison to the richest textbooks and the new generation of students seem to appreciate this aspect of the resource. Students tend to value the contribution of the program to improve their *language skills* as well. 16 students expressed this as an advantage of the program and the following quotes support this.

"I think the program has several news and information and students learn new words, so that helps to know more these words and their meaning" (St 35).

"The biggest advantages of Achieve3000 is improving our reading and writing skills by reading the articles and writing the thought questions. It is really good for learning" (St 10).

"The biggest advantage of Achieve is it helps me to improve my English skills and know more vocabulary" (St 27).

Although the program is mostly based on reading articles, students perceived the online program as contributing to multiple skills, including writing and vocabulary.

Following these two most frequently expressed advantages, *freedom and independent learning* was expressed as another advantage. The program allows students to work on any topic they like by using the search option, and gives them the independence to read the text and answer the questions at their own pace. In addition, when they miss the class, they can still follow it by participating in the activity, which is not limited to class time. Students have the chance to complete the work outside the class and they can work through the materials on any device that will allow them to access the internet. Students considered these options as independent learning and obviously appreciated them. Some quotes to support this view are as follows:

"What I liked most about it is being able to learn on my own, "how to be independent". I learn from my own mistakes and stuff. It was cool" (St 21).

"The biggest advantage is that we can feel free to choose articles; this makes it enjoyable" (St 11).

"The biggest advantage for me about the program is there are no specific articles we must do and we can search for articles talking about our interests such as sports and music" (St 12).

Students mostly focused on these three advantages, while some of them mentioned the multiple choice questions as a strength of the program in addition to the ones mentioned above. These students thought multiple choice questions were easy to answer and added to the entertainment aspect of the program; for example:

"I like the activities; they are really enjoyable" (St 29).

Perceived disadvantages of the program

Despite some commonly agreed upon advantages, the program was perceived to have disadvantages as well. Table 2 shows the major disadvantages as expressed by the student users of the program.

Table 2. Perceived disadvantages of the program

Disadvantages	Frequency
Workload (the number of articles and questions in total)	14
Difficult questions	12
Scoring/ grading issues	7
Long, boring articles (lacking variety)	6
Technical problems (internet access, connection issues etc.)	4

The major complaint about the ICT tool was the 40-article target to be met in one term. Case studies from various schools in the USA using the program suggest that students who successfully complete 40 Achieve3000 activities can go up one full grade level in reading (Achieve3000, 2014), and this approach has also been adopted by the writing instructors in the institution that this study was conducted. However, students thought this was an ambitious target and found it challenging to reach. This is the reason that 14 students ranked *workload* as the biggest disadvantage of the program.

"It is very time consuming to do 40 articles as we have many other subjects to concentrate on as well." (St 28).

"Thought questions (the essay writing questions) may be an obstacle along the course" (St 39).

"I don't see any disadvantages, but I think it would be a disadvantage if a person doesn't like reading because this is mainly based on reading. Also the amount of articles to be read and solved is big" (St 21).

"The biggest disadvantage is that the articles take a lot of time to complete and there are a lot of them to be done" (St 3).

As student quotes show, the number of articles was perceived as a (potential) problem and caused dissatisfaction among students who had other subjects to study in the college.

The second problem area is also related to workload. "*Difficult questions*" was not welcomed by students and was mentioned as the second biggest disadvantage.

"It has some difficult questions that are sometimes hard to answer" (St 22).

"Some reading questions are difficult and writing questions are not clear" (St 1).

"I dislike many things, especially the activities because some of them are not clear and have two similar answers" (St 17).

Apart from the workload and difficulty of the articles and questions, some students were not pleased with the grading and scoring system of the tool. Some thought the first trial should not count but they should be given a second attempt at answering multiple choice questions. The other issue is that the program considers a score of 75% or above a success in multiple questions and anything below this means that the exercise should be repeated. Some students found this target too high to meet and expressed their concerns about it:

"It counts just the first try and cancels the second try. Also it counts the scores above %75 and this is not fair" (St 16).

“For activity questions, 10 questions is better than 7 or 8. They should make the average less than 75%, for example %63” (St 1).

Some students found the article topics limited, and six students expressed the view that the articles were boring:

“The biggest disadvantage is the articles are too long and boring” (St 32).

“Honestly the big disadvantage is the topics are limited if you want to do research for a topic” (St 42).

Technical issues such as a slow connection or computer/ internet problems seemed to be experienced in ICT-based classes, and therefore were mentioned as disadvantages in the use of the online program.

“The only thing that bothered me was the technical issues. I had to wait a while for the page to start up sometimes and it is not an internet issue” (St 5).

“The webpage could have a lot of improvements and at times there were some connection issues” (St 15).

Overall, students tended to complain about the workload, difficulty level and topics of articles. Some technical features related to the use of the program, such as grading, scoring and even connection quality were less frequently mentioned. Although the educational content of the program was generally praised by students, when it came to reading and answering the questions about 40 articles over a period of about 3 months, the workload became a major source of complaint.

Perceived contributions of the program

Table 3. Perceptions regarding contributions of the program to language skills

Skills	Frequency
Vocabulary	25
Reading	23
Writing	15
Other skills	4
No contribution	3

Many students mentioned an improvement in more than one skill; vocabulary and reading in particular were often mentioned in the same sentence. Writing was also mentioned by 15 students, following vocabulary and reading. The quotes below summarize how students felt about the contribution, without differentiating the skills:

“It has improved my reading skills; I am able to understand the contents much easier than I used to do. Also because of reading and the dictionary option, my vocabulary has increased” (St 19).

“I started to use Achieve3000 as a major source of information. I see this program has improved my English skills such as reading, writing and vocabulary” (St 9).

“This program has improved my English a lot, especially in writing, every time I write in the thought question I feel that I learned something new about how to write well” (St 10).

The following quotations mention other skills that some students considered as a contribution of the ICT tool:

“The skills that I got are reading, writing, vocabulary and how to do research” (St 11).

“Yes, a lot! In everything, I can speak easily and know more words” (St 27).
For other contributions, participants mentioned “research skills” and even “speaking”.

Quantitative analysis results

General perceptions of the program

In the questionnaire form, following the Likert scale statements, students were asked two other questions. The 13th question asked students whether they enjoyed using the system or not. Students were given three options: *Yes/ No/ Neutral*. Out of 117, 98 students, i.e. 83.56% of them said “yes” to the question. 8 students said they neither liked nor disliked the program, which is equal to 6.84%. The percentage of students who expressed a dislike for the program was 12% with 11 students. This shows strong popularity of the program among students.

Question 14 presented students with a list of four negative and four positive adjectives and asked them to choose any three without any specific rank to describe their opinion about the program. The question yielded the following results shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Adjectives selected to describe the program

Adjective	Frequency	%
Flexible	75	24.2
Beneficial	68	21.9
Motivating	50	16.1
Fun	39	12.6
Boring	29	9.4
Unnecessary	21	6.8
Difficult	19	6.1
Not user friendly	9	2.9

Table 4 shows that students have generally positive feelings towards the program and almost a quarter of them see it as a *flexible* tool for learning. The second most popular adjective was “*beneficial*” with 68 students (almost 22%). Adjectives like “*motivating*” and “*fun*” are ahead of their negative counterparts, and the four negative adjectives “*boring*”, “*unnecessary*”, “*difficult*” and “*not user-friendly*” were at the end of the ranking with lower percentages than positive adjectives.

Table 5 shows the averages of student responses for agreeing and disagreeing with the statements in the questionnaire. The most popular feature of the program was *flexibility* of using laptops, notebooks or smartphones in class (Q5): the mean for this statement is a high agreement (4.34). The second most popular aspect of the system was relevant to the first: flexibility of using it outside the class, anywhere the student wishes (4.31). Following these modern age features of

the system, its content, with a variety of topics, appears to be a popular aspect (4.13). The lowest mean is associated with differentiated instruction (Q7): students appeared to be less enthusiastic about this feature, although it was still viewed positively overall (3.83).

Table 5. Mean responses to statements (1= Strongly disagree; 5= Strongly agree)

Statements	Mean
5. I liked the flexibility of using my laptop, notebook, or smartphone in the classroom	4.34
4. I liked the flexibility of working with the program outside the class, anywhere I like	4.31
6. I enjoyed discovering a variety of topics in the articles	4.13
1. The program was simple to understand and easy to use	4.11
11. The program has improved my reading skills	4.11
8. Since records were kept in my portfolio, it was easy to monitor my performance	4.05
2. Working independently created a more relaxed and stress free atmosphere.	4.03
12. The program has improved my vocabulary.	4.00
3. I felt more motivated to do the online assignments than paper based assignments	3.99
10. The program has improved my writing skills.	3.91
9. I believe this program has improved my English	3.89
7. I liked receiving articles set for my reading level	3.83

Effects of variables (gender, college, years and hours spent online)

To check the effect of demographic variables on students' perceptions, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. Gender seemed to make a significant difference only in perceptions related to reading skills: female students tended to think more often than male students that the program made contributions to their reading skills (Table 6).

Table 6. Mann-Whitney U results for gender (Q11)

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
Male	31	44.65	1384.00		
Female	86	64.17	5519.00	888.000	.003*

In regards to the effects of years in the university on perceptions related to the program, despite the great difference in the group sizes, a significantly less positive attitude towards some aspects of the program could be observed among second-year students. Specifically, statements about working independently, flexibility, monitoring progress, improvement in reading and English skills are perceived more positively by first-year students. Second-year students could be

repeating the course which may cause a boredom factor; first-year students may be more motivated as this is their first experience with ICT in university.

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the findings from both the qualitative and the quantitative data results, students generally had positive attitudes towards the ICT tool they used in Academic English classes. A majority of them find it flexible to use in and out of the class, beneficial for their language skills and a motivating factor to read more and do more assignments. It does not require advanced computer skills, it is simple to use and it contains reading texts on various interesting and educational topics.

This positive attitude displayed by ELT students has been confirmed in many studies. Usun's (2004) study of 156 undergraduate students in Turkey reveals that students regard computers as an individual and self-paced learning tool that allows them to work privately, and that they want to drill and practice in an enjoyable environment on their own. In his study, computers were seen by students as:

1. individualizing learning;
2. self-paced;
3. allowing students to work privately;
4. fun and entertaining;
5. excellent for drill and practice.

These results are very similar to Kuwaiti students' perceptions of the ICT tool presented in this study.

Rahimi and Yadollahi's (2011) study of 142 Iranian female students (50 junior high-school, 49 high-school and 43 university students) also shows that the sample had a general positive attitude towards CALL. Particularly, it was found that the effectiveness of CALL was rated higher among university students than the effectiveness of non-CALL (computers vs traditional paper-pencil classes). This could be attributed to the fact that university students are more computer literate and they appreciate the value of using computers in their academic tasks, since they are more exposed to technology and have more opportunities to use computers for course-related activities (Rahimi and Yadollahi, 2011).

Gender is a factor that has been implicated in a wide range of educational outcomes and continues to be significant in educational processes. In this study, males and females generally show similar attitudes, with a small difference in their perception of reading skills. Female students think this program has contributed to their reading skills, whereas males agree with this contribution with a lower average. Findings regarding gender differences in reading attitude have been quite consistent in literature. Girls are observed to have more positive reading attitudes at all learning levels (Hogsten & Perogoy, 1999; Kush & Watkins, & Brookhart, 2005; McQuillan, 2000; Crawford Camiciottoli, 2001; Yamashita, 2004, as cited in Sani and Zain, 2011). Girls also tend to be more able readers, even from a very young age (Sani and Zain, 2011). Many teachers and academics would agree that Arab Gulf or in general Middle Eastern students are not avid readers, and this is also confirmed by the Arab Thought Foundation's Fikr fourth annual cultural development report. The report states that an Arab individual on average reads a quarter of a page a year compared to the eleven books read by an American or seven books by a British person (AlYacoub, 2012). However, the author of this paper has also personally observed in her four years of teaching experience in the Gulf that female students read more than male students. Rana Idriss (2013), a Lebanese publisher, expresses that the female readership in the Arab world

has increased significantly over the past few years. According to Idriss (2013), in a country like the United Arab Emirates, for example, it seems that only women are reading.

Also the years spent in the university, and probably in the course seem to have an impact on perceptions as senior students agree less than their junior counterparts with statements about the flexibility of the program, independent study and contributions to language with statements about the flexibility of the program, independent study and contributions to language skills. Higher averages of first year students could be linked to perceived novelty, as students who are new to the university life and ICT in classes may have a more positive approach than more experienced second year students. The course load of the second year students is different from that of the first year students, which may also be the underlying factor in their lower average. This finding coincides with other studies. For instance, a study conducted in Oman with higher education students showed that more students used the online learning programs in the first term (54%) than in the second term (25%) (Saidi, 2003). Saidi also cites another study carried out by Stevens in 1991, in which student motivation remained quite high following the induction to the computer application as students regarded it as an innovative method, but motivation decreased gradually as the academic year progressed.

Major (the field of study) and hours spent online were not associated with significant differences in perceptions. According to Akbulut (2008), foreign language learners reveal positive attitudes towards CALL because of computers' potential to provide autonomous learning, creativity and achievement. Also, student attitudes are not strongly affected by factors such as ownership of a computer or frequency of use.

Some disadvantages of the program perceived by the students in the present study include workload, difficult or boring reading texts, management of the program and technical problems. These disadvantages could be related to teaching styles, the number of assignments faculty members expected from students or curriculum designers' decisions in course designs. Depending on the intensity of student complaints, this number could be changed, taking the optimum benefit into account. From these challenges presented by students, only technical problems seem to be related to the nature of ICT; others are relevant to the administration of the course or the proficiency level of students, which could be found in any class. Another study also showed that faculty get similar feedback from students regarding the use of the ICT tool (Erguvan, 2014). When Erguvan interviewed the faculty members on a similar branded ICT tool, she found that the feedback the faculty members reported from students was generally related to the course load; for example:

Truthfully speaking, my students generally find it a chore. They say things like 'too much work', 'too much writing', if the teacher insists on essays, the students grumble. They think volume is too much; the articles are too difficult, even if it set at their level, and they would rather something easier so they can answer the questions more easily and quickly (Erguvan, 2014, p. 123).

However, faculty members tend to ignore these complaints because they do not see it as negative feedback, as one participant has put it, "all students say it is too much work, but that's just typical laziness" (Erguvan, 2014, p. 124).

One thing to be aware of is that if the workload starts affecting student motivation levels and participation in the program, it may certainly hinder learning. Still, participants do not seem to be negatively influenced by these perceived disadvantages. Instead, both students and faculty members seem to feel that the program is motivating.

However, as mentioned by some students, connection problems and website breakdowns may demotivate some students. This result has been shared by many other studies conducted on integration of ICT in class. A classroom that meets all the suggested criteria should allow the teacher to concentrate on teaching and learners on learning in a “techno-problem-less” environment (Wee & Bakar, 2004). In Wee & Bakar’s study in Malaysia, 151 public and private university faculty members expressed the view that network connectivity does not necessarily imply reliability and some technical failures can be quite frustrating and demotivating in the classroom (Wee & Bakar, 2004).

Limitations and recommendations

This study was carried out under several limitations. The qualitative questionnaires were completed by 42 students and this number may limit the generalizability of the findings, as every academic term around 500 students sign up for this program. Although quantitative surveys were expected to be distributed to a greater number of students, due to the timing of the online survey (end of spring term, beginning of final exams etc.) only 117 students completed the online survey. The small number may be considered a limitation of the study.

In addition, the participants in this research study are students in a private university setting in Kuwait that has adopted a specific type of an ICT tool; therefore, the findings of the study can only be generalized for similar groups of participants. This study has assessed the perceptions and attitudes of students towards the program; however, in order to fully assess the impact of the software, more comprehensive investigation measuring the effect on learning outcomes is needed. Future research is suggested to check whether these positive attitudes can have a significant impact on improving student performance in language skills.

About the Author:

Dr Deniz Erguvan has been teaching academic writing skills in Gulf University for Science Technology, Kuwait since 2010. Her research interests mainly lay within educational administration. She has worked on topics such as the impact of privatisation of higher education institutions, internationalization of universities, the use of ICT in the ELT classroom, and reading habits of undergraduate students.

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Globalization and the Linguistic Imperialism of the English Language

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Abstract

This paper aims to address the new challenges faced by English language teachers in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, which have emerged as a result of the commodification of English and the rapid growth of the English Language Teaching (ELT) industry. The paper first scrutinized the correlation between the recent global changes and the predominant power of the English language. It also examined the "commodification of English Language" as a new global phenomenon that triggers many challenges for language teachers. The main focus of this paper is to reveal the EFL teachers' level of awareness of the current impact of globalization on the ELT realm. For the purpose of collecting data, a questionnaire was distributed among thirty non-native English teachers who teach the language to freshmen in different Omani higher education institutes. The questionnaire was intended to investigate the participants' attitudes and the challenges they encounter as non-native speakers and teachers of the English language. The major findings of this paper concluded that this group of teachers was aware of the status-quo of the English language and they believed that the power of English has entailed some challenges in the ELT field. The two principal challenges are: The changing linguistic and communicative needs of language learners and the cultural barrier global course books create when adopting them in EFL classrooms.

Key words: Commodification, ELT industry, English, globalization, linguistic imperialism

Introduction

In his book entitled *The Alchemy of English*, Kachru stated that "Knowing English is like possessing the fabled Aladdin's lamp, which permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates to international business, technology, science and travel. In short, English provides linguistic power" (Kachru, 1990, p. 1).

English has become the global language of the world. It is the language of economy, research, media, politics and social communication. It is the lingua franca of all spheres and the predominant medium of instruction worldwide. Globalization has undoubtedly played a significant role in creating the status-quo of English language around the globe. Economic, political and cultural globalizations, in their international and highly influential movements, have greatly contributed to the wide unprecedented spread of English. Therefore, learning English has become a top priority to all individuals who seek jobs, academic degrees or/and social privileges. As a result, English has been viewed as a new "commodity" which has its own market and consumers. This commodification is obviously observed in the current intensification of the ELT industry all over the world.

What is Globalization?

In order to understand the way how English has gained its dominance as a global language, defining globalization is of great importance. Kumaravadivelu (2006) described globalization as a "slippery term which carries different meanings to different people at different times." It is evident that the complicated nature of globalization as an era makes finding an agreed-upon definition quite an uneasy task. The interpretation and perception of this phenomenon vary from one observer/scholar to another depending on their area of interest and the particular angle of globalization they look at. However, most of the scholastic definitions of globalization have addressed the state of interdependency and interconnectedness between the various human spheres: social, economic, political, etc. Globalization is repeatedly defined as "new patterns of worldwide interconnectedness- the stretching of social relations and economic activities across national spaces and regions in various complex networks of interaction." (Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009). Tobin (1998) defined globalization as "a fashionable word to describe trends perceived to be dramatically and relentlessly increasing connections and communications among people regardless of nationality and geography" (Para. 1). The list of definitions goes on and what is obviously admitted by all scholars concerned with this phenomenon is that globalization is mainly about the inextricable connections between all life domains. This phenomenon started, as it is believed by many historians, in the fifteenth century when the steady transpacific connection started to appear (Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009). However, the Globalization era in the form of capitalism "started in the second half of the nineteenth century, along with the emergence of more consistent and coordinated practices of colonialism." (Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009).

The next few sections investigate the reasons behind the unprecedented spread of English and how globalization helps to perpetuate this status. Exploring the *linguistic imperialism* of English help to reveal the influence globalization has on this language.

The power of English in the era of globalization

Around 375 million people speak English as their first language and 750 million people speak it as their second language (How many people speak English, n.d.). This huge number of speakers which outnumbers the speakers of all other languages indicates very clearly that English is the global language which predominates in the era of globalization. David Crystal one of the giant and prolific writers in this field, asserted that "There is the closest of links between language dominance and economic, technological, and cultural power. Without a strong-power base, of whatever kind, no language can make progress as an international medium of communication." (Crystal, 2003, p. 7). Ciprianova & Vanco (2010) argued that the emergence of English as a global language is a result of the "unequal distribution of economic, political and cultural influence and a deliberate effort of native English speaking countries, mainly the United Kingdom and the United States of America to promote English around the world." Therefore, analyzing the major global forces (political, cultural, economic) and their connection with

English as primarily a tool of communication can reveal how these forces lead to the linguistic imperialism of this language which is the core theme of this paper.

Crystal (2003), attributed the global status-quo of English to "the expansion of British colonial power which peaked towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the twentieth century" (p.59) and he asserted that the second factor is the one which continues to support the dominance of English in the world as Britain has lost its colonial power over its colonies around the world. Yet, the colonization period has greatly contributed to the formation of this powerful reputation English has gained worldwide. In the post-colonial era, Kell (2004) argued that proficiency in English is still linked with prestigious jobs and the possibility to study abroad or migrate to a desired destination in the Asian countries which were British colonies until 1970s. The model of the three circles of English coined by the US linguist, Braj Kachru clearly illustrated the influence of colonization on the spread of the English Language. (Crystal, 2003). According to this model, the distribution of English speakers is determined by the level of geographical influence of the English political power over a particular region. The first circle is the *inner circle* which refers to the native speaking countries of the language. The second circle is the *outer circle* which encompasses the countries which were British colonies during the history of colonization. In these countries "the language has become part of a country's chief institutions and plays an important 'second language' role in a multilingual setting" (Crystal, 2003). The third circle is the *expanding circle* which involves the countries that recognize the international role of English and had never been under parts of the British Empire. Figure 1 shows the three concentric circles and the estimated number of speakers in each one.

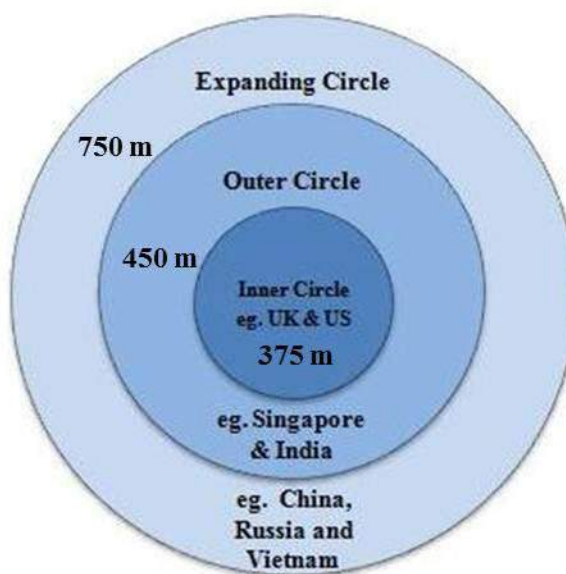


Figure 1. Kachru's circles of English

Along with the political power that contributed to the spread of English around the world, the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century in Britain and in the United States later in this century intensely strengthened the position of the English language in the world as most of the innovations that have been a turning point in the human civilization, were invented in these two English speaking countries (Crystal, 2003). As a result, the English language has become the medium of communication through which all humanity can get access to this new knowledge. This factor is still the chief reason behind the dominance of English as a global language, because globalization in its different aspects (e.g. Internet, new technologies and the competitive global market) helps to further this status.

Globalization and the linguistic imperialism

It goes beyond doubt that English is the lingua franca which enables people from different nations which have different languages to communicate with each other effectively. However, in this competitive global world, English has been viewed "as much more than simply a tool for communication." (Prey, 2001, p.21). Ciprianova & Vanco (2010) stated that many linguists such as Phillipson (1992), and Pennycook (1994,1998) argued that " the universal presence of English is a result of pursuing political and economic interests and of the effort of the British and the Americans to maintain control over the English language, often with the support of national organizations and ELT industry.". This can be interpreted as a new form of colonialism in which cultural and economic imperialism takes place through exploiting the unprecedented linguistic power of the English language. Robert Phillipson has coined the term *linguistic imperialism* to describe the wide spread of English as "a post-colonial endeavor" of the inner circle countries to maintain dominance over the other countries, especially the ones which were in the outer circle (McKay, 2003). By facilitating access to the language and language learning in the other nations, the native language speaking countries have created a solid foundation for a permanent successful industry (ELT industry) and simultaneously promote their culture and ideologies across the world. Khan (2009) pointed out that " although the majority of English language speakers in the world are in the 'expanding circle', hegemony of the 'center' (inner circle) persists when it comes to English language educational management" (p.191). This can be observed through the ELT centers mainly the British Council in the UK, AMIDEST, a center for the American Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL) exam in the Middle East and the International Displaced Person (IDP) agency in Australia. One of the clearest aspects that can obviously manifest the linguistic cultural imperialism is the international English proficiency tests: International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and TOFEL. These high-stakes international tests stand as a barrier to the majority of the English second language learners, a finding reached by Sarah Khan who has conducted a case study in Saudi Arabia. The participants of this study were twenty-four female students from the upper two levels in a college preparatory English program and five of their teachers. In the college, TOFEL is used as an entrance exam which means that the participants consider this test as a critical stage in their academic studies. The researcher has indicated in the findings' section that many participants have shown their dissatisfaction with this international test. That is because they believe that the test includes no "neutral content which is of general interest" to its takers and it does "privilege a specific culture" (Khan, 2009, p.202). They have argued that the listening and reading comprehension questions reflect a totally different context from their own and; consequently this hinders them from fully understanding the test questions. They have also pointed out that using American English in this test doesn't necessarily reflect the every-day language they are accustomed to.

There are some vocabulary and language expressions that do appear in the test and the majority of students are unfamiliar with. The same holds true with IELTS that represents the British English and its culture. The question is: Why do second language learners need to get exposed to the inner circles countries' cultures in order to pass these high-stakes tests, and; therefore, to survive in their societies through getting a degree certificate or a respectable job? Is being aware of the language native speakers' cultures a legitimate measure of language proficiency?

Yet, the reputation these tests have gained in Saudi Arabia and the other countries that use these international proficiency exams on a wide range makes it quite difficult for these nations to replace the tests with local exams due to " numerous socio-political and institutional benefits that ensue from [them]" and " the economic benefits that the creators of 'these tests' enjoy in collaborations with publishers of test preparation material which continue to maintain this status quo." (Khan, 2009, p. 203).

The linguistic imperialism can be also depicted "in the various ELT materials published and marketed by powerhouses like Longman, Oxford, Cambridge, Penguin, Macmillan, etc., and which are found almost all over the world." (Al-Issa, 2005) and, mainly, the global course books produced by the ELT international centers. Gray (2002) asserted that "Although course books are designed explicitly for the teaching of English language, they are also highly wrought cultural constructs and carriers of cultural messages." (p.152). Sheldon (1998) considered neglecting the cultural appropriacy as one of the major flaws of these textbooks. She added that the publishers "fail to recognize the likely restrictions operative in most teaching situations." (p. 239). According to the linguistic imperialism, this neglect could be deliberate as the publishers try to impose the native speaking countries' cultures on the other nations which intensely use these course books.

The commodification of English and the ELT Industry

The other and more powerful side of the linguistic imperialism is the economic motives of the countries in the inner circle; mainly the USA and the UK to create a strong industry which can guarantee a powerful position for these countries in the global competitive market. The great increasing need for English as an international language of knowledge, technology, economy, etc. has been nourishing the ELT industry around the globe. Heller (2010) stated that:

Late capitalism consists of the expansion of markets and their progressive saturation, resulting in an increased importance for language in (a) managing the flow of resources over extended spatial relations and compressed space-time relations, (b) provides symbolic added value to industrially produced resources, (c) facilitating the construction of and access to, and niche markets, and (d) developing linguistically mediated knowledge and service industries (p.103)

It is clear from what Heller asserted that late capitalism as a new form of the global economy has redefined the role of English and made the need for learning this language a top priority. Consequently, English has become a commodity that has its own market and consumers all over the world. This phenomenon is known by many sociolinguists as *the commodification of language* which is defined by Heller (2003) as :

a shift from a valuing of language for its basic communicative function and more emotive associations- national identity, cultural identity, the authentic spirit of people and so on- to valuing it for what it means in the globalized, deregulated,

hyper-competitive, post-industrial "new work order" in which we now live" (p. 295)

The commodification of English is a very noticeable global phenomenon which can be fairly recognized through the intensification of the ELT industry. The British Council, one of the giant ELT organizations worldwide, stated in the British Council Annual Report 2005-06 that the agency taught 1.1 million class hours of English to around 325,000 language learners in 53 countries and earned £ 81 million in that year (Ciprianova & Vanco, 2010). It is worth mentioning here that this huge amount of money does not include the profits earned from administering the international high-stakes IELTS test. Another example of this intensification is the *Ambient Insight Regional Report*, 2011-2016 which stated that "English language learning applications ranks consistently in the top-ten paid mobile learning applications in all the countries in Asia. Consumer spending on mobile-based ELT products represents significant new revenues for suppliers". Moreover, the annual report 2010/2011 published by Oxford University Press, one of the top ten ELT publishers, shows that the press in 2011 published about 1,200 new printed and online ELT products to second language learners worldwide. This huge number of products is only produced by one British publisher in one year. What about the other famous ELT publishers such as Longman, Macmillan/MEP, Cambridge University Press, Heinemann, Pearson, Collins and so on? These publishers which distribute their printed and online English language learning resources worldwide are a tangible indication that this industry is witnessing an era of prosperity. As an English language teacher and learner, the researcher can feel this intensification through the overwhelming teaching/learning resources that can be obtained from online websites, bookshops, international book fairs, advertisements received through mails and emails. There are also lots of agencies that offer books, teaching resources, traditional and online English learning courses and preparation courses for IELTS or TOFEL, besides the fabulous offers made by private and international schools for parents to send their kids to get their education in English.

To sum up what has been discussed earlier, it is evident that globalization has played a major role in creating (through colonization) and furthering the global role of English as a language which has both use-value and exchange-value. The term, *linguistic imperialism*, can obviously illustrate the cultural and economic motives of inner circle countries for maintaining the status-quo of English. As a language teacher who teaches English to college freshmen in Oman (a country located in the expanding circle according to Kachru's model), exploring the level of awareness of my colleagues about the impact of globalization on Language teaching and the challenges they encounter is very significant. Being aware of these various dimensions which undoubtedly affect the ELT realm would definitely help the English language teachers to better understand their role.

Methodology

For the purpose of collecting data, a questionnaire has been distributed among a convenience sample which is around thirty English teachers who teach the intensive English language program to freshmen in different Omani higher education institutes. The questionnaire attempted to reveal the participants' level of awareness of the current impacts of globalization on ELT realm, and to investigate their attitudes and the challenges they encounter as non-native speakers and teachers of the English language. The questionnaire (Appendix 1) consisted of two parts. The first part contained five items which required the participants' opinion about the language; these opinions are based on their experience as second language learners. The second part of the

questionnaires included miscellaneous open-ended questions which have been derived from what has been discussed in the literature review.

Findings

I have divided the questions and the participants' responses into three categories:

- 1- The importance of English in the world of globalization.
- 2- Globalization and ELT.
- 3- Teachers' awareness of their role in the era of globalization.

The participants' responses to the questions that fall under the first category have revealed that teachers are fully aware of the strong position English holds globally. 86% of the total participants have agreed that learning English is a top priority in order to survive in the new global community. 55% is the total proportion of those who believe that they are interested in learning the language because it offers them more job opportunities. With regard to the second category, a huge percentage of the participants (82%) have seconded the statement that English has been commodified in the global competitive market and 59% have agreed with the statement that says that ELT and ETS centers have imperialistic agenda (Economic and cultural) through spreading the language worldwide. Some participants indicated that the need for getting a high score in IELTS or TOFEL as a top requirement for getting a job or applying for higher education degree proves the agenda testing agencies have to gain more money and turn the language into a commodity. They elaborated on this idea by adding that these proficiency tests are valid for two years only. They believed this period is very short because sitting for a new test is finically demanding.

As for the third category, the majority of the participants have showed different concerns about the challenges they face as language teachers and how the linguistic imperialism in its two forms has forced them to adopt new teaching methods in their classrooms. 52% of these teachers have indicated that they usually use global course books with their students. These course books, as indicated earlier are produced by the language speaking countries. Most of the participants' responses fall in the "fair" category when evaluating these textbooks according to the given criteria. Although 50% of the participants have found these course books, to some extent, culturally appropriate, 40% of them have evaluated them as culturally inappropriate textbooks. One of the participants asserted that "These course books in general do not consider the cultural differences between the different contexts in the world. Therefore, ELT teachers have to face the challenge of adapting them to suit their students and the cultural background of the context in which they teach." Another teacher added "I believe that most of them [the course books] are still written from a western point of view." For example, some course books, which are widely used in the Arab world countries for EFL learners, are British-centric. Although these books are intended for international learners across the world, the content usually highlights British celebrities (pop stars, authors, poets, actors, etc.), British cities, and facts about the British society in general. In addition, some readings texts and photos associated with them cover culturally- inappropriate themes such as: romantic stories and songs. In other cases, teachers need to spend lots of time explaining background knowledge related to topics that are unfamiliar to students. Teachers find themselves forced to use these global commercial textbooks for various reasons. The most common reasons are: the pedagogical demands met in these textbooks and the lack of professional local textbooks.

Although we cannot ensure that emphasizing the western culture in these textbooks is a hidden agenda for the publisher, the linguistic imperialism theory discussed earlier does support this view.

With regard to the teaching approach EFL teacher needs to adapt, about 95% of the participants acknowledged that the linguistic needs of the language learners have changed, due to the global economic and cultural changes. Consequently, teachers need to adopt new strategies in teaching the language to their students. Most of them stated that learners need a "language for communicative purposes" not the Standard English of literature and books. Another teacher indicated that exposing learners to a variety of accents other than the British and American accents is what learners need in order to "prepare them for the real world where communication occurs most of the time between non-native language speakers."

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the questionnaire, the participants have addressed the major challenges they face because of the linguistic imperialism of English. These challenges can be summarized below:

1-The changing linguistic and communicative needs of the language learners. For instance, what is the proper English that learners need as there are nowadays endless varieties of English created by second language learners and media? Also, the teachers need to be aware of the changing communicative needs of their students because the purpose behind learning the English language differs from one learner to another.

2- The cultural barrier which has been forced by the global course books used by the majority of the English teachers in the intensive programs is another challenge. These course books usually include themes which are either inappropriate to discuss or totally unfamiliar to many learners who have different cultures. I think there is nothing wrong with getting exposed to unfamiliar cultures and gain, through their language, some knowledge about the different aspects of their lifestyles. However, the topics should be carefully selected which consider the age of learners and their cultural backgrounds, as well as being pedagogically effective for learning the language.

Investigating the related literature which is devoted to the major challenges faced by English teachers and the possible pedagogical suggestions to deal with these challenges can be the subject of another paper.

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Appendix- Questionnaire

I am a language instructor at Sultan Qaboos University and I am currently conducting a research paper about the linguistic Imperialism of the English Language. For the purpose of completing this questionnaire, globalization is defined as "new patterns of worldwide interconnectedness- the stretching of social relations and economic activities across national spaces and regions in various complex networks of interaction." (Popkewitz & Rizvi, 2009). This anonymous questionnaire attempts to reveal the non-native English Teachers' level of awareness of the current impacts of globalization on ELT realm, investigate their attitudes towards these impacts and the challenges they encounter as non-native learners and teachers of the language. The information you will kindly provide will be kept confidential. The time and effort devoted to completing this questionnaire is highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance!

Part One:

1- As a non-native English language learner, I believe that:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Learning English has become a top priority in order to survive in the new global community.					
2	I learn English mainly because it offers me more job opportunities					
3	English has nowadays been viewed as a "commodity" which has its own market and consumers.					
4	International English proficiency exams such as TOFEL and IELTS stand as a big barrier before non-native English learners who seek jobs or degree certificates... etc.					
5	ELT institutes and ETS centers have imperialistic agenda (Economic and cultural) through spreading the language worldwide.					

Part Two:

1. As a non-native English Language teacher, I believe that:

The global economic and cultural changes have forced me to adopt new strategies in teaching English to my students.

Yes

No

- 1.2 Please explain your answer based on your teaching experience.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. The linguistic needs of English language learners have changed because of globalization.

Yes

No

Please explain your answer based on your teaching experience.

.....

.....

.....

3. Please indicate how often you use a global English course book with your students. Circle the appropriate answer.

N.B. A global course book is a textbook which is not written for learners from a particular culture or country, but which is intended for use by any class of learners in the specified level anywhere in the world.

- a. Usually
b. Sometimes
c. Never

Please evaluate these textbooks using the criteria below.

	Criterion	Poor	Fair	Excellent
1	Culturally appropriate			
2	Relevant to learners interests			
3	Authentic (Expressing real- world situations , realistic, intended for ELT setting)			
4	Educationally Valid (Is it in tune with broader educational concerns?)			
5	Cost-effective			

4. If you have any further comments, I would be very appreciative and they would definitely be of great value.

.....

.....

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Investigating the Request Strategies among the Arab International Students and Malaysian Employees at a University in Malaysia

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Abstract

This paper investigated the ways in which the Arab international students realize requests with special reference to politeness strategies as patterned by Blum-Kulka (1989). The aim was to pragmatically analyze the most preferred request strategies and the types of external modifications by those speakers in the process of making requests in the academic setting at the School of Language Studies and Linguistics (PPBL), National University of Malaysia (UKM), Malaysia. To achieve this, the data was collected and recorded from two observed situations in which the two Arab students were involved in conversations, thus, making requests with two Malaysian employees. It was analyzed based on the model of request strategies by Blum-Kulka (1982) using the frequency of occurrences of such request strategies and external modifications. The results revealed that the speakers most preferred the use of conventional direct requests followed by the conventionally indirect requests and the non- the conventionally indirect requests respectively. Moreover, it was found that the use of reasons and positive politeness expressions used as external modifications made the requests smother and mitigated their effect in such situations.

Keywords: politeness strategies in request, request strategies of arab international students, head Acts request, external modifications request

1. Introduction

Politeness is considered as one of the important terminological concepts, which is defined by Brown & Levinson (1978-1987) as the action of saying and doing things in way that the person takes into consideration the other side's feeling. The work conducted by Brown & Levinson (1987) on "politeness" and its relation to "indirectness" and "face" has attracted many researchers who have carried out several studies on conversational analysis. Since then, many linguists have investigated the communicative events and speech acts in more details and deeply. Requests, as a subcategory of directives, were seen by Brown & Levinson (1987) as intrinsically face threatening as the intention of the speaker is often considered to threaten the addressee's negative 'face want'. However, according to Félix-Brasdefer (2005), requests are defined as pre-events which are intended by speakers to initiate the negotiation of face during a conversational interaction.

As direct requests appear to be impolite and face-threatening, Brown & Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) argued for indirectness as preference since it reflects the speaker's politeness or polite behavior. Leech (1983) suggested that it is possible to increase the degree of politeness by using more indirect illocutions: "(a) because they increase the degree of optionality, and (b) because the more indirect an illocution is, the more diminished and tentative its force tends to be" (1983: 131-32). Previous researchers such as Blum-Kulka, *et al.* (1989), House & Kasper (1989), Trosborg (1995), Sifianou (1999), Marquez Reiter (2000), Safont (2005), and have proposed an almost similar model for the discourse moves involved in Requestive Speech Acts (RSAs). A request, in their models, is a speech act consisting of an obligatory element of the core request (i.e., a Head Act (HA)), and one or more optional peripheral elements that function as force modifications for the request head act. The head act is the main part of the request act and can stand on its own.

Previous studies conducted on requests among Arab students have revealed several problems faced by such speakers in requesting others for information and other purposes (Al-Ammar (2000); Al-Eryani 2007; Hiba *et al.* 2009; Awad 2012). Such researchers have pointed out at the Arab speakers' degree of directness in using request strategies and their realization of the content of strategies which might differ from one culture to another culture. As stated by Umar (2004), Arab speakers of English form their request strategies based on their cultural background when formulating their requests strategies. They may lack that level of awareness of the existing differences between the two languages including such request strategies in terms of politeness and appropriateness.

2. Statement of the Problem

Leech (1983) and Brown & Levinson (1987) considered direct requests to be rude or impolite, and tend to threaten the addresser's face. As suggested by Leech (1983), to avoid using such direct requests and increase the level of politeness in performing requests, it is better for speakers to use indirect illocutions. In addition, Thomas (1983) argued that most of our misunderstandings of others are attributed to our lack of ability to understand their intentions.

However, regarding the politeness for performing requests in the Second Language (L2) or Foreign Language (FL), Marazita (2010) stated that it is difficult for the non-native speakers to perform politeness strategies in second language while requesting. For instance, in request, politeness strategies which will be used to perform this request vary because the differences of the cultures and communication patterns. Thus, understanding other cultures is a very important factor to communicate successfully with other people around the world. Such misunderstandings

may happen when the Arab international students transfer their Arabic request strategies to Malay language literally and consequently, the meaning of their requests were misunderstood or unacceptable by others. For example, when the Arab student requests a pen from his partner in the academic setting, he will say '*I want your pen for a moment*' it may appear that he is obligating his partner to give him the pen, and additionally it may be considered an impolite request. In Arabic, this kind of request is acceptable and expresses intimacy and closeness rather than rudeness or impoliteness, so misunderstanding could occur. Several figures agreed that, cultural differences play a vital role in performing the speech act of request in all societies of the world (Mashiri, 2001; Macaulay 2001; Brasdefer 2005; Kasper; 2006, Rue and Zhang 2008; Farahat 2009; Awad 2012).

Similarly, Umar (2004:46) pointed out that "Being polite is a complicated business in any language. It is indeed very difficult to learn because it involves understanding not just the language, but also the social and cultural values of the community". This means that Arab learners of English as an FL are more likely to find it difficult to master such politeness strategies in using requests in English, thus, employed their mother tongue rules and perceptions in making appropriate and polite request. As stated by El- Shazly (1993), the Arabic culture motivates the Arabic society to request from others indirectly as it is considered a polite strategy of communicating with others, studies such as Al-Ammar (2000), Al-Eryani (2007), and Awad (2012) as previously mentioned have proved that Arab EFL speakers frequently use the direct requests strategies for getting information. Therefore, this study investigates the request strategies as one of the most important concerns of the approaches of politeness. First, it aims to identify the request strategies used by the Arab international students while requesting with the Malaysian employees in an academic setting at PPBL. Second, it aims to investigate how the Arab international students initiate request with Malaysian employees at the School of Language Studies and Linguistics (PPBL), National University of Malaysia (UKM).

3. Study Objectives

The research objectives for the presented study are:

1. To identify the request strategies used by the Arab international students while communicating with the Malaysian employees in an academic setting at PPBL.
2. To investigate how the Arab international students initiate requests when communicating with Malaysian employees at PPBL.

4. Study Questions

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the requests strategies used by the Arab international students while communicating with the Malaysian employees in the academic setting at PPBL?
2. How do the Arab international students initiate requests when communicating with Malaysian employees at PPBL?

5. Review of Previous Studies

This part will look at the previous studies on request strategies. Rue & Zhang (2008) conducted a study to investigate the request strategies among the Chinese and Korean speakers. They collected their data from role-plays and naturally recorded conversations. Based on the findings

of the study, it was found that the Chinese and Korean role-play data exhibited indirect head acts (conventionally indirect + hints) as the most frequently used request strategies. Additionally, it was revealed that the Chinese speakers tended to employ more conventionally indirect head acts towards familiar superiors in natural convention, Korean speakers preferred using more hints to familiar superiors, in common the two groups used a similar pattern of request strategies, non-direct head acts. Kasper (2006) conducted a study to investigate the politeness of multiple requests in oral proficiency interviews (OPI). It was revealed that two types of structurally parallel operations of mitigations and conventionally indirect request frames were used by the participants based on the researcher's observation. For the most part, interviewers consider both types of request strategies as dispensable in the subsequent version, which is identified as a pattern found in multiple requests in the same-turn as well as in other-initiated and third position repair.

Mashiri (2001) carried out a study to examine the request strategies in commuter omnibus discourse involving the bus crew and passengers. The findings showed that polite requests predominate other speech acts in commuter omnibus discourse in Harare. In this context, it was revealed that the interactional relations between the commuter crew and passengers is very volatile, thus, increasing the speakers' tendency in using FTAs. Therefore, male passengers' responses to requests in traveling (as standing passengers, squeezed in corners or seating on falling seats) tended to be more favorable because of their fear of bringing their masculinity into question. However, such politeness markers were not found to be their counterparts, females. In a similar way, slang terms were not used by male conductors for the purpose of mitigating their requests to women passengers. Macaulay (2001) conducted a study to explore the differences between male and female while requesting information. The study found that the female participants used more indirect request for asking for information which can be provocative as well as polite, and they used provocative forms which constitute an enabling strategy. Whereas the male participants preferred the use of indirect forms that foster attunement, the females preferred indirect forms that engage them in analytically in their interviews. Moreover, the females frequently used the indirect request for getting information more than the male.

Upadhyay (2003) conducted a study to revisits the link between the linguistic indirectness and politeness by examining requestive acts from naturally occurring conversational data in Nepali. The findings indicated that the participants' selection of the linguistic form to express politeness in general is impacted by their social setting in which they interacted. Moreover, it is significantly affected by the morphological aspects of the language in Nepali, which is stated to be different from that of English as politeness in English is generally expressed through syntactic (rather than morphological) variation. Farahat (2009) carried out a study to identify the linguistic expressions and the politeness strategies employed by each culture studied in situations involving Face-Threatening Acts. This study also studies the politeness phenomena in both Australian and Palestinian play in a way that avoids unwarranted generalization. It was found that how the notion of imposition was conceptualized by speakers of Australian English and Palestinian Arabic, and the codes of politeness employed in requests to counteract any threat to face differ considerably between the two groups. Conventional indirectness was preferred by speakers of Australian English whereas the strategy of apologizing was preferred by speakers of Palestinian Arabic as they provide reasons to justify their request making and using. This reflects the difference between the two groups in terms of their native cultures and languages. Awad (2012) carried out a study to investigate the request strategies among Malaysian and Libyan

postgraduate students at USM. The findings indicated that the Libyan postgraduate students tend to highly prefer using the direct request strategies while asking for information.

Several figures agreed that, cultural differences play a vital role in performing the speech act of request in all societies of the world (Mashiri, 2001, Macaulay, 2001, Brasdefer 2005, Kasper 2006, Rue and Zhang 2008, Farahat 2009, and Awad 2012). In their investigation for request strategies, they employed certain terms such as politeness, request, and head acts strategies (direct request, conventionally indirect request and non-conventionally indirect request).

Having discussed the above literature, we can conclude that studies on this topic are very rare. Therefore, this study will have to contribute more findings in this field.

6. Methodology

This section discusses the procedures for data collection and data analysis. It gives more information and clear details about the study design, data collection, study setting, recording, and participants.

6.1 Study Design

Research design is defined as “an approach to integrate various elements of a research project in a consistent and coherent fashion in order to address a predefined set of study questions” (Trochim & Land, 1982). This study used qualitative approach to identify the request strategies used by the Arab international students while communicating with Malaysian employees in academic setting at PPBL and also to investigate how the Arab international students initiate requests when communicating with Malaysian employees in academic setting at PPBL. Creswell (2005) argues that qualitative method is a type of the research in which the researcher relies on the participants' views. Therefore, it is selected for this study to reflect the students' own voice.

6.2. Data Collection

Unlike previous study, this study analyzes natural data. Yet, some researchers use DCT (Discourse-Completion Task) as an instrument for data collection (Franch 2003, Byon 2004, Guodong and Jing 2005, and Jalilifar 2009). Few researchers state that DCT is not a good instrument for data on request strategies. This is because the type of data provided by DCT does not adequately represent the length of response or the number of turns it takes to fulfill the speech act, the number of repetition and elaboration occurring in authentic situations and real life conversations and the real wording used such interaction and the actual role of occurrence (Beebe and Cummings 1985:13). Natural speech can be either collected through field-notes of ethnographic data or by means of audio recording or video recording. Such natural speech is reliable data about the way speech acts function in interaction.

6.2.1. Study Setting

6.2.1.1. Place

This study takes place at Pusat Pengajian Bahasa dan Linguistik (PPBL), UKM where employees there were selected as the participants for this study. The idea behind choosing the Arab international students is that they have problems in performing requests. The researcher worked with some of employees of PPBL in UKM. They are helpful and gave the researcher permission to record the conversation.

The researcher recorded two conversations between the EFL Arab international students and some Malaysians' employees at PPBL at UKM. The two conversations were recorded in a noisy place which was surrounded by some local and international students.

6.2.1.2. Time

The employees at PPBL office gave the researcher specific days and dates to record the discussion involving a number of the employees and the Arab international students who went to the office there to ask for information about some cases.

6.2.2. Recording:

The researcher used tape recorder to record data conducted among some Malaysian employee and Arab international students at PPBL at UKM.

6.2.3. Participants

The participants of this study were four; two Malaysian employees working in PPBL; one is a male and the other is a female and two Arab postgraduate students who are doing their master and PhD degree in UKM. At that time, the students came to PPBL to ask for certain information concerning theirs and their friends' studies and how to enrolled at the university.

6.2.4. Transcription the Data

The two conversations between the Malaysian employees and the two Arab international students were recorded and were transcribed using Gail Jefferson's notation symbol. Gail Jefferson's notation symbol is used to indicate low and rising intonations, overlaps, inaudible sounds, and pauses of the speakers. (See Appendix)

6.3. Procedures of Data Analysis

Many researchers stated that DCT (Discourse-Completion Task) is not a good instrument for such kind of data. As pointed out by Beebe and Cummings (1985:13), the type of data provided by DCT does not adequately represent the length of response or the number of turns it takes to fulfill the speech act, the number of repetition and elaboration occurring in authentic situations and real life conversations and the real wording used such interaction and the actual role of occurrence. Therefore, data collection by using a tape recorder was conducted in this project in order to obtain natural and authentic data.

The data were analyzed based on Blum-Kulka's *et al.* (1989) modified model of request strategies which are classified into two major categories namely; head acts and strategies used as external modifications to the head act. In examining and identifying the head acts, there are three degrees or sub-categories of head acts known as directness: 1) direct; 2) conventionally indirect; and, 3) non-conventionally indirect (hints). For the external modification strategies, they were identified as elements which are used by speakers to modify the head acts, and they usually precede or follow the head acts in conversations. This model has been used by several researchers such as Félix-Brasdefer (2005), Scollon and Scollon (2001), and Færch and Kasper (1989). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data, and only the frequency was used to calculate the instances of occurrence of each category of these request strategies.

7. Results and discussion

7.1. Results of Head Acts and External Modifications

This section discusses the findings concerning the politeness in request strategies observed in the EFL Arab international students' interactions with the Malaysian employees in two request situations at PPBL at UKM. The results are presented based on the strategies used across the request sequence namely; head acts and external modifications. As shown in Table 1 and 2, the two Arab international students produced a total of 27 strategies in the two request situations. The instances of head acts are 18 and those identified as external modifications were 9.

Table 1. Results of the Frequencies of Arab International Students' Request Strategies (Head Acts)

Head Acts			
Participants	Direct Requests	Conventionally Indirect Requests	Non- Conventionally Indirect Requests
Participant 1	6	7	0
Participant 2	4	0	1
Total	10	7	1

Table 2. Results of the Frequencies of Arab International Students' Request Strategies (External Modifications)

External Modification			
Participants	Precursors	Reasons	Positive Strategies
Participant 1	1	3	2
Participant 2	2	1	0
Total	3	4	2

In further analyzing and identifying the types of head acts used by the two students, it was found that the frequency of the produced direct requests was 10, 6 times for the first participant and 4 times for the second participant. This was followed by the conventionally indirect requests with a frequency of 7 times for the first participant. There was only one non-conventionally indirect request used by the second participant. For the types of external modifications used by the two speakers, there were three types namely; precursors, reasons and positive strategies. The results concerning the frequency of occurrence of such three types of external modifications showed that the precursors occurred three times, one time for the first

participant and two times for the second participant. Additionally, reasons occurred 4 times; 3 times for the first participant and one time as used by the second participant whereas positive strategies occurred 2 times only for the first participant. The results of these two major types of politeness strategies in requests and their sub-categories are discussed in further details in relation to findings of other previous studies as follows:

7.2. Discussion of Head Acts and External Modifications

7.2.1 Discussion of Head Acts

This section will discuss the results regarding the first research question. The results of the head acts as mentioned in table 1 will answer the first research question. As shown in Table 1, the results revealed that the Arab international students highly preferred the use of direct request strategies by means of want statement such as two lines (8-9, 21 & 22) provided below:

[...] I want to ask you some questions I have two of my friends I want to submit phd here so [this proposal] (.).

[...] I want to ask you who supervisor who is chosen for them is the supervisor (.)

Or other direct request strategies as illustrated in lines (71 & 81) below:

[...] where is the main gate

[...] you have buses here (.) =

These results are consistent with Awad (2012) in studying the Arab Libyan participants' request strategies in speaking at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). It was found that the participants tend to highly prefer using the direct request strategies. However, such results do not conform the findings of a study by Hiba et al. (2009) who examined Iraqi postgraduates at USM as they found that the entire group preferred conventionally indirect requests.

The results proved that the second high category of head acts was conventionally indirect requests. It was found that the two participants used such conventionally indirect request strategies through the use of if conditional sentences functioning as polite requests containing modal verbs such "could" and other verbs such as "mind". The following lines (40, 41, 42, 52 & 53) illustrate the use of such types of polite request strategies. This is supported by Félix-Brasdefer (2005) as he stated that the use of indirect requests including the conditional form and modal verbs is usually highly preferred by some speakers addressing a person of distant relationship. However, the least frequency of occurrence of these three types of head acts was associated with the non- conventionally indirect requests. It was occurred one time as illustrated below in line (25&26) but, it implies that Arab students do not intend to prefer such type of head acts in requests.

[...] I don't know anyone I am not in the same faculty i am in IT not in err education not in English language (.)

Based on the results, the findings concerning the first high category of head acts (conventionally direct requests) are consistent with the findings in a previous study conducted by Awad (2012), who reported that the Libyan postgraduate students tend to highly prefer using the direct request strategies. For the findings concerning the second high category of head acts (conventionally indirect requests), they matched the findings in previous studies conducted by Mashiri (2001), Macaulay (2001), Brasdefer (2005), Kasper (2006), Rue and Zhang (2008), and

Farahat (2009), as such researchers reported that the conventional indirect requests were the most common means of requesting.

7.2.2. Discussion of External Modifications

This section will discuss the results regarding the second research question. The results of the external modifications as mentioned in table 2 will answer the second research question. Thus, the analysis of the two Arab international students' conversations in these two situations revealed that the speakers quite frequently used the external modifications either precede or follow request head acts (i.e., are pre-posed or post-posed) to initiate their request. As displayed in table 2, the results showed that the speakers used precursors three times in the two situations to initiate their request. According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and Félix-Brasdefer (2005), such external modifications functions to draw the addressee's attention to the request are 'attention getters' or 'attention grabbers'. In the current discourse, the two speakers employed precursors in the forms of greetings as to initiate their request and draw the employee's attention to their requests as illustrated in lines (1. 3).

alsalamulikum (.)

salamat pagi = (.)

Such precursors were used before requesting or before using the head act of request as to attract the employee's attention to what would information the speaker was about to ask or request. The speakers either used such precursors in Arabic or Bahasa Malay.

Moreover, based on the analysis of the current data, another type of external modifications named "reasons" was the most frequently used type of such external modifications in the two situations. These results show that reasons were used significantly more often than precursors across the request interaction. The interaction extracted from the exchange of information between the speakers and the employee below shows the co-occurrence of reasons and alternatives in an interaction. The reasons are underlined:

Student Male: I have my friend from yemen called me he did not have that but he is undergraduate his graduate from the secondary [school] (.)

Employee Male: [no]

Student Male: but he did not apply for ielts or tofel (.) [L. 21]

Employee (Male): ok our requirement is stated in our () that all application in ukm in our English program must be tofel () to but () you have to get ↑ tofel and ielts (.)

Student Male: yah (.) first time he should not be Contact ↑ with his supervisor or just (.) he fills [the application]

In the above interaction, the speaker negotiates the request with the employee and attempts to achieve or accomplish the request largely and a way or form of by stating the reason. This, according to Félix-Brasdefer (2005) assists the speaker or the person who makes a request to smooth the harshness of a direct request and to appear polite. In the above interaction, it can be noticed that after stating the reason, the speaker initiates and introduces his direct request strategy as in "first time he should not be Contact ↑ with his supervisor or just (.) he fills [the application]". The findings in this type is similar to the one by Farahat (2009) who also reported

that the strategy of apologizing was preferred by speakers of Palestinian Arabic as they provide reasons to justify their request making and using as discussed in the literature review earlier.

The analysis of the data in both situations showed that the least frequently used type of external modifications was expressions of positive politeness. They were used only two times or instances while initiating the requests. These below lines (5 & 12) extracted from the interaction in the first situation illustrate how the speaker uses such expressions of positive politeness in the form of apology or saying sorry to initiate his request. These expressions are underlined.

[] sorry(.) i would like to ask you about how to apply err or submit your

[] err sorry (.) I am not here (.)

As noticed from the above interaction, the use of such positive politeness expressions marks that positive politeness which introduces the request as in the first stance and mitigates the direct effects of a request preceded it as in the second stance.

8. Conclusion

The current paper investigated the use of the politeness request strategies observed from recorded conversations between two EFL Arab international students and a Malaysian employee at PPBL at UKM. It was found that conventional direct requests were the most common means of requesting in situations followed by the conventionally indirect requests and the non- the conventionally indirect requests respectively. Thus, the study provides some insights into the directness and requesting behaviors of the Arab international students in communicating and dealing with employees. Furthermore, such direct requests were made smother and their effect was attempted to be mitigated by using reasons and positive politeness expressions used as external modifications.

For future studies, it is suggested that more studies can look into the same direction of the current study with other speech acts such as apology and refusal in order to explain the cultural differences between native speakers of Arabic language and other cultures and languages.

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Appendix

Transcribed Data

Jefferson Transcription Nation Symbol Used:

Jeffersonian Transcription Notation is described in G. Jefferson, Transcription Notation, in J. Atkinson and J. Heritage (eds), *Structures of Social Interaction*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Symbol	Use
()	'Inaudible utterance'.
[]	Brackets: Speech overlap.
(.)	Micro pause: Brief pause of less than (0.3).
(.4)	Timed Pause: A number in parentheses indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech that's more than 3seconds.
hah	Laugh Syllable: Relative closed or open position of laughter.
↑	Rising intonation.
↓	Falling intonation.
=	Equal Signs: Latching of contiguous utterances, with no interval or overlap.
<i>Italic</i>	Code switching.
((telephone))	Telephone rings.
((coughs))	Words in double parentheses indicate transcriber's comments, not transcriptions.

The First Conversation (Participant 1)

Line No	Participant	utterance
1	Student	alsalamulikum (.)

	(Male)	
2	Employee (Male)	walikumsalam (.)
3	Student (Male)	<i>salamat pagi</i> = (.)
4	Employee (Male)	= <i>salamat pagi</i> (.) yes (.) err (.)
5 6	Student Male	sorry(.) i would like to ask you about how to apply err or submit your application err if you want to study phd here in this faculty(.) ((cough))
7 8 9 10	Employee (Male)	if you going to ((cough)) study here ((cough)) for phd you have to fill the form and go to the postgraduate center to get the form and fill the form and send err all of documents where to send it all and then proceed the process will start the process is done by the pps(.)
11		you have to go the postgraduate center in ukm (.)
12	Student Male	err sorry (.) I am not here (.)
13 14 15	Employee (Male)	for phd our requirement is 6.5 for the tofel certainly 6.5 ((telephone rings)) err in the master they have must be ielts or tofel for requirement get it necessary (.)
16	Student Male	necessary (.)
17	Employee (Male)	yah (.)
18 19	Student Male	i have my friend from yemen called me he did not have that but he is undergraduate his graduate from the secondary[school] (.)
20	Employee (Male)	[no]
21	Student Male	but he did not apply for ielts or tofel (.)
22 23 24	Employee (Male)	ok our requirement is stated in our () that all application in ukm in our English program must be tofel () to but () you have to get ↑ tofel and ielts (.)
25 26	Student Male	yah (.) first time he should not be Contact ↑ with his supervisor or just (.) he fills [the application]
27 28 29	Employee (Male)	[ok]application must be ↑ take with the proposal and send to the faculty no need to see ↓ the lecture here because we don't know when the head of the program or the lecturer will decide in the committee (.) ok = (.)
30	Student Male	= yah (.)
31 32	Employee (Male)	ah because that's one is your proposal that will see after whether you are qualified or not it is depend on your form(.)
33	Student Male	which form (.)
34 35 36	Employee (Male)	if you see ↓ the lecturer here it is not your proposal ↑ that is one edit by the lecturer they want your proposal ↑ your proposal is not be done for is not be done anybody do this research that's

37		your research your own research ↑ (.) is it ()
38	Student (Male)	yah (.)
39	Employee (Male)	ah yah for phd (.)
40 41 42	Student (Male)	just if you don't remind I want to ask you also about could i he selected your supervisor from internet he is looking for your staff and connect from because he wants some this dr this prof he has () in his area (.)
43 44 45 46 47	Employee (Male)	172839405 6 ok (.) in the committee for this lecturer the committee will decided ↑ it whether she is fail the supervisor is in the necessary and sometimes we have two or three supervisor in one for the supervision for student not one ok (.) sometimes they fail because they decided in the committee they committee will decide but he can request (.)
48	Student (Male)	yah (.)
49	Employee (Male)	ok (.) [depend on his request] (.) yes
50	Student (Male)	[depend on his request] (.)
51	Employee (Male)	yah (.) he write a letter he requests that is up to the committee (.)ok =
52 53	Student (Male)	= ok (.) err if you remained could I receive it the application for () the submission the application for thesis for phd (.)
54	Employee (Male)	that's why all in the [website] (.)
55	Student (Male)	[website]
56 57 58 59	Employee (Male)	and then all above the for phd and master is handle by the postgraduate center ukm (.) here ↑ is only school and then the school is only small is actually is department and then you also have the faculty small bigger the authority (.) small bigger than this (.) err here only a school (.)
60 61 62 63		maybe in your university is department ok even in the department the second stage is the faculty the more bigger than us and then faculty is after the faculty () you have to go to pps that is one the is the main for and check whatever public student is to () pps postgraduate center (.)
64	Student (Male)	i wonderful if you direct me or tell me the direction for the faculty = (.)
65	Employee Male	= faculty ok (.) we have a map here you can see you show the map we able
66	Student (Male)	yes this the faculty (.)
67	Employee (Male)	am ok (.)
68	Student (Male)	yah (.)
69	Employee	faculty of science social this is our school (17.) ok (.) am

	(Male)	
70	Employee Male	am yah am this is around here ok (.)
71	Student (Male)	yah where is the main gate (.)
72	Employee (Male)	the main gate is here (.)
73	Student (Male)	yah (.) is here ok it is around it is here (4.)
74	Employee (Male)	ok here (5.)
75	Student (Male)	oh the main gate and [turn left] (.)
76	Employee (Male)	[turn left] (.) ok =
77	Student (Male)	= ok (.)
78	Employee (Male)	all about the information about the university is inside our map here (.)ok =
79	Student (Male)	= ok err (5.) so (4.) if err () which transportation [I should be] take (.)
80	Employee (Male)	[we have a bus] (.)
81	Student (Male)	you have buses here (.) =
82	Employee (Male)	= yah (.) we have bus here you can with in front of ours (.)
83	Student (Male)	could you tell me (.) which number (.) of buses (.) or [zone of buses] (.)
84	Employee (Male)	[err]
85	Student (Male)	i will err should take it (.)
86	Employee (Male)	the one you have to see ↓ in the website I also never use to bus here (.)
87	Student (Male)	[ok] (.)
88	Student (Male)	[yah]
89	Employee (Male)	ok (.) you have to see the website and you can see in the when you
90	Student (Male)	wait for buses this around the university (.)
91	Employee (Male)	do you remained if I need if I want err to ask about any question to return to you (.)
92	Student (Male)	yes ↓ you can ask you can come here (.)
93	Employee (Male)	you don't remained =
94	Student (Male)	= i don't remained
95	Employee (Male)	Yah
96	Student male	

The Second Conversation (Participant 2)

Line No	Participant	utterance

1	Student (Male)	alsalamalikum (.)
2	Employee (Female)	walikumalsalam (.)
3 4	Student (Male)	i have question I have two friends I want to submit here to complete phd so I have this err () (20.)
5	Employee (Female)	yes (.)
6	Student Male	alsalamalikum (.)
7	Employee (Female)	salam (.)
8 9	Student (male)	i want to ask you some questions I have two of my friends I want to submit phd here so [this proposal] (.)
10	Employee Female	[submit what]
11	Student (Male)	phd =
12	Employee (female)	= phd (.)
13	Student (male)	but a new phd new student (.) =
14	Employee (female)	= new student = (.)
15	Student (Male)	= new student (.)
16	Employee (female)	if [new student]
17	Student (male)	[not come]
18	Employee (female)	you must you already applied or not (.)
19	Student (male)	not apply because I got () supervisor signature foe her (.)
20	Employee (female)	who is your supervisor (.) =
21 22	Student (male)	=no (.) don't know I want to ask you who supervisor who is chosen for them is the supervisor (.)
23 24	Employee (female)	normally you must know who is the supervisor he wants to chose (.) not me ↑ (.)
25 26	Student (male)	i know but I don't know anyone I am not in the same faculty i am in IT not in err education not in English language (.)
27	Employee Female	this one is your or your friends (.)
28	Student (male)	my friend not for me (.)
29	Employee (female)	better your friend comes here to ask ↑ not you (.)
30	Student	aha so how can help me () [for example]

	(male)	
31	Employee (female)	[()] ielts literature or els (.)
32	Student	for example this one how to translate err the quran kareem to translate into English (.)
33	(male)	
34		how to teach quran in English this one and this literature (.)
35	Employee (female)	ok (.) I give you the head of the [program]
36	Student (male)	[aha] (.) ok (.)
37	Employee (female)	[number]
38	Student (male)	[ok] (.)
39	Employee (female)	better you call [call him discussing]
40	Student (male)	[call him and explain]
41	Employee (female)	after that () who is the best supervisor for you (.) ok =
42	Student (male)	= ok thank you very much (.)
43	Employee (female)	because I have no ideas (.) only ()
44	Student (male)	hah Same me I am with [no idea] (.)
45	Employee (female)	[I see] () where is your friend (.)
46	Student	in my country Iraq he is the head of English language in university of alambar and he is
47	(male)	the lecturer there (.)
48	Employee (female)	this one the proposal =
49	Student	= this one the proposal and he have tofel and everything but I will
50	(male)	go to () [certificate] (.)
51	Employee (female)	[certificate and anything]
52	Student (male)	and all ()
53	Employee (female)	ok I will give the number (.) =
54	Student (male)	= ok thank you very much (.)

The Effectiveness of Thematic Progression Patterns with Jingle Button Technique in Teaching Writing of Narrative Texts

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Abstract

The purposes of this research are to examine the effectiveness of Thematic Progression Patterns with Jingle Button Technique (TP-JB) on the improvement of the students' writing skill of narrative text and the students' learning motivation. Thematic Progression Patterns with Jingle Button Technique (TP-JB) is a combination of thematic progression patterns and cooperative learning theories. It becomes a model of teaching writing. This mixed method research was conducted in the English Department of Tidar University (Untidar) in 2014/2015 academic year. The subjects were the third semester students of English Department of Untidar who took writing 2 (paragraph writing) subject. In order to assess the students' writing skill, the writing test was used as a pre and post-test while the observation and interview were used to assess the students' learning motivation. To analyze the results of writing test of narrative text, Brown' and Bailey's theory in Brown (2004) was used. The writer also used constant comparative method developed by Glasser and Straus (1999) for qualitative data. The results show that implementing TP-JB technique can improve the students' writing skill of narrative text. The pre-test score of writing is 53.64 and the post-test score is 73.10. In other words, the implementation of TP-JB can improve the students' writing skill of narrative texts. Besides, the implementation of this technique also improves the students' learning motivation in joining teaching-learning activities of writing class. Based on the data, 98.50% of the students have good motivation after the implementation of TP-JB.

Keywords: jingle button technique, narrative text, thematic progression patterns, writing

1. Introduction

In Tidar university (Untidar), writing is a compulsory subject. It belongs to MKK (Matakuliah Keilmuan dan Keterampilan) subject. This subject provides the students with basic knowledge and skill. As MKK subject, writing is a compulsory subject for the students of English Department of Untidar (Tidar University).

In fact the students' writing skill, especially the third semester students of English Department of Tidar University in the academic year of 2014/2015 is low. It can be proven by their low average score in writing of narrative text which is only 62; it is under the mastery learning (KKM) which is 70.

The above fact encouraged the writer to find the factors which influence the students' low writing skill. Based on her observation to the teaching-learning process, she observed that there were some factors which influenced the students' low writing skill of narrative text; they were internal and external factors. The internal factors came from the students themselves, during the teaching learning process. She observed that the students only had low attentions, motivations and interests in writing. In addition based on the interview, the students stated that they only have limited understanding of vocabulary, grammar, schematic structure, language features of narrative text, besides that they often found difficulties in organizing thoughts, afraid of making mistakes and rarely practice of writing, while the external factors came from the lecturer. Based on the observation on the teaching-learning process, it was proved that the teaching learning process was monotonous because the lecturer dominated the teaching learning process and did not encourage the students to be active. In addition to that, the lecturer did not implement various teaching techniques or use appropriate media.

From all the factors above it could be concluded that both the internal and the external factors influence to the students' low writing skill. To overcome the above problems especially to improve narrative text writing skill of the third semester students of English Department, Faculty of Tidar University in the academic year of 2014/2015, the writer implemented a specific teaching technique namely Thematic Progression Patterns with Jingle Button Technique (TP-JB). It is a technique for teaching writing. Thematic progressions patterns refer to the way in which the theme of the clause may pick up, or repeat, a meaning from a preceding theme or rheme (Paltridge, 2000: 40). Millis and Cottell (2011: 1) state that Jingle Button is kind of cooperative learning activity in which students are given chips that have function to allow the holder to exchange information, and contribute to the discussion. Thematic Progression with Jingle Button Technique (TP-JB) is a combination between thematic progression patterns and jingle button technique.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Writing

So far there are some definitions of writing made by different linguists. Some are summarized as follows. Writing is trying to produce or reproduce written messages (Bram, 1995:7). Before writing, the writer needs to determine what to write, and should have something meaningful to convey and put forward his/her messages successfully. In conclusion, based on the above opinion, it can be stated that writing is producing written messages. It is a method of representing language in visual form.

In line with Bram, Oshima and Hogue (1997: 2) state that writing is progressive activity. This means that when we first write something down, we have already been thinking about what we are going to say and how we are going to say it. Then after we have finished

writing, we read over what we have written and make changes and corrections. Therefore, writing is never a one-step action. It is a process that has several steps. As Rumisek and Zemach state (2003: 3) that the writing process consists of some steps. The steps are pre-writing, drafting, reviewing and revising and rewriting. Teachers can help students write more effectively by getting them to examine their own creative process. Although the process of writing is essentially idiosyncratic, a writer usually works through a few basic phases. Students can be shown the different stages in the production of a piece of writing and be encouraged to discover what works best for them. Students can be shown the basic phases of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, revising (editing and proofreading), and presenting. In other words, it can be stated that writing is as progressive activity.

2.2 Narrative Text

As we can see that the goal of English teaching and learning process in competency-based curriculum (CBC) is that the students are expected to be able to communicate in English. The ability to communicate in English here is the ability to create and understand a discourse. According to competency models developed by Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell (1995), basically the competency or the ability to communicate is the ability to create and understand a discourse. A discourse can be defined as texts, either spoken or written texts in a certain context (context of situation and context of culture).

According to Feez and Joyce's opinion (2002: 4), text is any stretch of language which is held together cohesively through meaning. In line with Feez and Joyce, Derewianka (1990: 17) states that a text is any meaningful stretch of language—oral or written. But of course not all texts are the same, and a functional model of language tries to describe the ways in which they differ. It is interested in what language choices are available within any particular situation, and in which choices are more likely to result in an effective text which achieves its purpose. One factor which accounts for differences in texts is the purpose for which the text is being used. Texts are structured in different ways to achieve their purposes. The purpose of instructions, for example, is to tell someone how to do or make something. The structure of such a text would typically move through the following stages:

- a. stating the goal (i.e. what's to be made or done)
- b. outlining any materials or equipment needed
- c. detailing the steps to be taken.

In addition to that, Johns (1997: 38) states that texts are examples of genres that encourage the study not only of the structure and content of written discourse, but how these internal textual elements interact with other texts and social cultural forces in particular context.

Narrative is one of the text types. Narrative is a kind of text which used to amuse, and to deal with various experience in different ways. Narrative deals with the action of the characters or problematic events which lead to the crisis or turning point of some kids, which in turn finds a resolution. The purpose of narrative is to entertain and make the audience think about an issue, the moral value, or excite their emotions (Gerrot & Wignel, 1994: 204).

In line with Gerot and Wignel, Anderson and Anderson (2003) define that a narrative is a piece of text which tells a story to inform and entertain the reader and listener. In additions, Feez and Joyce (2002) state that narrative is aimed to tell stories which are about a person or a group

of people overcoming problems, on people react and experience, explore social and cultural value, and entertain an audience.

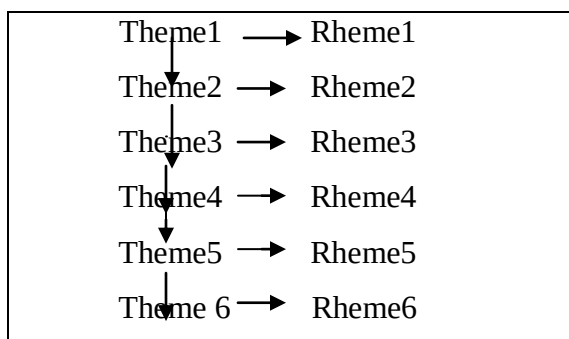
In conclusion, the narrative is fiction stories that consist of any characters to solve problems in the story in order the readers and the listeners can be entertained and can take moral values of the story. As one of the text types, narrative is characterized by three rethorical structures. They are the social function, the generic structure and the language features of the text.

2.3 Thematic Progression Pattens with Jingle Button Technique (TP-JB model)

Dealing with thematic progression, Martin and Rother in Paltridge (2000: 140) state, there are three main patterns of thematic progression. They are as follows:

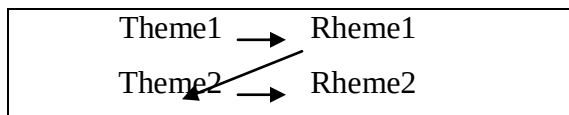
(a) The Theme Re-iteration/Constant Theme Pattern. In this pattern, the element of the preceding clause is the same as the subsequent clause.

This pattern is as follows:



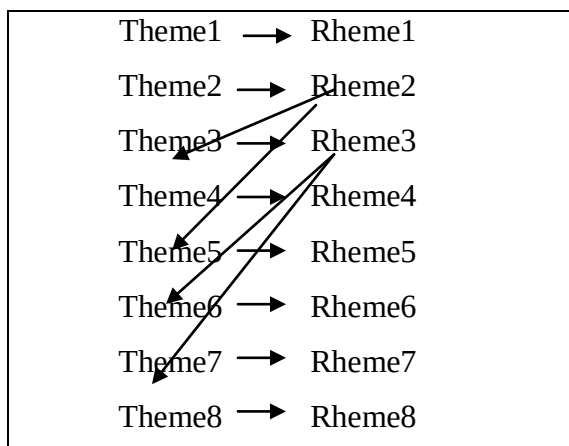
(b) The Zig- Zag Pattern

In this pattern, the Rheme of the preceding clause contains an element which becomes the Theme of subsequent clause. The pattern is as follows.



(c) The Multiple Theme Pattern

In this pattern, the Theme of one clause introduces a number of different pieces of information, each of which is then picked up and made in subsequent clause.



In addition to that, to make the teaching-learning activity effective and the students active and competitive, jingle button technique as a part of cooperative learning methods is considered as a good technique in teaching writing. As Slavin (1995) states that cooperative learning refers to instructional methods involving small heterogeneous group working together, usually toward a common goal. Dealing with jingle button technique, Kagan (1992) states that Jingle Button is a kind of structural developing of mutual relationship between members based on the same interest.

Jingle Button is one of techniques in cooperative learning. In jingle button technique, everyone in the class gets the same opportunity to participate or to give contribution in the discussion (class activities). The steps of Jingle Button technique based on Lie (2008:64) are:

1. the teacher prepares buttons or chips. Buttons may be pencils, candies, gravels and soon,
2. divided the students into some groups,
3. gives students two or three buttons or chips. (The number of buttons is depending on easy or difficulties of exercise),
4. when a student answers the question or matches the picture, he or she must place a button or a chip in the center of table.
5. when a student uses all his or her buttons or chips, he or she may not answer the question or match the core topic until all teammates have used their buttons or chips.
6. when all the buttons or chips have been used and the exercise not finish yet, the process starts again.

Based on the above considerations, the writer combines these two theories to create a model for teaching. It is Thematic Progression Patterns with Jingle Button Technique (TP-JB).

3. Research Method

Creswell (2009) states mixed method research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study. In this research, the writer applied sequential explanatory mixed method procedures. Explanatory strategy in mixed method research is characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data in a first phase followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the second phase that build on the results of initial quantitative results (Cresswell, 2009). It means the

writer sought to elaborate on or expand the findings of one method with another method. In addition to that, Allwright and Bailey (1991) claimed that mixed of quantitative and qualitative procedures are better than either of them, especially in the study of human learning.

The data was analyzed in two stages: quantitative and qualitative analyses. For quantitative analysis, the writer used descriptive statistics. In analyzing qualitative data (observation and interview) the writer followed constant comparative method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1999). This method consisted of four stages. They were comparing incidents applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory, and writing the theory.

C. Research Findings

Thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB) in teaching writing of narrative text was effective in improving the students' writing skill. It can be seen in two aspects. They are the improvement of students' writing skills of narrative text and the improvement of students' motivation in joinining teaching learning activities of writing class.

1.The Improvement of the Writing Skills of the Narrative Texts

The first purpose of the present study is to examine whether or not there is an improvement of the students' writing skill of narrative text after the implementation of TP-JB. Based on the pre-test and post-test data of writing skill of narrative text, through the descriptive statistic calculation, the results can be seen in the following table.

Table 1
The mean score of the aspect of writing in pre and post test (Brown, 2004)

Aspect	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Organization	10.41	13.94
Content	13.35	15.96
Grammar	12.21	14.92
Punctuation, Spelling, and mechanics	10.56	14.96
Style and quality of Expression	9.11	14.32
Total	53.64	73.10

Based on the above data, it can be seen that there is improvement of the students' writing skill of narrative text after the implementation of thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB). This can be concluded based on the improvement of the mean score of each aspect.

2. The Improvement of Students' Motiavation

Gardner (1985) states that motivation refers to a combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language.

To support Gardner's theory, Dornyei (2001) claims that motivation can help the majority of the learners to learn a language if they are motivated.

The observation was done to observe the process and the effects of the treatment. This observation was needed for monitoring the on-going learning process, class performance, as well as the teacher's performance. The data was recorded in the observation sheet that includes the processes and aspects to be observed. The observer (the collaborator) gave score on each of the indicator (1= poor, 2= enough and 3= good) and wrote briefly any observation or description about the process as well as the subjects of interest which are worth denoting. The results of each indicator of the observation before and after the implementation of thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB) can be seen in the following table.

Table 2

The Results of Observation on Students' Motivation

NO.	Indicators	Pre-treatment (number of the students)	Post-treatment (number of the students)
1.	Paying Attention	4	20
2.	Answering questions	5	20
3.	Asking questions	3	19
4.	Being Active	5	20
5.	Discussion	5	20
6.	Giving Opinion	3	19
7.	Doing Assignment	10	20
8.	Working cooperatively	5	20
9.	Interacting with the teacher	6	19
10.	Having Enthusiastic	4	20
	Mean Score	5	19.7
	Percentage	25.00%	98.50%

Based on the above table, it can be seen that the students' motivation in joining writing class before the implementation of TP-JB was in poor category. Only 4 out of 20 students (25%) paid attention to the teacher's instruction, 5 students answered the questions, 3 asked questions, 5 students were active, 5 students had discussion, 3 gave opinion, 6 students worked cooperatively and interacted with the teacher, 10 students did assignment and 4 students had enthusiasm.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that after the implementation of thematic progression patterns with jingle button techniques (TP-JB), almost all of the students paid attention to the teacher's instruction, answered and asked the questions, were active, had discussions, gave opinions, worked cooperatively and interacted with the teacher, did their assignments and had enthusiasm. In addition to that, based on the data, there were two indicators which did not reach maximum score (20 students). Those three indicators were asking questions, giving opinions and interacting with the teacher. Referring to the above results, it can be concluded that implementing thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB)

in teaching writing of narrative text improved the students' motivation in joining teaching-learning activity of writing class.

Based on the above data, it can be seen that thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB) is effective for teaching writing of narrative texts. In addition to that the implementation of thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB) technique encouraged the students to learn cooperatively since through this technique the students would be active and competitive. .

4. Conclusion

The implementation of thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB) is effective for teaching writing of narrative text to the third semester students of the English Department of Untidar in 2014/2015 academic year. It can be seen from the improvement of the results of the writing test of narrative text before and after the implementation of thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB). Apart from this, thematic progression patterns with jingle button technique (TP-JB) can improve the students' motivation in joining teaching-learning activities of writing class.

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The Impact of Geminate on the Duration of the Preceding and Following Vowels in Ta'zi Dialect

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Abstract

This paper is a spectrographic analysis of the duration of geminate consonants and their impacts on the preceding and the following vowels in Ta'zi Dialect (TD), a prominent dialect of the Yemeni Arabic. More than fifty words comprising minimal words are collected from the TD to find out the difference in length between the geminated and the non-geminated consonants in words and the consequences of this process. It has been reached to the conclusion that the duration of the geminate consonant in TD is generally twice as much as that of the non-geminates. When geminated, the trill has been found to be the longest among all other consonants; pharyngeals and semivowels have been found to be the shortest. The voiceless consonants prove to be longer than their voiced counterparts. It is also observed that the geminated consonants affected the preceding and the following vowels. The adjacent vowels to the geminates are generally shortened. It seems that there is no proof that the secondary articulation affects the length of the geminated words in case of gutturals.

Keywords: Duration, geminates, spectrographic analysis, Ta'izi Dialect, vowels,

1.1 Introduction

Gemination (*tashdeed in Arabic*) is generally defined as a sequence of two juxtaposed consonants in a single morpheme. There are vague or contradictory descriptions of 'gemination' in phonetic literature. Hartman, and Stok, (1972:93) defines gemination phonetically as a "sequence of identical adjacent segments of articulations.

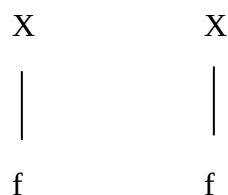
Some phoneticians view gemimates as long sounds on the phonetic level, Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996); Ball and Rahilly (1999). This long consonant is corresponding to singletons in Italian (Esposito and Benedetto 1999), Pattani Malay (Cohen, MacWhinney, Flatt and Jeferson 1999), Cypriot Greek (Arvaniti and Tserdanelis 2000, Tserdanelis and Arvaniti 2001). Al-Tamimi (2004) posits that "Greater muscular tension in the articulating organs" is mandatory to produce gemimates (Trubetzkoy 1969:161). (Catford 1977:298) postulates that gemimates requires to "hold the articulators and maintain a longer occlusion time for the geminate contoid".

Hassan 1981; Al-Tamimi (2004) argue that there is myodynamic, aerodynamic and acoustic evidence as well as a temporal compensation relationship between gemimates and vowels preceding them as cited in Rembarrnga, Mckay's 1980. Other researchers discuss the relationship between gemimates and morphological derivation. (Lahrouchi 2010; Dell and Elmedloui 2010)

Referring to one specific language i.e. discussing the issue on the phonological level, it typically refers to the prolongation of consonants. This definition does not mention whether gemination work in syllable boundaries, morpheme boundaries, or word boundaries. Crystal, D. (1989:33) defines gemination as a "sequence of identical adjacent segments of a sound in a single morpheme". Nevertheless, this definition is vague as it does not explain the distribution of gemination across morpheme boundaries or word boundaries. Trask, (1996:154) defines gemination as a "sequence of two identical segments, especially consonants". Again this definition is vague as there is an overlap and mixture between consonants as gemimates and lengthening of vowels. Moreover, it does not explain where the gemination takes place.

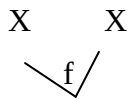
Delattre (1971) views gemination in terms of syllable boundaries. He postulates that there is a re-articulation of consonant: whereas the first consonant represents a coda of the first syllable, the second one represents the onset of the subsequent syllable. He argues that there is a difference between gemimates and long consonants in that the articulation of gemimates have two phases. Consequently, a geminated /f/, for example, has the representation in (1):

(1) Representations of gemimates



According to the above representation, a geminate can be taken as a cluster of the same consonant. The first consonant represents the coda of the first syllable and the second consonant represents the onset of the following syllable. However, long consonants are considered as a single segment with two timing slots as represented in (2)

(2) Representation of long consonants



Following Delattre's analysis, Miller (1987) carries out an acoustic study on tautomorphemic and heteromorphemic geminates in Levantine Arabic. Tautomorphemic geminates are consonants that belong to a single morpheme. They might also be called as monosegmental geminates. Heteromorphemic geminates, in contrast, belong to two juxtaposed morphemes and result from a range of phonological processes in language, such as assimilation of consonants or vowel deletion (3-4).

Tautomorphemic geminates in TD

- (3) a. sallam 'he surrendered'
b. kallam 'he talked'

(4) Coronal

ʔal- daar → ʔaddaar 'the house'

Miller comes to a conclusion that there seem to be "release spikes" in both geminate types, proposing the availability of movement during the geminate duration. The release spikes spot the point at which the sound is being rearticulated.

Ladefoged (1971) takes a different look at geminates. He regards geminates as long consonants. According to Ladefoged, geminates are better represented by autosegmental representation in (2) above but not that in (1).

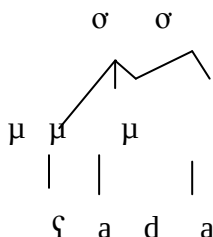
McCarthy (1979) and Leben (1980), adopt an autosegmental method to geminate; a geminate is considered as a single consonant mapped onto two skeletal tiers as discussed above. Both Ladefoged and McCarthy thus consider

a geminate as a single segment whereas Delattre posits that a geminate should be taken as two indistinguishable segments.

Mitchell (1993) revises the sources of initial geminates in vernacular Arabic and comes to the conclusion that, "an anaptyctic vowel may be heard in most cases of initial gemination but it is never essential and better omitted" (pp. 93,94). However, this claim is not supported by evidence as initial gemination is available without any vowel epenthesis.

As for Moraic Theory, a geminate is viewed as a consonant encoding intrinsic weight more than length. It postulates that a geminate is at all times moraic, and any CVC syllable should be taken as heavy if the coda consonant is part of an underlying geminate, even in languages where CVC syllables otherwise count as light (Tranel (1990)). Thus, a word like /ʕad*da/ meaning (he counted) in Arabic will have the syllable structure in (5) under Moraic Theory:

(5) Geminates within Moraic Theory



The most extraordinary feature of geminates is the one discussed in Kenstowicz and Pyle (1973). They posit that geminates form a link that does not adhere to phonological rules in two aspects: first, geminates never form a phonological rule that has an impact of the first half of the geminate without the second half of the geminate; on the other hand, geminate clusters do not allow vowel epenthesis to separate them into two parts. These two phonological features are known respectively as *inalterability* as well as *inseparability*.

Within linear phonology, geminates are differentiated from singletons by the feature [+long]; alternatively, they are known to as a sequence of two similar segments (6)

(6) Representation of the Geminate /ff/ in Linear Phonology:

Ci	Ci
f	f

Thurgood (1993:1) states that “syntagmatically, the most favored environment for long consonants to occur in is intervocalically, following a short, stressed vowel and preceding another short vowel.” Thus, cross-linguistically, geminates have a tendency to occur in the intervocalic phonetic environments and following short stressed vowels (Thurgood 1993). Consequently, most of the suggested phonological representations of gemination are “almost exclusively from intervocalic geminates; it is perhaps unsurprising that they should face some difficulties in representing non-intervocalic geminates” (Muller 2001:12).

Geminates in the medial position in Arabic are contrastive. Nevertheless, the distinctive feature of geminate/singleton in the final position contrast in Arabic is debatable. Mitchell (1990) lists the two Arabic words /ʕaam/ (year) and /ʕaamm/ (public) to exemplify distinctiveness (as cited in Abu-Abbas, Khaled, H (2011). El Saaran (1951) provides a list of examples that show distinctiveness of geminate/singleton in word-final position. Some of the examples are (/haad/ (deviated) and /haadd/ (sharp). On the other hand, Cowell (1964:23) states that, in Syrian Arabic, word final geminates “may occur after an accented vowel”; however, they “do not actually contrast with single ones.” Like Cowell, Ghalib (1984: 31) contends that “geminates occurring word-finally are non-distinctive in Arabic because contrasts between single and geminate consonants in this position are non-significant.”

As regard to temporal duration between geminate/singleton consonants, most of works on gemination in Arabic conclude that geminates intervocalically represent temporal differences with the preceding vowel (Blanc 1952; Mitchell 1990; Al-Tamimi 2004;) etc.

Al-Tamimi, Abu-Abbas, & Tarawneh (2010) provide convincing proof as regard the contrast of geminates in final position in Arabic. Using spectrographic and videofluoroscopic analyses demonstrate that final geminates are allowable in Jordanian Arabic. As a matter of fact, it is possible in all different varieties of the Arabic dialects. The compensation in duration of the preceding vowel and the tension in articulating the geminates increase the perception of boundaries and maintain phonemic differences.

Gemination as described in this paper is a phonetic feature regardless of the phonological or grammatical constraints of the word. If the word is prolonged during speech, it is considered as geminate. 'Thashdeed', a term used in TD for gemination, is not simply the lengthening of consonants; it may be defined as "consonants pronounced longer in duration than their single counterparts and with great tenseness of articulation" (Mitchell, 1975:xiv). In TD, gemination

may occur either a) within the morpheme boundaries, b) syllable boundaries or c) at the word boundaries. For examples of the three sets consider the following data:

(7) (a) morpheme boundaries (monomorphemic words)

/ʕann/	appeared
/ʔann/	moan
/zann/	complained
/ʕadd/	counted
/kadd/	overworked

(b) syllable boundaries

/ħabba:z/	baker
/kaðða:b/	liar
/zamma:r/	singer
/ħarra:tʰ/	bluffer
/laʕʕa:b/	player
/namma:m/	gossip

(c) Word boundaries

/ʔin naðhab/	if we go
/ʔið ðahba/	when he went

Some phoneticians argue that it is because of the syllable division, a geminate sequence cannot be regarded as simply a long consonant, and they claim that the transcription differences usually indicate this, e.g. [ff-] is geminate, [f:] is long" Crystal (1989:33). Catford indicates that "geminate or geminate sequences as, say, [zz], involves continuity of articulation – a prolongation of the articulatory posture – and might thus be termed a 'long' consonant than rather a geminate sequence of two segments". Catford, (1977:210).

However, a segment can be prolonged without being geminated. For example, [f] can be prolonged for five seconds or more and no gemination takes place. The term 'tashdeed' in TD, which is close in meaning to the English term 'gemination' means that the articulatory organ is firmly contacted with the passive organ that the sound produced is received differently from a merely long consonant. Thus, prolongation of a segment and 'tashdeed' are distinctly different.

Hence, gemination is a phonetic process that occurs in TD and applied to those cases where the sequence occurs within the same morpheme or within the same syllable. Gemination also occurs in the sequence of two syllables or two words. Whenever the term gemination is used in this paper in respect of TD, it is used in the sense of 'tashdeed'.

Gemination process is added to the single consonant to accomplish one of the following functions: (a) strengthen the effect of meaning (stronger word), (b) to create a causative meaning, and (c) for phonemic contrast. e.g. (8)

(8) (a)	/qatala/	killed
	/qattala/	killed severely or massacred

(b)	/galasa/	sat down
	/gallasa/	made him sit down
	/kaðaba/	lied
	/kaððaba/	accused him of lying
(c)	/saarr/	pleasing
	/saar/	walked away
	/ʔann/	moaned
	/ʔan/	that

The general framework of gemination in TD is either to make an intransitive verb transitive, or to indicate an exaggeration or frequency of an event etc. There is no gemination at the end of the word unless it is a monosyllabic word. Disyllabic words and more are not amenable to geminate at the end of the word. Rather, the gemination takes place in the middle of the word creating a syllable division.

1.2 The Present Study

This study on gemination in Ta'zi Dialect is based on a spectrographic analysis to achieve the following *aims*:

- 1) to find out the difference in length between the geminated and non-geminated segments.
- 2) to find out if there is any influence of the consonant on the length of the preceding and the following vowels.
- 3) to find out if there is any pattern according to the manner of articulation.
- 4) does the secondary articulation affect the length of the geminated words in case of gutturals?
- 5) which segment takes more time and why?
- 6) is there any difference as to duration between voiced and voiceless geminates?

This study contributes to the literature on gemination by providing a detailed examination of Ta'zi Dialect (TD). There are few phonetic studies of TD, and none on the acoustic patterns of consonant length in the colloquial variety. While consonant gemination in TD is very frequent and plays an important morpho-syntactic role in the language, little is known about the phonetic realization of singleton and geminate targets in this dialect.

1.3 The Status of Gemimates

There are several ways in which quantity (with reference to vowels and consonants) may be linguistically analysed. One of the problems regarding segmental quantity is whether all the long and short vowels and/or consonants should be listed in the phonemic inventory of the language. "This doubles the number of units in the inventory, and if indeed the system is symmetrical, it would be more economical to extract length from the system and treat it as a prosodeme". Lehist, (1970:43)

Linguists often argue whether the geminate clusters are to be treated as new phonemes or like any other consonantal cluster. According to Haugen, (1949:281-2), "as soon as sound extends beyond the boundary of a syllable, it is uniformly interpreted as a new phoneme. The long 't' of Italian 'fatto' is regarded as two 't's even though there is no actual break between them. A long vowel within which there is a syllable boundary is universally held to be two".

Lehiste proposes that "if a language has consonant clusters that function in the same manner as long consonants, it may be useful to analyse these long consonants as clusters of identical consonants regardless of whether it is possible to demonstrate phonetically their geminate nature" Lehiste, (1970:43-45).

It has been customarily agreed upon among phonologists that gemination takes place only when preceded by short vowels. But the following data from TD shows that gemination takes place in free variation whether preceded by short or long vowels or followed by short or long vowels.

(9) (a) with short vowels

/kassara/	smashed
/qattala/	slaughtered
/laqqata/	picked up

(b) with long vowels

/ma:rr/	pedestrian
/fa:rr/	escaper
/ðɑ:rr/	harmful

(c) across morpheme boundaries

/ðɑ:nnu:n/	thinkers
/ma:nnu:n/	naggers
/marru:n/	pedestrians

1.4 Gemination in English

In English, long syllabic consonants occur within the phrase at the juncture of two words, (e.g., shot tigers), or of a word and certain morpheme boundary, e.g., (unknown), (saneness) but never with the word proper.

Thus, one of the main difficulties encountered by the English-speaking students learning TD is closely related to their patterns of stress and rhythm. "Students tend to pronounce TD with stress-timed i.e. they use a heavy stress on most of the syllables in sentences which had word-stress, particularly with those syllables containing a long vowel or ending with geminate consonants, and tend to weaken the stress of the other syllables. In those weak-stress syllables the students tend to shorten the vowel and obscure its quantity". Kennedy, (1960:32). For example, the phrase /kabbajt azzajt/ (you poured the oil) might not be understood if the /bb/ and /zz/ are not geminated.

The observation by Kennedy is partly true. Stress in TD is predictable and does not play a major role in changing the meaning. What is more important is that the non-Arab students who are learning TD do not pronounce the "tashdeed" properly. They find it difficult to make the two articulators tightly pressed against each other for a considerably prolonged time. In other words, if the segment is prolonged properly, the gemination takes place correctly, and the stress pattern will be automatically placed on the correct syllable. Thus, failing to geminate results in a wrong stress. For example, the word /ħamma:m/ (toilet) might be taken as /ħama:m/ (pigeons) if the first /m/ is not geminated properly. Long consonants in the intervocalic position

contain a syllabic boundary and are distributed between the two syllables so that the first part of the consonant closes the preceding syllables and the second part starts the following syllable. In TD, voiceless and voiced stops, nasals, laterals, fricatives, approximants, pharyngeals and the glottal stop all without exception can occur in the geminated form.

Lehiste (1970) indicates that certain problems arise in determining whether a length difference is distinctive when a difference in vowel length is accompanied by an equally noticeable quality difference, it is often true that a listener responds to either the quantity difference or the quality difference, disregarding the concomitant phonetic cues as allophonic. "The native speaker's reaction may in such cases provide a suggestion as to which of the two – duration or phonetic quality – is of primary importance". Lehiste, (1970:30).

Lehiste (1970) indicates that there are some languages in which the quantity of a given segment is related to the quantity of other segments in the sequence. In TD, generally speaking, there exists an inverse relationship between the quantity of a vowel and that of the following consonant, so that a short vowel is followed by a long consonant and a long vowel by a short consonant. However, there are some examples where a long vowel is followed by a long consonant and a short vowel is followed by a short consonant.

Furthermore, in TD two long syllables may follow each other; a long consonant may be preceded by a long vowel and followed by a long vowel as well. In TD, length of vowels and consonants is phonemic and contrastive. This opens an option to consider this extra length as allophonic.

(10)	/taʃba:n/	sick
	/taʃba::n/	very sick
	/tʃqjjib/	nice
	/tʃqjj:ib/	very nice
	/zaʃla:n/	upset
	/zaʃla::n/	very upset
	/kabi:r/	big
	/kabi::r/	very big

Assimilation can also cause gemination in TD. When sequences of homorganic but not identical clusters are neighbours in word boundaries, the result will be one single geminated consonant. For example, when /n/ occurs at word final position and followed by frictionless continuant in the next adjacent word /r/, resulting with /rr/ double consonant. Thus,

[n] ----- [rr] ----- [r] # e.g. [man rabbak] → [marrabbak] (who's your lord?)

This rule reads /n/ → [rr] / /n/ _____ /r/.

Similar phonological process is applicable with the following consequences: Examples:

[n] → [ll] / /n/ _____ /l/. [man lak] → [mallak] (who's for you?)

[n] → [jj] / /n/ _____ /j/. [man jaʃmal] → [majjaʃmal] (who works)

Gemination in TD is often impacted by the surrounding vowels, particularly the preceding vowel. Generally speaking, the geminate consonant has an impact on the quantity of

the preceding vowels. In other words, the vowels preceding the geminate consonants in monosyllabic words are almost always short: e.g.,

(11)	/tamm/	finished
	/ta:m/	complete
	/ʕamm/	spread
	/ʕaamm/	passed the night
	/qall/	became scarce
	/qa:l/	said

Degemination of consonants is compensated by the lengthening of the vowels.

Another point Catford (1977:211) mentions is about the 'geminate' semivowels [-ww-] and [-jj-], which occurs in Arabic in such words as [awwal]. 'first', 'tʕajjib', 'good'. He defines semi-vowels as essentially momentary and 'prolongable'. Thus according to Catford, 'geminate semivowel' is a contradiction in terms".

The tendency to describe semivowels as momentary grew out from the fact that Catford wants to reject Pike's (1943) term 'contoid' and vocoid' and thus he describes [w] and [j] in Arabic as momentary. The Arabic [w] and [j] can be prolonged as any other consonant for a considerable amount of time. They do not tend to glide to [u] or [i] as in English. However, the most prominent feature of these geminate semivowels is "their rapid on-and-off- glide and it is this which preserves their semi-vocalic character", Catford (1977:211). This claim has been instrumentally proved. The semivowels are shorter when geminated than most of other consonants. (See table 1.5).

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- 8) to find out if there is any influence of the consonant on the length of the preceding and the following vowels.
- 9) to find out if there is any pattern according to the manner of articulation.
- 10) does the secondary articulation affect the length of the geminated words in case of gutturals?
- 11) which segment takes more time and why?
- 12) is there any difference as to duration between voiced and voiceless geminates?

This study contributes to the literature on gemination by providing a detailed examination of Ta'zi Dialect (TD). There are few phonetic studies of TD, and none on the acoustic patterns of consonant length in the colloquial variety. While consonant gemination in TD is very frequent and plays an important morpho-syntactic role in the language, little is known about the phonetic realization of singleton and geminate targets in this dialect.

1.5 Procedure

More than fifty words comprising minimal words are collected from the TD (see table 1.4) to find out the difference in length between the geminated and the non-geminated consonants in words and the consequences of this process.

The pairs have been collected carefully so as to represent different manners of articulation. Then the words, which have test sounds in the medial positions, have been mixed up and ordered arbitrarily so that no subconscious stress should be given to the geminated words. To avoid confusion between the pairs, a similar number was given to each pair in the list. With special care and preparation, the words are uttered by the researcher into the program and the spectrograms are obtained.

1.5.1 Consonant phonemes in TD

TD has slightly different phonemes from the Standard Arabic (SA) and from the phonemes of other Yemeni dialects such as the Sana'ni Dialect (SD). The following table compares the phonemes of the TD to SA and to SD.

Table 1.1 Consonant phonemes of TD compared to SA and SD

N o	TD	Description	SA counterparts	SD counterparts
1	b	voiced bilabial plosive	b	b
2	t	voiceless denti-alveolar plosive	t	t
3	t ^ʕ	voiceless pharyngealized denti-alveolar plosive	t ^ʕ	t ^ʕ
4	d	voiced denti-alveolar plosive	d	d
5	k	voiceless velar plosive	k	k
6	g	voiceless velar plosive	ɖʒ	ɖʒ
7	q	voiceless uvular plosive	q	g
8	ʔ	voiceless glottal stop	ʔ	ʔ
9	-	/d/ replaced by /ð ^ʕ / in TD and SD.	ɗ	-
10	m	voiced bilabial nasal	m	m
11	n	voiced denti-alveolar nasal	n	n
12	f	voiceless labiodental fricative	f	f
13	θ	voiceless dental fricative	θ	θ
14	ð	voiced dental fricative	ð	ð
15	ð ^ʕ	voiced pharyngealized dental fricative	ð ^ʕ	ð ^ʕ
16	s	voiceless alveolar fricative	s	s
17	s ^ʕ	voiceless pharyngealized alveolar fricative	s ^ʕ	s ^ʕ
18	z	voiced alveolar fricative	z	z
19	ʃ	voiceless postalveolar fricative	ʃ	ʃ
20	χ	voiceless uvular fricative	χ	χ
21	ʁ	voiced uvular fricative	ʁ	ʁ
22	ħ	voiceless pharyngeal fricative	ħ	ħ
23	ʕ	voiced pharyngeal fricative	ʕ	ʕ
24	h	voiceless glottal fricative	h	h
25	r	voiced alveolar trill	r	r
26	l	voiced alveolar lateral	l	l
27	j	voiced palatal approximant	j	j
28	w	voiced labio-velar approximant	w	w

Table 1.1 shows that TD contains 27 consonant phonemes compared to 28 in SA. The phoneme /ḏ/ in SA is replaced by /ð/ in TD. The phoneme /dʒ/ in SA is replaced by /g/ in TD. Other phonemes in TD are symmetrical to the phonemes of SA in the phonemic as well as in the phonetic representations.

1.6 Duration of Sounds in Medial Position

1.6.1 Stops

Under each phoneme given below, the comparative length of the consonants single/geminated in milliseconds and the ratio is highlighted.

/ʔ/

ʔ: ʔʔ= 35:175 R= 1:5

raʔasa 615 msec	duration	raʔʔasa 735 msec	duration
r	125	r	170
a	130	a	110
ʔ	35	ʔʔ	175
a	120	a	85
s	65	s	55
a	140	a	140

There is, due to gemination, the duration of the preceding and the following vowels is reduced. The initial consonant of the geminated word is lengthened due to the trilling given to /r/ as a launching preparation to utter the geminate properly.

/q/

q: qq= 90:230 R= 1:2.5

baqara 575 msec	duration	baqqara 715msec	duration
b	80	b	120
a	110	a	80
q	90	qq	230
a	120	a	115
r	15	r	20
a	160	a	150

It is clear that the geminated voiceless uvular plosive has more length than its non-geminated counterpart. The initial consonant in the geminated word has more duration than the initial consonant in the non-geminated word. The preceding and the following vowels have less duration than their counterparts in the non-geminated word.

/ g /

g: g g= 55:170 R= 1:3

ḡagar 475 msec	duration	ḡaggar 600 msec	duration
ḡ	130	ḡ	190
a	130	a	100
g	55	gg	170
a	130	a	120
r	30	r	20

From the data above, it is clear that the duration of the initial consonant is affected by gemination. The preceding as well as the following vowels of the geminate are also affected.

/ k /

k: k k= 95:220 R= 1:2.3

sakan 640 msec	duration	sakkan 755msec	duration
s	110	s	150
a	115	a	110
k	95	kk	220
a	150	a	110
n	170	n	165

/d/

d: dd= 70:210 R= 1:3

badal 640 msec	duration	baddal 780 msec	duration
b	150	b	180
a	120	a	110
d	70	dd	210
a	150	a	130
l	150	l	150

/t/

t: tt= 70:210 R= 1:3

matar 550 msec	duration	mattar 650msec	duration
m	60	m	150
a	120	a	110
t	70	tt	210
a	150	a	130
r	150	r	150

$$\begin{array}{c} /t^s/ \\ t^s: t^s t^s = 110:210 \quad R = 1:2.1 \end{array}$$

mat ^s ar 580 msec	Duration	mat ^s t ^s ar 740 msec	duration
m	60	m	150
a	110	a	100
t ^s	110	t ^s t ^s	210
a	150	a	130
r	150	r	150

Pharyngealised /t^s/ shows its influence when geminated not only on the consonant concerned (when compared to /t/), but also on the duration of the neighbouring vowels. Due to gemination, the vowels following and preceding the pharyngealized phonemes are comparatively short.

$$\begin{array}{c} /b/ \\ b:bb = 60:170 \quad R = 1:2.8 \end{array}$$

sabaq 460 msec	duration	sabbaq 550 msec	duration
s	130	s	150
a	100	a	70
b	60	bb	170
a	150	a	140
q	20	q	20

1.6.2 Nasals

$$\begin{array}{c} /m/ \\ m:mm = 80:240 \quad R = 1:3 \end{array}$$

samar 630 msec	duration	sammar 720 msec	duration
s	160	s	210
a	120	a	75
m	80	mm	240
a	160	a	95
r	110	r	100

$$\begin{array}{c} /n/ \\ n:nn = 60:180 \quad R = 1:3 \end{array}$$

hana 340 msec	duration	hanna 500 msec	duration
h	30	h	130
a	100	a	50
n	60	nn	180
a	150	a	140

Table 1.2 Duration of geminated and non-geminated plosives and nasals with duration of preceding and following vowels.

phoneme	Non-geminate	Preceding vowel	Following vowel	geminate	Preceding vowel	Following vowel
ʔ	35	130	120	175	110	85
q	90	110	120	230	80	115
g	55	130	130	170	100	120
k	95	115	150	220	110	110
d	70	120	150	210	110	130
t	70	120	150	210	110	130
tʰ	110	110	150	210	100	130
b	60	100	150	170	70	140
m	80	120	160	240	75	95
n	60	100	150	180	50	140

Generally, there is a pattern as to the duration of the preceding vowels of the geminates and non-geminates. Moreover, vowels following the geminates tend to be shorter than the vowels following the non-geminates. (see table 1.2).

It is also obvious that the non-geminated pharyngealized /tʰ/ has the highest duration due to the secondary articulation. The vowel following the geminated and the non-geminated pharyngealized /tʰ/ has the highest duration. The geminated /m/ has the highest duration among all stops due to the nasalization and bilabialization at the same time.

Generally speaking, voiceless stops tend to be longer in duration than the voiced stops. If the nasals, and the glottal stop are excluded, the length of the geminates in descending order is as follows:

q = 230, k = 220, t = 210, d = 210, g = 170, b = 170.

1.6.3 Fricatives

/f/

f:ff= 100:150 R= 1:1.5

nafar 430 msec	duration	naffar 450 msec	duration
n	50	n	60
a	60	a	50
f	100	ff	150
a	150	a	120
r	70	r	70

/θ/

θ: θθ= 60:240 R= 1:1.4

ʔaθar 540 msec	duration	ʔaθθar 680 msec	duration
n	110	n	120
a	120	a	100

θ	60	θθ	240
a	120	a	100
r	130	r	120

/ð/

ð: ð ð= 70:210R= 1:3

baðar 550 msec	duration	baððar 700 msec	duration
b	50	b	160
a	135	a	80
ð	70	ð ð	210
a	175	a	135
r	120	r	115

/ðˤ/

ðˤ: ðˤ ðˤ= 50:180 R= 1:3.6

naðˤar 460 msec	duration	naðˤðˤar 620 msec	duration
n	90	n	130
a	120	a	100
ðˤ	50	ðˤðˤ	180
a	150	a	120
r	50	r	90

/s/

s: ss= 130:230 R= 1:1.8

masak 440 msec	duration	massak 530 msec	duration
m	80	m	90
a	100	a	100
s	130	ss	230
a	110	a	90
k	20	k	20

/sˤ/

sˤ: sˤsˤ= 120:250 R= 1:2.1

masˤar 490 msec	duration	masˤsˤar 590 msec	duration
m	60	m	70
a	110	a	100
sˤ	120	sˤsˤ	250
a	110	a	100
r	90	k	70

/z/

z: zz= 80:200 R= 1:2.5

mazaq 530 msec	duration	Mazzaq 680 msec	duration
m	60	m	90
a	100	a	90
z	80	zz	200
a	110	a	100
q	180	k	200

/ʃ/

ʃ: ʃʃ= 160:300 R= 1:1.9

maʃa 680 msec	duration	maʃʃa 740 msec	duration
m	90	m	140
a	100	a	80
ʃ	160	ʃʃ	300
a	330	a	220

/χ/

χ: χχ= 140:220R= 1:1.6

ʃaχar/ 560 msec	duration	ʃaχχar 600 msec	duration
ʃ	140	ʃ	120
a	100	a	90
χ	140	χχ	220
a	130	a	120
r	50	r	50

/ʁ/

ʁ: ʁʁ= 100:210 R= 1:1.2

ʃaʁal 620 msec	duration	ʃaʁʁal 680 msec	duration
ʃ	120	ʃ	140
a	100	a	90
ʁ	100	ʁʁ	210
a	140	a	90
l	160	l	130

/ħ/

ħ: ħħ= 110:280 R= 1:2.5

kaħal 460 msec	duration	kaħħal 640 msec	duration
k	70	k	130
a	120	a	100
ħ	110	ħħ	280
a	140	a	100
l	20	l	30

/ʕ/

ʕ:ʕʕ= 70:190 R= 1:2.7

saʕal 560 msec	Duration	saʕʕal 660 msec	duration
s	110	s	120
a	100	a	90
ʕ	70	ʕʕ	190
a	130	a	100
l	150	l	160

/h/

h: hh= 80:200 R= 1:2.5

sahar 510 msec	Duration	sahhar 650 msec	duration
s	120	s	180
a	100	a	90
h	80	hh	200
a	110	a	90
r	100	r	90

The table 1.3 shows that the duration of geminated fricatives is more than twice as much as non-geminated fricatives. Generally speaking, gemination has an impact of the preceding and following vowels; all the vowels that precede or follow the geminates are generally shortened.

Table 1.3 Duration of geminated and non-geminated plosives and nasals with duration of preceding and following vowels

phoneme	Non-geminate	Preceding vowel	Following vowel	geminate	Preceding vowel	Following vowel
f	100	60	150	150	50	120
θ	60	120	120	240	100	100
ð	70	135	175	210	80	135
ð ^ʕ	50	120	150	180	100	120
s	130	100	110	230	100	90
s ^ʕ	120	110	110	250	110	100
z	80	100	110	200	90	100
ʃ	160	100	330	300	80	220
χ	140	100	130	220	90	120
ʁ	100	100	140	210	90	90
h	110	120	140	280	100	100
ʕ	70	110	130	190	90	100
h	80	100	110	200	90	90

Table 1.4 shows the difference in duration between the voiced and the voiceless fricatives. Voiceless fricatives tend to be longer than their voiced counterparts.

Table 1.4 Duration of voiced and voiceless fricatives

Voiced	Duration	Voiceless	Duration
zz	200	ss	230
ʕʕ	190	ħħ	280
ðð	210	θθ	240
ʁʁ	210	ʁʁ	220

1.6.4 Trills

/r/

r:rr= 20:200 R= 1:10

ʔaraq msec	470	duration	ʔarra 570 msec	duration
ʔ		20	ʔ	20
a		150	a	110
r		20	rr	200
a		190	a	150
q		90	q	90

1.6.5 Laterals

/l/

l:ll= 100:270 R= 1:2.7

ʔalam msec	510	duration	ʔallam 640 msec	duration
ʔ		20	ʔ	30
a		120	a	100
l		100	ll	270
a		120	a	100
m		150	m	140

1.6.6 Approximants (semivowels)

/w/

w:ww= 150:230 R= 1:1.5

ħawal msec	520	duration	ħawwal msec	590	duration
ħ		20	ħ		30
a		130	a		120
w		150	ww		230
a		100	a		60
l		120	l		150

/j/

j:jj= 40:220 R= 1:6

χaja:l msec	610	duration	Xajja:l 690 msec	duration
m		100	m	150
a		100	a	90
j		140	jj	220
a		150	a	130
l		120	l	100

1.7 Results

Table 1.5 summarizes the findings of the spectrographic analysis of the temporal duration of the consonants in TD. The table includes the minimal pairs, their gloss, sound duration and word total duration along with ratio of word duration as well as the geminate versus non-geminate sounds.

Table 1.5 Duration of geminated and non-geminated consonants and nasals with total gemination of each word of the pattern along with the ratio

word	gloss	sound duration	word duration	Ratio of word duration	Gem:non-gem
raʔasa raʔʔasa	presided made him head	35 msec 175 msec	615 msec 735 msec	1:1.9	1:5
baqar baqqar	cows married a cow-like lady	90 msec 230 msec	575 msec 715 msec	1:1.3	1:2.5
fagar faggar	trees planted trees	55 msec 170 msec	475 msec 600 msec	1:1.26	1:3
sakan sakkan	lived made him live	95 msec 220 msec	640 msec 755 msec	1:1.17	1:2.3
badal baddal	in place of changed clothes	70 msec 210 msec	640 msec 780 msec	1:1.2	1:3
matar mattar	measured measured perfectly	70 msec 210 msec	550 msec 650 msec	1:1.18	1:3
matʕar matʕ tʕar	rain rained heavily	100 msec 210 msec	580 msec 740 msec	1:1.27	1:2.1
sabaq sabbaq	surpassed initiated	60 msec 170 msec	460 msec 550 msec	1:1.19	1:2.8
samar sammar	stayed up nailed	80 msec 240 msec	630 msec 720 msec	1:1.14	1:3
hana hanna	pleasure wished pleasure	60 msec 180 msec	340 msec 500 msec	1:1.15	1:3
nafar naffar	bunch of people annoyed	100 msec 150 msec	430 msec 450 msec	1:1.04	1:1.5

ʔaθar ʔaθθar	trace traced	60 msec 240 msec	540 msec 680 msec	1:1.3	1:4
baðar baððar	sow wasted	70 msec 210 msec	550 msec 700 msec	1:1.3	1:3
naðʕar naðʕðʕar	sight proposed	50 msec 180 msec	460 msec 620 msec	1:1.3	1:3.6
masak massak	caught caught firmly	130 msec 230 msec	440 msec 530 msec	1:1.2	1:1.8
masʕar masʕsʕar	scarf scarfed	120 msec 250 msec	490 msec 600 msec	1:1.2	1:2.1
mazaq mazzaq	spit tore	80 msec 200 msec	520 msec 680 msec	1:1.3	1:2.5
maʃa maʃʃa	walked drove	160 msec 300 msec	680 msec 740 msec	1:08	1:1.9
ʃaxara ʃaxxra	glared snored	140 msec 220 msec	560 msec 600 msec	1:07	1:1.6
ʃaʕal ʃaʕʕal	tinkered found a job for someone	110 msec 210 msec	620 msec 680 msec	1:09	1:2
kaħal kaħħal	darkened eyes darkened sbd's eyes	100 msec 280 msec	460 msec 640 msec	1:1.4	1:2.5
saʕal saʕʕal	coughed caused sbd to cough	70 msec 190 msec	560 msec 660 msec	1:1.17	1:2.8
sahar sahhar	staying up late caused sbd to stay up late	80 msec 200 msec	520 msec 650 msec	1:1.25	1:2.5
ʔalam ʔallam	pain caused pain	100 msec 270 msec	510 msec 640 msec	1:1.25	1:2.7
ħawal hawwal	squint changed	150 msec 230 msec	520 msec 590 msec	1:1.3	1:1.5
χaja:l χajja:l	Illusion horseman	140 msec 220 msec	610 msec 690 msec	1:1.1	1:1.6

Table 1.5 shows that the duration of geminated consonants is much higher than the non-geminated ones. The geminated trill appears to be the longest compared to the non-geminated trill (1:10), followed by the glottal stop (1:5) and then by /θ/ (1.4), followed by /n/ and the pharyngealized dental /ðʕ/ (1:3.6) and finally /ð, g, d/ and /m/ (1:3). The difference between the other consonants starts from 2.8 for /b/ to 1.5 for /w/ and /f/.

Below is the average of the longest geminated consonants:

Table 1.6 *Longest duration of consonants types.*

Gemination type	Average value
Trill	10.0
Plosives	3.0
Nasals	3.0
laterals	2.7
Gutturals	2.7
Pharyngealized	2.6
Fricatives	2.4
Pharyngeals	1.8
Semivowels	1.8

Table 1.6 shows that the longest consonant is the trill. This is may be attributed to the nature of concomitant trilling for a remarkable time in the Arabic language. When it is geminated, the trilling is definitely increased, and it needs a special attention to control the trilling. Despite the fact that during the pronunciation of the trill in the spectrograph, a great care was taken not to over-trill it, it turns out to be the longest among all other consonants. Trill is followed by the plosives and nasals with an average value of 3.0 each type. Laterals have an average value of 2.7 as well as the gutturals. The term "gutturals" is used in this paper to include only the throat consonants in Arabic i.e. /ʔ, h, ʕ, ħ, ʁ, ʁ/. Pharyngealized sounds /ðˤ, sˤ, tˤ/, which are sounds that are mainly plosives and fricatives with pharyngealization as a secondary articulation, have an average value of 2.6. It is obvious that the pharyngealized plosive /d̤/ is excluded because it is not used in TD. The fricatives have an average value with 2.4 followed by the pharyngeals /χ and ʁ/ and the semivowels with an average value of 1.8 for each type.

1.8 Conclusion:

Consequently, the following inferences can be drawn from the above data:

1. the duration of the geminate consonant in TD is generally twice as much as that of the non-geminates.
2. When geminated, the trill has been found to be the longest among all other consonants, followed by the plosives, and then the nasals, laterals, gutturals, pharyngealized consonants, fricatives, pharyngeals and semivowels. The trill has been found to be the longest due to the repeatedly concomitant trilling of the tongue during the articulation of the sound.
3. The voiceless consonants prove to be longer than their voiced counterparts.
4. It is also observed that the geminated consonants affected the preceding and the following vowels. The adjacent vowels to the geminates are generally shortened.
5. It seems that there is no proof that the secondary articulation affects the length of the geminated words in case of gutturals.

Suggestions for further research

The duration of the sounds may be conditioned by the following factors:

1. The point and manner of articulation of the segment itself,
2. the preceding and following segmental sounds,
3. suprasegmental factors (especially the mora),

4. position of the sound within a higher-level phonological unit

The possible ways of analyses of quantity include:

- a) treatment of quantity as a segmental distinctive feature
- b) analysis of long sounds as clusters of short sounds, or as a sequence of two (or more) morae)
- c) inclusion of short and long sounds as separate entities in the phonemic inventory
- d) extraction of quantity as a prosodeme length.

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An Investigation of Smartphone Reading Strategies Behaviours from the Views of Jordanian Students

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Abstract

The reading comprehension study is considered as one of the most important areas in language education. Smartphone considered to be one of the most and fastest which rapidly covered the world. Attention should be given to this technology and become new era of education even the perspective about the Smartphone looks like non-academic. Here the study present the first stage of applying the previous reading strategies into the easier way than carrying book by convert it to the Smartphone. Participant showed a positive attitude toward using the Smartphone as an academic tool which it will replace the tradition way of reading and teaching

Keywords: online reading, Reading strategies, Smartphone application

Introduction

From the early days of Islam, reading has been given a special case as it was the first word revealed to the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) which is (recite “read” by the name of the LORD: Al Quran 96:1). Thus, reading has been identified as a main and important process which can be developed through practice, improvement and adaption new methods which methods . Previously, there was only one traditional way of reading where people managed to read, collect and gain data and acknowledgement via newspapers, magazines and other resources based on papers as they used certain strategies of reading. The world now is moving forward and a lot of new technologies have been offered to people all around the world in order to compete and gain data and new knowledge faster than before. Thus, now people start using new style of reading which is online reading which has been clarified and identified as a clear development in reading process. Nowadays, human beings are more familiar with technology which leads the new generation to choose and prefer to use their smart phones in every single matter and issue which the researcher expects that soon the process of reading will be led by online reading. Many researchers have been conducted on online reading strategies (Anderson 2003; Huang et al. 2009). So the concern was about online reading materials not on mobile reading applications. Nowadays, it could be recognized that the new generations prefer to read news, surf web pages and search other information through online reading wherever they are. Since coverage area for internet connection nowadays is mostly available everywhere, this phenomenon leads young generations for mobile reading where most of the smart phones nowadays provided with this characteristic since it is easier, more effective and practical way to read. Yet mobile reading is not rapidly applied and still new among university students generally in educational system.

Objective of the Study

This study will contribute new strategies for mobile reading in general as well as it will contribute some aspects for mobile reading improvements. Which mainly will investigate the Jordanian students behaviour when they use Smartphone in their reading.

EFL learners should possess reading capability which is referred and assumed to be as the most essential skill in educational settings. Therefore, in order to build and develop suitable reading programs or courses, it is such an important part for university EFL programs to expect and estimate their students’ reading capability. In addition most universities around the world prefer online method of teaching between students and their teachers due to time and duties and this strategy found to be a better link of communication between them where all the progress reports will be saved in new software application. The report can be read by the supervisors wherever they are and a part of this supervision, the progress report can be accessed through mobile unit especially smart phone because it comes with special software and application where this characteristic offers better and easier way to download most of the applications exactly like what we have in laptop and personal computer. So, clearly this tool is better, practical and smart since mobile device is smaller, easy to carry, easy to keep and easy to sleek compared to laptop.

Sample of the Study

Since English is widely used as a medium of instruction language among the Jordanian students and as a part of their studies, the main population of this study were Jordanian college-level students at World Islamic Science and Education University, Jordan. Subjects of the study have been selected from several different specializations.

Methodology

The general process that has been implemented for this work is a qualitative interview from volunteering participants. This task has been implemented for an attempt to identify and analyse the Jordanian postgraduate students' awareness of the various types of reading strategies (planning, attending, and evaluating); how often they usually use these strategies; their self awareness of the five facets of self-regulations; and finally to explore the (technological) features of the different mobile reading strategies.?

Since the general and crucial purpose of collecting qualitative data is to learn more about students' perceptions of reading strategies that might affect their overall achievement, the researcher follows-up with several questions (semi-structured interview) to analyse the students' awareness of the reading strategies types, their use, and their self-regulation facets.

Result of This Study

Reading increasingly has little to do with books or paper, and not all have been supportive of the growth of screen reading (reading digital texts from computer screens). It has been noted that opponents have argued that 'electronic text ultimately diminishes both the personal growth of individuals and the stability of our society.' Despite those and other reservations, screen reading has become so integrated into society and education that some researchers now claim that students accustomed to reading from a computer screen have trouble engaging with traditional paper books (Burke & Roswell 2008) and the assumption that electronic texts will increasingly dominate reading seems a safe one.

Narrowing this down to our current study, primary objective to investigate the behaviour of Jordanian students when they use smart phones to read materials. The first impression about the use of the smart phone in reading process was promising all respondent show high interests in using smart phone to read different tasks here are some response quoted from the interview;

“Interviewer: What is your experience in Smartphone reading?”

Interviewee1: I think it is a good Idea using smart phone very easier to use Smartphone especially when I try to read newspapers letters it's very easy to use Smartphone than using computer.

Interviewee2: Through the tasks that I have done I feel the process of reading using Smartphones would be easier and more accessible in the recent time

Interviewee3: I have I pad for the last 2 years before that I have I phone and I phone and I pad very good for reading and studying for me and make my study easier and make me study while I am traveling”

Generally speaking, almost all respondents have developed some good impressions on having a smart phone. The students favour using smart phones to perform their reading because of the fact that it is convenient and easy to do. One stated that his smart phone is the one gadget that was accessible to him. Another student pointed out that reading on smart phones is cutting-edge, where it will set to replace reading on lap tops and note books. A student praised his phone for having the touch-screen facility, where he was free to use his fingers to make the font of the texts bigger or smaller.

Another opportunity presented by screen reading is the ability to integrate questions within a text. Whereas in paper reading questions are generally separate from or at the end of a text, electronic versions allow for their insertion at various points within the text. The results indicate that integrated questions led to higher comprehension and that the best results on the task were from students who read a text with integrated questions and had on-line dictionary support (Al Shehri & Gitsaki 2010).

One respondent stated that he used his smart phone to read newspapers and letters, and he preferred this to using the computer. In support of this, Buzzfeed had published a piece called "Why I Bought a House in Detroit for \$500." The story ended up getting more than a million page views, which is notable because it is also more than 6,000 words long. The other notable thing: 47 percent of those views came from people accessing the story on mobile devices. And while people who read the piece on tablets spent an average of more than 12 minutes with the story, those doing so on phones spent more than 25 minutes—a small eternity, in Internet time.

A student mentioned that he started with a phone and then with an I-pad, and he found that both are gadgets that can facilitate reading. Some students mentioned that they tended to travel a lot, so having smart phones really helped them to pursue their reading activities while they were travelling.

Next, some respondents did report that they used their smart phones for various purposes. When it comes to reading, they informed that they read news sometimes, but they tended to read jokes, and also to embark on pleasure reading (articles, messages). 'To play games' was also another purpose mentioned. Another student mentioned that he had downloaded a library of books for his convenience, so he would use his smart phones whenever he wanted to do any reading. Some of the books on the internet are free and are downloadable, so this is another reason why Jordanian students concerned find it convenient to read on their smart phones. Some social networks like Twitter and Facebook also contained many readable articles depending on the users' subscriptions, so as these students are registered with these social media, they are constantly exposed to all sorts of articles and they are inclined, sometimes, to read these articles on their smart phones. A student stated that they read news on their smart phones, other than their academic materials and at other times, the smart phones were used when the student wanted to access his Facebook account or going through videos on You Tube.

A respondent commented that one other plus point about having a smart phone is that you get to read at any place and anytime. He stated that he even read in the bathroom, while another mentioned that he read during his travelling. One more student stated that he was always on the commute, so he read during his rides or in-between his rides. The fact that reading can now be done on phones 24/7, means that it is a limitless, unrestricted activity. A student stated that he did not need to have a room with Internet provided or the library as he had his own Wi-Fi. He could read whenever he wanted, even in odd hours.

"Interviewee: I think some problems like pictures you don't see pictures in very good way sometimes small pictures sometimes large pictures (the student trying to talk about the screen size) the text and the size"

This Smartphone reading definitely has its own shortcomings. Respondents had complained about the limited picture size- "sometimes they are big, sometimes they are small", other than the fact that the quality of the pictures can be really distracting. The size of the text also matters to some of these students. One respondent complained that the size of text can be problematic

sometimes, especially when it involves long texts. The style of which the texts are written, the layout, the arrangement of paragraphs and pictures can also be a distraction. As our respondents are all students, they also mentioned that the application in their smart phones had made it difficult for them to convey their ideas for their assignments or writing tasks, because whenever they have ideas or want to revisit the points they read in the text (in the phones) they stated that it was often hard to scroll through to the points they needed to find. The reading can also be disturbed and impeded by the incoming messages. Additionally, a survey by Pew Internet and American Life Project highlights a few striking facts:

- Reading-from phone problems have plagued nearly 9 out of 10 American adults who have a cell phone.
- Other than reading issues stemming from lagging data and poor Internet provision, almost 70% of these phone users tend to receive uninvited sales calls, messages or spam letters.
- 8 in 10 smart phones are reported to suffer from slow downloading speeds, making reading from phone very time-consuming and a very hassling experience.
- Smartphone owners are more likely to experience various reading problems, as compared to feature phone owners. The screen size also tends to bother some of these Jordanian students. Some smart phones (for instance Blackberry) have small screens, while others like Galaxy Grand have screen size large enough to allow for comfortable viewing and reading.

One area which is seen as more problematic to screen reading is the ability (or lack thereof) to annotate texts. Numerous studies (O'Hara & Sellen 1997, Marshall 1997; Pearson, Buchanan & Thimbleby 2009; Rose 2011; Mercieca 2011; Chou 2012) report that annotation, be it highlighting, underlining or taking notes directly on what is being read, is an important feature of reading and one often utilized by students and seen as beneficial to their reading process. The inability to annotate digital texts is noted as a hindrance in several of the above studies.

S. Kol and M. Scholcnik (2000) in her article titled "Enhancing Screen Reading Strategies" as published in the Calico Journal points out that despite the fact that more and more reading seems to be performed on screen, there are still existing problems that have yet to be addressed regarding reading via screen-oriented gadgets. Smart phones can be taken on a bus or to the beach, but digital texts do not have the "unique tactile qualities of paper" (Dillon, 1992). When comparing paper books and electronic books, Stephen Manes (1999) states that other disadvantages of electronic books are that they require batteries, can break if dropped, that they are expensive, and because of that, they are probably difficult to lend or sell. On the other hand, he also points to some of their advantages: some smart phones are readable in the dark, easily searchable, have a bookmark facility, and there is a read-aloud facility.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there was a significant positive correlation between Exercise and Test ($r = 0.918$, $p < 0.05$). The relationship was strong as the closer r value to 1, the stronger the relationship between variables. The greater the exercise results, the higher the test results. In influencing Test, Exercise recorded a significant contribution ($\beta = 0.918$, $t = 5.657$, $p < 0.05$). From these results it can be seen that the level of comprehension is high when users use a smart phone to read English. This is due to the fact that this technology is relatively new and attracts students, as opposed to the traditional reading from a book or online materials. However, even

with the use of a smart phone, students need to practice that since it is a new way of reading revaluation. The results show if the exercises were low, so were the test levels. This shows that even with the use of a smart phone, if the student does not perform well with the exercises, then he or she will not perform well on the test. However, the smart phone does allow for more comprehension than the conventional reading from a hard copy of the same material.

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Sociolinguistic Challenges Faced by Iraqi Graduate Students at U.S. Universities: A Case Study for Iraqi Graduate Students at University of Cincinnati

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Abstract

This study addressed the challenges encountered by Iraqi graduate students at both the Intensive English Program (IEP) and the regular academic degree programs at U.S. Universities. Using a case study approach, the study focused on five Iraqi graduate students studying at the University of Cincinnati to address those challenges and seek solutions that help both current and future students adjust to an American college campus culture. Two questions guided the research: 1) How do Iraqi graduate students perceive their challenges in a new setting with English as the medium of instruction for the first time, and 2) what social, psychological, and linguistic factors are behind those challenges. Study results revealed the linguistic, social and psychological challenges as experienced by the participants. This study is significant as it describes the types of challenges encountered by the students and offers recommendations to improve the practices of the intensive English programs and better meet students' needs.

Key words: Academic language, Content-Based second language instruction, Graduate students, Intensive English Programs,

Introduction

The number of Iraqi students in U.S universities is increasing year after year. According to the *Open Doors Report* (2014) on international education exchange, Iraqi students are part of a growing number of international students enrolled in higher education. In fact, in 2004, the embassy in Baghdad announced a 38.8% increase in the number of Iraqi students studying in the U.S. A decade later, 1,074 Iraqi students were enrolled in U.S. universities for the 2013-2014 academic years. This rise in numbers has been fueled in part by an increase in scholarship opportunities. One mid-western university, the University of Cincinnati (UC), recently started receiving a considerable number of Iraqi graduate students as a result of three separate scholarship programs, funded by the Higher Committee for Education Development in Iraq (HCED), Ministry of Higher Education programs, and the Kurdish regional government scholarship program.

UC has developed a strong relationship with several Iraqi universities. Linkage programs, funded by external grants, have increased opportunities for Iraqi students to study at UC. Like other international students, Iraqi graduate students had significant challenges in adjusting to the American academic culture as well as in preparing for a smooth transfer from Intensive English Programs (IEP) to their academic degree programs. These challenges are usually associated with language difficulties leading to problems in intercultural communication and adaptation (Medved D., Franco. A., Gao. X., & Yang. F., 2013)

The Intensive English Programs (IEPs) at U.S. Universities usually adopt a sheltered form of English instruction in order to connect the language development skills with those of the area content. According to Cho & Reich (2008), sheltered instruction is the method of integrating language and content objectives in planning and implementing instruction for low English language learners. However, the IEP in this study does not follow a content-based English language instruction. Due to scholarship limitations, Iraqi graduate students are constrained by a limited period of time in the IEP, leaving them with limited English language preparation.

Iraqi graduate students face other socio-cultural challenges as a result of several historical factors. The disconnection from the international community for decades as a result of the last two Gulf wars and United Nations' sanctions on Iraq negatively impacted English language education and limited Iraqi students' exposure to the authentic target language. The author of this paper argue that the challenges students face preparing to use English in their content area is due to sociolinguistic and psychological factors, among which are a separation of language skills and content area language experienced in their IEP. The lack of connection between language and content in the IEP phase increases the linguistic demand of the content and requires more cognitive energy, which hinders students' academic language development.

The mismatch between the kinds of instruction offered during the IEP period and the academic language of the students' actual degree program result in low preparation on the part of the students and left them with linguistic, social, and psychological challenges. The study sought to answer two questions: 1) how do Iraqi graduate students perceive their challenges in a new setting with English as the medium of instruction, and 2) what social, psychological, and linguistic factors are behind such challenges? As students who choose to study in the United States sometimes find serious challenges adapting to the native level of English and the unique culture of their new surroundings (Kuo, 2011), likewise, some Iraqi graduate students suffer in their academic degree programs on US college campuses and some fail to attain satisfactory grades or drop out of their programs altogether. In exploring the experience of Iraqi graduate students, this study seeks to better understand the impact of these challenges.

The current study is significant in addressing those challenges and providing recommendations for stakeholders in order to better address the needs of those graduate students. The linguistic, social and psychological challenges that those graduate students face when they arrive in the U.S may obstruct their academic acculturation and their language socialization. These factors are closely related but distinct. Cummins (1984) differentiates between social and academic language acquisition where the former refers to the language skills used for social interaction and the latter includes skills needed for academic success such as comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating and inferring. As soon as Iraqi graduate students graduate their IEPs, they start to encounter those challenges as a result of the different cultures and values of both the language and the overall academic practices of typical American classroom.

The current study emerged from personal experience, as I came to the U.S from Iraq in 2012 to begin my doctoral program. Despite the fact that Iraqi graduate students already received considerable English as a second language (ESL) instruction in their home country, we still found many difficulties coping with the linguistic variations in the U.S., such as American regional dialects, colloquial expressions and many contextually specific terms, unknown prior to arrival in the U.S. Exploring student awareness of these difficulties, experienced during the ELS language focus, were vital to my study.

The study begins by presenting relevant literature and introducing the theoretical framework. Then the methodology and the research design followed prior to the data analysis and results. The study concluded with discussion and conclusion sections. The conclusion part included recommendations for future ELS programs for Iraqi graduate students.

Theoretical Framework

In Iraq, English language instruction starts at the third elementary grade. A flawed methodology in the teaching of English language in Iraqi schools has resulted in low English levels among Iraqi students. English language teachers are not given adequate training and the schools usually use the traditional outdated audio-lingual approach, which often leaves students uninterested. According to Liu & Shi (2007), the audio-lingual method has long been criticized in terms of language theory and learning theory. Further, practical results from the audio-lingual method fell short of expectations, leaving students less prepared to acquire communicative competence. As a result of this teacher-centered approach, student fluency in English remains low in Iraq. Recently, the communicative language teaching approach was accepted as a method for learning English in Iraq. However, observation of Iraqi classes revealed that this classroom interaction based learning strategy has not been widely implemented. According to Kalanzadeh, G., Mirchenari, N. & Bakhtiarvand, M. (2013), the lack of adequate teachers training program, a reliance on traditional teaching methods, classroom size and time available, as well as resources, are the main reasons behind the failure to apply the communicative language method. These same limitations apply to the contexts of Iraq EFL classrooms. According to the Iraqi Ministry of Education, students' performance in the examination of the third intermediate level for the year 2011, which witnessed the kick start of the communicative approach curriculum, was among the worst compared with previous years.

Receiving little quality English language instruction at home, Iraqi graduate students experience a gap between the content knowledge in their areas and English language knowledge. In this study, for instance, the Iraqi students involved already won a highly competitive scholarship and only top ranked students were accepted. Still, no consideration was given to English language skills; scholarship administrators assumed the students would learn the

language after they fulfilled their IEPs in the U.S. Furthermore the academic use of language in Arabic is different from its use in English and Iraqi students do not usually use academic English at schools. In fact, the academic language used in their first language is quite different from U.S academic language.

Though the model of instruction adopted in IEPs in the U.S is more learner-centered, there is still less focus on integrating content and language development skills. The result is that graduate students receive poor preparation to comprehend the content knowledge after the transfer from the IEP to the academic degree program. There is a difference between general survival English, and the English that learners use in their area content. Schleppegrell (2004) points out the difference between academic language and oral language, arguing that the language used in schools is a linguistic method of relating content, which can be expanded and developed with the students' discourse. Content-based second language instruction has recently been advocated for as an effective approach in the field of second language learning. Mohan and Beckett (2003) emphasize the importance of content-based language instruction for ESL students; coming from vastly different backgrounds, they are expected to know and understand complex subject matter that is being taught in English and to perform and understand the materials as well as native speakers. They believe that content-based language instruction is effective, since it provides meaningful communication about both content and international language development. This is in line with Krashen's (1994) call to support content-based instruction in his *Input Hypothesis* where he states that language is gained from broad comprehensive contact with second language experiences.

Thus, ESL students, in order to qualify for the use of English in schools need to socialize with academic registers appropriate to their fields of study. Socialization is more than a required process to learn social language; it is also a process related to the academic language. Duff (2010) discusses the term, "socialization into academic discourse." (p.174). Here the challenge that second language learners face is more interpersonal and relates to the different types of informal discussion and communication needed inside the classroom rather than the technical language of the students' area content. International students often find themselves not understanding this academic discourse which was defined by Duff (2010) as "forms of oral and written language and communication—genres, registers, graphics, linguistic structures, interactional patterns—that are privileged, expected, cultivated, conventionalized, or ritualized, and, therefore, usually evaluated by instructors, institutions, editors, and others in educational and professional contexts" (p.175). The amount of anxiety experienced from coping with this socialization is even greater in the case of the Iraqi graduate students in the current study, whose English language skills ranged between basic and intermediate by the time they started their IEPs.

The amount of linguistics input Iraqi graduate students receive in IEPs needs to be both gradual and relevant to the learners' levels. Poor English language learning received in the home country and the inequitable practices that Iraqi graduate students experience in their IEP leave them less prepared linguistically and socially to start their academic degree programs at U.S universities. The fact that language and content integration is not properly implemented during this phase mixed with overwhelming cognitive demands and pressures to adapt culturally and socially to the new environment creates real academic challenges of sociolinguistic and psychological sources.

Method

This multi-case study explores the experience of five Iraqi graduate students who have already graduated from their IEPs and started their regular academic studies at UC. The students are currently attending different graduate academic programs, including sociology, pharmacology, architecture, and engineering. Case studies, according to Merriam (1988), are useful in providing researchers with an in-depth understanding of problematic situations, and their meaning for those involved. The problematic issue here is the great linguistic, social, and psychological challenges that Iraqi graduate students usually meet in their Intensive English Programs. Since I was one of the Iraqi students attending ELS, I had easy access to the students whom I selected for this study.

The participants come from different geographical areas of Iraq, including Baghdad, the capital, the South, and the Kurdish region of Iraq in the North. They also have different social status in terms of being married or single. Table 1 provides information about the study participants. By the time the data collection started, the students had already graduated from their IEP and started their regular academic degree programs. Graduating from the IEP was an alternative for taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test. All the students have attained their most recent degrees from Iraq and, for four of them, Arabic was the medium of instruction before they started their study in the U.S.

In the present study, Nunan & Bailey's (2009) call for data triangulation was considered and the data collection included a triangulation of methods—survey, followed by interviews and a collection of course artifacts. An online survey using *Survey Monkey* was used to gain general impressions about the student's perception of the challenges discussed in this article. Based on the responses for the online survey, ten open-ended questions were posed through a semi-structured interview. According to Dörnyei & Taguchi (2010), there is merit to open-ended questions, as they can provide broader richness about the topic and they also well serve when the range of the possible answers is not known. The method used intended to encourage self-reflection and critical thinking, as the aim was to uncover how each of the participants perceived the obstacles they faced in their academic programs in hopes of eliciting meaningful and thoughtful dialogue about their firsthand experiences without pressure or judgment.

Table 1

Participants' Background Information

pseudonym	Major	Social status	Degree	Note
Hani	Sociology	Married (live with his family of 5 in the U.S)	PhD	His first language is Kurdish and speaks little Arabic
Zak	Pharmacology	Single	Master	English was the medium of instruction in his school in Iraq
Jenna	Architecture	Single (her 6 year old child live with her)	PhD	
Munaf	Civil Engineering	Married (live with his family of 4 in the U.S)	PhD	
Sami	Mathematics	Married (his wife lives with him)	PhD	He did not continue the interview as he failed in his first semester and had to leave UC.

Data Analysis

Direct interpretation and the establishment of patterns, as suggested by Creswell (2012), were used in looking at single and multiple instances of the data. Correspondence among the emerging themes shows relationship between thematic categories. After obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, a questionnaire was designed using *Survey Monkey* and sent to the five graduate students selected. Responses were obtained from four of the five students, as one student had failed his qualifying exam and had to leave the university. Next, thirty minute face-to-face interviews were conducted and transcribed. Interviews consisted of ten open-ended questions designed to elicit and unpack students' perception of the challenges that the Iraqi graduate students met in their Intensive English Language Program, and how this influenced their academic progress after they moved from the intensive English program into their academic degree programs. Further, the participants' real syllabus was also used as another source of data, along with the interviews and the online survey, in order to triangulate the data.

Results and Findings

Data from participant responses to the survey and the transcribed interviews was collected and coded into three themes, highlighting the three challenges reflected in the research questions: Linguistic, Social and Psychological.

Linguistic Challenges

Linguistically, most Iraqi students, except Zak, experienced English as the medium of instruction for the first time at UC. English study in Iraq, a secondary elective subject, focused primarily on grammar and forms. The exposure to the English language in US classrooms was a challenge despite graduating from an intensive English language program. Hani, for instance, said that he faced several problems in this respect, such as difficulty in understanding idioms and the extra cognitive energy needed to comprehend the American native pronunciation. Hani said, "It was difficult. Especially I face it two kind of problems. When I started my English language at ELS center, first was understanding idioms speaking idiom... idioms between Americans themselves and second one was the... their pronunciation...". Munaf agreed with Hani, adding to it the challenge of the American accent and how this affects his complete understanding of the lectures in class. In addition, Munaf noted difficulty in understanding not only his teachers, but his American class mates as well. Participants repeated the key word 'uncomfortable' when talking about their experience with English as the language of instruction.

Zak faced less linguistic difficulty, as his school in Iraq uses English as the language of instruction. Still, he reported difficulty in coping with pronunciation, especially from non-American professors and the language encountered off campus. It seems that Zak was feeling more comfortable using the medium of English in his academic program unlike how he was in IEP. This supports the argument that a lack of language integration in content area classrooms would cause some sociolinguistic challenges. The English he experienced in his previous degree focused on content specific language, rather than basic interpersonal communication skills. It has also been noted that students face difficulty outside the classroom and in off campus social situations. They all noticed difficulty in understanding American accents in general and the African American accent in particular.

Jenna believes that her listening comprehension fluctuates between average, in campus and classroom interactions, to poor when she encounters situations off campus, especially in grocery stores. She also agrees that international students, especially Indians, are hard to understand. "...So, I think for the first time when I came here and the ESL it's a good experience

because the language that they use its academic language... But the problem that was on the groceries, on phone when I talk to them. Uh their... the accents, maybe the accents is different not academic accent uh.... also uh.... when I um.... started my academic courses it's about the teachers that not all the professors, they have not clear accents so some of them they are not native American..." Jenna also preferred written communication and assignment over oral communication because she would have more control on her grammar and style: "... maybe in the written assignments it's less [errors] because I have time to revise them and return back to them, but in the oral I can't so." Iraqi graduate students appear to be overwhelmed with the need to focus on intensive amounts of linguistic inputs, causing them to segregate themselves on and off campus and to be resistant in terms of using Arabic for note-taking.

Grammar is one of the major considerations students mentioned in both writing and speaking. Hani, when asked about how he corrected his grammar, said he consults a grammar book every time he has to write. Hani also said that he sometimes consults with his teachers and classmates to get feedback on his writing. He stated that the exchange of emails with his peers and professors helped him improve his writing in general and his grammar in particular. Munaf thinks that grammar is one of his biggest challenges, especially when he engages in conversation in and outside of classes. Peer feedback and email exchanges with professors were all agreed on as effective practices that participants rely on in dealing with their grammar in speaking and writing. All participants found it easy and more comfortable to ask questions through an online mode of communication, such as email. They noted that taking time to revise messages before sending emails brought peace of mind, compared to the tension and anxiety they experience when they communicate face to face with professor and American peers. They also benefited from the messages in their email, as they feel they gradually acquire the norms of writing in an American campus setting. Hani continued, "...way that helped me mutual and exchanging letters with the professors and my teachers and my classmate friends. Really this by this way I got...yeah good feedback and a good way of good writing and with answering their letters in such a good writing and like them. And not perfectly but at least right now I can send a letter to my professors like how like they send..."

It seems that all the participants believe grammar is a challenge and it caused them to think before they speak, resulting in a lack of fluency in their speaking and lack of accuracy in their writing.

Social and Psychological Challenges

The linguistic challenge itself seems to form a barrier between the Iraqi students and their American classroom peers. When asked about means of feedback on their grammar and writing, the answers were all related to a self- search. Hani for instance consulted a book, Munaf and Zak listened to news and conversation and later checked on them individually. They were less confident speaking in classroom, as they admitted feeling embarrassed and hesitant in asking their professors and peers for face to face feedback on their writing.. Hani's answer about the grammatical mistake revealed that he paused to think before he engaged in a conversation, less he produce funny grammar and style mistakes.

In their intensive English language program, students are expected to come to class five days a week from 8 am to 4 pm with mostly international students and overwhelming intensive homework and a strict grading policy. However, the participants believe that they benefited less from their ELS study in terms of being prepared to their academic study at the university. When asked about their experience with their ELS study, they all agreed that ELS provided less academic preparation. They thought that the flexibility of time they had in their academic study

was a relief for them and provided an opportunity to engage in social activities on campus and to study under less time pressure. The availability of options like Blackboard and office hours helps them to better manage their time and homework.

Like other new educational practices such as syllabus and Blackboard, students were also ill prepared for the more learner-centered approach encountered during the IEP period. Munaf, for instance, preferred whole class discussion, as it put him in a less threatening environment. Compared to the pair or group work, it also helps him get feedback and feel more confident to participate in class. When asked on whether whole class discussion was helpful for him he said “Yeah teaching method like all class discussion it is very important to me to enhance my language especially when I was not good and listening at my accent and grammar but sometimes I feel I'm worried to communicate during big mistakes. During grammar I am worried I may make this mistake so it's helpful though I am still worried.”

Participants agreed that group work provided a good platform to improve their English but they still believed that group work was challenging with regard to the focus that would fall on them to explain the topics. Zak believed that peer feedback was very helpful in improving his writing. The only chance that he had for this was when the professor paired him with an American class mate. Zak regretted that there were few chances to be paired with a native English speaker. Zak said “Actually I haven't experienced the peer or group work a lot because the majority of my classes are lecturing except one class which is immunopharmacology. It's in the form of a small group class and the format of the class is in the as presentations so I think if you want to improve your language this kind of classes will help you.”

According to Zak, pair work with native speakers is also difficult, due to the language and cultural barriers. However, this did not hinder him from signing up for academic and professional development events and activities. Hani thinks such events increase his network of professional people and provides an avenue to communicate and gain feedback from others, as he might be less embarrassed asking for feedback from outsiders than from the professor or the class mates. Jenna believes that the syllabus was important for forecasting both content expectations and the communicating the type of content knowledge that they will learn: “... it's benefit for to know what the kind of knowledge that I will get is.” This is again related to other options that students rely on to comprehend the material produced and eventually help them to manage their time, which is itself a cultural difference that they all needed to cope with in their new academic setting. Syllabus and schedule are new terms to most Iraqi graduate students.

Time itself carries cultural differences. In Western communities, time is more valued than in countries like Iraq. However, students liked the idea of a syllabus and the idea of having a full time-table for a given course. It provides a tool for them to manage their time and prepare for their assignments and also to understand the objective and the expectations of the course. An analysis of one course syllabus showed that Iraqi graduate students appreciate that they are given this document for every class. Most of them believe that syllabus is not only important to understand the expectation of the classroom, but is also beneficial in terms of understanding the assignments part. The description of the assignment provides a platform for them to eliminate any misunderstandings, as opposed to orally communicating expectations.

Jenna agrees that whole class discussion is the preferred model for communication inside the classroom, as she doesn't like to be the center of attention when tasks are given to students and also because she is not confident enough to interact with native English-speaker students. She said: “...[I] hesitate to share in the discussion because I see their accents is very good and um I'm less than them because I am international [and] this is the first time for me to share in the

English discussion.” The realization that students feel less valued in class had a major psychological effect on their motivation to study, as they feel that the language barrier hindered them. Jenna expresses this frustration, noting that she really wished to be like them in terms of using the language, not the content.

Group work, and pair work were considered effective by the students, but they find it is not easy to lead a group discussion. The group work offers a less pressing environment for the students to produce. Whole class is the least risk-taking situation according to them since it requires more listening and less speaking. According to Jenna, whole class discussion is helpful “because um... it's for it's encouraged and forced me too, because sometimes I want to share my question. I want to get the answer, so that's it's a little bit like force me to share. So I wanted to sometimes to understand something that uh the professor said but I don't understand it. So uh I ask him. When I ask him he answer me, so after that I have to uh return back to some point which encourage me to go to in this discussion and to help me step-by-step to overcome the obstacle of uh discussion on the speech itself.” This feeling of anxiety and discomfort associated with working in groups and pairs forms a psychological barrier that hindered students' effort to improve their English language skills.

The psychological challenge seems to prevail as students start adjusting to the classroom environment. Besides the demand of pair and group work and the intensive cognitive energy required to focus, students were also challenged with the note-taking skill. Note taking is required in a learner-centered classroom, but students found themselves overwhelmed by the low comprehension of the linguistic input in classroom. Employing alternatives, such as writing down the notes in Arabic and remaking their notes later at home and recording the class discussion in order to listen later were widely used by Iraqi graduate students. This shows how intensely challenged students feel in their programs. The combination of these three challenges resulted in feelings of anxiety, separation, and inadequacy. All the students gave the same impression when asked about their experience during ELS and academic study. According to Jenna, the ELS period was considered passive by most students, as they found out that they were given material not related to their academic study. Further, the lack of interaction with native English speakers and the intensive time they had to attend and fulfill long tedious homework were viewed as definite weaknesses. Jenna said, “The Language Institute that I attend. Uh we are all like um international students from Chinese from different parts of uh... ELS it's a little bit harder because there was like I have to attend the ALS like eight hours between eight and ten hours every day, even the Friday”

Discussion

The survey and interviews show that there are three themes for the challenges affecting Iraqi graduate students getting prepared for both graduating their IEP and starting their degree program at the University of Cincinnati: linguistics, social and psychological challenges. The three themes representing the challenges Iraqi students encountered in their IEP as well as their academic degree program seem interrelated. The social challenges, for instance, are caused mostly by the linguistics challenges represented by the struggle with the use of the target language on and off campus. Though students arrive in the US with a considerable repertoire of vocabulary and grammar rules, they find themselves thwarted by the use of English as the instruction language. There are also issues related to the grammar in context, American idiomatic expressions and accent. That was clear from their reflection on the intensive concentration they needed to have in order to understand expression new to them and also to understand North

American accents, which they were rarely exposed to before. Worse, they suffer more when they listened to English foreign accents from Indian and Chinese professors, as well as the African American accent.

The knowledge of the content language they studied at the ELS language center was not very relevant to their fields' content language. Miller (2011) realized this mismatch in the material given to students during their ESL preparation. This becomes a challenge that students encounter after finding themselves coping with a new register language related to their specific fields of study. Generally, students show frustration with the type of IEP program and realize the mismatch with their expectations. The scarcity of exposure to the native language speakers during this period, the intensive study time and homework load given during the ESL, accompanied by the struggle to acculturate in the new environment both socially and academically render them less motivated. Jenna, who was very expectant and motivated to arrive in the U.S and improve her English through study with native English speakers, found herself helpless while attending classes nine hours per day with grammar drilling and homework and no time to attend social events or professional development meetings.

Students were from different educational backgrounds and with different social status experiencing a new culture of the college and the new life-style demands. Academically, they needed to not only use the target language but also to adjust to factors new to them such as learner- centered, pair and group work, syllabus and so forth. The linguistic demand required in a learner-center classroom created a major obstacle for the students to show themselves as competent in their fields. Their frustration emerged from the fact that they were already considered top students in their home institutions. This was reflected by their achievement in winning a highly competitive scholarship to study in the U.S. The lack of fluency in using English in the classroom put them in embarrassing situations and shook their self-confidence. The students' resistance manifested itself in thoughts of dropping out and returning to their earlier zone of comfort. Generally, participants' experience in the ELS period was less favored. This is closely attributed to the fact that the content offered during this period was general in scope and had no relevance to the students' specific needs or content areas.

A closer look at these results showed that solutions to most of these challenges would be possible through some practices on the part of both the scholarship funding agencies in Iraq. Students need to be assessed by more than their knowledge of the area content knowledge in order to be given a scholarship to study abroad. Considering other parameters, such as good English language proficiency and communication and interpersonal skills are essential. It has been substantially seen that most of the challenges rooted back to the linguistic demand and the low English language level of students.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In this work, The author presented the status of Iraqi graduate students as part of the international students community at the University of Cincinnati. Further, He addressed the main challenges those students encounter at U.S universities. The first question of this study is about how the students perceive challenges they face in their IEPs, as well as after they transfer to their academic degree programs. The students endured a mismatch between their expectation prior to their arrival to the U.S and the reality they experienced. This realization elicited through student responses to the interview suggest recommendations to different stakeholders where student needs can better be met.

The second research question addressed the kind of challenges Iraqi graduate students faced. The study revealed that there are real sociolinguistic and psychological challenges in the process of preparing Iraqi graduate students in their IEP to start their academic programs. The frequency counts of the three themes in the data showed that those constraints affected all the students regardless of their English level and the sociocultural status. Students' frustration was mainly expressed about the level of their separation from the local students in the classroom setting and the academically challenging environment. Their self-perception as high achieving winners of respected and competitive scholarship programs in their home country was shaken. By the end of their programs, students worried about merely surviving with the least expected level of passing their courses.

This study has some recommendations to be suggested. For the Intensive English Language programs at the University of Cincinnati as well as in other schools in the U.S, it is important to consider a variety of factors in order to academically prepare international students in general and Iraqi graduate students in particular. The English only instruction method loaded with overwhelming intensive homework and drilling would yield results that counter the goals of the program. Ensuring an appropriate learning environment is something that the IEP programs need to pay attention to. Designing syllabi and classroom practices that ensure a balance of more area content language and survival English and providing more social events with more exposure to the native language are practices that would greatly improve both the language learning and the academic preparation. As for the degree programs department, they need to assess the level of English needs with advisors' recommendation on specific ESL courses as an elective courses for students to take as they start.

Special attention and orientation meetings with international students prior to the beginning of the semester would be helpful practices in the graduate programs. Professors' awareness of those students' experiences with English as the language of instruction for the first time will provide a groundwork to pedagogically set up plans and practices in order to have students able to gradually adhere to the learner-centered approach. Such practices as professors' involvement in assigning pair and group work rather than leaving it to the students, more professional development opportunities, and advice on using academic services such as writing centers are essential to achieve this aim.

The use of technology in the form of synchronous and asynchronous communication instead of face to face meeting is important. It has already been shown that students feel more comfortable communicating through emails and Blackboard, rather than engaging in a face to face conversation. Learners appear to shape a strong identity communicating through such platforms, meaning that more online communication will be beneficial to the students as they gradually adjust to the new challenging academic phase of their life.

This study has looked at the pressing factors challenging Iraqi graduate students' community at a U.S university. Although some studies have looked at either social or cultural aspects affecting international students' performance at U.S Universities, the combination of the three factors, social, linguistic and psychological, has not been addressed adequately.

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Effect of Vocabulary learning Strategies on Academic Achievements of Pre-University Libyan EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present study is focused on identifying the effects of vocabulary learning strategies on academic achievement of students who learn English as a foreign language in Libya. The primary assumption made in this study is that the high achieving students in a class make use of a particular strategy or set of strategies for learning, including learning vocabulary items in a foreign language, different from the low achieving students, which help them learn new vocabulary items faster, retain them permanently and recall them in appropriate contexts. The secondary assumption made is that the set of strategies, used by low achievers is not suitable for effective learning in the given contexts as reflected in their achievement grades. The study was conducted by collecting data through a questionnaire which was adopted from Rebecca Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (1990) and which elicits information about the use of six language learning strategies used by learners. The sub-strategy questions were focused on eliciting responses about learning new vocabulary items in English, their retention and recall in context. The collected data were analysed statistically to calculate frequency of use of different vocabulary learning strategies among high, medium and low achievers in the same class. As hypothesized, the results showed that high achievers and low achievers use different strategies to learn, retain and recall new vocabulary items, strengthening my belief that the use of a particular strategy is the major drawback in the learning process of low achieving students in the same learning conditions.

Key words: academic achievement, learning and frequency of strategy use, vocabulary learning strategies

1.0 Introduction

Vocabulary has a key role in the ability of the students to communicate their thoughts in a clear and concise manner. Reading and comprehending text is a basic part of the learning process, where novel words and phrases are brought up in class daily. Students can and learn and develop ideas only when they feel comfortable and confident in using their vocabulary orally and in writing. In this regard, Anderson and Freebody (cited by Francis & Simpson, 2003) highlighted the relationship between the vocabulary knowledge of students and their understanding when reading (p.66).

Hence, vocabulary is a very important aspect of a language. We can even say that the major chunk of the corpus of a language is its lexicon; the rest is the grammatical aspect. Knowledge of vocabulary means that a learner can convey meaning and express his ideas because as Wilkins (1972) stated, "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". (111-112). In other words, if a second language learner enriches his/her vocabulary, s/he can master the language very fast since much of the grammatical aspect of the language is present in its words - in their forms, categories, collocation, association and combination in sentences. English language is no exception to this. English language packs even more information in its lexicon, not only semantic information but also syntactical information and even extra-linguistic information through stress, tone, rhythm and punctuation, etc.

English is taught as a foreign language in Libyan schools. In the academia all the students joining the university should have a working knowledge of English since English is the language for almost all the university courses and for professional courses English is the medium of instruction. Even in the society in general there is felt a growing need to learn English to make progress in the present globalized world. But, it is generally noticed that students, except for a handful of exceptions, develop a kind of distaste for English and miserably fail to learn the language despite the best of efforts at teaching and learning.

This may be owing to several reasons, one of them being a lack of emphasis on generating awareness among learners to build vocabulary effectively, especially to be aware of the strategies to help themselves acquire English vocabulary apart from classroom teaching since classroom teaching / learning gives only a small scope for learning vocabulary. The major part of vocabulary acquisition is left to the learners. According to Oxford (1990), "Language-learning strategies, based on the idea of learner self-direction, are beginning to command attention around the world." (11) Oxford's idea of language learning strategies leading to learner self-direction, that is, learners becoming autonomous learners, is particularly suited to learning new vocabulary items since it is obvious for many reasons that language learners have to develop the habit of self-dependence.

1.1 The Problem

The Teaching of vocabulary is a neglected area of teaching English, wherever English is taught being placed on the functional aspects of the language as a foreign language, owing to more emphasis on grammar. If vocabulary is taught at all, it is only the lexical items found in the texts used in classrooms. A major problem arises when the learners have acquired the initial stages of the target language but face difficulties for lack of vocabulary for further progress. They are never taught to be autonomous vocabulary learners. That's why I have selected secondary school students for the present study as the secondary school students pass the initial stages of foreign language learning and are ready to use the language widely but face difficulties in using the language fluently for lack of proper vocabulary and lack of awareness of the need to build a

wider vocabulary base on their own. Since many researchers, like, Lawson and Hogben (1996:102) have emphasized on “the importance of vocabulary learning for second language (L2) learners (Allen, 1983; Laufer, 1986; Nation, 1990; Richards, 1980)” and they also note that vocabulary has until recently been something of a “poor relation” as far as linguists and language teachers have been concerned (Maiguashca, 1993)”. I found the field quite fertile for research. With reference to the situation in Libyan schools, since I had been teaching there many years, and had an opportunity to talk to the learners about vocabulary learning. The main problem that learners complain about is forgetting the words taught. The learners cannot recall the words taught, or their meanings. Another issue is word orthography. The learners find it is difficult to spell correctly words which have strange pronunciations or have similar sounds to other known words. In order to memorize new words, most of the learners normally use the word repetition strategy. For instance, they repeat the English word aloud with its Arabic translation, or write it several times on a piece of paper or notebook with the Arabic equivalent. Some of the learners feel that using only memorization strategy doesn't generate any interest or enthusiasm to learn more new words on their own. Lastly, the learners have never been exposed to training in different vocabulary learning strategies. This relates to the problem specifically raised present paper: since learners aren't trained in any learning strategies, they follow their own strategies, which may or may not be well suited to producing appropriate results.

1.1 The Objectives

The objective of this research was to identify the effect of vocabulary learning strategies on the academic achievements of pre-university learners learning English as a foreign language in Libya. One of the problem areas in learning English language among Libyan students appears to be learning, retention and recall of the vocabulary items. I have hypothesized that the majority of learners must have been using strategies that may not be appropriate for the purpose since not each learning strategy is suitable for every learning objective.

The specific objectives of the research are to find out -

- I. The vocabulary learning strategy used most frequently by high achievers in a class.
- II. The vocabulary learning strategy used most generally by high achievers in a class.
- III. The vocabulary learning strategy used most frequently by low achievers in a class.
- IV. The vocabulary learning strategy used most generally by low achievers in a class.

'Most Frequently' used strategy is the strategy 'always' and 'usually' put to use by learners, while 'Most Generally' used strategy is the strategy put to use 'always,' 'usually' and 'sometimes' as well (for further clarity see 'frequency variables'.)

1.2 Research Questions

So, to test the hypothesis and meet the objectives of the research I have designed the present research to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between vocabulary learning strategies followed by foreign language learners and their performance in learning the FL, with specific reference to English language?
2. What is the effect of vocabulary learning strategies on the academic achievements of English language learners, with specific reference to secondary school students in Libya?
- 3.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

I have hypothesized that there exists a relationship between vocabulary learning strategies used by learners learning English as a foreign language, and their performance in that language since specific vocabulary learning strategies are suitable for specific learning objectives. Second, I have also hypothesized that brighter students in a class rely on some particular vocabulary learning strategies more than the other strategies, and that brings better outcomes for them. In contrast, the slow learners rely more on particular vocabulary learning strategies which do not bring better results in the long run, and it becomes the major drawback in their learning process.

1.4 The Scope and Limitations

The present study was limited to students in a Libyan secondary school in Bani Walid. The research was conducted with the 2nd year students since they have passed the initial stages of learning English after 5 years of training in English. It is assumed that at this stage the learners are ready to use the language widely and therefore they require a wider vocabulary base.

The conclusions drawn from the study will be primarily related only to the students used as subjects for the present study, though on a wider experimentation the conclusions may be found sound for other second/foreign language learners as well. The scope of the present study is limited to English language taught as a foreign language in Libya, and not to any other foreign language.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies not only it is being a pioneering research in this neglected area of research in Libya but also possibly in the major part of the Arabic world since English is taught as a foreign language in Arabic speaking countries. In addition to contributing to the existing body of knowledge in the area of English language teaching, it is hoped that the findings of the present study will help the second/foreign language learners of English in a major way by suggesting easy ways to acquire new lexical items fast and effectively. They will be aware of vocabulary learning strategies, so VLSs will adopt, guide and help learners to learn not only in the class but also outside the school.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Research in vocabulary learning strategies of foreign language learners has been growing at a constant pace now. To enhance vocabulary retention Mondria and Mondria-de Vries (1994) suggest that learners use a card system where they enter the word and its meaning. Some textbooks use graded series of books which present new words which the learners should acquire gradually. Lawson and Hogben (1996) have investigated some of the procedures students use in situations where they attempt some deliberate acquisition of vocabulary. They opine that the learners must analyze the “to-be-acquired word-meaning complex” and then must establish a representation of this complex in memory. They support their hypothesis through Mayer (1992) and Wittrock’s (1992) argument that “The more effectively the to-be-learned material is elaborated during acquisition, the more readily it will be recalled.” (p.104). Gu and Johnson (2006) studied the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies used by Chinese students learning English and their outcomes and found that participants used a wide variety of ways. Indeed, language learning theorists also place significant stress on foreign language learners developing autonomous vocabulary learning strategies (Rossini Favretti, Silver, Gasser &

Tamburini, 1994, cited by Lawson and Hogben, 1996); McCarthy, 1990; Nation, 1990; Oxford 1990).

Of course, there is some disagreement too among scholars regarding vocabulary learning strategies. Gu and Johnson (1996) list only four strategies: memory, cognitive, metacognitive and activation strategies, whereas Schmitt (1997) gives a list of two broad categories: determination and consolidation strategies. The first one is sub-divided into determination strategies and social strategies, while the second one is sub-divided into cognitive, metacognitive, memory and social strategies. 'Social strategies' are repeated in both divisions since they can be used for purposes, determination as well as consolidation of meaning. Nation (2001) divides strategies into three general categories: 'planning,' 'source' and 'processes,' and each in turn is divided into a sub-set of key strategies. 'Planning strategy' is meant to decide how, where, how often to focus attention of the lexical item. The purpose of the 'Source strategy' is getting information about the word, while 'Processing strategy' involves establishing word knowledge through noticing, retrieving and generating strategies.

Nation (2001) as cited in (*Riankamol, 2008*), stated that "vocabulary learning strategies are one part of language learning strategies which in turn are part of general learning strategies". Most scholars agree that the six language learning strategies charted by Oxford and others are commonly used by learners, with individual learners leaning heavily towards one or two of them. Therefore, in the present study the researcher has followed the taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies based on the six language learning strategies charted out by Oxford (1990): cognitive, metacognitive, memory, affective and social strategies. A short description of each strategy is given below:

- a. **Cognitive Strategies:** are the strategies / techniques used by learners for understanding and producing the target language. In the case of vocabulary, the learners try to understand the meaning of new words they come across and try to use them in contexts.
- b. **Metacognitive Strategies:** are the put to use by learners to coordinate the learning in various different ways. For example, the learners create a situation where they can test and evaluate their own knowledge of difficult words.
- c. **Memory Strategies:** are employed by language learners for remembering and retrieving new information, i.e., new vocabulary items.
- d. **Compensation Strategies:** are utilized especially in the initial stages of language learning, to make up for the lack of knowledge of the new language. There are occasions when the learners do not know the exact meaning of a word, so, s/he may try to convey the sense through gestures, signs and guessing. (Schmitt, 1997)
- e. **Affective Strategies:** are particularly important for regulating emotions. They are important to keep the morale of the learners up.
- f. **Social Strategies:** are the strategies put to effective use when the learners learn new vocabulary items with others. The learners ask the meaning of words from others and check the correctness of what they know. (Oxford, 1990: 14-15)

In terms of literature, there is a scarcity of research on the language / vocabulary learning strategies used by Libyan students if we look at the issue in international contexts. Whatever research there was on language learning issues, not on issues specifically concerning vocabulary learning. Therefore, there exists a large research gap in this area. I try to conduct this study to get good data which provides good knowledge in the area of vocabulary learning and teaching in Libyan school contexts.

2.2 Global Perspective

Research in language learning strategies has a history of almost half a century since the studies in the area took off in 1960s. Williams & Burden (1997: 149) state that research and developments in cognitive psychology influenced research in language learning strategies to a great extent. Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) may be considered as the pioneers in the field. Aaron Carton's study 'The Method of Inference in Foreign Language Study' (1966) triggered Rubin's study on successful learners' strategies of learning as he hypothesized that once identified, these strategies could be of use to less successful learners. As mentioned in Hismanoglu (2000), Rubin (1975) "classified strategies of language learning in terms of processes that may contribute to language learning directly or indirectly."

Thus, it is almost three decades now that research in vocabulary acquisition, teaching and learning in EFL / ESL contexts has gained prominence (Richards, 1980; Nation, 1990; Mondria & Wit-De-Boer, 1991; Maiguashca, 1993; Wang, Thomas, Inzana, & Primicerio, 1993). Although Moulton (1966) placed considerably high value on reading and significance of context in learning word meaning, vocabulary attracted the attention of researchers and commentators only much later, in the 1980s. According to Nation (1990), from the late 1980s, vocabulary was an area that had drawn researchers' interest within the mainstream of L2 acquisition. Seal (1991) as cited in (Ghazal 2007, p.85) "also recognizes word knowledge as an important part of communicative competence. Knowing a word involves knowing a great deal about its general frequency of use and the syntactic and situational limitations on its use". Hatch & Brown (1995) observe that vocabulary is central to language and is of great significance to language learners. Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning (Ghazal, 2007).

In the 1990s the amount of empirical research on vocabulary acquisition began increasing at a slow pace. A study by Granowsky (2002) confirms that many researchers assigned an important role to vocabulary knowledge in students' reading comprehension, and therefore in their school success. As regards learning vocabulary, we consciously or unconsciously use some strategy to process the information packed in the lexical items, retain the meaning and retrieve it in proper contexts. Some strategies may be better than others; therefore some learners are more successful than others. The researcher's focus in the present study is to identify superior learning strategies in learning vocabulary.

2.3 Libyan Perspective

The field of research in language learning strategies or vocabulary learning strategies is still unexplored in Libyan contexts since there is not much work done yet. Aljdee (2011) in "The Relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and vocabulary knowledge," a study conducted at 7th April University, makes an attempt to ascertain the range and frequency of some vocabulary learning strategies students commonly use. His findings show that,

The Libyan EFL learners reported using a wide range of Vocabulary Learning Strategies even though the frequency of use is relatively low. Discovery strategies, such as using dictionaries and guessing meaning from context, were used more frequently than consolidation strategies, such as practising in groups, making word lists, or assessing their own vocabulary knowledge.P.2

Pathan & Mar'ei (2013) investigate 'the role of short stories in overcoming the problems faced by EFL learners in reading comprehension skills' and they have come up with the conclusion that,

with numerous linguistic and other pedagogical advantages, with practical and feasible implications for the EFL contexts like Libya, short-stories surely can be a wonderful boon not only for overcoming problems of the EFL learners related to reading comprehension skill but also for the effective fostering of all the major language skills in creative and enjoyable way. P.7

Actually, I think that Libyan students may be using only one or two strategies to learn new vocabulary items, focusing mainly on dictionary use and guess work. Orafi and Borg (2009: 251) point out that the shift of emphasis from teacher-centred approach to learner-centred approach in the new school curriculum introduced in Libya in 2000 has brought about some shift in perspectives, and therefore the new school textbooks in English include different communicative activities and learning tasks which encourage learners to engage in group tasks. This may inspire learners to use learning strategies, like, social strategies, compensation strategies, and even metacognitive strategies. The appropriate implementation of activities introduced in the new school textbooks, like, role-play, group work, language games, etc. involves students' true engagement and active participation and teachers' adoption of the role of a facilitator.

3.0 Materials and Methods

The methodology followed in the present study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative analysis was used to collect data from the participating students through a survey questionnaire eliciting responses from them on the sub-strategies (framed in the form of questions) concerned with all the six learning strategies identified by scholars like Oxford (1990) and Schmitt (1993). Qualitative analysis involves interpreting the results obtained, especially the interpretation of the relationship between particular learning strategies and their impact on the performance of learners in learning a foreign language like, English.

The questionnaire used was adopted from Oxford's Strategies in Language Learning Inventory, with slight modifications here and there. The major modification involves adapting the questionnaire to test vocabulary learning strategies, so, that the sub-strategies were framed to elicit learners' responses on steps followed by them in learning new vocabulary items. The other modification in the questionnaire was the provision of an Arabic version of all the stimuli along with the English texts. The purpose of this process was to make all the points clear to all the participants, as it was assumed that not all the students would understand English very well.

3.1. Methodology

The questionnaire was tested with 30 students before it was administered to the larger section of students. The questionnaire was then administered to 180 students. All the participants were briefed about the purpose of the questionnaire. Frequency of use of vocabulary learning strategies was calculated using simple statistical analysis through creating frequency tables.

3.2 Sampling

A simple random selection method was followed for the sampling of the school. As regards sampling of participating students, I followed a systematic sampling method choosing 6 sections of secondary classes with 32 students each making the total number 180 students. All the classes

were mixed groups of high, medium and low achieving students. Thus, enough care was taken to eliminate any bias in sampling.

3.3 Research Setting and the Participants

The present research was proposed to be conducted at selected Libyan schools. In Libya English is taught as a foreign language. Teaching of English in Libyan schools begins from standard 5, and by the time a student joins university s/he has 6 years of English learning. The participants selected for the study are secondary school students whose next step in education is university, so, they have learnt English language for 6 years, sufficient to understand the requirements of the present research. Also, the rationale behind the selection is that these students have gained knowledge of English language and are ready to make use of a wider range of vocabulary items, either for further studies or for their own business, as they can easily reflect upon their own strategies use in learning, retention and recall of vocabulary.

3.4 The Instrument of Data Collection: The Questionnaire

As discussed above, I adopted Version 7 of The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) prepared by Oxford (1990: 293) to conduct the survey, with some modifications to frame the survey questionnaire. The total numbers of strategies measured were 6, with a slightly varying (between 4 and 5) number of their sub-strategies, thus making a total of 27 questions to be answered, rated on a 5-point scale, as follows: (1) Always (2) Usually (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never. These pointers indicate the learners' choice of sub-strategies falling under a particular strategy, thus finally indicating his/her choice of that particular strategy to learn a new vocabulary item. "Always" means 100% in terms of use; "Usually" means above 90%; "Sometimes" means more than 60% in terms of use; "Rarely" would mean less than 40% use and "Never" stands for no, or almost no use at all. Participants were asked to record their opinions by choosing what to them would be the most suitable response to the given statement.

The various sub-strategies included in the questionnaires as statements tested the following features of each VLS:

Memory: memorization, semantic mapping, repetition, remembering and retrieval of new information, etc.

Cognitive: understanding a new concept, making associations, analyzing, and producing language, etc.

Compensation: looking for clues, using mother tongue, learning to cope with new situation, using language despite lack of knowledge, etc.

Metacognitive: coordinating the learning process, linking new concepts with the known, self-monitoring, and taking help from other sources, etc.

Affective: control and regulation of emotions in learning new vocabulary, discussion with others, etc.

Social: learning with others, taking help from teachers and classmates, checking correctness with others, etc.

The questionnaire consisted of six sections, each strategy devoted to one section, and their sub-strategy questions grouped under the respective strategy sections. For instance, all the sub-strategy questions measuring 'Memory Strategy' use were grouped under the section 'Memory Strategy.' To calculate the frequency of use of all the strategies, all the responses for all the five pointers were counted and tabulated.

3.5 Variables

The primary hypothesis of the present study was that there is a relationship between the use of learning strategies and their impact on a learner's performance, with the secondary hypothesis emerging from the first, that is, brighter students in a class of learners use different strategies from the slow learners. So, to test this idea through collecting data from a mixed group of learners, the independent variable fixed was **the learner's level of achievement** (high / medium / low achievers) in his/her studies and the dependent variable was **his/her choice of strategy** (the six vocabulary learning strategies outlined above). The level of learners' achievement was arrived at by gleaning through their exam results in English language over the past two years.

4.0 Survey of VLS frequency of Use by Libyan Students

4.1 Data Collection

The survey questionnaire was distributed to all the 180 students, explaining to them the purpose of the research. Most of the students returned the filled-in questionnaire the next day. Then, the questionnaires were sorted out into three groups, belonging to (i) high achievers, (ii) medium achievers, and (iii) low achievers. The number of students in each group was as follows:

High achievers (scoring 80% and above marks): 30 [All female students]

Medium achievers (scoring between 69-79% marks): 82 [76 female and 6 male students]

Low achievers (scoring less than 69% marks): 68 [39 female and 29 male students]

The questionnaire given to them comprised of 27 sub-strategy-statements with following distribution:

Strategy	Sub-strategy statements
Memory	4
Cognitive	5
Compensation	5
Metacognitive	5
Affective	4
Social	4

4.2 Data Analysis

4.2.1 Results for the Data from Participants Categorized as High/Medium/Low Achievers

The results presented below are derived from the data collected from participants categorized as High/Medium/Low achievers based on their academic achievements and performance in the examinations.

4.2.2 Frequency Tables for the Results of the Five Variables

The results of the statistical analysis for each frequency variable (Always/ usually / Sometimes/ rarely, and Never) were computed (Columns 3-7) with all the six vocabulary learning strategies (Memory / Cognitive / Compensation / Metacognitive / Affective and Social, in column 2) and shown in separate tables for High, Medium and Low achievers. For convenience, I gave only the total figure of the responses to each sub-strategy-statements and the percentage of those responses. Thus, the columns for variables were divided into two, one for the total of responses and the other for its percentage, making the number of sub-columns 10. The total figure of the

responses appears in the first sub-column and the percentage of the same appears in the second sub-column for each variable.

The percentage of frequency for the five variables was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{R}{P \times S} \times 100$$

Where R is the total frequency of responses; P is the total number of participants; S is the number of sub-strategy statements. For example, in case of **High Achievers**, for Memory strategy variable "Always," the total frequency of responses (R) is 62, the total number of participants (P) is 30 and the number of sub-strategy statements (S) is 4; therefore, the percentage frequency of the variable "Always" for the 'Memory' strategy is:

$$= \frac{62}{30 \times 4} \times 100$$

$$= 52\%$$

In total there are 3 tables, one each for High, Medium and Low achievers, as follows.

Table 1

Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use Frequency Table for High Achievers

S. N o.	VLS	Frequency of Variables										Tot al	%
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never			
		Tot al	%	Tot al	%	Tot al	%	Tot al	%	Tot al	%		
1	Memory	62	52 %	33	27 %	25	21%	0	0%	0	0%	120	100
2	Cognitive	90	60 %	33	22 %	26	17.3 %	0	0%	1	.7%	150	100
3	Compensati on	36	24 %	44	29 %	31	21%	9	6%	30	20 %	150	100
4	Metacogniti ve	28	19 %	53	35 %	35	23%	8	5%	26	18 %	150	100
5	Affective	59	50 %	32	27 %	12	9%	12	10 %	5	4%	120	100

6	Social	38	32 %	29	24 %	39	33%	12	10 %	2	1%	120	10 0

Table 2*Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use Frequency Table for Medium achievers*

S. No.	VLS	Frequency of Variables										Total	%
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never			
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%		
1	Memory	155	47%	92	28%	64	19%	12	4%	5	2%	328	100
2	Cognitive	119	33%	79	22%	66	18%	68	19%	32	8%	364	100
3	Compensation	63	15%	57	14%	83	20%	138	34%	69	17%	410	100
4	Metacognitive	32	8%	60	15%	134	33%	112	27%	72	17%	410	100
5	Affective	86	26%	64	20%	67	20%	71	22%	40	12%	328	100
6	Social	103	31%	75	22%	85	25%	58	17%	17	5%	338	100

Table 3*Vocabulary Learning Strategy Use Frequency Table for Low achievers*

S. No.	VLS	Frequency of Variables										Total	%
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never			
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%		
1	Memory	74	27	34	13	51	19	63	23	50	18	272	10

			%		%		%		%		%		0
2	Cognitive	16	5%	63	19%	59	17%	89	26%	113	33%	340	100
3	Compensation	0	0%	25	7%	48	14%	118	35%	149	44%	340	100
4	Metacognitive	8	2%	5	2%	58	17%	130	38%	139	41%	340	100
5	Affective	75	28%	35	13%	67	24%	54	20%	41	15%	272	100
6	Social	17	6%	32	12%	41	15%	100	37%	82	30%	272	100

4.2.3 Calculation of Frequency of Use of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

I calculated the most frequently used and the least frequently used VLSs among high/medium/low achievers. To get a general idea, I also calculated the most generally used VLS. This is done in the following way:

1. The **most frequently used** vocabulary learning strategy among the participants is calculated by adding up the percentage responses for Always and Usually.
2. The **most generally used** vocabulary learning strategy is calculated by adding up the percentage responses for Always, Usually and Sometimes.

The calculations were as follows. The results were also presented in Tabular form in Table 4.

High achievers:

Memory:

Always + usually (52+27) = 79 + sometimes (21) = 100 / rarely + never (0) = 0

Cognitive:

Always + usually (60+22) = 82 + sometimes (17.3) = 99.3 / rarely + never (0+0.7) = 0.7

Compensation:

Always + usually (24+29) = 53 + sometimes (21) = 74 / rarely + never (6+20) = 26

Metacognitive:

Always + usually (19+35) = 54 + sometimes (23) = 77 / rarely + never (5+18) = 23

Affective:

Always + usually (50+27) = 77 + sometimes (9) = 86 / rarely + never (10+4) = 14

Social:

Always + usually (32+24) = 56 + sometimes (33) = 89 / rarely + never (10+1) = 11

Medium achievers:

Memory:

Always + usually (47+28) = 75 + sometimes (19) = 94 / rarely + never (4+2) = 6

Cognitive:

Always + usually (33+22) = 55 + sometimes (18) = 73 / rarely + never (19+8) = 27

Compensation:

Always + usually (15+14) = 29 + sometimes (20) = 49 / rarely + never (34+17) = 51

Metacognitive:

Always + usually (8+15) = 23 + sometimes (33) = 56 / rarely + never (27+17) = 44

Affective:

Always + usually (26+20) = 46 + sometimes (20) = 66 / rarely + never (22+12) = 34

Social:

Always + usually (31+22) = 53 + sometimes (25) = 78 / rarely + never (17+5) = 22

Low achievers:

Memory:

Always + usually (27+13) = 40 + sometimes (19) = 59 / rarely + never (23+18) = 41

Cognitive:

Always + usually (5+19) = 24 + sometimes (17) = 41 / rarely + never (26+33) = 59

Compensation:

Always + usually (0+7) = 7 + sometimes (14) = 21 / rarely + never (35+44) = 79

Metacognitive:

Always + usually (2+2) = 4 + sometimes (17) = 21 / rarely + never (38+41) = 79

Affective:

Always + usually (28+13) = 41 + sometimes (24) = 65 / rarely + never (20+15) = 35

Social:

Always + usually (6+12) = 18 + sometimes (15) = 33 / rarely + never (37+30) = 67

Table 4

Frequency of Vocabulary Learning Strategies Use among High/Medium/Low Achievers

Level of Learners	Frequency of Use	Strategies					
		Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
High Achievers	Most Frequent: Always + Usually	79%	82%	53%	54%	77%	56%
	Most General: Always + Usually + Sometimes	100%	99.3%	74%	77%	86%	89%
Medium	Most Frequent: Always + Usually	75%	55%	29%	23%	46%	53%

Achievers	Most General: Always + Usually + Sometimes	94%	73%	49%	56%	66%	78%
Low Achievers	Most Frequent: Always + Usually	40%	24%	7%	4%	41%	18%
	Most General: Always + Usually + Sometimes	59%	41%	21%	21%	65%	33%

4.3 Discussion of the Results for Frequency of VL Strategies Use among High/Medium/Low achiever Participants

4.3.1 Most and Least Frequently Used Strategies

High achievers: Most frequently used strategy – Cognitive, with the highest percentage of 82% use, followed by Memory strategy with a percentage of 79% use; the rest of the strategies in sequence were Affective strategy with 77% use, Social strategy with 56%, Metacognitive strategy with 54% and Compensation strategy with 53% of use.

The most generally used strategy among the high achievers was – Memory strategy with the highest percentage of 100%; followed by Cognitive strategy with a percentage of 99.3% of use. The rest in sequence were: Social strategy with 89%, Affective strategy 86%, Metacognitive strategy 77% and Compensation strategy with 74% of use. This was not very surprising since Libya being a Muslim country, learning through memorization was in the tradition there.

Medium achievers: Among medium achievers, the largest group in any class, the most frequently used strategy was Memory strategy with 75% use, followed by Cognitive strategy with 55% use; the rest in sequence are: Social strategy (53%), Affective strategy (46%), Compensation strategy (29%) and Metacognitive strategy (23%). What was generally followed by the high achievers was the most frequently used strategy among medium achievers. They favour Metacognitive strategy the least. That means these students were least interested in correcting their mistakes or observing good English samples written by others; even practicing and checking their progress through self-evaluation and self-monitoring was also not done by them. They hardly went for making proper arrangements to learn new vocabulary items with proper planning.

The most generally used strategy among the medium achievers was once again Memory strategy (94%), followed by Social strategy (78%). The rest in sequence were: Cognitive (73%), Affective strategy (66%), Metacognitive strategy (56%) and Compensation strategy (49%).

Low achievers: The low achievers used Affective strategy the most frequently (41%); followed by Memory strategy (40%). The rest in sequence were: Cognitive (24%), Social strategy (18%), Compensation strategy (7%) and Metacognitive strategy (4%).

One thing was obvious from the obtained results that learning of new vocabulary items, their retention and recall could be much faster and long-lasting if Libyan learners used cognitive strategy techniques like, analysing words by breaking them into sound segments, or into meaningful parts, linking new words to already existing visual images in mind, linking words with known English words and linking new words with similar words in the mother tongue. Memorization was another great strategy that helps build learners' repertoire of lexicon in a foreign language. The findings were much similar to the results obtained by Aljdee (2011) who stressed upon memory strategy in his research.

Low achievers did use memory strategy but not primarily. So, the results from my study implied that teachers could make an experiment by encouraging the low achieving students to change their vocabulary learning strategy to see if the results were better. Even the medium achievers in a class should go primarily for cognitive strategy techniques and try to memorize new words only when fully recognized.

5.0 Conclusion

The results make clear why the high achievers are high achievers: they learn new vocabulary items with proper understanding and full memorization. The least favoured strategy among high achievers is the Compensation strategy, which means those participants don't like looking for clues, using mother tongue, trying measures to cope with new situations or using new vocabulary items despite lack of knowledge, etc. They do take risks but wisely.

The picture is clear: low achievers are always concerned about their emotional states when learning new vocabulary items; that is, they may be always confused about the meaning, spelling and pronunciation of the words but lack control over their feelings. Although they do use Memory strategy but without being cool in the head.

The most generally used strategy among the low achievers was once again the Affective strategy (65%), followed by Memory strategy (59%). The rest in sequence are: Cognitive strategy (41%), Social strategy (33%), Compensation and Metacognitive (21% each). Low achievers don't seem to favour Compensation and Metacognitive strategies, which indicate that they don't give much importance to looking for clues, using mother tongue to learn new vocabulary or using language despite lack of knowledge, etc. They also don't try to link the new concepts with the known concepts, as well as taking help from other sources, like, magazines, films, Internet, etc.

I began this research study with two questions in mind: (i) Is there a relationship between vocabulary learning strategies followed by foreign language learners and their performance in learning the FL, with specific reference to English language?, and (ii) What is the effect of vocabulary learning strategies on the academic achievements of English language learners, with specific reference to secondary school students in Libya? The results obtained show that the answer to the first question is in the affirmative – Yes, there is a relationship between particular vocabulary learning strategies and performance of learners of foreign language, like English, in the target language. As to the second question, the results prompt me to conclude that at least in Libya contexts, the combination of cognitive and memory strategies works wonders for a better performance in learning, retention and recall of new lexical items in appropriate contexts.

5.1 Suggestions

But, I would like to add that the present research has been conducted on a small scale and the results may hold good only for the participants used in the study. If the experiment could be repeated by researchers on a larger scale in a wider variety of settings within Libya, we would arrive at a better understanding of vocabulary learning strategies and their effects on the learning outcomes of EFL learners in Libya.

Yet another interesting aspect of vocabulary learning, not explored in Libyan contexts, is the effect of learners' enhanced repertoire of lexical items in a foreign language on their understanding of the syntactical structures of the language.

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Appendix 1:

Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ)

Personal Details of the Participant

Gender: Male Female

Age: _____

Class _____

Score in English test: _____

The questionnaire is about learning new words in English language. Please tick [✓] what to you is the most suitable choice for each of the following statements:

Item.	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
A. Memory Strategy					
1. I repeatedly say the word in my mind frequently.					
2. I repeatedly spell the word in my mind.					
3. I repeatedly say the word aloud.					
4. I repeatedly write the word.					
B. Cognitive Strategy					
5. I analyze the word by breaking it into sound segments.					
6. I analyze the word by breaking it into meaningful parts.					
7. I link the word to a visual image in my mind.					
8. I link the word to another English word with similar sound.					
9. I link the word to an Arabic word with similar sound.					
C. Compensation Strategy					
10. I associate sound with meaning.					
11. I group words together with storyline.					
12. I remember the sentence in which the word is used.					
13. I remember the new word together with the context where the new word occurs.					
14. I make up my own sentences using the new word.					
D. Metacognitive Strategy					
15. I try to use newly learned words in imaginary situations in my mind.					

16. I remember words by doing dictations.					
17. I remember words by doing group work activities in class.					
18. I remember words by doing a project.					
19. I analyze the part of speech of the new word					
E. Affective Strategy					
20. I analyze the affixes and roots of the new word					
21. I check for the meaning of new English word in Arabic.					
22. I analyze any available pictures or gestures to guess the word meaning.					
23. I guess the meaning of the new word from the story					
F. Social Strategy					
24. I use a dictionary to check the words					
25. I ask teacher for the new word's synonym.					
26. I ask teacher for a synonym, paraphrase, translation					
27. I ask classmates for meaning of the word					

Graffiti in Libya as Meaningful Literacy

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Abstract

Graffiti as a form of public behavior is a reflection of graffiti artists' intentions, thinking, and surroundings. This study aims to analyze the graffiti portrayed in three areas in the capital city of Libya, Tripoli, in relation to the Libyan's social and cultural context. The study attempts to answer three questions: (1) what are the main themes addressed in the graffiti collected? (2) What does the graffiti reflect in terms of the socio-cultural context of Libya? (3) What is the function of graffiti? And what are the implications of graffiti in second language literacy? The data consists of 79 pictures of graffiti. A quantitative content analysis was adopted as the research methodology. A coding system was developed to categorize the pictures of graffiti into different themes. Results of the study indicate that political issues comprise the largest number (around 64 percent of the graffiti), second are the social demands and issues (approximately 25 percent of the graffiti). The significance of the study lies in shedding light on the importance of graffiti as a representation of a new era in the history of the country and as a reflection of the socio-cultural context. The study also provides pedagogical implications of graffiti as a form of meaningful literacy and discusses how graffiti can be used in second language (L2) teaching and learning.

Keywords: Functions of graffiti, graffiti, Libya, pedagogical implications, socio-cultural context

Introduction

Graffiti is considered an expressive art form that aims to gain attention. It can be used to convey different ideas and to serve different functions, such indicating one's affiliation to a certain group, affirming one's existence or expressing control over a certain territory (Hanauer, 1999). As "a powerful mode of expression" for those who feel ostracized by society or ignored by the media, it is often conceived as an antisocial act performed by groups or individuals (Hanauer, 2004, p. 30). Throughout the years, continued research has been conducted on the genre of graffiti located on bathroom walls (Kody, 2006), classroom walls (Sehgal, 2013) and the publicly accessible wall that witnessed the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin (Hanauer, 2004).

The focus of this study is graffiti as a form of meaningful literacy that represents personal experiences and reflections and encompasses a potential source for interpretation and emergence in the various political and socio-cultural aspects of Libya. Finally, the study draws on some of the implications of how graffiti can be used in L2 classrooms and how the graffiti in this very study could potentially be a source of data for second language teaching and learning.

History of Libya: Gadhafi's Rule 1969-2011

Libya came into existence after independence in 1951 and became known as the Kingdom of Libya. In 1969, first lieutenant Gadhafi led a coup that ousted the king and declared Libya a republic (Mogariaf, 2008). The country's name was changed once again in 1977 when the nation was declared to be ruled by its people and to be known as "Libyan Arab Jamahiriya," a name that lasted until the death of Gadhafi in 2011. Afterwards, the National Transitional Council (NTC), recognized then as the functional political entity of Libya during the uprising, declared that the nation is to be called "Libya" as of October 23, 2011.

The Libyan flag has been changed several times between 1951 and 2011. The flag that was adopted by the kingdom from 1951-1969 consisted of three equal stripes of red, black and green from the top to the bottom with a crescent and a star on the flag's black stripe. During the rule of Gadhafi, the flag changed three times and settled eventually on solid green. When the war erupted in Libya in February 2011, the kingdom's flag appeared on the scene again to represent the opposition forces led by the NTC that fought against and toppled Gadhafi's rule.

Economically, Libya was a poor country until the discovery of oil in the beginning of the 1960s, when the country started to undergo infrastructural and economic development (Hilsum, 2012). Under Gadhafi's rule, the country went through different stages of inconsistent developmental changes. In 1990 the U.N. imposed economic sanctions and political isolation due to Gadhafi's refusal to extradite to the United States two Libyans who were accused of carrying out the 1988 Lockerbie bombing in Scotland. In 2004, the United Nations lifted the sanctions on Libya. However, Libya's economy continued to decline. The economy and welfare of the country continued to suffer because of the corruption and the rule of one man.

The Libyan people were marginalized for decades during the rule of Gadhafi. The same people who were in power continued to rotate among different major government positions for decades. The era of Gadhafi's rule was well known for the corruption and deterioration of all aspects of life: economic, social, and political. Bribes, exploitation and dishonesty were rampant due to the nature of the regime that relied on dishonest people to keep it alive and going. Khan (2013) argued that "[t]he bribe culture flourished in the time of former regime..." and affected all sectors of the Libyan society.

In 1996 a massacre in the notorious Tripoli prison, Abu-Salim, led to the deaths of more than 1,000 inmates. The details of the massacre were concealed until 2009. Finally, families of

victims started to receive death certificates of their relatives killed in the prison; however, no bodies were returned to the families. For months, families of the victims demonstrated in front of a court in Benghazi, protesting and demanding to know the fate of their relatives and the return of their bodies. On February 15, 2011, Gadhafi's security forces detained the lawyer of Abu-Salim's victims. Sympathizers joined the protests of the enraged families; the group's attack on security forces ignited the 2011 uprising (Hilsum, 2012). Benghazi was one of the first cities that declared its independence from the rule of Gadhafi on February 19, 2011, and Tripoli was declared free six months later.

Graffiti in Libya

Before 2011, graffiti in general was uncommon in Libya, and political graffiti did not exist. Graffiti depicting Gadhafi appeared in the declared free cities right after the war erupted (Givoianni, 2011). This graffiti that still exists today tells a story of man who ruled the country for 42 years and was killed in October 2011 by the same youths he vowed to destroy (Muammer Gadhafi speech translated, February 2011).

Graffiti in Libya after February 17, 2011, represents a shift in power and authority. Graffiti of Gadhafi in particular represents the collapse of a long, steadfast authoritarian form of power in Libya. Before the revolution, pictures of Gadhafi occupied every office, public square, school, and major streets in Libya.

Research Questions

- What are the main themes addressed in the graffiti collected?
- What does the graffiti reflect in terms of the socio-cultural context of Libya?
- What is the function of graffiti? And what are the pedagogical implications of the graffiti in this study in relation to L2 literacy?

Methodology

A quantitative content analysis was adopted as the research methodology of the photographs of the graffiti. Because the study aims at finding the socio-cultural aspects that graffiti reflects, three themes have been selected: political, economic, and social issues. A coding system was used to categorize the different themes mentioned, and the data analysis was used to explain what the graffiti reflects in light of the Libyan social and cultural context.

Data Collection

The data consists of 79 photographs of graffiti portraying various themes and contexts. Photographs of graffiti were taken by an individual in three areas in Tripoli, the capital city: the 77 Military Compound near Gadhafi's residence Bab Al-Azizia; Zawiyat E-dahmani ; and Ben Ashour, urban areas, located near downtown Tripoli. The photographs were e-mailed to the researcher in an electronic form. The graffiti collected consists of two types: pictorial and visual inscriptions. Graffiti used in the study was drawn between August 2011 and October 2013, the time period during and after the 2011 Libyan revolution.

Data Analysis

Data analysis of the graffiti was accomplished through two tasks: a coding system followed by socio-cultural analysis of the graffiti. The coding system of all the data portrayed in the photographs was created according to what the graffiti depicts. Different codes were categorized under three main themes: political, economic and social issues. The analysis step represents an attempt to connect the graffiti, broadly speaking, to the social and cultural event it reflects. The researcher relied heavily on her knowledge of Libyan society and the themes of graffiti. In addition to her personal knowledge, she works as a deep reader and a close follower of social and cultural events of the Libyan society, in accordance with Leavy's (2009) suggestion

that "...visual art inherently opens up multiple meanings that are determined not only by the artist but also by the viewer and the context of viewing (both the immediate circumstance and the larger sociohistorical context)" (p. 215).

The themes were chosen according to what the data presented. For example, photographs showing graffiti of buildings or visual inscriptions referencing re-building were classified as "economic" because they deal with the infrastructure of the country. Photographs of graffiti depicting demands for respect, equality, peace, and better education and health systems were positioned under the "social issues" theme. Political graffiti included topics such as "celebration of a new era" with the drawing of the new Libyan flag, graffiti mocking Gadhafi, and graffiti related to the subject of elections. Moreover, photographs that showed images of crimes committed in the past such as torture and discourses referencing the search for justice (such as the visual inscription stating that (the law is over all) were also listed under political issues due to their relation to the judicial system. Photographs that did not align with the three main themes (social, economic or political issues) were listed under the category "Miscellaneous."

In Table 1, topics that appeared in the graffiti were categorized under four themes. The table shows the number of times each topic appeared in the graffiti, including both pictorial as well as visual inscriptions.

Table 1.

Categories of Photographs of Graffiti

Category	Frequency
Social Demands and Issues	1
Identity	1
Multi-visions	8
Elections and martyrs	1
Restrictions on women	3
War orphans	2
Future and hope	2
Social demands	11
Respect	1
Dignity	1
Health, educational and judicial system	1
Peace	3
Freedom of speech	1
Social justice	2
Rape	2
Economic Issues	4
Rebuilding	3
Eco-economic: Preserving nature	1
Political Issues	51
Celebrating a new era	45
Constitution	2

Justice	4
Miscellaneous	4
Grand Total	79

Results of the Study

In the analysis, the data will be addressed with respect to quantity. That is, themes with the highest number of appearances will be examined first, followed by themes that appeared less frequently.

Political Issues

From Table 1 it appears that political issues, with 51 photographs, encompass the largest number; more than half of the data (approximately 64 percent) falls under this category. “Celebrating a new era” in the history of the country is the main topic within the political category. Perhaps the long rule of the Gadhafi regime is one of the reasons for this wide celebration, in addition to the brutality and suppression that the regime executed on Libyans over the decades. Graffiti artists drew pictures of the colorful new flag of Libya over and over as a reminder of the end of a long-lasting regime that imposed many kinds of oppression—social, political, even economic—on its people. On the other hand, the “constitution” is presented in the form of demands to adopt the Quran as the source of law and the guarantor of justice. These depictions show two hands: one holding the Quran and the other holding a scale, with the two hands at the same level. Finally, issues such as serving justice to victims who were killed or tortured under the former regime appeared in this category. One graffiti artist drew a woman holding a picture of what appears to be her son. The graffiti replicates the mothers of Abo-Salim prison victims who used to demonstrate on Saturdays in front of the court in Benghazi. A second graffiti work recapitulates what many prisoners had to endure in prison: a blindfolded person, screaming in pain, serves as a reminder to seek justice for these people.

Social Issues and Demands

Social issues and demands from graffiti artists (and perhaps of the Libyan society as a marginalized group during the rule of the Gadhafi) came in second with approximately 25 percent of the total graffiti. Appeals for dignity, respect, equality, women’s rights and nonviolence are among the graffiti artists’ demands. Additionally, pleas for a better health, educational and judicial system, an end to violence against women, and requests for God to bring peace to the country appeared in the form of visual inscriptions. On the other hand, issues such as freedom of speech appeared in the form of a mouth being unzipped, thus ending the silence that lasted for over four decades.

Libyan people are generally known to be conservative, and issues that graffiti brings up are taboo in Libyan culture. For instance, nobody dares to raise or discuss rape, which appeared in two photographs of graffiti under the subcategory of “social justice.” Even in the graffiti, the issue of rape is brought up in a very reticent way, such as by showing a woman with duct tape on her mouth as a representation of the rape victims who could not tell of their ordeals because of the social restraints, such as stigma, against such discussions. A rough estimate indicates that 8,000 women and girls were raped during the war; however, there must be many unreported cases due to the sensitivity of the crime in Libyan society (Gumuchian, 2011).

Economic Issues

At the next level, economic demands for rebuilding the country arise. Due to the nature of the uprising in Libya and the months of intense fighting that destroyed cities, the issue of rebuilding became a main concern for Libyans as it is reflected in graffiti. However, graffiti depiction of rebuilding was not limited to a narrow definition of construction. On the contrary, it stretched to include how rebuilding is to be done: through “building” the educational system. One photograph shows graffiti of buildings coming out of a book with an Arabic inscription underneath that reads, “With education we build the country.” During Gadhafi’s rule, the infrastructure of the country suffered dearly. Corruption, monopolies and embezzlement delayed the completion of projects such as residential and commercial buildings. According to Transparency International (2010), Libya was ranked 160 out of 176 countries in corruption.

The fourth category, consisting of three photographs categorized as “miscellaneous,” portrays diverse issues such as Gadhafi attacking a mosque or an unidentified rebel reading from the Quran.

Graffiti Discourse

In the photographs of the graffiti, only three languages appear: Arabic, Japanese, and English. In some of the photographs, both English and Arabic appear next to each other but with different discourse meaning. The inscriptions of the two languages in one picture were counted for both languages. The use of Arabic (the official language of Libya) is expected, but the use of another language (English) is perhaps meant to serve a different function: to address a broader audience, using a global language that many people around the world understand (Hanauer, 2011). Table 2 provides the number of times that each language appeared in the graffiti.

Table 2.
Frequency of Languages Used in the Graffiti

Language	Frequency
Arabic	40
English	22
Japanese	1

Twenty-two photographs contained some English letters or words, constituting more than 27.8 percent of the total photographs of graffiti used in this study, compared to 56 percent written in Arabic. Using English as a medium of communication in graffiti can be perceived in two ways. When Gadhafi first came to power, English was taught beginning in the seventh grade, but due to his disagreement with the United States and the United Kingdom back in the 1980s, Gadhafi banned teaching English in all educational institutions in Libya. The ban that lasted for years resulted in depriving generations from learning English. Banning the teaching of English was not the only approach that the regime used to stop the use of the language; it further banned using it in any media, including television, radio or newspapers. Furthermore, using any English words or wearing any clothing that had English writing on it could get students and teachers into trouble. In addition to the first function of English as a global means of communication, using English in graffiti can be viewed as a form of defiance and resistance to

the notion of looking down on English because it is the language of the enemy or because “the leader-Gadhafi” did not use it in his speeches.

Though it is rare to find names of graffiti artists or their hometowns (Blume, 1985; Hanauer, 1999), about 31 percent of the graffiti in this study had a signature or a person’s last name, and some of the graffiti included a full name, even the middle name. About eleven of the photographs of graffiti had at least one name of a city or an area in Libya. Acts of resistance and defiance are evident in the graffiti. It appeared in two forms: graffiti celebrating end of an era with drawings of the new Libyan flag and mocking Gadhafi; and artists tagging their names on the graffiti as an open act of bravery and determination of their support of the uprising. Signing their names on the graffiti constitutes a death sentence if the regime ever restores power. Graffiti artists are willing to die for the message, a message of no turning back. The name of the cities and areas appears as an act of pride of the graffiti artists’ origin. Cities well known for their defiance and resistance in the early days of the uprising, such as Misrata and Rijban and areas such as Fashloom, appeared on some of the graffiti.

Analysis of a Sample of Graffiti

The graffiti in this study was taken from three main urban areas in Tripoli: the 77 Military Compound, Zawiyat E-dahmani and Ben Ashour. It was drawn on the outside walls of the compound and on walls in the two other areas. These areas witnessed heavy fighting during the uprising between Gadhafi’s loyalists and the rebels in August 2011. To draw graffiti on these specific walls is to send a message asserting the rebels’ control and power over those certain areas.

One of the photographs of graffiti that appeared on the 77 Military Compound demonstrates an environmental issue that Libyans found themselves dealing with after the uprising. The unlicensed hunting and overkilling of wild deers in Libya known as “Wedan” is becoming a threat to the wildlife. In this photograph, a shadow of a deer stands on the edge of a mountain with words inscribed in English, “*Kindness is Free,*” a desperate call to save the animal and wildlife in Libya from extinction (see Figure 1). “Preserving nature” as it appears in Table 1 is an eco-economic issue in Libyan society that raises concern of losing wildlife in the mountains of Libya.

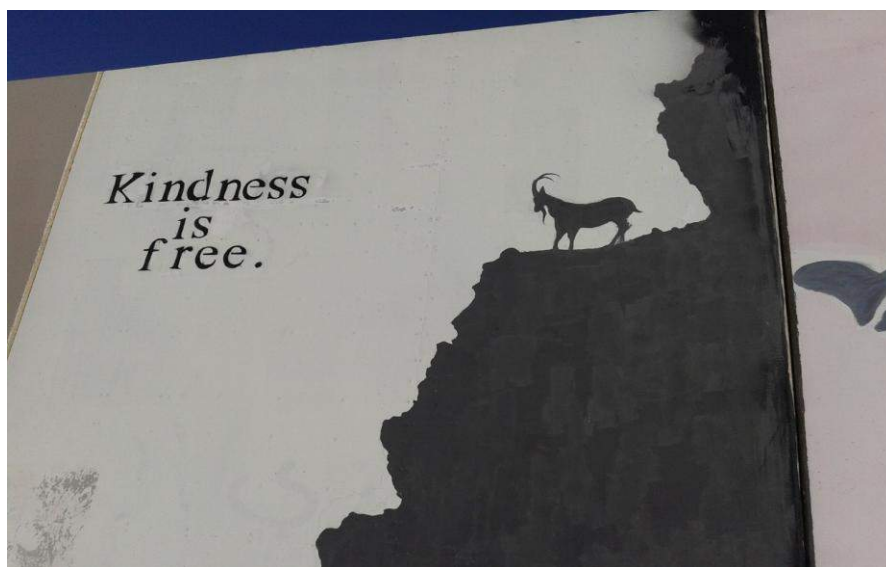


Figure 1. Eco-economic Graffiti of Deer Standing on an Edge of a Mountain

Figure 2 appeared on the walls of the 77 Military Compound. Listed under “political issues – celebration of a new era,” this graffiti shows three men running. The first in the line is carrying a torch and the Libyan flag, the second man is carrying the Egyptian flag, and the third is carrying the Tunisian flag. From the photograph, it appears that the last man carrying the Tunisian flag handed over the flag to the Egyptian and then to the Libyan. The man carrying the Libyan flag reaches for hands with the words Syria and Yemen written on them in order to hand the torch of revolution and freedom to these countries. The graffiti is telling a history of what happened in 2011 in the three Arab counties, Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, which witnessed uprisings that ousted the regimes and started what came to be known as the “Arab Spring.”



Figure 2. Graffiti of Three People Running Carrying the Libyan, Egyptian and Tunisian Flags. Words ‘Syria’ and ‘Yemen’ Inscribed

The third photograph appeared in the area of Zawiyat E-dahmani, an area that witnessed heavy clashes between rebels and Gadhafi loyalists during the months of the uprising. Graffiti in this photograph consists of multiple inscriptions in both English and Arabic. The graffiti was listed under “social demands.” Visual Arabic inscriptions state “God is the greatest” and “Start with yourself” as an invitation to everyone to start helping to rebuild the country by looking within themselves to issues that might hinder societal progress. An English visual inscription in Figure 3 states “stop the war” in reference to the war in Libya in 2011.



Figure 3. A Graffiti of Multi Inscriptions: “Start with yourself” in Arabic, “Stop the War” in English, and “God is the Greatest” in Arabic

The Function of Graffiti

According to Hanauer (2004, pp.29-30), graffiti as “a mode of expression” could serve one of three functions:

- (a) allowing the entry within public discourse of messages regarded as marginal by other media; (b) providing the individual with the opportunity to express controversial contents publically; and finally (c) it offers marginal groups the possibility of expressing themselves publicly.

The function of graffiti, as it appears from analyzing the data in terms of their themes, seems to be reflecting the wants and needs of the Libyan society or a part of the society. The different themes that appeared in the graffiti ranging from political to social to economic themes demonstrate the significance of all of these aspects.

Graffiti in Libya today seems to function as a reminder of the demands to which the graffiti artists aspire, such as rebuilding the county or gaining respect. Moreover, graffiti serves as a mirror of the social aspects that seem to inhabit the minds of Libyans, such as improving education and building a better health system. They also reflect issues that are not addressed in the media fully or at all, such as rape victims of the war.

The new era in Libya after the toppling of Gadhafi’s regime in October 2011 seemed to overwhelm the people with euphoria of victory, which can be seen in the graffiti portrayed in signs such as the new colorful Libyan flag and the date when the uprising first started in February 17. Another function of graffiti is to gain attention and to address issues that have been ignored by the media (Hanauer, 2011b), such as orphan children left behind after the loss of their parents during the war, a graffiti theme listed under “social demands.” Broadly speaking, graffiti serves as a reflection of social and cultural aspects of Libya. It emulates the concerns and the demands in a new era in the history of the country, an era that makes everything possible, even writing graffiti on the walls.

The function of graffiti overall seems to serve a temporary function that resulted from the shift in power from a dictatorial regime to an absence of a strong political entity. Hanauer (2013) argued that the graffiti in Libya might have a function that has not been presented before. He states that “[t]he power that can be associated with this literacy is in itself very unusual and may result from the change in balance of power and lack of a central controlling government. I doubt that the graffiti and graffiti writing will have this power once a stronger central controlling entity is present” (D. Hanauer, personal communication, December 13, 2013).

Pedagogical Implications and the Function of Graffiti within the Language Classroom

Graffiti can be taught as an art form to help students become more creative (Blakesley, 2010). It has also been used as a research method to understand and document university students’ responses to issues such as the dispute between Palestine and Israel (Olberg, 2013). Furthermore, graffiti has been used as a research topic by a student who wrote about graffiti in her hometown (Hurlbert, 2006).

Already existing graffiti such as the graffiti used in this study can be employed in the classroom to help students brainstorm and reflect on ideas and themes as they see them. Moreover, students can draw their own graffiti to help generate ideas and reflect on some of the social and cultural issues they see. Group discussions can be formed to discuss students’ opinions and reflections and “to make language learning a personally contextualized, meaningful activity for the learner” (Hanauer, 2011a, p. 2).

The use of L2 in graffiti in Libya can be one of the focuses in the L2 classroom by investigating the nature of the usage, the characteristics of the language used, and why it appears.

Conclusion

By focusing on graffiti of Libya after the uprising in 2011, this study aims at providing insight into some of the cultural and societal issues that overcame Libyans throughout the rule of Gadhafi. The graffiti in the study demonstrates a shift in focus in the new Libya to issues and demands that were forbidden and denied in the past. By analysis of the graffiti of Libya, the researcher aimed at providing new knowledge to many fields, as Soldatenko (2013) declared that “[t]he analysis of graffiti touches into many disciplines such as sociology, urban studies arts and art history in addition to philosophy and to politics.” Finally, graffiti in Libya would be an excellent source of knowledge, whether it is a broader knowledge of the domains of culture and society or of a narrower realm such as using graffiti as a teaching tool.

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Autonomy in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: A Culture Bound Concept

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Abstract

This paper argues that fostering autonomy in the FL classroom is a highly desirable aspiration as research is continuously reporting encouraging echo on the subject. Yet what is lacking in various theoretical as well as empirical discussions is the cultural dimension that is bound to the notion of autonomy. Autonomy is neither an innate characteristic nor is it valued and expected in all cultures, hence educational contexts. What is more, autonomy is a long term evolving feature that requires new-found outlooks from both learners and teachers. The major concern of this work is an attempt to discuss learner autonomy in respect to learners' specificities which are in turn highly shaped by specific socio-cultural educational contexts. The arguments behind learner autonomy as a culture related concept, in the present paper, are associated to Algerian students of English at university level as they constitute the category of learners the author is most familiar with.

Key words: attitude, culture, foreign language learning/teaching, learner autonomy

Introduction

Among the pedagogical principles that have been revealed by learner-centered approaches is the promotion of learner's self-directed and active participation to his/her learning experience, and it is this way of functioning that brought about "learner autonomy". There are few international and national conferences on FL education that do not have learner autonomy debated from various angles (e.g.1994: Hong Kong conference; 1999: Alak International Language Association (AILA) conference in Tokyo; 2000: Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues (CRAPEL), University of Nancy; 2006: The 9th Nordic Conference, Copenhagen; 2014: European Council of Modern Languages (ECML) conference; 2014: DRAL2/ILA conference. Nevertheless, starting from the perspective that educational pedagogy is far from being a global project, we thus raise the following questions:

- Are new learning/teaching practices transferable to all socioeconomic, psychological and educational contexts?
- Do Algerian learners have the desired learning profile(s) for autonomous education requirements?

The proposed research attempts to bring to the surface the question of learner autonomy in environments where traditional FL practice has (and for that matter often still is though in slightly moderate forms) been the norm for decades. It suggests that Algerian university students are adults who have been highly guided all along their previous primary and secondary education, and thus cannot reasonably be presumed to become suddenly autonomous.

The concept of learner autonomy

Autonomy has been examined and defined by various language professionals each referring to it by a particular token and stressing one aspect of it or another. Consequently, labeling as self-reliance, independent learning, and self-direction often accompany learner autonomy in the literature of FL learning/teaching. Concern about this issue has gained so much popularity across borders, inasmuch as we came to refer to "the autonomy movement" (Smith, R. *ibid*) Learner autonomy may be seen as that responsible decision taking attitude the student has throughout his learning experience. Autonomy often carries the connotation of freedom to act, freedom from the teacher's control (rather than from peers or teaching material and facilities), freedom to choose or in short to influence one's own learning. "The autonomous learner is one that constructs knowledge from direct experience, rather than one who responds to someone's instruction" (Benson, 2001).Echoing a similar view as Holec,H (1981) who is the leading figure of autonomy; Dam. L. (1990) restated that the autonomous learner not only sets objectives for his/her own learning, but also selects materials, activities and evaluation tasks that best fit this experience.

Autonomy in FL teaching pedagogy by no means suggests "teacherless learning" to borrow Sheerin's terms (1997) cited in Thanasulas, D. (2000). Sinclair, B. (1997) cites several aspects of autonomy in language learning such as:

- Autonomy involves a learner's capacity and willingness to take responsibility for making decisions about their own learning;
- These capacities are not innate;
- There are degrees of autonomy;
- Different teaching and learning contexts require different approaches to the promotion of learner autonomy.

The issue that may be pointed out in view of the above is the implication (s) that the implementation of learner autonomy will inevitably have on the learner. If/when autonomy is adopted in the EFL classroom, students are undoubtedly:

- 1- discouraged to rely heavily on the teacher;
- 2- expected to develop their own leaning strategies;
- 3- required to make decision about what they learn , how and with whom they learn it;
- 4- expected to evaluate their own progress and weaknesses.

Autonomy in relation to culture

Before stressing the relationship between FLT and culture, it may be worth examining first the concept of culture and attempting to define it in light of the bind it has with autonomy as the title of our paper suggests. Culture has been and is still being defined on different grounds. The fact that this concept has been defined extensively and in various and sometimes opposing ways is no more than a reflection of different theories about understanding human experience. Culture generally refers to shared patterns of behaviour amongst a group of people. Peck (1998, cited in Thanasulas 2008:7) writes:

Culture is all the accepted and patterned ways of behavior of a given people. It is the facet of human life learned by people as a result of belonging to a particular group; it is that part of learned behavior shared with others .Not only does this concept include a group's way of thinking , feeling, and acting, but also the internalized patterns of doing certain things in certain ways...

These patterns are based on common valued principles, beliefs, and assumptions which will determine the dynamic of the group. By the late 19th century, a broad definition of culture has largely been adopted by anthropologists. It commonly refers to the way human beings codify, classify and symbolize their experience of life. Culture here is reflected or manifested through all the behaviors, general way of life of a community, and is transmitted from one generation to the other. On a general and simple note, culture may consist of what particular people do and how they do it in various life circumstances and contexts.

Autonomy in language learning and culture

There has been an argument that learner autonomy is a concept which is based on Western educational tradition and that as such it can only fit in the western educational context. In this respect, Harmer, J. (2005) explains that “attitudes to self-directed learning are frequently conditioned by the educational culture in which students have studied or are studying...autonomy of action is not always considered a desirable characteristic in such contexts”. This same line of reasoning operates in L. Dam's conception of “differential teaching and learning” (interview 2006) when she explains that variations like learners'/teachers' background, language, culture, educational context are all significant.

In a research on the implementation of autonomy to higher education learners in Macedonia Xaferi, B. & Xaferi, G., (2011,p.152) interestingly claim that changes are needed to lead such learners from traditional teaching to independent practice. A major finding of this study is that “...85% of the participants believe that learner autonomy is very important but they mostly do as the teacher instructs”. This is no surprise as learners' conceptions of their roles as well as their teachers have been shaped by previous conventional practice. Being in a similar situation (as the Macedonian ones), Algerian students of English often show comparable reactions.

The Algerian student

The Algerian student evolving in an Arabo-Islamic upbringing possesses some qualities, behaviours, beliefs, and attitudes among others which define him as such.

As an individual, he/she:

- Progresses in a culture of the group, the family, the community;
- Takes decisions with the parents (family);
- Shares experience with others.

As a learner, he/she:

- Considers the teacher as someone necessary for learning;
- Relies heavily on classroom input (provided by the teacher);
- Consults the teacher before taking decisions;
- Learns (inside and outside the classroom) with his/her classmates;
- Takes decisions concerning studies and career with family.

Needless to say that these features need definitely serve as a starting point in any attempt to promote autonomy among this type of learners. Interestingly enough, relating autonomy to sociocultural contexts does in fact stress its ‘acquisitional’ dimension, and in terms of FL pedagogy this simply means that all learners can develop high levels of autonomy if they are directed towards it.

Towards a realistic and efficient FL pedagogy

Realism in our context is to be associated with well- founded elements that influence the success/failure of a teaching/learning experience. Whenever a decision is taken some organization is necessary before this decision becomes truly functional or is implemented. This is because not any new movement guarantees success and improvement; and in order to be efficient we need to:

- Inform learners about modified or new pedagogical perspectives;
- Raise both learners’ and teachers’ awareness about the issue at stake;
- Prepare and eventually train teachers to this reform;
- Adapt the material facilities available as libraries, internet, self- access centres, etc...

Gaining autonomy is a lengthy, progressive and continuous process that requires a revision of the traditional roles of both the learner and the teacher. We cannot reasonably and realistically expect our learners to move from a largely “spoon feed” attitude (in the ‘traditional’ class) to a totally decision taking, responsible one necessary for better language learning. Not only this, autonomy should be a concern from early education so that by the time they get to university; students would have already attained reasonable levels of autonomy as “there are degrees of autonomy”. (Sinclair’s definition of autonomy, 2000). Teachers’ professionalism is needed here to guarantee the smooth and gradual transition between these two learners’ tasks; and rather than advocating abrupt changes in our methodology, it seems more realistic to gradually lead learners to change their attitudes.

Besides, it is widely acknowledged today that there are no two learners alike in terms of mode and rate of learning: some need lengthy and linear explanations; others prefer examples on the basis of which they will construct their hypotheses. There are also those who not only enjoy working with peers, but benefit more and learn better in the group, and those for whom learning

is an individual, solitary experience. The teaching profession needs to take this aspect into account and push learners towards autonomy even when they are engaged in pair or group work: one can at the same time cooperate in a group activity and still keeps an autonomous attitude concerning the decisions that may need to be taken individually. Autonomy in class may be seen as a collaborative process, Ramos, R.C. (2006, 197) for example prompts the teacher saying, “provide autonomous students and try to make them influence others, through project work, tasks and other types of group work where they would interact”. For optimal efficiency, tasks and activities need to be organized together with the learners so as to make them express their preferences and needs. Communication should be at the core of class work as students need to feel free to express personal, original views as well as criticize their peers’ or teachers’. Likewise, learners may be lead towards autonomy when they are invited to have an objective eye on their progress, strengths and weaknesses. The teacher should be there to validate this and propose alternatives for remedy.

Conclusion

It seems reasonable at this stage to strike a chord on autonomy from the other side of the desk, i.e. teacher autonomy. Teacher autonomy is another issue which deserves the attention of the language professionals as it is indeed a prerequisite to any step towards leading learners to autonomy. In the same vein Thanasulas, D. (2000) simply declares that “To posit ways of fostering learner autonomy is certainly to posit ways of fostering teacher autonomy”. Nonetheless, although it seems reasonable to assume that teacher who is not autonomous himself in his profession and classroom practice cannot reasonably guide his learners towards autonomy; we must admit there is little evidence in the literature about teachers’ own perception about this concept (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Duong & Seepho, 2014; Shahsavari, 2014).

We have attempted in this paper to associate autonomy in learning with the socio-cultural educational context in which one desires to give it a place. The foremost argument in this work is that the feasibility of learner autonomy depends on the extent to which pedagogical principles are understood, accepted and rooted in our language classes. Tracing back the historical progression of autonomy Smith, R. (2008) concluded his article asserting that “The Autonomy Movement is by no means over, but it seems to have entered a new phase, one of wider diffusion”. It goes without saying that the present piece of work is far from being comprehensive, as we have merely referred to autonomy and culture on theoretical grounds. Empirical studies in similar contexts need to address questions like teachers’ (often denied) resistance to learner autonomy, the lack of material facilities that pave the path towards autonomy, and the difficulty of measuring autonomy. At any rate, it is hoped that further research will come up with more critical theoretical as well as practical views so that learner autonomy will not only be an ideal but a genuine pedagogical principle that not only serves our learners in their educational adventure, but also in their lives as citizens.

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A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words Approach to Teaching English: Integrating Mind Maps in ELT

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Abstract

With the growing emphasis recently on developing organizational and thinking skills alongside language ones, visual tools such as mind maps are being increasingly employed in English language teaching. Many studies have demonstrated that when students use mind maps they tend to be motivated and thus better assimilate information and complete complex tasks. The aim of this paper is to discuss the different types and uses of such learning devices. It also demonstrates based on evidence from the literature how mind maps as effective tools that teachers can use to enhance learning, attend to various learning styles, make instruction student-directed rather than teacher-led, and ultimately generate excitement and promote students' engagement. The paper concludes with some literature-based guidelines that EFL teachers need to follow in order to effectively implement mind maps in their classrooms. These are mainly instructions on teacher instruction stages, and the precise point of implementation and how it influences the degree of effectiveness.

Keywords: concept maps, English language teaching, graphic organisers, mind maps.

1. Introduction

One of the problematic areas for students is the manner in which textbooks are written. Very often course books are written above their level and lack explicit organization of concepts. This is where mind maps come to the rescue. According to Drapeau (1999:5) a mind map is a visual display that depicts the relationships between facts, terms, and or ideas within a learning task. Willerman & Mac Harg (1991:705) add that mind maps are also referred to as knowledge maps, concept maps, story maps, cognitive organizers, advance organizers, graphic organisers or concept diagrams .

Research shows that mind maps, make content area information more accessible as well as memorable to students. These are visual tools that help English language learners understand and organize information. The use of these tools can generate excitement and enthusiasm toward learning. Therefore, they appear to be a beneficial instructional strategy to help students learn more effectively and retain learned information longer.

Bellanca (2007: 11) maintains that teachers can use mind maps to reinforce learning, assess learning at multiple checkpoints, and identify misunderstandings of concepts. In fact, mind maps can be used before, during, and after instruction. Besides, learning environment settings for using them vary from individual use, to partners, to small groups, to centres, and to whole class environment. Teachers can use these organizers to brainstorm ideas, to activate prior knowledge, to remain focused on content material, to present findings from an investigation, to confirm existing knowledge, and to review at the end of the period or week of study. Graphic organizers are also valuable in any activity which requires the use of critical thinking .

2. Types and functions

Graphic organizers come in many different forms. Merkley& Jefferies (2001: 350-357) provided the following sampling of the different types and uses of graphic organizers:

2.1 Use number more professional than stars A Descriptive or Thematic Map works well for mapping hierarchical relationships.

2.2 Organizing a hierarchical set of information, reflecting super ordinate or subordinate elements, is made easier by constructing a Network Tree .

2.3 When the information relating to a main idea or theme does not fit into a hierarchy, a Spider Map can help with organization .

2.4 When information contains cause and effect problems and solutions, a Problem and Solution Map can be useful for organizing.

2.5 A Problem-Solution Outline helps students to compare different solutions to a problem.

2.6 A Sequential Episodic Map is useful for mapping cause and effect.

2.7 When cause-effect relationships are complex and non-redundant a Fishbone Map may be particularly useful.

2.8 A Comparative and Contrastive Map can help students compare and contrast two concepts according to their features .

2.9 Another way to compare concepts' attributes is to construct a Compare-Contrast Matrix .

2.10 Continuum Scale is effective for organizing information along a dimension such as less to more, low to high, and few to many .

2.11 A Series of Events Chain can help students organize information according to various steps or stages .

2.12 A Cycle Map is useful for organizing information that is circular or cyclical, with no absolute beginning or ending .

2.13 A Human Interaction Outline is effective for organizing events in terms of a chain of action and reaction.

3 . Evidence for effectiveness as a learning enhancement

The literature supports the use of mind maps to facilitate and improve learning outcomes for a wide range of learners. In fact, numerous studies confirm the benefits of using such graphic organizers in the classroom in terms of helping students develop and process information. In this respect, Ellis (2004:1) emphasises that they help students to process information as opposed to memorizing and stressing facts. This is because graphic organizers are structures or templates that help students understand the relationships between concepts rather than just memorizing isolated, non-contextualized bits of information. Also, spatial arrangements depicting the information's structure reduce the cognitive demands on the learner. The learner does not have to process as much semantic information to understand the information. This is one reason why mind maps are "such powerful devices for students with language based learning disabilities" (Ellis, op.cit: 2 .(

Mcknight (2010: 5) argues that when content is illustrated with diagrams, the information can be maintained by students over a period of time. First, because organizers portray knowledge in a meaningful way, which helps bring clarity to ideas as connections are made. As a matter of fact, having a way to organize ideas, facts, and concepts graphically facilitates effective student retention. Also, graphic organisers help students separate what is important to remember from not essential information.

Many students are visual learners, thus, a visual approach to brainstorming or organizing information is essential. As such, Horton, et.al (1990: 12-14) believes that mind maps appear to be a valued approach to utilize in teaching and learning. They help students generate mental images to go along with information and create graphic representations for information. Organizers also offer an entry point into complex material for visual learners, increase comprehension and retention, and can be used with all students ranging from gifted to those with mild cognitive disabilities.

Learning to think is an essential skill needed in education today. Educators often use teaching methods where students are passive learners. Difficulty arises when students must make meaning out of information taken from a book, video, or a lecture. When students interact with content, it is important that they actively construct meaning. To do this, students must be active thinkers during the learning process. Drapeau (2008:12) emphasizes that students are required to think in multiple directions when they use mind maps. Hence, learning becomes rather an active and meaningful process.

Mind maps offer support when new information is presented and previously learned information is reviewed. Ausubel (1963:15) believes that the appropriate organizer can help students form relationships between previously acquired knowledge and new concepts. This linkage process seems to be precisely what students need for learning to take place because it helps them store and retrieve the knowledge in their long-term memory .

Jitendra (2002: 23-28) points out that students are more likely to become strategic learners when they use mind maps. Reading and writing skills, communication skills, and analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills are all subject to improve when students use such graphic organizers. Students with learning difficulties need strategies to help them achieve success. These students must have information presented in a clear, concise, and organized form if they are to make progress in content area classrooms. Gagnon & Maccini (2000:1-22) emphasise that mind maps

have great potential for students with learning disabilities because they provide extra support to guide them to focus on the important information and learn how to organize it.

In sum, the literature stresses that mind maps help clarify and organize information, which leads to students being active in the acquisition of conceptual knowledge. Teachers also use this teaching resource to develop lessons and link new concepts with existing knowledge. Besides, graphic organizers combine both the linguistic and non-linguistic modes of learning. In most cases, this dual-presentation (visual representation accompanied by auditory explanation) is considerably more powerful than either approach alone, and hence leads to the ultimate goal of effective learning for students. Ultimately, concept maps allow for more than just content acquisition. In fact, students learn also processing skills, patterns for organizing information, critical thinking skills, and communication skills.

4. Implementing mind maps in the EFL classroom

McKenzi (1997: 2-4) emphasises why in the past tense and previous ones in the present, be consistent that most examples, in the literature, that outline the inefficacy of mind maps invariably point to inadequate teacher instruction as the key in the failure of these tools to achieve any noticeable results in student achievement. By and large an effective teacher instruction model includes explicit and detailed instructions and independent practice by the students with feedback wherever necessary. The teacher should also determine and establish a purpose for which the graphic organizer is being used. All these three elements – instruction by the teacher, practice by the students, and feedback from the teacher – are inextricably linked. Failure at one of these stages will negate the benefits of using the tools.

Bellanca (op.cit: 2) points out that visual displays can be successfully implemented at several phases of the instructional cycle. They may be introduced as advance organizers, before the learning task, or as post organizers, after encountering the learning material. Positive outcomes have been reported when graphic organizers are used as both advance and post organizers. However, the precise point of implementation does appear to influence the degree of graphic organizers' effectiveness. Merkley & Jefferies (op.cit:350-357) report from a study that the point of implementation is a crucial factor in determining the magnitude of improvement in learning outcome. When graphic organizers were used as a pre- activity, average effect sizes were small. In contrast, graphic organizers used as a follow-up yielded somewhat higher improvement in learning outcomes. Thus, efforts to improve learning outcomes may be more successful when mind maps are introduced after the learning material.

5. Conclusion

The literature supports the assertion that mind maps are valuable instructional instruments that improve learning no matter the cognitive ability or learning style of the learner. When students use these organizers, they tend to be motivated and thus better assimilate information and complete complex tasks. So, it is important that educators make a concerted effort to use this method to cater for individual differences, abilities and preferences. However, the effectiveness of instruction will depend on teachers' skills and knowledge in the development and use of these visual tools. Maximum gains can only be derived if teachers are equipped with the necessary skills to use the strategy.

Moreover, this strategy provides instant feedback. As a result, teaching can be modified to suit the learners' needs and so allows educators to be reflective. Also, the use of mind maps in the classroom can lead to positive gains for students. It moves instruction from teacher-directed to

student-directed as students learn how to construct meaning themselves. Consequently, it is incumbent on educators to use such strategy that will not only maximize engaged time but also develop independent learners .

Finally, since students learn best through a variety of ways, teachers need to vary their teaching to help promote student excellence. Using graphic organizers to teach English is an effective approach to assist students' learning .

About the Author

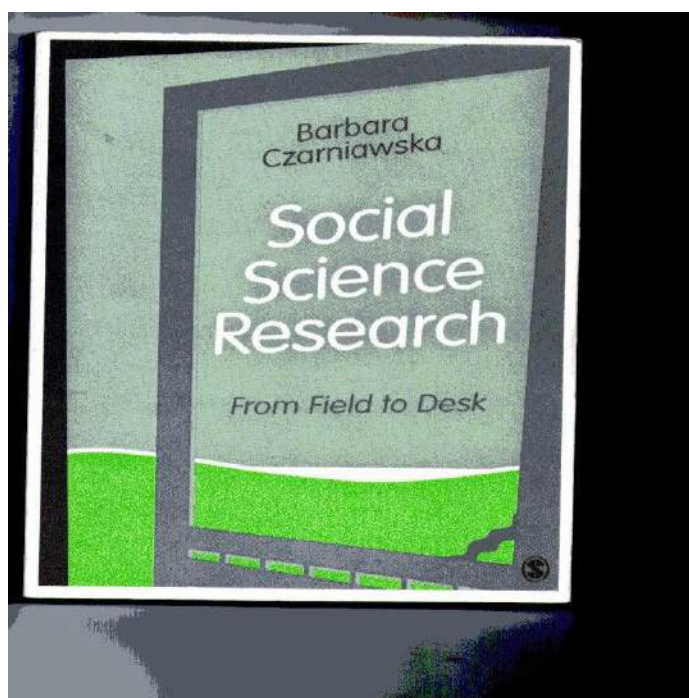
Dr. Manar Dahbi holds a Ph.D in Applied Linguistics. She teaches English for business, English for computer engineering, and translation at the National School of Applied Sciences. She has also an extensive teaching experience as an EFL secondary school teacher. Her main fields of interest include: action research, teacher training, and ESL assessment.

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Book Review

Social Science Research: From Field to Desk



Author: Barbara Czarniawska

Title of Book: Social Science Research: From Field to Desk

Year of Publication: 2014

Publisher: Sage, United Kingdom

Number of pages: 175

Reviewer: Dr. Nadia Idri

The social science research is a practical guide for beginner researchers that treats methodological problems they can face. Czarniawska presented an account of practical methodological approaches, various research methods and methodologies, and diversified case studies from a cross-disciplinary work. In this expert guide of 171 pages divided into fourteen chapters, the author could enclose research steps from planning and designing research to collecting and analyzing data, to writing up and disseminating findings. Each chapter is divided into sections illustrated with examples the thing that makes of it a coherent structure. What makes the textbook worthwhile for new researchers and students is the end of each chapter that offers an activity and a list for further readings. Some chapters are also enriched with further notes for more understanding. Outstandingly, all chapters in the book consider ethical aspects; an important feature a researcher should have, and many new scholars may ignore in research. In this, according to Czarniawska, doing research is making moral choices and always under time pressure. The author, with her long experience in teaching and in doing ethnographic research,

could provide a rich and extensive list of references that ranges from 1913 to 2014 since she could collect a wide range of books and articles on research methods used in social sciences.

Thanks to this experience that the author could think of writing this simplified trust worthy guide for young scholars. Barbara wrote in her prologue: “what I hope to offer is a simple and pragmatic picture from beginning to end- of a research process that includes fieldwork”. In her overview, the author put focus on qualitative research more than quantitative methods although the reader can come across some quantitative illustrations when relevant they are.

All along the chapters, Czarniawska initiated her book by the three known questions a researcher should ask before getting started; that is the what? The why? and the How? to which she devoted her first chapter. The author, then, considered important steps in the research process focusing how to treat sources, importance of references, relevant research steps. In her second chapter, Barbara focused on how to review the literature. In upcoming chapters, she moved from study design to good academic writing.

In the third chapter, the author went through designing the study through the grounded theory approach. Then, she devoted chapters four, five and six to selected qualitative methods starting from interviewing, to observation and then, quasi-objects. Interviews, as an important method in qualitative research, have been defined and linked to context. The author related the interview to the site of narrative re-production. It can also be regarded as an observation opportunity either through observing the interviews or considering the diary interviews. Barbara served the reader with a section to help the scholar ask the relevant questions in their appropriate way and know how to transcribe and what problems he can meet. As for observation (chapter five), the author enumerated its varieties first and, then, focused shadowing. Going through objects, Czarniawska devoted the sixth chapter to following objects and quasi-objects relying on Actor-Network Theory.

Chapter seven adds new elements related to tools for fieldwork. Czarniawska treated diary studies in the digital era and considered the use of the camera in research. The author, being aware of the difficulty of fieldwork, devoted her eighth chapter to methodological problems and common complications the researcher can meet while trying to access information from different people, different types of people, different genders, particular situation, particular days, etc. This makes the job difficult for the researcher. That is why; Czarniawska dealt with “surviving in the field” with stories and real experiences illustrated all along the chapter.

Always within fieldwork, Barbara Czarniawska moved from fieldwork in social sciences in the real life in chapter eight to cyberspace in chapter nine. She emphasized fieldwork via cyberspace going through computer work, information gathering and eliciting field material. Then, the author explained clearly fieldwork about cyberspace and fieldwork in cyberspace. A historical account about its early days and the blooming of virtual ethnography has been presented.

In the two coming chapters; that is ten and eleven, Czarniawska moved to data analysis where she treated analyzing field material. Barbara came back to grounded theory revisited and covered content analysis, discourse analysis, conversation analysis and visual analysis in her tenth chapter. However, she devoted her eleventh chapter to text analysis where she started with the theoretical analysis, went through the origins of structuralism and its place in psychology. The author placed a section about semiology based on Actor Network Theory and ended the chapter with notes on post-structuralism.

The remaining chapters dealt with writing up the thesis with valuable techniques to succeed in the writing process. Aspects of: what to write, how to write academically and how to organize the work were detailed in chapters twelve and thirteen. Barbara Czarniawska ended the book with the when to stop question in chapter fourteen. The author enumerated three stops; first for reading, second for material collection and third for writing. After ending the writing process, the scholar-according to Barbara, should think of what to do next. In this last section, she referred to disregarding literature, previous field material, unused topics and themes, mass media and finally social media.

All in all, the book seems to be a valuable guide to any researcher who would like to succeed in research in social sciences through linking field-work data to academic writing; leading such data to drawing conclusions and linking them to other phenomena in the field of ethnographic research.

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