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## On the Motivations of Conceptual Metaphors: Comparing Arabic and English

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### Abstract

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and later elaborated by others (e.g. Grady et al 1996; Lakoff & Kövecses 1987) provides a useful framework for describing metaphor in human language and cognition. Employing this framework, this article analyzes the emergence motivations for a number of conceptual metaphors in Arabic and English. Then, when they emerge, why do they seem to be crosslinguistically similar at times and different at others. According to some sources (e.g. Kövecses 2002) metaphors are either motivated physically (including biologically and physiologically), perceptually, culturally, or from image-schematic metaphors. The sources also maintain that metaphors are motivated by three major categories: correlations in experience, perceived resemblance, and the GENERIC-IS-SPECIFIC metaphor (Lakoff & Turner 1989; Grady 1999). In this article an attempt is made to distinguish and classify these different types of motivations, with the former category termed as “emergence motivations” and the latter category as “relational motivations”. Further, the article aims to give a sense of the universality as well as the specificity of metaphors crosslinguistically based on these different types of experiential motivations, taking English and Arabic as a case in point.

**Keywords:** cognitive linguistic; conceptual metaphor; crosslinguistic; experiential motivation; image-schema

## I. Introduction

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and later elaborated by others (e.g. Grady et al 1996; Lakoff & Kövecses 1987) provides a useful framework for describing metaphor in human language and cognition. Employing this framework, this article analyzes the emergence motivations for a number of conceptual metaphors in Arabic and English. Then, when they emerge, why do they seem to be crosslinguistically similar at times and different at others?

According to some sources (e.g., Kövecses 2002) metaphors are either motivated physically (including biologically and physiologically), perceptually, culturally, or from image-schematic metaphors. The sources also maintain that metaphors are motivated by three major categories: correlations in experience, perceived resemblance, and the GENERIC-IS-SPECIFIC metaphor (Lakoff & Turner 1989; Grady 1999). In this article an attempt is made to distinguish and classify these different types of motivations, with the former category termed as “emergence motivations” and the latter category as “relational motivations”. Further, the article aims to give a sense of the universality as well as the specificity of metaphors crosslinguistically based on these different types of experiential motivations, taking English and Arabic as a case in point.

## II. Background

One core claim of CMT is that metaphor is in essence experientially motivated. According to the cognitive-linguistic view of metaphor, all metaphors are motivated experientially, or they have experiential bases.

Metaphors may either be conventional or unconventional. Conceptual Metaphor theory rejects the notion of metaphor as being just a linguistic ornament and a poetic device that is the sole property of literary and rhetorical discourse. Metaphor is so pervasive in our lives and a considerable amount of our daily everyday discourse is actually metaphorical, whether we know it or not. Metaphors in this view are said to be conventional because they are so conventionalized in our daily discourse that people almost never think of them as being metaphors. Examples would be utterances like *give me a hand*, *he passed the exams*, and *his answer is close to my answer*.

Surprisingly, even most poetic metaphors are conventional because they make use of the same source and target cognitive domains which are employed in conventional language but they extend them, elaborate on them, or phrase them in novel ways, novel in the sense that they might employ some flowery linguistic devices while retaining the basic conceptual metaphors that are readily available in conventional language (Lakoff 1993; Lakoff & Turner 1989; Turner 1987).

That is not to say that unconventional conceptual metaphors do not exist, but that they exist in extremely limited ways, and when they do exist, they need more cognitive processing effort because they would not dovetail nicely with the conventional conceptual metaphors available in the conceptual systems of speakers of a given language. These unconventional metaphors are usually one-shot image metaphors.

Based on their cognitive functions, metaphors are of three types (Kövecses 2002): structural metaphors, orientational metaphors, and ontological metaphors. Structural metaphors provide elaborate mappings between the source and target domains; they are rich in knowledge.

The metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, for instance, maps a great deal of knowledge between the concept of journey and that of life. Such conceptual correspondences consist in that both concepts have destinations, both have beginnings, both have obstacles in the way, both involve investment of time, and so on.

The detailed mapped knowledge that exists in structural metaphors above is not present in ontological metaphors. Ontological metaphors merely help human beings talk about their experiences in a concrete way; they help them identify, refer to, and quantify nonphysical aspects of their experiences, as in *friendship is based on trust*, and *this would give you courage*.

Oriental metaphors on their part are just coherence metaphors which help us make sense of concepts in a coherent way based on our image-schematic knowledge of the world, like MORE IS UP, HAPPY IS UP, PAST IS BEHIND, FUTURE IS FRONT, and so on. That is, we evaluate our concepts using the image-schematic knowledge that we acquire from our interactive experiences in the world. These evaluations are based on primary orientational concepts of UP and DOWN, FRONT and BEHIND, CENTRAL and PERIPHERAL, IN and OUT, and the like.

Perhaps the most explicit pronouncements on the assumptions of CMT, especially with regard to the nature of metaphor, are those found in Steen (2002b: 389-390):

- Meaning is grounded in experiential knowledge.
- Literal meaning is direct, concrete meaning; metaphorical meaning is indirect abstract meaning.
- Metaphor is primarily a matter of conceptual structure, and derivatively a matter of language.
- Metaphor is a set of correspondences between two concepts in two different knowledge domains.
- Metaphor may be conventional, systematic, and familiar, or may not be.
- Metaphor, whether conventional or not, may be deliberate or "emergent".
- Metaphor may be signaled as such, or not.
- Metaphor may be expressed at various levels of linguistic organization and in various rhetorical forms.

### III. Motivations

Motivations for conceptual metaphors may be divided into two main categories: emergence motivations and relational motivations.

#### 1. Emergence motivations

Emergence motivations depict how conceptual metaphors emerge from the human experience at large, and they are (Kövecses 2002):

##### a) *Bodily (physiological and biological) Motivation*

These metaphors are motivated by human physiological and biological processes associated with particular states, such as anger and happiness. For example, anger is sometimes conceived of as a pressurized liquid in a container. Consider the following:

1. *He is just blowing off some steam* (Lakoff 1980).
2. *You make my blood boil* (Lakoff 1980).
3. *Fawwar-t damm-i* (Maalej 2004).  
Boiled-you blood-my

You made me extremely angry.

The above examples are linguistic manifestations of the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS A HOT FLUID IN A CONTAINER (Lakoff 2003 [1980]). Here, the human body is compared to a container and the heat inside the human body associated with the state of anger is compared to the pressurized liquid in the container. These examples are instances of metaphors that are motivated by correlations in experience. Prototypically, when someone is angry their body heat increases. These two concepts are distinct and are by no means similar but they go hand in hand in the experience of anger.

Although correlations in experience account for a great deal of conceptual metaphors, it is not always the case that two languages will have the same metaphors just by virtue of having the same experiential bases. The anger metaphors above present a case in which Arabic and English converge in this respect. However, the two languages do have different preferences as to which experiential correlations each language will employ to conceive of less concrete or more abstract concepts. The conceptual target domain of IDLE TALK is a case in point. In the two languages there are many expressions that are used to refer to this domain, for example:

4. *They sat for a long time **chewing the fat**.*
5. *ǧalas tʷuul al-laail yetʷegg hanak.*  
Sat (he) long the-night (he) hit “tap” palate

He sat all night long hitting “tapping” the palate.

He sat all night long talking idly.

We can see above that there are two conceptualizations of IDLE TALK. In the first example we have IDLE TALK IS CHEWING FAT, whereas in the second example which comes from my own Najdi dialect in Saudi Arabia, it is IDLE TALK IS TAPPING PALATE. In each conceptual metaphor we have two distinct concepts that are correlated in experience. In (4) chewing the fat usually correlates with idle talk; when two people chew the fat they do not just do that silently but they engage in aimless talk in the meanwhile. There are many theories as to the origin of this English idiom that are irrelevant to our discussion here; what concerns us here is that the distinct concept of chewing the fat experientially accompanies the distinct concept of idle talk. As for the

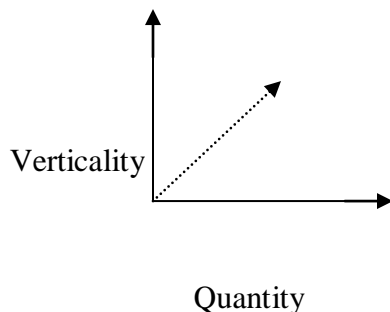
Arabic example, no talk can occur without the palate being tapped by the tongue. So these are naturally correlated events in the experience of talking as described here. The question is why the source domain of PALATE-TAPPING is utilized to understand the target domain of IDLE TALK when we know that tapping the palate also occurs in purposeful talk. I think that in purposeful talk there are other important things that overshadow the mere palate-tapping, such as the communication of ideas, the attempt to reach a fruitful end-result of a discussion, and so on. In idle talk, however, nothing of importance can be thought of as accompanying this kind of talk other than palate-tapping for which reason it is utilized to highlight this aspect of talk, the idleness.

### *b) Perceptual Motivation*

Many metaphors are motivated by the human perceptual senses when human beings perceive objects around them. The metaphor MORE IS UP is motivated by the perceptual correlations in the experience of piling up something and its increase in quantity; whenever something is piled up it must increase. Thus, QUANTITY is generally correlated with VERTICALITY (Lakoff 1993). Consider:

#### *6. Prices soared.*

Figure 1 below illustrates how the correlation metaphor QUANTITY IS VERTICALITY works, with the arrow representing the relationship between the two concepts:



**Figure 1. Correlation of quantity vs. verticality**

Human beings have the same perceptual senses; yet, environmental settings, terrain, or particular type of weather that they experience might motivate the emergence of particular conceptual metaphors. Consider:

7. In a *flurry* of public comments in the past month, Russian officials have acknowledged that Russia is delaying the delivery of fuel to the reactor in the port city of Bushehr (Sciolino 2007).

8. After a quiet spell, there was a sudden *flurry* of phone calls (LDCE).

9. *Reporters wanted to ferret out the details of the story.*

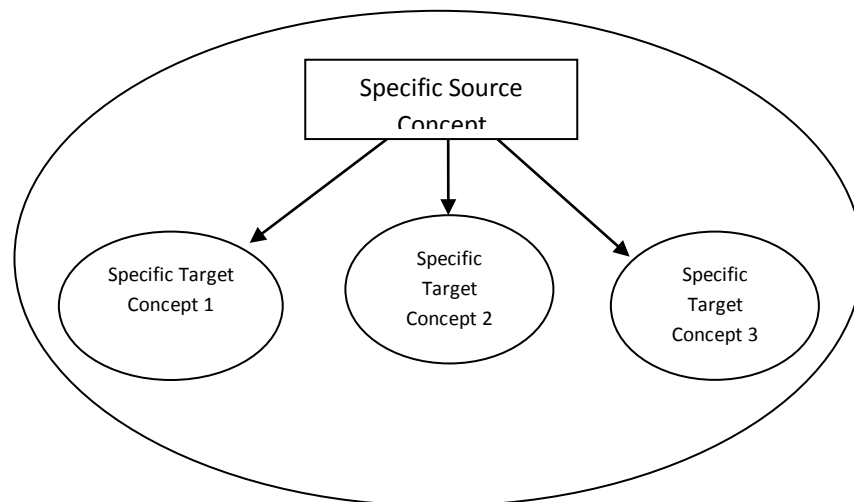
From examples (7, 8) we can derive the conceptual metaphor INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES ARE FLURRIES. Such a metaphor will not be a good candidate for emerging in the Arabian Peninsula since there is no experiential basis for it; the Arabic-speaking people in that region almost never experience snow flurries. By the same token, in (9) the ferret, which is an animal that does not exist in the Arabian terrains, it is inconceivable that such a metaphor would emerge directly from the physical environment of the Arabic-speaking people. On the other hand, the following metaphor would be least conceivable in an English-speaking environment:

10. *Laa ta-truk al-habl ʕala al-yaarib fa tandam.*  
Don't you-leave the-rope "leash" on the-hump then (you) regret

Don't leave the rope on the hump then you regret.

Don't leave (things or people) run their own course without supervising otherwise you will regret.

This is a standard Arabic metaphor in which the source domain of the camel left on its own by putting the leash on its hump as a signal for it to go wherever it likes is mapped to the target domain of people or things left to their own whims or desires. This expression has a derogatory tone. This is a case of the GENERIC-IS-SPECIFIC metaphor through which a specific source concept is mapped onto an indefinitely large number of parallel specific target concepts which all have the same generic-schematic structure as the specific source concept's. Idioms and proverbs are typical examples of this type of metaphor. Figure 2 below represents the relationship among concepts in this metaphor with the arrows indicating mapping from the source to the target:



**Figure 2. Mappings between specific source and target concepts**

Such a metaphor is a least candidate for emerging in an English-speaking setting because such a setting would lack the experiential basis for it. Even if translated into English, it would require unconventional cognitive effort to process, and might even be processed incorrectly since the English-speaking people lack the image-schemata that evolve from experiencing camels and the ways by which they are handled.

### c) *Cultural Motivation*

Metaphors of cultural motivation are primarily reflections of the unique culture of each speech community, culture understood broadly. For example, consider the American English metaphor *Monday morning quarter-backing* meaning giving advice in hindsight when it is too late; this is again an instance of the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor that is culturally motivated since it reflects the sports culture in the US. In Arabic there is a very productive conceptual metaphor that is culturally motivated, principally by the Quran. That is PREACHING IS REMINDING which is manifested in examples such as the following:

11. *Ath-thekraa tanfaʿu al-muʿmineen* (Quran 51:55).

Reminding benefit the-believers

Preaching is beneficial to the believers.

12. *Qaala ʿanna-hu yaḏjibu ʿan nu-thakker ʿan-naas bi-Allah.*  
said (he) that-it must that we-remind the-people INST-God

He said that we must preach God to people.

The above illustrates how each language culture can induce its own cultural metaphors that are reflective of the experiences of its speech communities.

### d) *Image-schema metaphor*

There is a great deal of conceptual metaphors that are not derived directly from experience but indirectly via image-schematic metaphors which have direct experiential bases reflecting the ways we human beings experience the world around us. These experiences constitute image-schemata in our conceptual systems. From such experiences we know what it is like to be *in* something and *outside* of it, *behind* it and *in front of* it, *central* and *peripheral* to it, and so on. Such conceptual metaphors are not usually rich in knowledge, that is, there is not much knowledge mapped from the source domain to the target domain because the source domain itself is schematic and lacks detailed knowledge. For example, there is the conceptual metaphor STATES ARE CONTAINERS through which states are conceived of as bounded containers. The source domain, THE CONTAINER, does not incorporate any knowledge other than the image-schema of containment. Note that both the source and target domains represent major categories or types rather than tokens. Either of these categorical slots or both are simply filled in by specific tokens or details. Consider the following in which the target domain of STATES is further specified:

13. *He spent all his life in misery.* (MISERY IS A CONTAINER)

14. *They lived in happiness ever after.* (HAPPINESS IS A CONTAINER)

15. *Extramarital sex*. (MARRIAGE IS A CONTAINER)

16. *Borne out of wedlock* (LDCE). (MARRIAGE IS A CONTAINER)

In the examples above, not much knowledge is transferred between domains other than the image-schema of containment either in or out of. Image-schematic conceptual metaphors are usually available crosslinguistically, so Arabic and English are no exceptions. The ubiquity of these metaphors may be ascribed to the fact that they derive directly from the generic human experience available to all human beings. However, conceptual metaphors that are derived from these image-schematic metaphors might vary across languages. For instance, consider the following Arabic example:

17. *Daxala al-qafas'a ath-thahabi.*  
 Entered (he) the-cage the-golden  
 He entered the golden cage.  
 He got married.

Here we have the source domain of GOLDEN CAGE and the target domain of MARRIAGE. Marriage is conceived of as a golden cage, concepts which both represent specific types of STATE and CONTAINER, respectively. There are other metaphoric entailments involved, such as the source domain aspect of GOLDEN being mapped onto the target domain aspect of HAPPINESS or SWEETNESS, and the source domain aspect of CAGE mapped onto the target domain aspect of COMMITMENTS, which is a conventional mapping, providing more evidence for another productive conceptual metaphor in both Arabic and English, that is, COMMITMENTS ARE FETTERS. The above example illustrates how image-schematic metaphors that are potentially universal are specified differently in different languages.

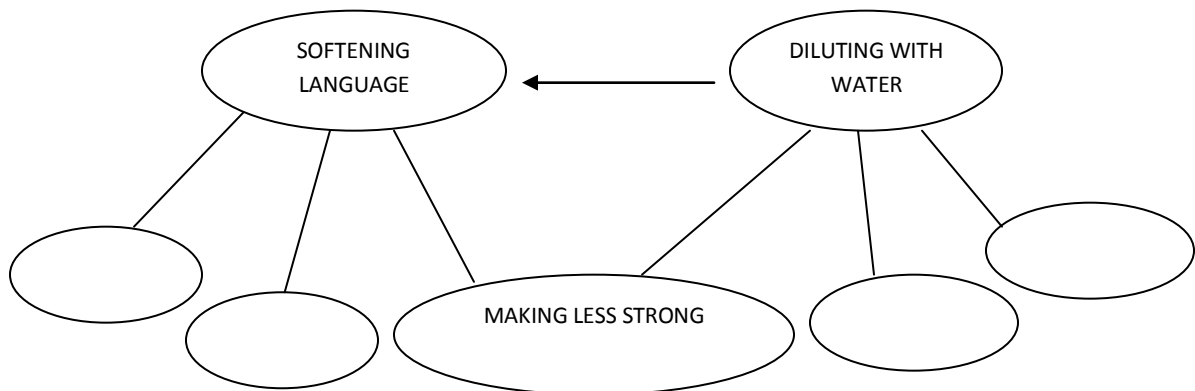
## 2. Relational Motivations

Relational motivations describe the relationship between the source concept and the target concept as they emerge from the human experience. A clear line of distinction should be drawn between three types of relational motivations: Experiential correlation, GENERIC-IS-SPECIFIC, and perceived resemblance (Grady 1999). Thus far we have come across the first two in the previous discussions under bodily and perceptual motivations, but not yet the latter, which is the object of analysis in this section. These motivations should not be confused with the motivations discussed earlier. The earlier motivations concern how conceptual metaphors emerge in the first place from the human experience, whereas these motivations characterize the relationships between the source domains and the target domains as they emerge from the human experience. Let's consider the following example:

18. *Throughout the negotiations, the Russians tried to water down the resolution* (Sciolino 2007).

*To water down* in the above example is a metaphorical expression meaning *to make a statement or report less forceful by modifying its language* (LDCE). This expression literally means to

dilute a liquid with water. We can initially, for argument's sake, derive the conceptual metaphor SOFTENING LANGUAGE IS DILUTING WITH WATER. We have here two cognitive domains the relationship of which cannot be said to be correlation in experience because simply the two concepts are totally different and uncorrelated. By the same token, this metaphor is not a realization of the GENERIC-IS-SPECIFIC metaphor because DILUTING WITH WATER is not a specific concept that can potentially be mapped onto a number of other specific concepts among which is SOFTENING LANGUAGE that all share the same generic-schematic structure. In other words, the mapping from the concept of DILUTING WITH WATER is not very productive such that it manifests in other specific concepts besides SOFTENING LANGUAGE. What remains then is the *perceived resemblance* motivation. *Resemblance* in the cognitive view of metaphor is different from *similarity* in the Aristotelian traditional view which maintains that metaphor is an objective similarity between two things. The resemblance hypothesis (Grady 1999) claims that such similarity is only subjectively perceived based on some feature that is conceivably shared by two cognitive domains. The following diagram sketches the relationship between the two cognitive domains according to the perceived resemblance hypothesis. The arrow shows the direction from the source domain to the target domain. The blank circles stand for some other potential features that are not conceivably shared between the two domains.



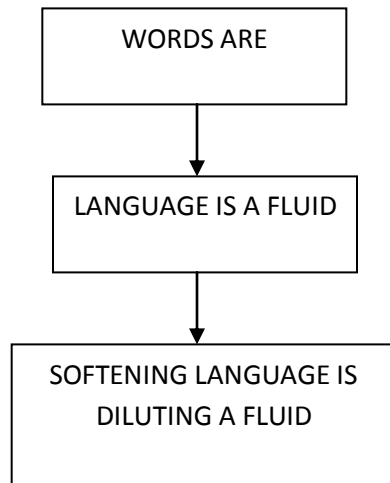
**Figure 3.** *Perceived resemblance between two domains based on two conceived common features*

Figure 3 above illustrates how the metaphor in example (18) above employs the conceived common feature of the two domains to linguistically project some similarity between them. Based on this analysis alone we may not venture to say that there exists the conceptual metaphor SOFTENING LANGUAGE IS DILUTING WITH WATER. But when we know that there is some additional linguistic evidence suggesting the existence of some underlying conventional mappings entailed in this metaphor, specifically between the domains of LANGUAGE and FLUID in general, we may reconsider. LANGUAGE, especially written language, is sometimes conceived of as A FLUID, whether it be water or otherwise, for instance:

19. *His writings flow easily.*

20. ?*Clear (transparent) language.*  
 21. *Luyatun insiyaabiyyah.*  
*Language flowing*  
*Flowing language (writing).*

The conceptualization of language as a fluid must precede the conceptualization of softening language as watering down a fluid. But it is only through the more primary ontological metaphor of WORDS ARE OBJECTS that we could further conceive of language as a fluid in the first place:



*Figure 4. Derivations of specific metaphors from ontological metaphors*

The first conceptual metaphor, WORDS ARE OBJECTS, readily exists in both Arabic and English as manifested in the following:

22. *Don't put words into my mouth.*
23. ?*alqaa kalimatan t'ayyibah.*  
 Dropped (he) word good  
 He dropped a good word.  
 He delivered a good speech.

I strongly suspect that such a primary metaphor would have a strong crosslinguistic tendency, if it is not universal. The second conceptual metaphor in the hierarchy in figure (4) above, LANGUAGE IS A FLUID, also exists in the two languages as demonstrated in examples 19-21. The third metaphor, SOFTENING LANGUAGE IS DILUTING A FLUID, represents a point where the two languages diverge since, to my knowledge, this metaphor is not explicitly attested in Arabic.

#### IV. Conclusion

In this article, the varied emergence motivations for conceptual metaphors have been examined taking the languages of Arabic and English as a case in point. Motivations for metaphors have been shown to be divided into two types or categories: emergence motivations which describe how conceptual metaphors emerge from our experiential interactions, and they include the human body, the human perceptions, culture, and image-schema metaphors; and relational motivations which characterize the relationship between source and target concepts as they emerge from our experiential interactions. The latter motivations include experiential correlations, GENERIC-IS-SPECIFIC, and perceived resemblance.

Given that speakers of different languages sometimes share a number of specific motivations that may be subsumed under these large categories, it is not always the case that languages end up having exactly identical conceptual metaphors. Cognitive as well as cultural preferences play an important role in this process. Nonetheless, out of all these variations, we can be certain about one thing: no conceptual metaphors would emerge in violation of the experiential backgrounds of speech communities.

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## AUE Students' Practice of the Speech Act of Compliment

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### Abstract

This paper investigated AUE students' practice of the speech act of compliment while they were communicating in English; it also investigated the most common positive adjectives adopted by them and the effect of the topic of the situation on the compliments. The participants of this study were 15 female and 15 male students at AUE. To gather the required data for the study, the researcher designed a questionnaire in the format of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) which had eight situations, provoking the speech act of compliment. The results of the study revealed that the factor of gender among AUE students had almost no effect on their compliment forms, on the adopted positive adjectives, nor on their interest in the topic of the compliment. The participants did not compliment properly: They ignored some of the most common forms of compliment in English, they used a lot of compliments that are not common in English, and they used jokes and Arabic words transcribed in English to convey compliments. The most two frequent positive adjectives adopted by the participants were 'nice' and 'good'. Finally, the results revealed that the topic of the setting was not a crucial factor to enhance the participants to convey the compliments. In conclusion, the researcher recommended that the speech act of compliment must be taken into consideration while teaching English language courses to enable students to use them more properly.

**Key words:** AUE (American University in the Emirates), sociolinguistic competence, speech acts, the speech act of compliment

## Introduction

Communicating through English language is not satisfied through mastering grammatical competence. This competence is considered the first basic component of the communicative competence which is the ultimate goal for learning a language. Several linguists such as Canale (1983) describe four main components of this communicative competence: Linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. This study deals with one of these components which is sociolinguistic, defined by Thomas (1983) as the ability to communicate efficiently with others beyond the level of grammar. The sociolinguistic competence can be achieved through different channels; one of them is through mastering the different functions of the language or what the professional linguists call speech acts of the language such as apology, greeting, and compliment. This study focused only on the speech act of compliment "which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristics, skills, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer" (Holmes, 1986, 485). According to Matsuoka (2003) "we generally exchange compliments as an effort to keep relationships solid". Besides, Boyle (2005, 356) mentioned five reasons behind compliments "1- to avoid hurting other people's feelings; 2- to give people some hope and encouragement; 3- to protect oneself from more powerful people ; 4- because they want other people to compliment them too; 5- it's encouraging".

As it is very fundamental to master the speech acts of English language to be able to communicate efficiently, the researcher has found that it is interesting to study and investigate the speech act of compliment at American University in the Emirates (AUE). English language is the main medium of instruction at (AUE). Students communicate in English; they need to learn how to express themselves functionally in different situations that they encounter in their daily life at the university. Failing to do so may cause misunderstandings and communication breakdowns between the students themselves, on one hand, and the students and their teachers, on the other hand.

## Literature Review

There are a number of studies conducted to analyze the speech act of compliment in English language and many others conducted to analyze second or foreign language learners' practice of this speech act. Manes and Wolfson (1981) listed down the most common American compliments, putting them in the following nine formulas: 1- 'NP is/looks (really) ADJ', 2- 'I (really) like/love NP', 3- 'PRO is (really)a ADJ NP', 4- 'You V a (really) ADV NP', 5- 'You V (NP) (really) ADV', 6- 'You have (a) ADJ NP!', 7- 'What (a) ADJ NP!', 8- 'ADJ NP!', and 9- 'Isn't NP ADJ!' The two researchers identified two compliment topics: 'Appearance/possession' which is the most common topic in the compliments in American English and 'ability/accomplishments'. Nelson, El Bakary and Al Batal (1993) studied Egyptian and American compliments using both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. They concluded that that both Egyptian and American compliments tended to be adjectival. Kim (2001) revealed that Korean and Japanese EFL learners adopted their native language compliment forms while they were communicating in English; they did not adopt the common English language compliment forms. Matsuoka (2003) investigated the influence of gender on explicitness of proffering compliments; he found that the explicitness ratings for male participants were higher than female participants, and this result is contradicting the results of the previous studies. Al Falasi (2007) studied the pragmatic transfer from Arabic into English

among Arabic learners of English while they were responding to compliments. The researcher found that the learners did not produce target-like compliment responses; they adopted some Arabic expressions to respond to the compliments in English as they perceive their native norms as being universal and not language specific. And Abdul Sattar and Lah (2008) investigated Iraqi students' compliment responses in English, and if pragmatic transfer can occur. They found that the participants adopted the Arabic expressions to respond to the compliments in English; this result was explained by learner's lack of knowledge of different sociolinguistic rules among cultures. In this paper, the researcher tried to enhance the sociolinguistic competence literature by studying AUE students' practice of the speech act of compliment.

### **Questions of the study**

As the purpose of this paper is to study AUE students' practice of the speech act of compliment, three research questions will be answered:

- 1- To what extent is the English speech act of compliment practiced properly by AUE female and male students?
- 2- What are the most common positive adjectives adopted by AUE female and male students?
- 3- To what extent does the topic of the situation enhance AUE female and male students to convey compliments?

### **Methodology**

To assure validity of the study, the researcher reviewed the related literature, adopting the most common forms of compliment in English language; these forms were adopted in the analysis sheet which was used to analyze the responses of the participants for the different situations in the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). Moreover, to achieve intra-rater reliability, the researcher herself repeated the analysis of the data collected from the DCT after three weeks; and to achieve inter-rater reliability, another analyst who is a holder of Ph.D in Curricula and Methods of Teaching English Language was asked to analyze the data again.

#### ***Participants of the study***

The participants of this study were 15 female and 15 male students at AUE. They were chosen randomly from different colleges at this university: College of Business Administration (COBA), College of Media and Mass Communication (CMMC), College of Computer Information Technology (CCIT), College of Fine Arts and Design (CFAD), and College of Law (CLAW). The participants were not native speakers of English as they learned English as a second or foreign language; they had different Arabic nationalities such as Emirati, Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Sudanese.

#### ***Instrument of the study***

To gather the required data about AUE students' practice of the speech act of compliment, the researcher designed a questionnaire in the format of a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The questionnaire had eight situations which provoked the speech act of compliment; all of the situations can be encountered by the students at AUE's campus. Some of the situations are about the topic (appearance /possession) and some about the topic (ability / performance). The questionnaire was designed in a way to alternate equally between the two topics (See the

appendix). Table 1 and Table 2 show the situations that are about (appearance/possession) and (ability/ performance) respectively.

**Table 1. Compliment situations that are about ( appearance/ possession)**

Situation 1	You are at the car parking and notice that your friend has bought a new luxurious car. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her / him ?
Situation 2	Your classmate is dressed up. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?
Situation 3	Your friend has got the highest tech mobile. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?
Situation 4	Your friend has a new nice haircut. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

**Table 2. Compliment situations that are about ( ability/ performance)**

Situation 1	Your friend has just finished her/his wonderful presentation at the class. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?
Situation 2	You are at the orientation session for the freshmen, and you meet a new friend. You are really impressed with her / his suggestions and questions . What would you say to compliment her/him?
Situation 3	You are at AUE Carnival and Global Day, you like the traditional food prepared by your Palestinian friend. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?
Situation 4	Your classmate has got an 'A' in the course. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

### Results and discussion

The first question of the study was: 'To what extent is the English speech act of compliment practiced properly by AUE female and male students?' To answer this question, the researcher analyzed the compliment forms used by the participants in the (DCT). The frequencies and percentages of the compliment forms were calculated. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Frequencies and percentages of the compliment forms practiced by AUE female and male students**

Gende r	NP is/look s	I (really) like/lov	PRO is (really) a ADJ	You V a (reall	You V (NP) (reall	You have (a)	Wha t (a) ADJ	ADJ NP!	Isn' t NP	Total
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	(really ) ADJ		e NP		NP		y) ADV NP		y) ADV		ADJ NP!		NP!				AD J!			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Femal e</b>	15	23	22	33	5	8	0	0	2	3	1	1.5	1	1.5	2	3	0	0	66	100
<b>Male</b>	10	15	17	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	4	0	0	65	100
<b>Total</b>	25	19	32	24	22	17	0	0	2	1.5	1	1	2	1.5	4	3	0	0	131	100

Table 3 shows that the participants used only 131 compliments that can be classified under the nine most common compliment forms in English Language; females and males used almost the same number of compliments, but each group had prominent forms that were different from the other. The female participants used the second most common compliment form in the English language which is ‘I (really) like/love NP’, e.g., ‘I like the new haircut!’ most as they used it 22 times with a percentage of 33%; next, they used the eighth most common compliment form which is ‘ADJ NP!’, e.g., ‘Good job!’ 20 times with a percentage of 30%. Third, they used the most common compliment form which is ‘NP is/looks (really) ADJ’, e.g., ‘Your dress is very nice’ with a frequency of 15 and a percentage of 23%. The third, fifth, sixth, and seventh compliment forms were adopted with small frequencies and percentages; respectively, they are (5-8%), (2-3%), (1-1.5%), and (1-1.5%). Two forms were not tackled at all which were the fourth and ninth common compliment forms in English language.

Regarding the male participants, they used the eighth most common compliment form in the English language which is ‘ADJ NP!’, e.g., ‘Nice presentation’ most as they used it 27 times with a percentage of 42%; next, they used the third most common compliment form which is ‘PRO is (really)a ADJ NP’, e.g., ‘It’s delicious food!’ 17 times with a percentage of 26%. Third, they used the first and second most common compliment forms which are ‘NP is/looks (really) ADJ’, e.g., ‘Your haircut looks nice!’ and ‘I (really) like/love NP’, e.g., ‘I loved the food’ with the same frequency and percentage which are 10 and 15% respectively. The seventh form was adopted once and the fourth, fifth, sixth, and ninth compliment forms not at all.

On the other hand, the participants of the study used a lot of compliments that cannot be classified under any of the most common compliment forms in English language. The female participants used the following expressions to convey compliments: ‘My dear’, ‘My friend’, ‘Nice to meet you!’, ‘Wow!’, ‘Where did you get it from?’, ‘How do you make this?’, ‘Keep it up’, ‘Congratulations!’. One female student adopted the joke as a way to compliment by saying: ‘I hope it falls down and gets broken!’, and definitely this is not the proper way to compliment neither in English language nor in Arabic. Moreover, some female students used Arabic words transcribed in English to convey compliments such as: ‘Mashallah’ which means ‘God’s well’; it is an Islamic expression used to indicate that everything good happens to a person is because of God’s well and ‘Mabrook’ which means congratulations. In fact, this goes with Abdul Sattar and Lah’s study (2008); they found that the Iraqi participants used the Arabic expressions to respond to the compliments in English; their result is explained by learner’s lack of knowledge of different sociolinguistic rules among cultures. And this what Thomas (1983) called pragmatic failure; this failure usually occurs when learners transfer their first language pragmatic rules into the second language, so they are perceived as being odd or even rude .

Regarding the male participants, they adopted the following compliments that cannot be classified under any of the most common compliment forms in English language: 'Wow!', 'I hope I can get one!', 'Keep it up!', 'I hope I do the same', 'From where did you get it?', 'Congratulations!', 'Who learned you how to cook?', 'Yummy!', 'Good luck!', 'When will you do for us a dinner?', 'It will be my honor to become one of your friends!', 'Wow! You are the first to have it!', 'I wish you the best', 'All of the students are jealous because of your presentation!'. Furthermore, three male students adopted the jokes as a way to compliment by saying: 'From whom did you cheat?', 'Who did it for you?', 'Are you dating someone? We are not in the Dubai Mall!', 'Congratulations for your new mobile. Next time buy me one!', 'You are very smart. Help me in some exams to get an 'A', and 'Wow! Your phone is so nice. Can I take it?'. As mentioned earlier this is not a proper way to convey compliments. It is obvious that those participants wanted to compliment others regardless of the uttered words. Al Falasi (2007) mentioned that compliments in the UAE are no more than a routine and they are perceived to be insincere in many contexts.

The second question of the study was: 'What are the most common positive adjectives adopted by AUE female and male students?'. To answer this question, the researcher analyzed the positive adjectives adopted by the female and male participants while complimenting. The frequencies and percentages of the positive adjectives were calculated. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Frequencies and percentages of the positive adjectives adopted by AUE female and male students**

Positive Adjective	Female		Male		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Nice	24	35	45	65	69	100
Good	12	36	21	64	33	100
Great	8	80	2	20	10	100
Amazing	7	78	2	22	9	100
Delicious	2	29	5	71	7	100
Others	29	66	15	34	44	100
Total	82	48	90	52	172	100

As shown in Table 4, the most two frequent positive adjectives adopted by the female students were 'nice' and 'good' with frequencies of 24 and 12 respectively. And the most two frequent positive adjectives adopted by the male students were also 'nice' and 'good' with frequencies of 45 and 21 respectively. The positive adjectives: 'Great', 'amazing', and 'delicious' were used with modest frequencies. Some positive adjectives were rarely used by the participants, so they were all listed under *others*; these adjectives are the following: 'Smart', 'pretty', 'beautiful', 'excellent', 'interesting', 'gorgeous', 'cute', 'perfect', 'elegant', 'lovely', 'tasty', 'attractive', 'cool', 'wonderful', 'gentle', 'handsome', 'clever', and 'fantastic'. This result goes with (Manes and Wolfson, 1981) who found that the positive meaning, in the speech act of compliment in English language, is carried mainly by the two adjectives: 'Nice' and 'good' and by other less frequent positive adjectives which are: 'Pretty', 'beautiful', and 'great'. In this context, it is worth mentioning that the two positive adjectives: 'Nice' and 'good' are very well recognized by the Arabic learners of English as a second or foreign language to the extent that they use to adopt them while they are communicating in Arabic.

Finally, the third question of the study was: 'To what extent does the topic of the situation enhance AUE female and male students to convey compliments?' To answer this question, the researcher designed the (DCT) in a way to have four settings about the topic of 'appearance / possession' and other four settings about the topic of 'ability/ accomplishments'. The frequencies and percentages of the compliments responding to the settings about 'appearance / possession' and 'ability/ accomplishments' were calculated. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Frequencies and percentages of the compliments responding to the settings about 'appearance / possession' and 'ability/ accomplishments'**

Gender	settings about appearance/ possession		settings about ability/ accomplishments		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Female	56	51	53	49	109	100
Male	58	51	56	49	114	100
Total	114	51	109	49	223	100

Table 5 shows that the settings about 'appearance/possession' evoked female participants to convey 56 compliments with a percentage of 51% while the settings about 'ability/ accomplishments' evoked them to convey 53 compliments with a percentage of 49%. Almost equally, the settings about 'appearance/possession' evoked male participants to convey 58 compliments with a percentage of 51% while the settings about 'ability/ accomplishments' evoked them to convey 56 compliments with a percentage of 49%. So, in total, the settings about 'appearance/possession' evoked 114 compliments with a percentage of 51%, and the settings about 'ability/ accomplishments' evoked 109 compliments with a percentage of 49%. In the designed (DCT), the settings about 'appearance/possession' revolved around: A new luxurious car, dressing up, the highest tech mobile, and a new nice haircut while the settings about 'ability/ accomplishments' revolved around: A wonderful presentation, impressive suggestions and questions, preparing traditional food, and receiving an 'A' in the course. Despite the fact that the topics of the first category seemed to be more interesting to the participants than the topics of the second category, the number of compliments for each category was nearly the same. It turned out that the topic of the setting was not a crucial factor to encourage and enhance neither female nor male participants to convey the compliments to the addressed people.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it is recognized that the factor of gender among AUE students had almost no effect neither on their compliments forms, on the adopted positive adjectives, nor on their interest in the topic of the compliment. The participants did not use all of the nine most common compliment forms in English Language. Two forms were totally ignored: 'You V a (really) ADV NP' and 'Isn't NP ADJ!'. On the other hand, the participants of the study used a lot of compliments that cannot be classified under any of the most common compliment forms in English language. Surprisingly, they sometimes used jokes and Arabic words transcribed in English to convey compliments. The most two frequent positive adjectives adopted by the participants were 'nice' and 'good'; these two adjectives are very well recognized by the Arabic learners of English as a second or foreign language. Finally, the results showed that the topic of the setting was not a crucial factor to enhance the participants to convey the compliments. Accordingly, the researcher believes that the speech acts namely compliments must be taken into

consideration while teaching English language courses to enable students to master them, so they can communicate more efficiently and smoothly in the different situations of their daily life. Rose and Kasper (2001), Al Falasi (2007), and Abdul Sattar and Lah (2008) emphasize the benefits of the implicit and explicit teaching of the sociolinguistic competence and how it should be used and adopted in the different contexts and settings.

#### About the Author:

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**Appendix A. Discourse Completion Task**

**Gender:** .....

**Nationality:**.....

**Dear Students,**

**Respond to the following situations by giving a compliment to the person involved in each setting:**

1- You are at the car parking and notice that your friend has bought a new luxurious car. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her / him ?

.....

2- Your friend has just finished her/his wonderful presentation at the class. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

3- Your classmate is dressed up. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

4- You are at the orientation session for the freshmen, and you meet a new friend. You are really impressed with her / his suggestions and questions. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

5- Your friend has got the highest tech mobile. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

6- You are at AUE Carnival and Global Day, you like the traditional food prepared by your Palestinian friend. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

7- Your friend has a new nice haircut. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

8- Your classmate has got an A in the course. You are really impressed. What would you say to compliment her/him?

.....

*Thank you  
The researcher*

## Assessing EFL Undergraduates in Communicative Language Teaching Classroom

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### Abstract

In the Universities across Saudi Arabia, English is a compulsory course at the first level undergraduate education. A student should pass in the first level English course in order to continue his/her chosen field of study. English language courses at the undergraduate level are intended to improve communication skills of the students. Course content is linked to communicative activities and students are expected to participate in the classroom sessions. Students' participation in communicative activities also contributes to their scores. This paper gives an overview of communicative language teaching in Saudi undergraduate classrooms. Regular assessments are necessary to monitor students' progress in English language skills. Since a course book is designed with a variety of communicative activities, each of this emphasizing particular processes and procedures, influence the learning outcomes. An understanding of motivational elements in students' academic career reveals their attitudes in learning a foreign language. A discussion of motivation skills and assessment processes in Saudi EFL classrooms gives insights about the success and failures of communicative activities. This paper also discusses current pedagogical practices and approaches to communicative activities in the EFL classroom. Most often EFL teachers have difficulty in making skilful and effective use of assessment in a CLT classroom to identify students' skills. A theoretical review on the developments in communicative approach presented in the paper outlines its relevance in EFL classrooms. Monitoring the regular progress of undergraduate EFL students is a central aspect of teaching because it is linked to decision making about the choice of processes and procedures that facilitate classroom learning.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Classroom, Communication, Teaching, Skills

## Introduction

The traditional approaches to language teaching have given the value to grammatical competence. Researchers believed that the foreign language learners will find it easier to learn a new language when they are given exposure to drilling and grammar exercises. Traditional theorists in foreign language learning argued that initial errors made would quickly become repetitive in the learner's speech and so recommended grammatical competence from the initial stages of learning a new language. Though grammatical competence was required to produce correct sentences, there was a shift to other aspects of language for communication purposes. According to Cheung and Yang (2003), communicative language teaching began in Britain in the 1960s, as a replacement for the highly-structured method of situational language teaching. They further say that the communicative language teaching requires authentic communication and includes a believable setting, a standard speed in speaking, a range of lexical items suitable for the students' ages, and an overall promotion of learning. Savignon (2002) states that both grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods did not prepare learners for the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning and thus an enthusiasm for an array of alternative methods labelled communicative, has resulted in uncertainty as to what the essential features of communicative language teaching are. According to Savignon, the principles of communicative language teaching apply to reading and writing activities that engage readers and writers in the analysis, expression and negotiation of meaning. Savignon (2002) argues that the communicative language teaching includes metalinguistic awareness or knowledge of rules of syntax, discourse and social appropriateness. The goals of communicative language teaching depend on learner needs in a given context. In Saudi undergraduate classrooms, English is introduced from the first level and learners are expected to have a minimum proficiency to read, understand, speak and write high frequency English words. Communicative language teaching is a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, the ways learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that enhance learning and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. The prescribed English course books for undergraduate education are based on the communicative approach to language teaching. In this context, it is important to be aware of the features of communicative language teaching and its impact on the classroom teaching-learning process.

## Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching gives preference to real life situations. In a communicative language teaching classroom students are required to participate and respond to the interactive sessions. In these interactive sessions, English teachers have to be active facilitators of their students' learning. The role of a teacher is to observe and monitor the progress of communicative activities in the classroom. The responsibility of the students is to participate in an activity and make the communicative exercises lively and productive. According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence consists of four indispensable elements: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic. Grammatical competence deals with sentence-level rules. According to Thurrell and Zoltan (1991), grammatical competence involves knowledge of language code (grammar rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.). They further point out that language teaching has traditionally been aimed at improving grammatical competence. Canale and Swain (1980) states that discourse competence deal with rules that govern the relationship among sentences to form a meaning. According to Thurrell and Zoltan (1991), the rules of discourse focus on particular cohesion

devices and coherence rules to produce unified texts. Canale and Swain (1980) state that sociolinguistic competence deals with rules of speaking that depend on pragmatic and socio-cultural factors. According to Thurrell and Zoltan (1991), sociolinguistic competence is made up of two sets of rules namely socio-cultural rules and rules of discourse. They further state that socio-cultural rules specify ways of using language appropriately in a given situation as it is concerned with style, register and degree of politeness. According to Thurrell and Zoltan, language learning materials in modern English course books are designed to develop sociolinguistic competence in the learner. A speaker may encounter many unfamiliar situations and hence be strategic to deal with these situations with appropriate language skills. Canale and Swain (1980) state that strategic competence deals with the way the speaker manipulates language to fulfil communicative goals. According to Thurrell and Zoltan (1991), strategic competence refers to the ability to get one's meaning across successfully to communicative partners, especially when problems arise in the communication process. They further point out that a lack of strategic competence is explicit when students with a firm knowledge of grammar and a wide range of vocabulary get stuck and are unable to carry out their communicative intent. Thurrell and Zoltan are of the view that training in strategic competence has been rather neglected. Canale and Swain (1980) assert that if the foreign language program aims at enabling learners to reach the level of communicative competence, all four components namely grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence are of high importance.

Littlemore (2003) says that the communication goals of the language user are likely to vary from context to context. Communicative language teaching provides value to social and situational contexts of communication. Communicative competence includes the use of language for a range of different purposes and functions. It also includes knowledge of formal and informal speech, knowledge to produce and understand varied kinds of texts and the ability to maintain communication in spite of limitations in one's language background. The second language learners may use different kinds of communication strategies for being successful in academic and non-academic contexts. According to Williams (2006), an effective way to develop students' communicative competence is to teach communication strategies. Bialystok (1990) points out that communication strategies are used by speakers intentionally and consciously in order to cope with difficulties in communicating in a L2 or foreign language. However, Lessard-Clouston (1997) states that the term language learning strategies are used more generally for all strategies that L2 or foreign language learners use in learning the target language. Lessard-Clouston clarifies that communication strategies are, therefore, just one type of language learning strategies.

### **Developing communication strategies in EFL classrooms**

Williams (2006) states that communication strategies are strategies that learners employ when their communicative competence in the target language is insufficient. This includes making themselves understood in the L2 and having others help them understand. He further points out that learners use communication strategies to compensate any inadequacies they may have in grammatical knowledge and vocabulary. According to Williams, communication strategies aid learners in participating and maintaining conversations and thus improve the quality of communication. This, in turn, enables them to have increased exposure and opportunities to use the L2. Williams further states that such strategies would encourage learners

to take risks in a foreign language and other specific conversation topics or situations. According to Savignon (2002), by definition, communicative language teaching puts the focus on the learner and learner attitude is the single most important factor in learner success. Savignon says communicative curriculum is composed of language arts which include many of the exercises used in mother tongue programmes and focus on forms of English, including syntax, morphology and phonology. Savignon further points out that attention to the particular communication needs of the learners is important in the selection and sequencing of materials. She argues, “every programme with a goal of communicative competence should give attention to opportunities for meaningful English use, to opportunities to focus on meaning rather than on form” (p.4). The most successful teaching programmes are those that take into account the affective, as well as the cognitive aspects of language learning, because these programmes involve learners psychologically as well as intellectually.

According to Ryan (2001), communicative methodology is learner-centred and emphasizes fluency over accuracy. He says that although fluency may be needed, it can create problems of not providing enough concrete feedback for learners to correct their mistakes and keep focused on the immediate classroom task(s). Rooney (2000) points out that the communicative task has ascended to the position of prominence as a unit of organization in syllabus design. Rooney further says that task-based approach of language teaching allows for needs analysis and the evaluation can be based primarily on task-based criterion-referenced testing. Students can be evaluated on their ability to perform a task according to a particular criterion rather than on their ability to be successful in a discrete-point test. Ryan (2001) is of the view that the communicative methodology is an excellent tool for increasing fluency. He further states that it also creates recurring problems that need to be addressed and counterbalanced with different methodology. According to Ryan (2001), overcoming these common recurring problems that plague the existing courses can free the instructor to become more creative while allowing learners to become more competent in the target language. Lessard-Clouston (1997) states that a key goal for the learner within a communicative approach to language teaching is to develop communicative competence in the target L2 or foreign language, and language learning strategies can help students in doing so. He points out that an understanding of language learning strategies is crucial for all EFL teachers who aim to help develop their students' communicative competence and language learning. Communicative language teaching draws on a number of diverse sources, and there is no single set of practices that characterize current communicative language teaching. It can be applied in different ways depending on the teaching context, the age of learners, their level and their learning goals.

Learning a foreign language is a cyclic process because motivation, positive attitudes, and efforts in effective learning may result in increased language attainment. Reilly (1988) points out that language acquisition and maintenance depend on instructional factors, relating to the way in which the language is initially acquired. Thanasoulas (2002) holds the view that learning a foreign language is different from learning other subjects. Narayanaswamy (1973) says that any approach to the teaching of a new language must take into account the needs of the learner and the conditions in which the language is taught. He points out that the needs and circumstances differ not only from country to country but also from time to time within the same country. According to Thomas and Rohwer (1986), the characteristics college students bring to each learning environment that are important to active learning are students' prior knowledge,

metacognitive abilities, motivational levels, and interest in what they are reading or studying. The learning environment depends on the prescribed texts for the classroom teaching and learning process.

### **Assessment processes in EFL classrooms**

Assessment is an integral activity of learning and teaching through which learners get accurate feedback about what they have learned. Assessment is a useful tool to monitor progress and achievements in regular classroom sessions. An observation of students' attitude towards assessment in English as a Foreign Language classroom indicates fear, excitement, frustration and anxiety about the results of the assessment. EFL students worry about the outcome of the assessment rather than understanding assessment as a tool to improve and enhance their language skills. English teachers find assessment as a method to understand students' progress in English language skills. Curriculum designers, though, well aware of the complicated process of assessment in a CLT classroom, prescribe communicative language course books for EFL courses. The general criterion of assessing EFL Arab students in communicative language teaching classroom is often a replica of native speakers' classroom contexts. In most EFL situations, assessment rubrics set for native English speakers is directly implemented in the classroom. A review of the rationale for this type of assessment criterion indicates that most of the English books meant for beginning native English speakers or ESL students are prescribed for EFL classrooms. Most often, EFL students' proficiency levels are below the minimum standards required to understand or communicate in English. English language course books prescribed at the first level (entry level) often focus on basic language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students are expected to communicate on real life situations. A pair work or group work using target language in EFL classrooms is an unfamiliar and difficult task for the students. Tasks or activities in the textbooks are based on the communicative teaching methodology where the role of the English teacher is to monitor the students' participation in real life situations. The course content constitutes language structures that pose difficulty to the students.

Assessment has been an important component to rate the students' knowledge in the teaching and learning process. It outlines students' understanding in a specific course material. Constructive feedback on students' progress and performance have to be built into all assessment activities. Language learning abilities of the student improves when students receive appropriate and focused feedback continuously. In EFL undergraduate courses, graded evaluation activities are scheduled at the end of learning experiences. In communicative language teaching classrooms, teachers often find it difficult to follow a specific rubric due to variations in students' skills. Often, tasks and activities given in the course books do not specify any rubric for assessment. English teachers in EFL classrooms use communicative activities to refine the receptive and productive skills of the students through the effective use of constructive feedback. These feedback sessions should highlight gaps in students' learning progress and performance. However, EFL teachers rarely use specific rubrics during the communicative activities because it may lead to less focus on the students' language expressions. Since the assessment is mandatory from students' school level, English teachers assume that students are well aware of the prerequisites of a classroom test. As an assessor, it is the responsibility of the teachers to inform the learners about the requirements of the assessment and make them understand why an assessment is done in a particular way. This is important because college students might have experienced

different assessment processes at their schooling. Assessments at the entry level of undergraduate education should make the students aware of the educational value and affects of a test outcome. The awareness of learner responsibilities during assessment activities motivates EFL students to participate actively in a non-threatening environment. The complicated nature of communicative tasks and activities make it difficult for the teachers to pre-determine a specific assessment criterion for a communicative language teaching classroom. However, a specific assessment criterion can be useful to identify students' progress and provide resourceful feedback to the students about their level of competence. Feedback that students get from their mid-term exams must make them clear about their strengths and weaknesses and the areas where they should improve. In a communicative task, where several outcomes have to be assessed by a language instructor, it may take longer time, and the learners feel burdened and stressed. Using a combination of assessment methods may result in disjointed learning experience.

### **Students' English proficiency in relation to assessment**

A student has to cope with too many cognitive tasks at the entry level in undergraduate education. The communicative activities which require students to use target language for the purpose of improving language skills remain a difficult task for the students. All the students are from Arabic medium background and during their transition period to undergraduate education, these students are expected to master minimum proficiency to understand, read, write and speak English words and sentence structures. Language exercises in English course books prescribed at the entry level of undergraduate education are based on communicative language teaching. According to David Nunan (1991), important features of communicative language teaching are learning to communicate using the target language, introducing real life situations into the classroom teaching-learning process and provide opportunities for the learners to focus on the learning management process. However, most of the EFL students do not have language proficiency to communicate in the target language. Further, unfamiliar topics in the form of authentic texts make the communicative task more difficult for the students. Language exercises where students have to interact in the target language remain as unfulfilled outcome in the EFL classroom. The only source of comprehension is translation of English words to Arabic. Language structures and words meant for communicative activities remain a source of improvement in the syllabi because students English language repertoire needed to read a paragraph, write simple sentence structures, pronounce words and respond to classroom instructions. Each of the given communicative activity is linked to sub skills where the learners need to activate their schemata to produce meaningful words for self development. Processing information presented in the form of content require knowledge of Basic English vocabulary. Further, EFL students at the entry level of undergraduate education find it difficult to produce letters of English alphabet. Students who are familiar with letters of English alphabet lack the skills of sequencing these letters in the correct order. Most of these students learn to write their names in English during their undergraduate education. However, there are Saudi students at the entry level who can read, write and speak English proficiently. These students visited English speaking countries to improve their skills. In EFL Saudi classrooms, the mismatch in students' proficiency levels is a hindrance for a CLT classroom. The real life situations that a teacher sets to generate communication often fail due to poor response from the students. According to Idrees and Jamal (2012), many Saudi learners start learning English at primary six or even pre-school but most of them are far from attaining the desired level of proficiency in the target language. They are of the opinion that in spite of spending a huge amount of time and effort

students could not reach the required proficiency levels. Ansari (2012) says that students only need marks to pass the examination. Students are habituated to memorize the answers without learning any English. Consequently, they spend their valuable years in schools without learning anything of English language and when they come to college or university English becomes a problem for them .

### **Language learning tasks in relation to assessment tasks**

An important goal of communicative activity is to trigger interaction in the target language. The practical tasks given in the course books are meant to stimulate conversation and discussion in EFL classrooms. At the undergraduate level, course books are prescribed to give directions to the teachers and learners to organise learning environment. The content in the English textbooks is integrated with a wide variety of communicative activities to provide language input to the learners. The activities given in the English textbook is intended to give language exposure to Saudi students. However, these activities require students to have basic knowledge in word recognition skills, basic vocabulary, construct English phrases and simple sentences. A beginner EFL teacher may often encounter difficulties due to unfamiliar classroom situations. These teachers though skilful may find it challenging in facilitating the teaching-learning process. During the initial transition phases, EFL teachers have to try and test eclectic methods in the classroom. Striving to succeed using innovative teaching methods and appropriate materials suitable to the classroom context can bring a positive outcome in Saudi EFL classrooms. In the EFL teaching-learning contexts, assessment should be used to understand students' strengths and weaknesses. However, most of the assessment procedures in a CLT classroom ends with measuring students' content knowledge and lacks remedial measures to develop language proficiency of the students. English teachers should be conscious of setbacks in the classroom and take necessary steps to enhance learning environment. Since each learning environment differs, teachers should pay attention to the similarities and variations in students' learning styles. A conscious monitoring of the learning processes during communicative activities can make a pair work or group work interesting and productive.

According to Sheldon (1998) excessive claims made by some authors and publishers that the volumes they produce in English language are suitable for all learners and all conditions brought dissatisfaction among teachers. He further says that textbooks are perceived by many to be the route map of English language programmes and even teacher quality is being assessed by learners in terms of unit-by-unit coverage. Hitomi and Brian (2010) points out that there is an extensive literature on research and materials development, but regrettably little of it provides empirical evidence of the effects of the materials on their users. A teacher who understands the situation of the EFL undergraduate classroom has too many constraints. The semester duration, a large number of students, mid-term tests and end term exams, are other factors that compel the teacher to focus on the given materials. The aims and objectives for improving language learning remain unfulfilled while the students are subjected to formal assessment. Since the teachers find it futile to evaluate students based on the communicative approach, they rely on written tests. Exercises given in the course books are used to assess students' knowledge in mid-term and end-term exams. Any kind of deviation from this kind of an assessment process is unacceptable to the EFL students. These students are habituated to memorize answers during exams. The only creativity few students exhibit is the ability to reproduce correct sentence structures that were memorized. A reflection of teachers approach and students' attitude towards

the assessment process indicates wide gap in the procedures of assessment in a communicative approach and the EFL classroom.

According to Sheldon (1998), the teacher quality in the classroom is assessed by learners in terms of unit-by-unit coverage. There may be discontent among the teachers when they find it difficult to make changes or modify the prescribed EFL course books. A mismatch in the students' level and textbook materials often end up in frustration, failure and disgust among the EFL students. Teachers are helpless when the course structure at an undergraduate level is unevenly distributed. A careful planning by academicians and expert committee is required for appropriate distribution of EFL courses at different levels of undergraduate level. During the transition phases from a beginning level course to the advanced courses, students need to develop their language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. EFL students need to have adequate proficiency to be successful in advanced level courses and the only sources of input to most of these students are the university English language classrooms. In the absence of teacher participation during course book review process, the prescribed course books remain cyclic and may produce a large number of disgusted EFL learners. An important factor that hinders success in language learning is motivation. Motivating students to participate in communicative activities given in the course book can be a stressful task for the English teachers. However, an understanding of motivating factors that create interest towards language learning can make the CLT classroom productive.

### **Motivating EFL Students**

Motivation is a key element that encourages students to learn a foreign language. Motivation in relation to language learning should more often come from oneself and is helpful to achieve one's career goals. It is important for EFL learners to participate in the classroom activities and improve their language skills. The English teacher has to provide enough resources to improve language learning. At the beginning of each semester, students have to be given opportunities to identify and decide the relevant learning goals. To attain the learning goals and promote productive learning environment, Saudi students have to be motivated to participate actively in the classroom activities. Motivation gives them emotional support and aids in their learning goals. Ames and Ames (1989) define motivation as the impetus to create and sustain intentions and goal-seeking acts. They further state that the motivation is a desire to achieve a specific goal. Teachers can give appropriate language input when each of specific goals is explicitly understood at the planning stage. Introducing a pre-task before the main activity can activate students' interest and attention to language input. It also helps in reducing anxiety during the language learning process. Krashen (1985) says that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Reading requires motivation. Struggling EFL students tend to have lots of wishes, needs and goals when it comes to become proficient speakers of English language. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) say that the motivation to learn a language influences one's approach to a communicative task. Motivation is considered as a significant variable that affects language learning outcomes. The studies of Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) point out that L2 learners are highly and appropriately motivated to accomplish a language learning task, and they become very active in exerting cognitive and metacognitive efforts, and are cautious about their current levels of achievement. Mills (1991) says that during a communicative activity students would be open to learning new strategies when they gain control over their own thinking processes.

According to Falk (1978), successful students learning a new language would respect the culture of the target language and have a desire to integrate into the society in which the language is used. Falk says this form of motivation is known as integrative motivation. According to Norris-Holt (2001), when someone becomes a resident in a new community that uses the target language in its social interactions, it becomes necessary to operate socially in the community and become one of its members. Norris-Holt says integrative motivation is a key component in assisting the learner to develop some level of proficiency in the language. In contrast to integrative motivation, there is instrumental motivation. According to Hudson (2000), the term instrumental motivation is usually characterized by the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language such as meeting the requirements for school or university graduation, reading technical material, translation work or achieving higher social status. According to Norris-Holt (2001), instrumental motivation is common in second language acquisition, because little or no social integration of the learner into a community using the target language takes place, or even desired. Norris-Holt further states that integrative motivation is continually linked to successful second language acquisition. However, Norris-Holt (2001) states that it is necessary to view motivation as one of a number of variables which is unique to each language learner.

According to Fisher (1990), the three major sources of motivation in learning are the learner's natural interest (intrinsic motivation), the teacher/institution/employment (extrinsic reward) and success in the task (combining satisfaction and reward). Fisher says that the teachers and school system have drawn on both of the first two sources of motivation while the third source is under-exploited in language teaching. Fisher notes that as human beings, people generally like what they do and therefore are likely to do it again, and put in the effort. Ehrman et al. (2003) state that the intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual and when one realizes success is important for achieving personal goals. Intrinsic motivation values rewards gained through the process of task completion, regardless of any external rewards. Ehrman et al. further point out that students are intrinsically motivated when learning is a goal in itself. Students find intrinsic motivating tasks interesting and challenging, and the reward is the enjoyment of the activity itself or a feeling of competence in doing the task. Ehrman et al. (2003) say that the extrinsic motivation comes from outside the individual and students are extrinsically motivated when learning is done for the sake of rewards (such as grades or praise). Extrinsic motivation is not inherently associated with learning itself; that is, when learning or performing well becomes necessary to earning those rewards. Walqui (2000) says a student's total motivation is a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Ehrman et al. (2003) say teachers can increase their students' intrinsic motivation by providing them with learning experiences that promote competence, relatedness, self-esteem, and entertainment.

Pintrich and Schunk (1996) say that the motivation depends on the context; the people involved, and specific circumstances. Weiner (1986) points out that some learners believe learning depends on their own actions or abilities while others believe that their success depends on other people or fate. Oxford and Shearin (1994) identify six factors that impact motivation in language learning. The six factors are attitudes, beliefs about self, goals, involvement, environmental support and personal attributes. The four areas of second language learning motivation identified by Crooks and Schmidt (1991) are the micro level, the classroom level, the syllabus level and a level involving factors from outside the classroom. The micro level involves

the cognitive processing of language input and the motivation is evidenced in the amount of attention given to the input. At the classroom level, methods and activities employed by the teacher in the classroom influence the motivational levels in the students. The syllabus level refers to the choice of content in the English course books because it can either trigger curiosity or disinterest in undergraduate students.

Strang (1978) says that for beginners, just knowing how to read is motivating. At the entry level, Saudi students should be given more opportunities to develop reading skills. An awareness to word recognition and sentence structures at the entry level of undergraduate education increases confidence in Saudi EFL learners. Hidis (1990) is of the view that the classroom materials are an important factor in determining how students process information. Hidis opines that students process interesting information differently from uninteresting information. Communication skills are continuously developing skills and require constant practice. An important skill to be developed in CLT classrooms is reading because reading is a lifelong process whereby a student has to practice and refines skills throughout his/her academic career. Alyousef (2005) points out that engaged reading is based on motivational and cognitive characteristics of the reader who is intrinsically motivated, builds knowledge, uses cognitive strategies, and interacts socially from a text. According to Oxford (1990a), one of the factors that influence the choice of strategies used among students learning a second/foreign language is motivation. Oxford is of the opinion that highly motivated students in EFL classrooms tend to use a number of strategies during a communicative activity. According to Fisher (1990), feelings of failure, particularly early on in a student's school career can lead to a downward spiral of self-perception and students may develop an image of themselves as not good at English. Students who develop a low image about themselves may remain passive during communicative activities. According to Schunk and Swartz (1991), students will have higher levels of motivation if they believe that language exercises are useful in meeting their goals. However, Paris and Turner (1994) point out that students' motivation is dynamic and so changes as the situation changes. Curriculum designers have to consider learners' needs while designing the syllabus or else the learners may not feel motivated to participate in the learning process. The learners must be given opportunities in multiple contexts to help them recognize the relevance and transferability of different skills or knowledge. The ability to transfer one's language skills to other related areas is important because learners need to use English in specific occupational or educational settings. The resourceful exposure a student gains during communicative activities has been an encouraging factor in CLT classrooms across the world.

### **Modifications in Undergraduate EFL curriculum**

A challenging task of curriculum designers in Saudi undergraduate education is to produce English course books relevant to students' language skills. Reputed publishers from English speaking countries have published English course books to cater to the needs of Middle East students. However, undergraduate Saudi students often find difficult to comprehend unfamiliar situations described in the course books. Ministry of Higher Education, Saudi Arabia has taken steps to promote research from the undergraduate education to make teaching-learning process productive and relevant. Al-Zubeiry (2012) points out that Saudi Government's initiative to promote English language education is reflected in the document issued by the English Department in the Directorate of Curriculum at the Ministry of Education in 1421 H. (2000). The document states that the English education should foster students' ability to

comprehend and express Basic English, as well as foster interest in foreign languages and cultures. The recognition of the importance of English in the education system is evidenced by the increasing number of newly established English departments in Saudi universities and growing number of language institutions offering English-related courses. In Saudi Arabia, Arabic is the common medium for communication and instruction. English does not play an essential role in national or social life. The average citizen does not need English or any other foreign language to live his daily life or even for social or professional advancement. To reduce the gap, it is necessary to make the following modifications:

- Linking the course materials of 12<sup>th</sup> grade school with undergraduate course material.
- Incorporating language exercises in a gradual transition from familiar to less familiar tasks.
- Introducing similar communicative tasks and reinforcing the grammatical items learned until the students reach minimum proficiency levels in a specific skill.
- Introducing Remedial Teaching to help the struggling undergraduate learners.
- Introducing English language lab sessions where students listen, understand and produce words using advanced computer software and teacher assistance.
- Beginning level English course book need to introduce glossary in Arabic.
- Giving autonomy to the English teachers to design and modify course content to suit the learners' level.

### **Conclusion**

The Ministry of Higher Education, Saudi Arabia endeavor to promote quality education at the undergraduate level is laudable. The sponsorship programs initiated by Saudi government encouraged many of its citizens to pursue higher education in the English speaking countries. The quest to improve English language communication skills to pursue higher education has motivated many Saudi undergraduates to learn English as a second language. The presence of multinational companies in Saudi Arabia and the need to communicate in English with non-native Arab speakers has gained momentum in the local community. Though English has gained wide recognition across the provinces of Saudi Arabia, Arabic remained important in everyday communication. The English curriculum at undergraduate level is primarily concerned to improve receptive and productive skills of the students. However, students have to realize that availability of large volumes of library resources to enrich knowledge and skills in specific fields of English can be used for career success. In CLT classrooms, EFL students can contribute best in pair and group work when they learn to use the available educational resources effectively.

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## English speaking learning barriers in Saudi Arabia: A case study of Tibah University

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### Abstract

The English language has certainly become the most influential international language in the world. The teaching of English attracts the attention of researchers for many socio linguistic and pedagogic reasons, especially for the development of higher education in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language. Various initiatives in non-English speaking countries, including the Arab world, have been launched to promote the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. More specifically, in Saudi Arabia, the critical knowledge of teaching and learning English is considered to be essential in education in order to raise the English language learning proficiency, especially in speaking. The present paper focuses on the English language learning barriers of speaking in particular, where Tibah University is presented as a case study. Accordingly, ten English speaking classes have been observed for the foundation year at Tibah University, in order to find out the reasons behind Saudi students' lack of speaking. The English programme and curriculum, teaching strategies, and students' motivation, anxiety and reticence will be discussed in detail as the most prominent factors that impact upon speaking proficiency and language learning. Therefore, it is essential to study the abovementioned factors to maximise the awareness of some of the potential English learning barriers that Saudi students face. This will help raise the overall academic English language standard, in particular the speaking proficiency, at Tibah University.

**Keywords:** Anxiety and reticence, Curriculum, Saudi Arabia, Speaking barriers, Students' motivation

## Introduction

The teaching of English in the Gulf region in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular, attracts the attention of numerous researchers and scholars, especially with regard to the programmes, curricula, teaching strategies and students' attitudes towards learning at universities. According to Khan (2011), the teaching of English at Saudi universities serves two purposes: first, it strengthens the foundation of English for Saudi students, and second, it lays the basis for a specific focus on certain aspects of English language learning, which will be used in the coming years as they pursue their specialities after fulfilling the entry requirements for their chosen departments. Although English is taught in schools as a compulsory foreign language in Saudi Arabia, insufficient attention is paid to important aspects of the curriculum. "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has undergone great political, social and economic development. To meet new challenges, the Ministry of Education has introduced English as a foreign language (EFL) in schools since 1925" (Al-Ahaydib, 1986, P. 32). According to Saudi Arabia's educational policy, the aim of teaching English is to provide students with knowledge of at least one international language, and the only one which is available to learn and to teach as an official foreign language in the Saudi educational system is English. By learning English, Al Wadah (2000) believes that students will be able to communicate and represent their culture to the world using this language. Furthermore, in the Arab world, there has been an increased interest in learning English as a foreign language due to the numerous opportunities it provide its speakers in various fields. However, one needs to keep in mind the challenging and often complicated process of learning and teaching English in Saudi Arabia; more precisely, the learning and teaching of *speaking* skills, with their different levels in the Saudi education system, which includes the elementary, intermediate and both the secondary and the university stages. The speaking skill is still the only skill that is difficult to be efficiently acquired among the other English language skills. In addition, the reasons behind the student's lack of speaking are not always possible to be determined. In this paper, some of the most important language learning barriers, which have been observed during the data collection of this study, will be presented. A background of the educational system in Saudi Arabia, specifically at Tibah University, will be covered, and the English language curriculum and teaching strategies will also be analysed. Finally, students' motivation towards learning English at Tibah University and their anxiety and reticence towards speaking will be discussed in this paper.

## Background

Saudi Arabia has a compulsory education system that consists of three levels: the primary level, which consists of six grades, and the intermediate and secondary levels, each of which consists of three grades. Students start learning English in the fourth year (year 4) of the primary level and are aged between 9 to 11 years. The number of weekly English sessions at the primary level is four, and the duration of each session is 55 minutes. This continues through the remaining three main compulsory educational stages in the Saudi System. In other words, the same number of classes and minutes are followed for all stages. One can state that students aged between 6 and 18 years are not exposed to sufficient English input due to the limited number of English classes, the poor quality of teachers, the English language curriculum and the teaching strategies used inside the classroom. These factors result in future language-learning obstacles when students begin their foundation year (the first year of Saudi universities) or when they communicate using the English language. For example, the implementation of English as a foreign language among

Arab Countries and the Gulf States has been given a great deal of attention as a result of the increase in globalisation, which has obliged all countries to adopt an international language. Hence, English has been finally accepted in different learning institutions in the Gulf States, such as Kuwait and the Emirates, and nations such as these are now seeking to teach English as a compulsory subject to students from kindergarten (aged between 4 to 5 years old) all the way through their education. At university levels, students must be prepared to study most of their subjects in English, which results in a better language learning outcome throughout the educational movement (Al Othman & Shuqair, 2013).

Despite the attempts of the Saudi government to effectively plan a comprehensive curriculum and to provide textbooks, the teaching-learning process seems futile because actual skills' development is lacking. The Saudi Ministry of Higher Education is extremely concerned with the pursuit of excellence in effective English language teaching and learning in the education arena; however, progress is slow, and continues to be insufficient especially at the college level (Liton, 2012). This is a common scenario in almost every stage of learning English in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). In other words, the lack of English language development does apply to every stage of education and in every independent region in Saudi Arabia where teaching English as a foreign language is required to teach the same curriculum following the order from the Ministry of Education.

The teaching of English as a compulsory subject has received a great deal of attention from the Ministry of Education as well as from the Saudi community. Parents are willing to pay for extra lessons to increase their children's awareness of the language due to its importance. It is the language of economic contracts, higher studies, international aviation research, international affairs and cooperation across the globe; furthermore, it is a language that is shared by many millions of people throughout the world. In fact, the considerable development that has taken place in the field of English language teaching in the KSA cannot be denied. According to Kahn (2011), in the KSA, the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language has undergone several changes and modifications over many decades. The Saudi Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum was initially prepared in 1999 by the Department of English Language in the Saudi Educational Directorate of Curriculum under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. This curriculum specified that the goal of TEFL is to focus on the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to enable students to communicate using English, the first spoken language in the world. According to Dr Talal Al-Hajailan (Teaching English in Saudi Arabia, 2003), during the history of English teaching in the KSA, two curriculum documents were prepared to specify the aims and objectives of TEFL. "The first document was formulated in 1987 and became the basis for all TEFL text books. The new series 'English for Saudi Arabia' was born in 1989 by a group of authors collaborating with the King Fahad University of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia (KFUPM). The new textbooks employed the latest method of teaching 'the communicative method'. The second document for TEFL was produced and 'modified by the Department of English in the Directorate of Curriculum under the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia' (2000)" (Liton, 2012, p. 3).

However the goal of teaching English at all levels, schools, colleges and universities, in Saudi Arabia is defined in the Saudi Policy of Education and is included in each textbook, which states the aim as the following: "Providing the students with at least one of the living languages, in

addition to their original language, to enable them to acquire knowledge and sciences from other communities and to participate in the service of Islam and humanity” (Al-Hajailan, 2003, p.23).

Based on this objective, which has been adapted to teach English in Saudi Arabia, and in order to provide a theoretical and critical review of TEFL in Saudi Arabia, a case study of one of the Saudi universities will be presented in more detail to shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of the educational process in teaching speaking at Tibah University. Moreover, the actual causes of the educational system weaknesses at Tibah University will be identified, and the weaknesses of the language teaching process in this context will be evaluated as well.

### **The Tibah University Programme and curriculum**

The Royal Decree establishing Tibah University in Saudi Arabia, was issued in 2000 to grant the approval of the resolution of the Council of Higher Education, which signified the integration of the two campuses of King Muhammad Bin Saud University (in Riyadh, the Capital) and King Abdul-Aziz University (In Jeddah) into one independent university, indeed the only university, sited in Madina. In addition, the aim of teaching English was to provide programmes that were developed according to international standards of quality and academic accreditation and to prepare curricula based on a set of quality standards. Moreover, the major objectives were to conduct studies and research on the development of academic programmes in order to provide an evaluation of learning outcomes (Administration of Tibah, 2004). To achieve the aforementioned TEFL objectives, the English teaching curriculum at Tibah University has undergone significant changes due to the failure to achieve the objectives of teaching the language in each of the previously taught textbooks. According to Liton (2012), who conducted a study on the development of the EFL teaching and learning curriculum in the Saudi university and college context, the authentic EFL text should be designed and focused on grammar and writing skills, while offering many practical exercises geared towards the development of listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, English courses in schools and universities should gradually but perceptibly increase the standard of language learning, in order to assess the standard of language learning.

The textbook provided by the university has been changed numerous times. In 2001, *English for Saudi Arabia* was introduced as a compulsory textbook which is a reflection of the Saudi national Curriculum. The textbook contains two volumes, and students have to finish both books throughout the Academic year. Though each book focuses on one or two Language skills, for example reading and writing in book one, and listening and speaking in book two, still not all the language skills are given enough emphasis throughout the year and speaking skills are the most neglected., In regards to the English language text book provided for the university level, Al-Qurashi states that, “These books form a bridge between the intermediate and secondary courses” (1995.P 10). Although these books represented and included most language skills, neither the teachers nor the students can choose the skills which needed to be focused on according to the student’s needs.

Each of these books contains almost the same number of units. The lessons vary between different skills, for example, some lessons provide listening and speaking activities, whilst others focus on grammar, reading or vocabulary learning. Finally, the skill of writing is also represented in these books but more heavily than the other skills. According to some reviews of these

textbooks, Raghada in her evaluation of the Saudi schools English books surmised it as the following: “speaking about the situation in KSA where there is a lack of qualified teachers and sufficient textbooks. Thus, teachers are bound to follow the textbooks quite heavily. The teacher’s guide of EFSA takes control over the teachers which can result in the materials being taught with less variety and flexibility, and which can lead to teachers with limited teaching experiences. Therefore, teachers should evaluate their material. Another point is the lack of interference of Saudi teachers in designing the material and evaluating it, since the Ministry of Higher Education in KSA is the one in charge. In spite of the great importance of material evaluation, there seems slight empirical research as opposed to the theoretical one”. (Raghada, 2010, p.2). Moreover, since the examination results of the students and the insufficient outcome of learning, the Ministry of Higher Education’s assessment has failed to meet the objectives of learning. Thus, an in-depth evaluation has been adopted to change and modify these textbooks (Al-Shumaimeri. 1999).

As a result, The Ministry of Higher Education then agreed on a pilot edition of a new course book aimed at achieving effective language learning. This book, titled “Challenges for Successfully Learning English”, has been designed for the secondary stage of Saudi schools and then has been approved for teaching in the foundation year at Tibah University. This textbook is a combination of two books: a “student book” consisting of studies for the English class with the teacher, and a “work book”, in which students practice the exercises included individually at home without the teacher’s help. Basically, the Ministry has adopted a brand new design of the contents of this book and focused on developing the thinking skills of learning English by relying on the communicative approach as an effective tool of foreign language learning. The “Challenges English text book” contains four modules that are mainly focused on two major skills: learning grammar and applying it to everyday language use via student communication within the language class. The book is divided into “receptive skills” such as listening and reading, and “productive skills” such as speaking and writing. All the four modules should be covered during the academic year, separated with two exams in between each two modules. Although the teacher still has to stick rigidly to the book plan, provided by the Ministry of Education, this new book has an excellent modern plan for teaching English language. It was especially developed and designed for KSA with the cooperation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Pearson Longman, who designed the English language course book (2010). The book has been following the Communicative Language Teaching system, which is an ideal approach to help learners acquire a foreign language effectively. According to Savignon, who contributed to the definition of communicative competence (or communicative competence), communicative competence is “relative and depends mainly on the cooperation of all participants, because it is a very dynamic conception in which at least two individuals are involved in the process of negotiating meaning” (2001, p.8).

The book had a promising start when it was first applied in both the secondary stage and the foundation year at university as it was aimed to help students with better language learning. “New challenges course books” has already helped students become more effective learners and better citizens of the world through personal development. However, although this book has only been adopted for teaching at Tibah University for two years, the Ministry of Education has now decided to change the course book again. The book failed to meet the objective of EFL teaching in Saudi universities and schools according to the ministry results of the final Academic year’s

examination. In 2012, the new course book became “Flying High for Saudi Arabia”, which was specially formulated by the English Language Development Project, still under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The book adopted the plan of units and lessons in teaching English. The book aimed to cover grammar, language functions, vocabulary and pronunciation. In spite of the variation of contents in this book and the focus in pronunciation, which is the first time Saudi Arabia has taught this as an individual skill, the book was only a pilot edition of the Saudi curriculum adopted at Tibah university, and it was once again changed in 2013 to “Cambridge Touch Stone”, comprising of series 1, 2, 3 and 4. Though this textbook contains a variety of language skills designed to a high standard of language teaching, the number of units and the language skills included in each unit are quite challenging and difficult to be covered for both teachers and students. Throughout the attendance of the English language classes in Tibah university and as a part of the data collection for this research, which will be described in more details later in this paper, both teachers and students complained about the huge amount of lessons which should be covered during the full academic year according to the Ministry orders to not deviate from the lesson and unit plans. According to Khafaji (2004), the control of the teacher’s guide according to the Ministry regulation will absolutely lead to the lack of creativity and flexibility in teaching the language. Khafaje (as cited in Ragadah, 2010, p. 3) further suggested that there is a need to re-evaluate the learning/teaching context in public schools and universities in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and to agree to new materials which can mirror the requirements of learning English in society, taking the Saudi student’s and teachers’ needs into account. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education agreed on the “Cambridge Touchstone” textbook to be taught regarding EFL teaching in Saudi universities during the foundation year with respect to the various levels of the official English language textbook.

Curriculum development in Saudi Arabia, Tibah University in particular, has not taken into account the factors (such as materials, language teacher opinions and learners’ needs) that should be involved in rational curriculum development. Ragadah (2010, p.10), divided the rational curriculum changes and evaluation in two main points. The first is the impressionist overview which “demands a fast look through a lot of new material from which to choose”. However, this approach cannot be followed since the teachers are not allowed to change the materials and the teaching materials and lessons are already provided and planned by the Ministry of Education. The second method mentioned by Ragadah in the textbooks’ evaluation, is that the in-depth evaluation of language textbooks which required an extensive and close examination that can be carried out by both the teacher and the Ministry of education in order to find out how certain skills and different materials workout for the students’ language learning needs.

The evaluation of the curriculum according to Nunan, (1988, p.10) is “principles and procedures for the planning, implementation, evaluation and management of an educational program.” Additionally, the Ministry of Education, and the administration of Taibah University, should provide an understanding of what takes place in each edition produced by the Ministry before adapting new English textbooks to be taught by University. The materials used in the textbooks should be evaluated under certain criteria and according to both the textbooks’ objectives and the learners’ objectives, which should be accomplished by the end of the academic year. Ragadah (2010) has suggested three different kinds of materials evaluation that vary according to their academics’ purpose, timing and formality: “pre-use evaluation, whilst-use evaluation and post-

use evaluation. "Pre-use evaluation" requires making choices about the value of materials for their users. It can be context-free, content-influenced or context dependent. This kind of evaluation is often impressionistic, since it consists of a fast decision by a teacher or an institution, and as a result some mistakes may come out during the use of the book. "Whilst-use evaluation" deals with evaluating the material while using it, which makes it more consistent than pre-use evaluation, but it cannot measure the strong or effective learning. "Post-evaluation", is considered the most important since it can measure the effort of the material on the users (2010, p.4). Consequently, the Ministry Of Education should take into consideration the effectiveness of methods for both evaluations and assessment of English textbooks before making the judgement on the objectives achieved continuously and excessively.

Additionally, a critical evaluation of the texts should be undertaken via experimental forms and small-scale research to acquire a more in-depth understanding of what a comprehensive curriculum should involve and whether or not the Ministry Of Education is succeeding in regard to the achievement of this goal. Hirst (1968) discussed what should be involved in rational curriculum change, stating that when the curriculum consists of deliberately and consciously planned activities, which are applied in schools and colleges, the learning outcomes and objectives will certainly not be met. Language needs a more unconscious sequence of learning, rather than adherence to a consciously planned curriculum, where the latter path will lead to unsuccessful learning outcomes. Secondly, Hirst (1968) argued that the curriculum does not need to achieve all the stated objectives. It is not necessary for the specified objectives to be achieved at the end of the course via certain activities and lessons. It becomes clear that the focus of language teaching should be to provide natural and unspecified material according to the students' needs as this helps to provide learning opportunities for them. This method can unconsciously help students to learn the language, leading to a sufficient learning outcome. Third, the central point that remains crucial regarding the achievement of the curriculum objectives is the identification of the principles of the objective. For example, do the objectives take into consideration different kinds of behaviour, skills, concepts, creative capacities and students' abilities to learn and achieve the stated aims? Unfortunately, curriculum development in Saudi Arabia relies heavily on the recognition of aims, which are assessed by the end of each term via a written exam. This assessment is used to determine whether the objectives have been successfully achieved or if further changes need to be implemented. This method neglects the crucial role that other factors may play in the final stages of the learning outcome, and neglects the assessment of the speaking skill as well. Therefore, curriculum planning in Saudi Arabia in general and at Tibah university in particular, needs to consider decisions according to different characteristics and contexts, rather than being based on a general education principle that needs to be achieved at the end the term. Otherwise, without an actual understanding of the various complex elements that are integrated to produce a sufficient learning outcome, the teaching curriculum will be a complete waste of time, money and effort, leading to unachieved teaching and learning goals and a lack of proficiency.

Despite the aforementioned arguments and the recent curriculum modification and development, the myth of the falling standards of English in KSA, and more specifically at Tibah University and the lack of focus on speaking skill as a result of the courses taught the one which have been described above, has not yet been proved with certainty. There are other foremost factors that affect the standard of EFL teaching and speaking proficiency that hinder the achievement of the

goals of the Saudi curriculum. These factors include, in addition to the curriculum, English teaching strategies, students' motivation, anxiety and students' reticence to learn English at Tibah University, which could be considered as important factors that affect the standard of learning and teaching practices in Saudi Arabia.

### **Strategies for Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia, Tibah University.**

With regard to curriculum development in Saudi Arabia, it is important to provide a description of Tibah University's ongoing English language course, particularly in the foundation year, in order to undertake a theoretical analysis of different aspects of language teaching and the significant features of the English language classes run by Tibah University. These aspects and features include students' motivation, teacher-student interaction, language focus and the general atmosphere of language classes.

As an essential component of the completion of the foundation year, Tibah University offers English language classes based on its "Intensive English Language Programmes", where the "Cambridge Touchstone" is used as the core course book of the programme. The aim of these classes is to improve students' English language competency and to help them achieve the targeted level within the contexts of the majors they will be pursuing after they complete their foundation year. The grade they achieve in this English language course will indicate their English language proficiency and determine which major they will be able to pursue.

According to the data collection and the ten classes which have been observed, the number of registered students in each language class may be as high as 30 students, and student-teacher interaction may be affected as a result. However, the number of the students who regularly attend classes is usually between 12 and 25 according to the teacher's records. Throughout the data collection period for this research, I attended English language classes at Tibah university at the "foundation year" level to find out more about the factors that affect students' English language competence, particularly in terms of speaking. The number of students in each language class continued to decrease throughout the year, as more became absent in order to study for the midterm or final exams. Moreover, the issue of absences and decreasing attendance is a habit not only among students at Tibah University but also at Saudi universities and colleges more generally. Ezza (2012) recently discussed Saudi students' attitudes towards attending English language classes at Saudi universities and colleges, and related these to different environmental and social factors, which can be summarised as follows.

Text anxiety/tension can be related to the curriculum. There can also be learning problems related to coping with the text provided, fear of problems, lack of motivation (which will be discussed in more detail later in this paper), peer pressure and a negative attitude towards the academic institution. There is also the forced choice dilemma, that is to say students are forced to attend a full day of English classes at Tibah University. This attendance rule of forcing students not to leave the campus was changed in 2011, when the course became a full nine-hour day, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every working day. Once students attend the first classes, they are unable to miss or cancel classes for the rest of the day; they are obliged to be on the university campus for the entire day, which results in a significant decrease in attendance. This is a result of the university's new rule for foundation-year students, who are no longer allowed to leave the campus during the university's working hours due to many cultural issues. Marcus (2001) as cited in Khan, raised the issue of the effect of emotional or social problems on students' performance and achievement in language learning, demonstrating that students performed better

when their emotions towards language learning were strong and positive. Khan (2007, p.1) pointed out the different factors that represent barriers to learning within the Saudi context: “The barriers are some of those that are very influential: social, cultural, parental, attitudinal, motivational, psychological, personal and pedagogical factors. Pedagogical factors in particular include teachers, action researches, teaching strategies, teaching resources and administration”. The presence of such important factors can be remarkable and can contribute to the worsening of students’ capacity for language learning, not only in speaking, but in all skills. Rogers (1987) stated that such factors become integrated with students’ attitudes to learning, and that the language practitioner should collaborate with other consultative departments in the academic institution to solve such problems.

### **Student Motivation Towards Language Learning**

One possible reason one can consider for students’ lack of motivation to attend English language classes at Tibah University and according to the data collection of this study, is that they have to attend five hours of English classes everyday with the same teacher in the same room for an entire year. During this period, they are required to focus on only two skills, reading and writing, while almost completely neglecting speaking and listening practice. Moreover, since students’ assessment is based on a written exam at the end of the term, and they do not have to use the second language outside of the classroom setting, they are unable to achieve the level of proficiency required to communicate in English using the four basic language skills. Students also use the language inside the classroom based on a specific component of the curriculum. Unfortunately, in this case, the language learning process contradicts the Ministry’s stated goals related to the English language curriculum. Hedge (2000) referred to motivation as a crucial factor in language learning. This can be related to students’ lack of motivation towards the English course. However, Gardner defined motivation as “the sum of effort plus the desire to achieve a language learning goal plus attitudes or the degree of interactive orientation” (1985, p. 363). Moreover, the concept of motivation “is composed of many different and overlapping factors such as interest, curiosity or a desire to achieve” (Williams & Burden, 1999, p.111). Accordingly, students who are highly motivated seek opportunities to use their second language, and they are more successful with regard to the development of oral communication skills than learners with a lower level of motivation (Lightbown & Spada, 2001). Saudi English classes include only Saudi students, whose first language is Arabic. Those students mostly speak Arabic inside the classroom and do not speak to their teacher, who is a native speaker of English. This point will be discussed in more detail later, especially regarding teacher attitudes towards teaching English courses at Tibah University.

Hedge (2000) suggested that there are two kinds of motivation to learn the English language: (i) students’ need to use language as an instrument to achieve a specific purpose, or (ii) the desire to engage in certain activities, such as joining another group in a different culture, which is not applicable to the Saudi context. Both of these factors may be useful for interpreting student behaviour towards language learning, and particularly the issue of speaking skills in the classroom, is a limited field in which students can practise the second language outside of the classroom setting. Moreover, Nunan (1999) divided learner needs into two main kinds. Objective needs refer to those activities carried out by the teacher to diagnose the student’s ability and language proficiency and to work with the student’s own knowledge by providing the appropriate level of language instruction. The other kind is subjective needs. These include the student’s desires, wants and expectations. This assessment is undertaken via a planning

programme proposed by the teacher with the support of the academic organisation. Unfortunately, less emphasis is placed on major obstacles such as these, which lead to the provision of an inappropriate learning environment at Tibah University. Alternatively, since language learning entails involvement in a language learning situation, the student's attitude plays a crucial role, in addition to the instructor, classroom, textbooks and learning atmosphere, among other factors. Gordon (1980) found that language attitude was the best indicator of English learning achievement among schools and colleges, while Lett and O'mara (1990) found that motivation is an important factor in achievement, even among military personnel. Similarly, Bartley (1969) found that those who withdrew from language classes had less language competence, significantly lower aptitude scores and less positive attitudes towards the language-learning environment.

Another important motivational factor linked to favourable attitude towards language learning is called the "foreign language-learning situation". According to Dornyei, and Csizér (2006), when students learn a foreign language at school without having direct contact with native speakers of that language, this has an adverse effect on their willingness to communicate and leads to less oral communication. This, in turn, may discourage students from practising their English language skills outside of the classroom setting. For example, as part of the data collection process in which to find out about the English language learning obstacles, one of the English classes I have attended for the foundation year and which are offered at Tibah University was a speaking class dealing with the "Money Unit" as part of the curriculum, based on the Touchstone course book. The major goal of the lesson was to enable students to use many different types of material to apply rules to real-life situations. Unfortunately, the teacher relied on reading from the book more than on involving students in discussions, as this is the most appropriate method to finish the unit in the textbook according to the department obligation. This may have resulted in the level of dissatisfaction with the quality of the English language classes which effects students' attitudes toward language. Humanistic language psychologists, such as Rogers (1983), emphasise the importance of dealing with the "whole learner" and stressed that "learners are not simply processors of information who, when they enter the classroom, leave the deeper layers of their identity outside: they are real people who bring with them the whole array of personal attributes and feeling. These have to be respected, if individual development and growth are to take place". (Littlewood, 1992 ,p.98).

Furthermore, Reynolds's (1991) research linked motivation with second language proficiency. This author argued that motivation plays an important role in language learning and that it is directly linked to students' language learning competence. Reynolds also differentiates between kinds of motivation. The first, which refers to the effort expended on learning a second language, is called intensity of motivation. The second kind of motivation refers to one's purpose for studying the language. Consequently, classroom performance is correlated in one way or another with students' motivation to learn a foreign language and their ability to interact effectively in the second language classroom, which appears to be missing in the case of the Saudi students who learn English at Tibah University.

### *Anxiety*

Throughout the collection of data at Tibah University and the classes for the foundation year, and as a result of the many factors I have found collaborate to hinder students' learning language competence, especially their communication skills in a speaking class, is anxiety. In fact, many

studies have analysed the relationship between anxiety and second language learning. For instance, Gardener, Day, and MacIntyre (1992) pointed out that foreign language anxiety is different from other kinds of anxiety, and that there is a relationship between anxiety and learning proficiency. This, they argued, can be linked to students' attitude towards language learning, and is identified as being specifically related to speaking and listening. Anxiety can be defined as a "subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry" (Dornyei & Schmidt, 2001, p.364). Additionally, within the language learning context, Zhang (2001, p.74) defined anxiety as "a distinctive complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process". He also defined the relationship between anxiety and speaking in particular as "a stable personality trait referring to the propensity for an individual to react in a nervous manner when speaking in the second language". Furthermore both Zhang (2001) and Dornyei and Schmidt (2001) argued that anxiety can be a strong motivator for students. It can encourage them to learn a language or it can have a negative influence and prevent them from achieving the purpose of the learning process, thereby possibly preventing them from achieving good oral communication. Zhang's study demonstrates that students were anxious about oral communication as a result of their language learning difficulties. They did not have enough relevant knowledge about the second language, which made them more anxious about practising the language inside the classroom. Their lack of experience with regard to real communication made them worry about their speech production, which, in turn, led to speaking difficulties and decreased self-esteem. Khan (2001) mentioned that one of the most important factors that stands as a language-learning barrier in English classes in the Saudi context is learners' anxiety towards the learning environment. However, with regard to English language competence, Saudi students face linguistic obstacles at the tertiary level of education. According to Khan, "Since English is the medium of instruction, and the target learners' background seems to be quite humble, they are often scared of learning a subject of study in English in general and studying English in particular. Sometimes they strive to learning, but English appears as one of those barriers that they are even afraid to handle" (2011, p. 5). Moreover, one of the fundamental characteristics of effective language teaching at Tibah University has been found to be absent from the English classes. How can we expect learners with the major goal of passing the examination based on a certain curriculum (without having the choice of what to study) to learn the language? In most studies, interactive motivation between the learner and the learning environment is found to produce the best learning outcome. The simplest and most obvious factor that attracts the individual to language learning is the involvement of students in a manner that engages their minds with the language using creative resources in different contexts. This enables them to communicate using this language. Learners at the university level differ from students at the school level; the latter students need to have their space for learning in order to produce a good learning income. They need to determine with the teacher the value of the natural language class in which they work. Littlewood pointed out that "Making space for learners means that each individual learner should not feel threatened by forces outside his or her control (e.g. a negatively-disposed audience) and should not feel that his or her social identity is submerged anonymously within the class" (1992, p. 99).

Although some research demonstrated clear evidence of the relationship between personal characteristics and feelings in language learning acquisition, the findings indicate that personal feelings, such as anxiety, are considered a major factor in the acquisition of conversational and oral communication skills (Lightbown & Spade, 1999). However, it is a fact that some learners'

attitudes towards learning a second language, including their motivation and anxiety, play a crucial role that is linked to their success in interactive communication in the language class in general and in speaking skills in particular, but still the strategies of teaching English at Tibah university need to take into consideration the crucial role which these factors play in language learning and communication competence.

### *Student Reticence*

Based on the collection of data of this study, it was noted that students prefer to remain silent in English language classes. They appeared not to have the ability to interact via oral communication. This is called “student reticence”, which refers to a student’s unwillingness to communicate. According to Lee and Ng (2009) in their research about student reticence, the reason behind this problem is very complex. There are many factors related to student personality, and these are integrated with other areas, such as personal attitude, confidence, motivation and anxiety. These intertwined factors affect students’ behaviour in class and, in turn, result in their lack of oral communication skills. Moreover, Williams and Burden (1997) stated that students’ behaviour in a second language classroom depends on a complex set of interacting factors, such as motivation, anxiety and personal attitude towards the language, which may lead to student reticence.

Furthermore, Arnold (2003) linked oral production with different personal attitudes, such as anxiety and motivation. The situation that second language learners (especially at Tibah university language classes) face when speaking is not easy. Students’ lack of knowledge and confidence may lead to several difficulties, which might cause some students to prefer to remain silent and not to interact effectively due to their lack of self-confidence. Such behaviour might be the major factors behind student reticence. In addition, Gardner (2001) stated that the majority of students who are studying the English language feel very motivated and anxious in the beginning. He explained that when they come to class and the teacher involves them in speaking activities, they begin the production of speech. This is when they discover their speaking difficulties, and as a result, they may develop negative feelings towards the foreign language and may prefer to remain silent rather than participating in speaking activities due to their lack of self-confidence. However, hundreds of studies have been conducted with the aim of understanding the relationship between student behaviour and the language learning process. According to Hedge (2000), most research about second language learning and oral communication ability essentially depends on students’ personal characteristics. These are the factors affecting learning and learners’ motivation, as well as their anxiety and self-confidence. Students who lack certain characteristics may face learning difficulties and suffer from decreased speech production. In order to help students improve their ability to speak in the classroom, teachers should be aware of both the teaching situation, such as why learners are learning the language, and be mindful of individuals who might be influenced by different factors, such as motivation, anxiety and willingness to speak. Due to the lack of knowledge of the administration and the English language course directors at Tibah University, it seems to be that more emphasis should be given to these factors. They should also be aware that continuing to use traditional teaching methods and certain textbooks that assess written forms, while neglecting the value of oral communication inside the English language classroom, will lead to insufficient language learning. In addition, Norton (2001) suggested a variety of ways in which personal characteristics (such as anxiety and motivation) associated with oral skills can be treated in a language learning situation, and they identified how to create opportunities for the learner to

practise the target language according to their needs. Scrivener (1994), Thornbury (2005), Harmer (2007) and Arnold (2003) suggested different procedures and activities that might help students to be more motivated, less anxious and more positive towards learning, thereby possibly helping them to overcome the aforementioned problems. The main point on which these authors all agree is that it is important to stimulate students' desire to speak the language and to involve them in as many activities as possible. Scrivener (1994) suggested that teachers should encourage students to engage in effective interaction and give them the choice to speak. Moreover, according to Dornyei and Schmidt (2001), students who are highly motivated welcome communicative classes and prefer those that balance the role of the teacher with learner-centeredness. Consequently, Scrivener (1994) suggested that teachers dedicate little time to individuals at the beginning of the speaking activity, then they can organise the activities in pairs, trios and small groups before involving the entire class, including the teacher, in the discussion. The less motivated students may see this as a beneficial opportunity to participate, as they will be speaking mostly to everyone in the class, including the teacher. In addition, Arnold (2003) stated that the teacher may focus more on students' attitudes rather than the techniques used in the speaking class, which teachers may benefit from in the case of the language centre at Tibah University. He maintains that "success (in language) depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom" (Arnold, 2003, p.5). In other words, the teacher should create a positive atmosphere for learners to encourage them to participate and to involve them in speaking activities that facilitate the development of their communication skills. Furthermore, I think students in language classes at Tibah University need to determine what might stimulate their desire to be engaged in oral communication and understand what may make them motivated. Also, it would be helpful if the language teacher assesses the strength and the weakness of their students' language ability, builds up their decision according to the students' need, and involves the students' experience throughout communication using the English language. Presently, according to the university educational system and the Ministry of Education's curriculum, it is difficult for both students and teachers to learn in freer environment, without being bound to textbooks. However, according to Scrivener (1994), teachers should try setting a particular topic related to the students' own problems rather than choosing a topic based on textbooks provided. In this way, even the less talkative students may view it as an opportunity to discuss their own interests and feelings and be more encouraged to interact.

Finally, as anxiety, within this context, is a complicated matter associated with different feelings towards learning a second language, Zhang (2001) suggested that teachers may encourage students to speak about their feelings and interests; this can be done in their free time or at the beginning of the class. In addition, Saudi students at Tibha University need to have time for private consultation with their teachers to determine if there are any problems related to language learning, class or school, and the aforementioned factors should be taken into consideration by the English language course director. As a result, students may have positive attitudes towards the second language and be more motivated to practise English and acquire the language both inside and outside of the classroom.

### **Conclusion and Remarks**

It is clear from my research and participation in English classes at the Tibah University, that the educational system in Saudi Arabia for teaching second languages could be reformed. The two

most important skills for life are speaking and listening, but apart from one textbook in circulation for only two years between 2010-12, the Ministry of Education has not produced a course for students that stresses the importance of verbal communication. Instead, course books focus on reading and writing, thus causing a myriad of problems, most notably anxiety and reticence when called to practice speaking. Furthermore, student motivation has been compromised by the Ministry of Education's rigid English curriculum: for their foundation year at university, students must spend many hours in a classroom each day, with the same teacher, trying to get through the strict textbook. Neither teachers nor students are allowed to deviate from the course, causing both a huge loss in motivation. Teachers cannot use their own initiative or introduce topics that might be more relevant to their students' personal lives, and learning English becomes a race to get the textbook finished in time for exams at the end of the year. Speaking is not prioritised at all, in fact, the exams only come in written form, and students are not encouraged to talk to each other in English inside and outside the classroom. The Ministry of Education and The Higher Administration of Tiba University, as well as academic instructors and language teachers throughout Saudi Arabia, should be aware of these crucial problems and learning barriers in English teaching, and a process of language learning should be developed that will create opportunities to improve students' communicative abilities, and at the same time allow teachers their own input into their students' learning programmes.

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## Investigating EFL Omani Learners' Ability to Produce English Phonics in taught words and in untaught words

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to Investigate EFL Omani Grade Two Learners' Ability to produce the (43) sounds which are taught in grades one and two course books. It focuses on answering the following question: Are there any significant differences between grade two learners' ability to produce phonics in taught words and in untaught words? The study sample consisted of second grade learners in Al-Batinah North Governorate in the academic year 2010/2011. They were 100 learners. To answer the research questions, a reading test to measure learners' ability to produce phonics was used. The Major finding of the present study was: There is a significant difference between grade two learners' ability to produce phonics in taught words and phonics in untaught words in favor phonics in taught words.

**Key words:** Grapheme, Phoneme, Phonics, Sound clusters

## Related literature

### *The phonic approach to reading instruction*

Jeanne & Helen (n.d), indicate that learners who learn phonics, do better in all aspects of reading such as word identification skills, accuracy of oral reading, silent reading comprehension and fluency than those who do not learn phonics. This indicates that failure at phonics could result in weak readers. Adams (1990), concludes that teaching phonics is a critical factor for success in early reading. Hughes (1976), states that many children fail to read because of their lack of phonic knowledge. David & Yvonne (2004, p83) state that "learners who learn English as a second or foreign language must develop the ability to comprehend and produce the sounds of English".

The International Reading Association (1997) has asserted three basic principles regarding phonics and the teaching of reading:

1. The teaching of phonics is an important aspect of beginning reading instruction.
2. Classroom teachers in the primary grades should value and teach phonics as a part of their reading program; teachers make appropriate instructional decisions for the inclusion of phonics based on their knowledge of children and their language development.
3. Phonics instruction is more meaningful when it is presented within the contexts of language use that provides patterns and structures to support learners' understandings. Therefore, effective phonics instruction need to be embedded in the context of a total language reading program and not just presented in isolation.

### *The English graphemes and phonemes*

Graphemes can be defined as the different forms by which a letter can be printed A, a, G, g etc... They are the letters of the alphabet written on paper to represent separate sounds of speech written in words. English has twenty six graphemes, six of them are vowels and the rest are consonants. A phoneme is the smallest significant unit of sound in a language. The phonemes are the sounds of the English language e.g. /b/, /z/ etc. which are represented by letters e.g. b, z etc. (Richards, 1992).

English as an international language has forty four phonemes as they are presented in the IPA (The International Phonetic Alphabet) symbols. They are divided into twenty four consonants and twenty vowels.

### *The Arabic and English consonants, vowels and consonant clusters*

Arabic is marked by a rich consonantal system. It has twenty-eight consonants. On the other hand English has twenty four consonants. Most of the Arabic consonantal phonemes are similar to the English phonemes. However, the consonants /g/ as in 'goat', /dʒ/ as in 'joke', /ŋ/ as in 'thing', /p/ as in 'pull', /tʃ/ as in 'cheese' and /v/ as in 'van' do not exist in Arabic and hence they do not have a written form. Therefore, when reading English Arab learners will either avoid producing these sounds or replace them by the nearest sounds in Arabic. (Kharma & Hajjaj, 1989).

**Table. The English consonants which may/may not cause difficulty to Arab learners**

p	b	t	d	tʃ	dʒ	K	g
f	v	θ	ð	S	z	ʃ	ʒ
m	n	ŋ	h	L	r	W	y

According to Kharma & Hajjaj (1989), the shaded consonants in Table (1) have equivalents or near equivalents in Arabic and should therefore be perceived and articulated without great difficulty by Arab learners, although some confusions may still arise e.g. learners might confuse 'b' with 'd'. Un-shaded consonants can cause problems to Arab learners. However, the consonants /g/ and /dʒ/ are pronounced in dialects of some Arabs and, therefore, may not cause problem to them. The consonant /ʃ/ occurs naturally in all dialects in junctures of /t/ and /ʃ/ and therefore may not become a major problem for Arab learners.

### **The vowels**

English has a greater number of vowels than Arabic. It has twenty vowels according to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). On the other hand Arabic has eight vowels only. They are /a/, /U/, /i/, /ā/, /ū/, /ī/, /ai/ and /au/. This can make English vowels more difficult for Arab learners than producing English consonants. When Arab learners are asked to recognize and to produce English vowels, they tend to replace the English vowels with the nearest vowels in Arabic .(Kharma & Hajjaj, 1989).

**Table. The English vowels which may/may not cause difficulty to Arab learners**

i:	ɪ	ʊ	u:	ɪə
e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:	ʊə
æ	ʌ	ɑ:	ɒ	eə
əʊ	aʊ	eɪ	ɔɪ	aɪ

According to Swan & Smith (2001), the shaded vowels in Table (2) have equivalents or near equivalents in Arabic and should therefore be perceived and articulated without great difficulty by Arab learners, although some confusion may still arise. On the other hand the un-shaded vowels do not have equivalents or near equivalents in Arabic and therefore, they can cause problems to Arab learners.

Jones (1996), writes that most English consonants exhibit a regular grapheme-phoneme relationship. Irregularity in letter-sound correspondences is obvious in vowels where a grapheme can represent many phonemes and several graphemes-represent a single phoneme. From this it might be predicted that Arabs will show lower performance with English vowels than with English consonants.

### **The consonant clusters**

A consonant cluster is “a sequence of two or more consonants”. (Richards, 1992. p.79). Roach (2000, p.68), states that “when we have two or more consonants together without a vowel intervening them we call them a consonant cluster”.

Consonant clusters in English may occur in word-initial position as in “draw”, in word-medial position as in “instrument” and in word-final position as in “garaged”. The number of consonants which go together is varied. English can have up to three consonants in a cluster as in 'strong'.

(Kuiper and Allan, 1996). In contrast, Arabic has no sequence of more than two consonants with no vowel intervening them. (Kharma & Hajjaj, 1989).

Kharma & Hajjaj (1989), write that Arabic can have a sequence of two letters; therefore, the consonant blends may not cause a lot of difficulty to Arab learners. However, because some of these consonant blends contain consonants which do not exist in Arabic and some of them contain irregular grapheme- phoneme relationship, they might be difficult for Arab learners to produce. Altaha (1995), investigated Saudi learners' ability to produce English consonants. He found that the learners tended to insert a vowel in words that contain a sequence of two initial consonants or insert a vowel between the first two consonants in words that contain a sequence of three initial consonants.

### ***Related Studies***

#### ***Arab learners' ability to produce English consonants***

Zainab & Malatesha (2011), investigated the ability of (70) Bahraini Arabic learners who study English as a second language at grades four and six in Bahrain Public schools. The learners were tested to produce the sounds /v/, /p/, /b/ and /f/ by using isolated words. The researchers found that the learners had difficulty producing /v/ and /p/. They related this to the non-existence of these two sounds in Arabic. They also found that the learners confuse /b/ with /p/ and /v/ with /f/.

Jalal (2011), investigated the difficulties Saudi students encounter when pronouncing certain English consonant sounds. The eight participants in the study are adults who graduated from secondary schools from different regions of Saudi Arabia and joined the Preparatory Year Program at Najran University. The participants have never been to any of the English speaking countries, so they do not have any kind of exposure to a native English environment. Four words were selected for each consonant sound in all three positions; initial, medial, and final word positions. Each participant was asked to read these words aloud while being recorded. The results show that the Arabic speakers in this study had difficulties producing the consonant sounds /p/, /d/, /v/, /tʃ/, /ʒ/, and /ŋ/. The researcher related learners' difficulty with /p/, /v/, /tʃ/ and /ŋ/ to the non-existence of these sounds in Arabic.

Binturki (2008), investigated the ability of five Saudi learners of English as a second language to produce the three consonants /p/, the /v/, and /r/.

A word list and a reading passage were used to elicit the target sounds in order to generate data for both context and isolation. His results show that participants have difficulty with all the three-targeted sounds. However, the greatest difficulty was with /v/. The researcher related this to the non-existence of these sounds in Arabic. The learners showed the same performance with /p/ and /r/. The study also indicated that difficulty was closely related to certain word positions. The three sounds are used more accurately when occurring in word initial position than in word final position.

Barros (2003), looked into pronunciation difficulties with English consonants facing ESL Arab learners after the age of puberty. The aim of the study was to identify and to analyze difficulties in pronunciation of six Arabic speakers who have been living in the United States for four years. The subjects of the study did not represent a single Arabic accent. They were from different Arab countries; two subjects were from Egypt, one was from Saudi Arabia and three were from Kuwait. The results showed that the sounds /d/, /p/, /v/, /dʒ/ and /ð/ were mispronounced respectively as [t], [b], [f], [ʒ] and [də]. The researcher reported that (5) out of (6) of the participants had problems with the following consonants (in order of difficulty): /d/,

/p/ and /v/. The consonants /dʒ/ and /ð/ were mispronounced by (2) participants. The two Egyptian subjects were the only participants who experienced problems with the phonemes /dʒ/ and /ð/. The other participants all displayed the same mispronunciations, but one subject from Kuwait who pronounced the sound /v/ appropriately. The author noticed that the interference of first language seems to be the major factor contributing to pronunciation problems that might differ from one Arabic speaker to another, depending on the colloquial variety of Arabic they use. We can conclude from this that there are differences in pronunciation among Arab learners. This gives us the insight that we cannot generalize pronunciation mistakes to all Arabs. There are certainly differences in various Arab backgrounds and dialects which result in different mispronunciations in English.

Barros (2003), stated that the greatest number of participants in the study experienced problems with the phoneme /p/ and half of them had difficulty with /v/. The researcher attributed this mispronunciation to the fact that the above sounds are not present in the Arabic alphabet and they are substituted with /f/ and /b/.

Altaha (1995), investigated the problems Saudi Arabian students encounter when learning English pronunciation. The participants in his study started learning English at the age of (13) and never left their native country to learn English. Participants were asked to say out English words that contain the English sounds. He collected the data by recording and analyzing the spoken English of the participants in different conditions and situations. Regarding consonants, he found that the participants have problems with some pairs of consonant sounds (i.e. /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ as in chair and share; /v/ and /f/ as in van and fan; /p/ and /b/ as in pat and bat). The participants also pronounced the letter c as [k] when it should be pronounced as [s].

Khurma & Hajjaj (1989), tried to identify the pronunciation problems encountered by Arab learners who come from different Arabic countries when they start to study English in the University of Kuwait. As far as consonants are concerned, they stated that certain pairs are confused by Arab learners such as /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ as in chair and share; /v/ and /f/ as in fast and vast; /dʒ/ and /ʒ/ as in jump and vision; /p/ and /b/ as in pin and bin; /s/ and /θ/ as in sin and thin.

Messiha (1985, p.225), investigated the ability of Egyptian learners to produce English consonant sounds. She asked the learners to read words that contain the tested sounds. After the analysis of data she stated that "it is an elementary linguistic fact" that the English phonemes which are not present in Arabic are the cause of the phonetic difficulties that Arab learners face. The researcher added that the phonemes /p/, /θ/, /ð/, /v/ are good examples of the pronunciation difficulties which are mispronounced as [b], [s], [z], [f] respectively by Egyptian speakers.

#### ***Arab learners' ability to produce English vowels***

Ryan & Meara (1991), compared the performance of (10) Arabs at the age of twenty who come from the middle east and (10) non-Arab learners of English with English vowels with the performance of native speakers of English. All the learners were students at the University College of Swansea. They used lists of words that contain English vowels. There were three lists of words. One had the vowels at the beginning of the word, the second had the vowels at the middle of the words and the third had the vowels at the end of the words. The results of the study showed that Arabs were the poorest performers with English vowels with all the lists of words, followed by the non-Arabs and finally the native speakers of English.

Khurma & Hajjaj (1989), found that Arab learners seem to confuse certain pairs of vowels such as /i/ and /e/ as in sit and set; /ʌ/ and /ɒ/ as in luck and lock; /əʊ/ and /ɔ:/ as in coat and caught. The English vowels /eə/ as in hair, /ʊə/ as in 'tourist', /ɪə/ as in 'here', /əʊ/ as in show and

/eɪ/ as in 'wait' caused much difficulty to Arab learners when they tried to recognize and produce them. The findings of the study done by Altaha (1995), showed that the participants replaced the sounds /e/ and /ɛə/ with the sounds [i] and [ə:] respectively.

## Method

### *Subjects*

The population of this study consisted of grade two learners. It is taken from Omani governmental Basic Education schools in Al-Batinah-North Governorate in the academic year (2010/2011).

Since the collection of data for this study requires about (20-25) minutes to test each learner's ability to produce the phonics under investigation, a number of (100) learners of grade two out of (1632) has been selected to be the sample of the study. They were selected randomly from five random schools of the governorate. From each school a number of (20) learners was selected.

### *Research Instrument and procedures*

#### *Reading Test*

As mentioned before a reading test was adapted to be used to test grade two learners' ability to produce English phonics in taught and in untaught words. It consists of (86) items that will test the learners' ability to produce the (43) sounds in taught words and in untaught words. It has a marking sheet to be filled by the evaluator who will test the learners (see appendix A).

The appropriateness of the content of the reading test was validated by thirteen jury members including two EFL instructors from the Language Center, three instructors from the College of Education, five instructors from the College of Arts in Sultan Qaboos University. It was also validated by two members from the Curriculum Department of the Ministry of Education, and one supervisor of English (see appendix B).

Based on the recommendations of the jury members, taught words were separated from untaught words and clear instructions for the evaluators were given.

The reliability of the reading test was established by using (20) grade two Basic Education learners who were not included in the sample of the study. These learners were selected randomly from the population of the study. The test was conducted and marked by the researcher. The data of the piloted test was computed using the SPSS and the internal consistency method was used to calculate the reliability of the test.

After the approval of the thesis proposal the researcher analyzed grades one and two course books and selected the sounds to be investigated and adapted the reading test. Then, he established the validity and the reliability of the research instrument. Then he took a letter from the administration of the College of Education to the Ministry of Education requesting the facilitation of the researcher's mission to administer the research instruments. Then the Ministry of Education sent to the Educational Directorate General of Batinah north governorate requesting the facilitation of the researcher's mission to administer the research instruments in the schools of the governorate. Then a letter from the Educational Directorate was given to the researcher to submit to each school principal where the sample will be taken from for cooperation.

To decide the sample of the study the researcher asked for the list of all the schools in the governorate. A sample of five schools was decided and twenty learners from each school were selected randomly.

***The administration of the reading test***

To test (100) learners in (5) different schools the researcher trained (5) English senior teachers who work in those schools to administer the reading test. They were asked to explain the reading test to the learners and then to administer it with them. The researcher showed the senior teachers how to conduct the reading test practically with some students who were excluded later from the sample of the study. Then, the senior teachers were given enough time to test their learners. Finally, the researcher thanked the senior teachers for their cooperation and collected the question papers and the marking sheets of the reading test.

After the administration of the reading test the data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In order to address the question of the study, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were computed. In addition to descriptive statistics, a General Linear Model Repeated Measures test was also used to see if there are any significant differences between grade two learners' ability to produce phonics in taught words and in untaught words.

**Data analysis and Discussion**

In this study the researcher will use the following criteria to evaluate grade two learners' ability to produce the forty-three sounds which are taught in grades one and two:

- If a specific sound shows a mean less than (0.70), then that sound will be considered below the acceptable level of performance. That means learners have difficulty producing it (31 learners have difficulty with the sound).
- If a specific sound shows a mean of (0.70) or above, then that sound will be considered at the acceptable level of performance. That means learners can produce it (70 learners have no difficulty with the sound).

*The research question: Are there any significant differences between grade two learners' ability to produce phonics in taught words and in untaught words?*

**Table. 3** *The difference between grade two learners' ability to produce the sounds in taught words and in untaught words*

Types of measurements				Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig. <sup>a</sup>
Variable 1	mean	Variable 2	mean		
Sounds in taught words	0.75	Sounds in untaught words	0.69	.058*	.000

Table (3) shows that there is a significant difference between grade two learners' ability to produce the sounds in taught words and in untaught words in favor of their performance to produce them in taught words. In order to locate the differences between grade two learners' performance with the sounds, the following tables will present the learners' performance with the (43) sounds in taught words and in untaught words.

*Grade two learners' performance with phonics in taught words***Table. 4 learners' performance with phonics in taught words.**

No.	Phonic	N	Mean	Std.	No.	Phonic	N	Mean	Std.
1	q(square)	100	<b>0.24</b>	.429	23	p(purple)	100	0.75	.435
2	u(umbrella)	100	<b>0.57</b>	.498	24	cl(clock)	100	0.76	.429
3	l(little)	100	<b>0.59</b>	.494	25	t(train)	100	0.76	.429
4	i(arabic)	100	<b>0.62</b>	.488	26	ff(puff)	100	0.77	.423
5	st(breakfast)	100	<b>0.62</b>	.488	27	sk(skirt)	100	0.77	.423
6	y(yellow)	100	<b>0.64</b>	.482	28	n(snow)	100	0.78	.416
7	d(dates)	100	<b>0.64</b>	.482	29	v(Vicky)	100	0.78	.416
8	r(ruler)	100	<b>0.65</b>	.479	30	sn(snake)	100	0.81	.394
9	sw(sweater)	100	<b>0.68</b>	.469	31	x(six)	100	0.81	.394
10	ss(dressed)	100	<b>0.68</b>	.469	32	sc(scarf)	100	0.81	.394
11	j(jelly)	100	0.70	.461	33	sm(smell)	100	0.84	.368
12	bl(blanket)	100	0.70	.461	34	b(black)	100	0.85	.359
13	w(windy)	100	0.70	.461	35	c(cake)	100	0.85	.359
14	sl(slide)	100	0.71	.456	36	br(bread)	100	0.85	.359
15	zz(buzz)	100	0.71	.456	37	sp(sport)	100	0.86	.349
16	gl(glass)	100	0.73	.446	38	fr(frog)	100	0.89	.314
17	k(park)	100	0.73	.446	39	f(fish)	100	0.89	.314
18	a(apple)	100	0.73	.446	40	z(zebra)	100	0.92	.273
19	g(green)	100	0.74	.441	41	e(red)	100	0.93	.256
20	ll(fell)	100	0.75	.435	42	o(orange)	100	0.94	.239
21	h(honey)	100	0.75	.435	43	m(milk)	100	0.94	.239
22	s(swings)	100	0.75	.435	<b>Overall mean</b>			0.75	

It is clearly shown from the overall mean value of (0.75) out of the total mean value of (1) presented in Table (4) that the overall performance of EFL grade two learners with English phonics in taught words is at the acceptable level of performance. There are (33) sounds at the acceptable level of performance and (10) sounds below the acceptable level of performance. The mean values show that the learners' ability to produce the sounds 'm' and 'o' (0.94), 'e' and 'z' (0.92), 'f' and 'fr' (0.89), 'sp' (0.86), 'br', 'c' and 'b' (0.85), 'sm' (0.84), 'sc', 'x' and 'sn' (0.81), 'v' and 'n' (0.78), 'sk' and 'ff' (0.77), 't' and 'cl' (0.76), 'p', 's', 'h' and 'll' (0.75), 'g' (0.74), 'a', 'k' and 'gl' (0.73), 'zz' and 'sl' (0.71) and 'w', 'bl' and 'j' (0.70) in taught words is at the acceptable level of performance. However, the mean values of 'q' (0.24), 'u' (0.57), 'l' (0.59), 'i' and 'st' (0.62), 'y' and 'd' (0.64), 'r' (65), 'sw' and 'ss' (0.68) indicate that the learners' performance with these sounds in taught words is below the acceptable level of performance.

*Grade two learners' performance with phonics in untaught words***Table. 5** *learners' performance with phonics in untaught words.*

No.	Phonic	N	Mean	Std.	No.	Phonic	N	Mean	Std.
1	q(quiz)	100	<b>0.25</b>	.435	23	fr(refrigerator)	100	0.70	.461
2	sc(rescued)	100	<b>0.35</b>	.479	24	m(match)	100	0.71	.456
3	ss(assistant)	100	<b>0.49</b>	.502	25	f(flew)	100	0.72	.451
4	v(visited)	100	<b>0.55</b>	.500	26	h(hole)	100	0.72	.451
5	b(brought)	100	<b>0.55</b>	.500	27	sn(snacks)	100	0.73	.446
6	y(stayed)	100	<b>0.57</b>	.498	28	j(jump)	100	0.73	.446
7	i(visit)	100	<b>0.57</b>	.498	29	ff(giraffe)	100	0.76	.429
8	z(Suzy)	100	<b>0.59</b>	.494	30	sw(swim)	100	0.77	.423
9	a(thank)	100	<b>0.59</b>	.494	31	g(get)	100	0.79	.409
10	sk(skipping)	100	<b>0.60</b>	.492	32	sm(small)	100	0.79	.409
11	u(under)	100	<b>0.61</b>	.490	33	sp(spider)	100	0.79	.409
12	l(lunch)	100	<b>0.63</b>	.485	34	e(next)	100	0.80	.402
13	o(wok)	100	<b>0.63</b>	.485	35	br(brush)	100	0.80	.402
14	zz(pizza)	100	<b>0.64</b>	.482	36	w(went)	100	0.80	.402
15	d(draft)	100	<b>0.65</b>	.479	37	s(swam)	100	0.83	.378
16	bl(blazer)	100	<b>0.66</b>	.476	38	sl(sleep)	100	0.83	.378
17	gl(gloves)	100	<b>0.67</b>	.473	39	k(like)	100	0.84	.368
18	c(colour)	100	<b>0.67</b>	.473	40	p(plan)	100	0.85	.359
19	x(oryx)	100	<b>0.69</b>	.465	41	t(print)	100	0.86	.349
20	ll(full)	100	<b>0.69</b>	.465	42	r(ran)	100	0.90	.302
21	cl(click)	100	0.70	.461	43	st(stop)	100	0.91	.288
22	n(wanted)	100	0.70	.461	<b>Overall mean</b>			0.69	

It is shown from the overall mean value of (0.69) out of the total mean value of (1), presented in Table (5), that the overall performance of EFL grade two learners with English phonics in untaught words is below the acceptable level of performance. There are (23) sounds at the acceptable level of performance and (20) sounds below the acceptable level of performance. The mean values show that learners' performance with the sounds 'st' (0.91), 'r' (0.9), 't' (0.86), 'p' (0.85), 'k' (0.84), 'sl' and 's' (0.83), 'w', 'br' and 'e' (0.80), 'sp', 'sm' and 'g' (0.79), 'sw' (0.77), 'ff' (0.76), 'j' and 'sn' (0.73), 'h' and 'f' (0.72), 'm' (0.71), 'fr', 'n' and 'cl' (0.70) in untaught words is at the acceptable level of performance. However, the mean values of 'q' (0.25), 'sc' (0.35), 'ss' (0.49), 'v' and 'b' (0.55), 'y' and 'i' (0.57), 'z' and 'a' (0.59), 'sk' (0.60), 'u' (0.61), 'l' and 'o' (0.63), 'zz' (0.64), 'd' (0.65), 'bl' (0.66), 'gl' and 'c' (0.67), 'x' and 'll' (0.69) indicate that the learners' performance with these sounds in untaught words is below the acceptable level of performance. To discuss the results of this question, the researcher will first discuss the significant differences between grade two learners' ability to produce the tested sounds in the three levels. Then he will discuss the learners' performance with the tested sounds in each of those three levels.

***The significant differences between grade two learners' to produce the tested sounds in taught words and in untaught words.***

The results of the study show that there is a significant difference between the learners' ability to produce the sounds in taught words and in untaught words in favor of their ability to produce the sounds in taught words. While there are (33) sounds in taught words, there are (20) sounds in untaught words at the acceptable level of performance. On the other hand, there are (10) sounds in taught words, there are (23) sounds in untaught words below the acceptable level of performance.

***With regard to learners' better performance with sounds in taught words than in untaught words.***

Grade two learners' better performance with sounds in taught words than in untaught words could be attributed to the following points:

- Some of the untaught words included in the test might have contained some sounds, which were taught but were difficult to be produced by the participants; therefore, they did not try to produce even the targeted sounds.
- Learners found it difficult to figure out the sounds which were in untaught words but were not taught in grades one and two course books; therefore, they did not try to produce even the targeted sounds.
- Learners are not challenged or trained to read words, which are not included in their course book.
- Learners are not taught word attack skills which the researcher mentioned in chapter two. This could have made their performance with untaught words the least. However, Beck & Juel (2002), state that the knowledge of letter-sound relationships is of a little value unless the learners can use that knowledge to figure out words. Whether learners have learned the sounds of letters through implicit or explicit phonics, figuring out a new word still requires that the sounds of the letters can be combined or blended.
- Learners' better performance with sounds in taught words than in untaught words can be attributed to a more emphasis is given (by the teachers or the course books) to the use of the sight word or the whole word method than to the use of phonological knowledge when reading words.

***The phonics in taught words***

The results of the reading test show that grade two learners' performance is at the acceptable level of performance with all the sounds being tested in taught words except 'q', 'u', 'l', 'i', 'st', 'y', 'd', 'r', 'sw', 'ss' and 'j'. The learners' overall level of performance with sounds in taught words is at the acceptable level of performance. It seems from the results that Omani grade two learners have difficulty with the consonant 'j' because this consonant does not exist in Arabic. The same thing is with the vowels /ʌ/ which was presented by 'u' and the vowel /ɪ/ which was presented by 'i'. This result supports what Barros (2003) and Kharma & Hajjaj (1989) have found about these sounds with Arab learners. Although the consonant 'r' exists in Arabic, the Omani learners showed difficulty with it. This supports the results of Binturki (2008), with Saudi learners and

could be related to deficient training and exposure given to this sound when it appears in words. However, according to the literature, the consonants 'q', 'l', 'd', and 'y' and the consonant clusters 'st', 'sw' and 'ss' are supposed to make no difficulty on Arab learners as the consonants exist in Arabic, and the consonant clusters are made of no more than two consonants. Therefore, the learners' difficulty with these sounds can be attributed to deficient training, lack of exposure and little practice given to these sounds inside the classroom.

As a result, learners were confused about the sounds and the names of the letters such as 'y', 'st', 'sw' and 'ss' and some pairs of consonants such as 'd' and 'q', and 'b' and 'p' as mentioned by previous studies with other Arab learners.

### ***The phonics in untaught words***

The results of the reading test show that grade two learners' performance is at the acceptable level of performance with all the sounds being tested in untaught words except 'q', 'sc', 'ss', 'v', 'b', 'y', 'i', 'z', 'a', 'sk', 'u', 'l', 'o', 'zz', 'd', 'bl', 'gl', 'c', 'x' and 'll'. The learners' overall level of performance with sounds in untaught words is below the acceptable level of performance. The learners' difficulty with 'i', 'u' and 'o' can be related to the non-existence of these vowels in Arabic. (Kharma & Hajjaj, 1989). However, the sound 'a' has an equivalent or a near equivalent sound in Arabic, and accordingly, it should not create a problem for Omani learners. Therefore, the difficulty with this sound could be related to the fact that the learners could not read the digraph 'th' in the word 'thank' which was included in the test and as a result of this, they did not attempt to produce the rest of the words' sounds. The difficulty with 'q', 'v', 'b', and 'd' can be as a result of confusion between these consonants. The learners might have confused 'd' with 'b', 'v' with 'f' and 'q' with 'p'. The learners' difficulty with these sounds supports what (Jalal. 2011; Zainab & Malatesha. 2011; Binturki. 2008; Barros. 2003; Altaha. 1995; Kharma & Hajjaj. 1989; Messiha. 1985), have found with their participants. The learners' difficulty with 'sc', 'ss', 'y', 'z', 'sk', 'l', 'zz', 'bl', 'gl', 'c', 'x' and 'll' can be attributed to learners' confusion between the sounds and the names of the letters, e.g. as in 'sc'.

It also can be due to lack of emphasis given to these sounds by grade two teachers. Mainly, the learners' failure to produce sounds in untaught words could be attributed to the following reasons:

- The lack of word attack strategies, e.g. trying to sound out words, the use of the onset-rime method to decode words, looking for chunks in the word (prefixes, suffixes, ending, base words), blending chunks and the re-read or trial-and-error technique have resulted in students' inability to pronounce certain sounds.
- Normally children try to avoid reading more difficult words as a result of lack of fluency.
- Learners did not find enough time to decode the sounds of the words while the conduction of the reading test.
- The length of words and some consonant clusters might have contributed negatively to the production of those sounds.
- Normally children try to avoid reading more difficult words as a result of lacking of fluency. Therefore, they need to be asked to read challenging words .(Chall & Jacobs, 2003).

### Summary & conclusion

The following are the main conclusions of this study:

- A. There is a significant difference between grade two learners' ability to produce sounds in taught words and sounds in untaught words in favor of learners' ability to produce sounds in taught words.
- B. The performance of Omani EFL grade two learners with the tested sounds in taught words is at the acceptable level of performance with the all the tested sounds except 'q', 'u', 'l', 'i', 'st', 'y', 'd', 'r', 'sw' and 'ss'. The overall learners' level of performance with the tested sounds in taught words is at the acceptable level of performance.
- C. The performance of Omani EFL grade two learners with the tested sounds in untaught words is at the acceptable level of performance with all the tested sounds except 'q', 'sc', 'ss', 'v', 'b', 'y', 'i', 'z', 'a', 'sk', 'u', 'l', 'o', 'zz', 'd', 'bl', 'gl', 'c', 'x' and 'll'. The overall learners' level of performance with the tested sounds in untaught words is below the acceptable level of performance.
- D.

### Recommendations

Based on the results of this study some recommendations can be given. These recommendations if adopted and implemented would help to improve learners' abilities to produce phonics. There are two types of recommendations, the first ones to improve grade two learners' phonological performance and the additional ones for further research.

#### *Recommendations to improve learners' phonological performance*

After the conduction of the current study, the researcher recommends the following to improve grade two learners' phonological performance:

1. Teaching word attack skills to grade two learners to help them read untaught words.
2. Activating different methods to reading instruction and not just the whole word method to improve learners' performance with sounds in untaught words.
3. Giving more focus on the sounds which are difficult to grade two learners.
4. Giving more challenge to grade two learners by asking them to read words from outside the course book.
5. Including more explicit and synthetic ways to teach phonics in grades one and two course books.
6. Presenting a sound in all forms where it can appear, to get learners notice the different letters that can represent it, e.g. /k/ can be presented by 'c', 'k', 'ck' and 'q'.
7. Presenting a letter in all forms where it can appear, to get learners notice the different sounds it can represent e.g. 'c' can be /s/ as in 'face' and /k/ as in 'cat'.
8. Teaching the phonic song instead of the alphabet song with young learners to avoid confusing the sounds of the letters with their names.
- 9.

#### *Recommendations for further research*

1. The researcher recommends a further research in which the sounds below the accepted level of performance are investigated deeply.
2. The researcher recommends a further research with a greater number of learners, and teachers to increase the reliability of the result and therefore, to make the generalization.
3. The learners in this study were not recorded while producing sounds. This could not tell whether they were confusing or substituting the difficult sounds with other sounds or

omitting them. Therefore, the researcher recommends another study, which tries to look deeply at what exactly learners do when producing the sounds.

### About the Authors:

**Dr. Salma Al-Humaidi** obtained her PhD from the USA in 2002. She is currently working as an assistant professor of ELT at Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman. She has published research papers on teaching practice, task-based learning, learner centered methodology, and microteaching. Currently, she is working on two papers about the performance of students in English as a foreign language and qualities of English language teachers in Oman. She also attended many international conferences and symposia about ELT.

**Jasim Al-Belushi** has a master in English language education in 2012. He has been working as a supervisor of English in the Ministry of Education. He is interested investigating ways to develop to develop young learners abilities in the main English language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

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**Appendix A                      The Final Version of the Reading Test  
The Marking Sheet**

BPST-II - - Basic Phonic Skills Test Marking Sheet (For students reading at grade 2) Adapted from: John Shefelbine, California State University, Sacramento, 2002

Student No: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_      Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/2011      Time: From \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_      To \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_

**1. Reading taught words with the tested sounds:** Ask the learner to look at the words on his/her sheet, study them for 2 minutes and then say them. Mark correct answers, incorrect answers or NR with a √ (Producing the tested sound only is to be considered as correct).

No	taught word	Tested sound	correct	incorrect	NR	No	taught word	Tested sound	correct	incorrect	NR
1	milk	m				23	orange	o			
2	swings	s				24	apple	a			
3	fish	f				25	umbrella	u			
4	little	l				26	red	e			
5	ruler	r				27	slide	sl			
6	snow	n				28	sweater	sw			
7	honey	h				29	skirt	sk			
8	Vicky	v				30	scarf	sc			
9	windy	w				31	sport	sp			
10	yellow	y				32	breakfast	st			
11	square	q				33	dressed	ss			

12	zebra	z				34	bread	br			
13	black	b				35	frog	fr			
14	cake	c				36	fell	ll			
15	dates	d				37	buzz	zz			
16	green	g				38	puff	ff			
17	purple	p				39	glass	gl			
18	train	t				40	blanket	bl			
19	jelly	j				41	clock	cl			
20	park	k				42	snake	sn			
21	six	x				43	smell	sm			
22	Arabic	i									

**2. Reading untaught words with the tested sounds:** Ask the learner to look at the words on his/her sheet, study them for 2 minutes and then say them. Mark correct answers, incorrect answers or NR with a √ (Producing the tested sound only is to be considered as correct).

No	Untaught word	Tested sound	correct	incorrect	NR	No	Untaught word	Tested sound	correct	incorrect	NR
44	match	m				66	woke	o			
45	swam	s				67	thank	a			
46	flew	f				68	under	u			
47	lunch	l				69	next	e			
48	ran	r				70	sleep	sl			
49	wanted	n				71	swim	sw			
50	hole	h				72	skipping	sk			
51	visited	v				73	rescued	sc			
52	went	w				74	spider	sp			
53	stayed	y				75	stop	st			
54	quiz	q				76	assistant	ss			
55	Suzy	z				77	brush	br			
56	brought	b				78	fridge	fr			
57	colour	c				79	full	ll			
58	draft	d				80	pizza	zz			
59	get	g				81	giraffe	ff			
60	plan	p				82	gloves	gl			
61	print	t				83	blazer	bl			
62	jump	j				84	click	cl			
63	like	k				85	snacks	sn			
64	Oryx	x				86	small	sm			

65	visit	i				
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Adapted from <http://www.csus.edu/>

**Appendix B (Instruments Validity Check Committee)**

No	Name	Position & Place Of Work	Specialization
1	Dr. Mohammed Al-Okda	Asst. Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Curriculum
2	Dr. William Schreck	Asst. Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Curriculum
3	Dr. Mohammed Ismail Abu Rahma	Asst. Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Curriculum
4	Fawziyah Hamdan Al Zidjaliah	Director of Cycle One Office, Directorate of Curriculum, Ministry of Education, Oman	Curriculum
5	Christine Hourigan	English Materials writer, Directorate of Curriculum, Ministry of Education, Oman	Curriculum
6	Dr. Khamis Al Busa'idi	Asst. Professor, College of Arts & Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Applied Linguistics
7	Dr. Abdulmoneim Mahmood	Assoc. Professor, College of Arts & Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Applied Linguistics
8	Dr. Abduljabbar Al Sharafi	Asst. Professor, College of Arts & Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Applied Linguistics
9	Dr. Rahma Al Mahrooqia	Asst. Professor, College of Arts & Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Applied Linguistics
10	Dr. Balasubramanian	Asst. Professor, College of Arts & Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Applied Linguistics
11	Dr. Mohammed Akhtar Khan	Asst. Professor, Language Center, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Testing
12	Dr. Rima Mansoor Al Zidjalia	Asst. Professor, Language Center, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman	Testing
13	Anwar Salih Al Beloushi	Governorateal Supervisor, General Directorate of Education, North Batinah, Oman	English Language

## **The impact of positive views on language learning and pupils' construction of L2: Imagined communities, possible selves, and investment in language learning**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is based on data drawn from PhD research investigating the relationship between language learning, identity, culture, and motivation. It specifically describes how a group of Arab Muslim female English as second language (ESL) pupils are motivated by their imaginings of the English language speaking community. In Saudi Arabia the education system concentrates on teaching, while identity and social aspects have only been given little attention. I seek to redress this balance by exploring the impact of pupils' positive imaginings of the linguistic communities and of themselves in the future as members of those communities. I show how this investment works to promote their language learning. I use the concepts of imagined communities, possible selves and investment to illustrate the relationship between language and identity and how they impact each other. Further, I utilise sociocultural theory to explore how participants negotiate their identities as female Muslim Arabs who desire to be members of the imagined linguistic communities. In this presentation I illustrate my arguments using data drawn from focus group and one to one interviews, and students' text messages, photos and drawings.

**Keywords:** second language; motivation; sociolinguistics; identity; imagined communities, possible selves and investment.

**Introduction**

English is the only foreign language taught in public schools starting from the seventh year to year eleven in secondary school for more than 50 years (Al-Mutawa & Kailani, 1989); recently it has been taught during year 6, and from an age as early as kindergarten in most private schools. Furthermore, English is the language of instruction in all science university courses. Moreover, as a result of Saudi Arabia's economic leading role at the international level, the Saudi Arabian government has realized the great demand to learn English as a means of communication with the outside world. In addition, beside Arabic English is the only language used in hospitals, shops, and other public places, therefore, English could be regarded as a second language in Saudi Arabia. However, learning English in the Saudi context might clash with the mother tongue and the local cultures. This clash could result from certain social images created towards the target language culture and speakers, which as a result could demotivate language learners and discourage them to use English.

There is much debate surrounding the importance of motivation in language learning, and it has been agreed that motivation is one of the influential factors in ESL. For example, Ellis states that "SLA research... views motivation as a key factor in L2 learning" (1994, p. 508). Moreover, McDonough supports this argument, pointing out that the "motivation of the students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure in learning the language" (1986, p. 142). In addition, lack of motivation could reduce learners' attention and sometimes push them to misbehave, while motivated pupils are more likely to concentrate and behave to a certain extent (Spolsky, 1989). It is argued that pupils who are interested in language learning perform better than those who are not motivated (Chang & Lehman, 2002).

There is much debate about the relationship between motivation and attitude, especially in learning a second language. De Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2005) state that "teachers, learners and researchers will all agree that a high motivation and a positive attitude towards a second language and its community help second language learning" (p. 72). Attitude refers to the learners' positive and negative beliefs towards the target language speakers and their perception of their own local culture (Brown, 1973). Due to the belief that there is a direct correlation between learners' motivation and attitudes towards language learning, Triandis states that "attitude is defined as an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of action to a particular class of social situation" (1971, pp. 3-4).

Within the debate of defining the concept of motivation, some identified it as a learner's requirement to approach a goal (Gardner, 1985). For example, when motivating learners, it is important that they have a goal to look forward to as they learn a second language, such as getting a good job or gaining a high social status. This argument suggests that language learning could be a vehicle by which a learner achieves his or her goals. Dornyei (2005) also suggested a model that considers that the essential power that energises language learners are the images of their future selves as successful speakers of that language.

According to the debate above that empower the significance of motivation in language learning, I, therefore, argue for a motivating environment to teaching and learning, which integrates elements of learner's identity and imagination into the the learning and teaching process.

### Basic objectives of the study

The main aim of this paper is to discover factors that may impact ESL pupils' attitudes towards themselves in the future and towards the speakers of English on motivating their learning in the Saudi context. The objective of my study are as follows:

- To explore girls' attitudes towards English language and culture.
- To explore pupils' assumptions about English language and culture.
- To describe how learning of English is related to pupils' identity construction.
- To explore the influence of images and future possible selves on ESL that could motivate learners in the Saudi context.

### Literature review

#### *The relationship between identity and language*

Falout and Maruyama have argued that "People's identity inheres in their voices, spoken, written or signed and their identities are always present in what they say and in the understanding of what others say" (2004, p. 21). One can read others' identities, therefore, through their speech, their choice of words and their linguistic structures in the process of interaction whether in formal settings, as in schools and learning institutions, or in informal places, as in other daily life situations such as with friends and relatives. In addition, "it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time" (Norton, 2000, p. 5).

The relationship between foreign and second language learning and identity has been discussed in many studies (Adger, 1998; Block, 2007; De Fina & Schiffrin, 2006; Maybin, 2006; Pavlenko, 2004; Toohey, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). In this study I address the relationship between English learning and the Islamic and Saudi identities in the context of Saudi Arabia, where the first and the target language and culture might clash.

This concluded that people use language varieties to show their loyalty to a social group and display their identities through their speech.

#### *Bilingual speakers*

Speakers of more than one language can feel the effect of using more than one code in their identity construction. Also, bilingual speakers could use code switching to show their identities and their "linguistic variability must have effects not just on how people refer to and explicitly categorize states of affairs but also on what social acts people accomplish through talk" (Koven, 1998, p. 412). Garret (2007) argue that when bilinguals "use particular linguistic resources in a particular context or at particular moment of interaction" (p. 234), they purposely want to show their identity.

#### *Motivation*

The term motivation is complicated and varies according to the dynamic changes in a person's psychology, it is not an easy task to define this phenomenon (Dornyei & Tseng, 2009; Judge, 2011; Nishino, 2007). Harmer (1991) describes motivation as the 'internal drive' that pushes somebody to do something. If we think that our goal is worth doing and attractive for us, then we try to reach that goal; this is called 'the action driven by motivation' (p. 3). It has also been explained that learning and motivation are two fundamental components necessary to reach a

goal; learning enables us to obtain knowledge, and motivation attracts us to become involved in the learning process (Parsons, Hinson, & Brown, 2001). Moreover, motivation and attitudes could be identified as two vital, equivalent factors in the language-learning process. For example, Karahan states that "positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English" (2007, p. 84). To conclude, motivation is a complex concept to identify, however, it could be defined it as a factor that pushes people to do something.

#### *A teacher's role in motivating learners*

The role of the teacher in motivating learners has provoked a great deal of debate among language-learning researchers together with acknowledgement of its significance in watering pupils' learning roots and improving their performance (Dornyei, 1994; Ellis, 1994; Tanaka, 2005). Increasing learners' expectancy for success could also impact pupils' motivation, while reminding them of their failures and difficulties in language learning might negatively impact their enthusiasm and performance (Atkinson, Raynor, & Birch, 1974). In response to this theory, teachers should increase pupils' expectations for success and help them form positive images of themselves as future members of the community connected to the language such as encourage them to create images of themselves as language teachers in the future.

#### *The motivational self-system and parental encouragement*

Numerous studies stressed the importance of parental encouragement in enhancing learners' motivation (Gardner, 1985; Kormos & Csizer, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Williams & Burden, 1997). Many studies stressed the impact of parents on their children's self-system and future self-images (Kormos & Csizer, 2008; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). Self-images and role models are identified as the main factor in energising pupils' imagination of possible selves and thus their motivation. In addition, poor ideal second language images could result from a lack of social encouragement, which was sometimes caused by lack of role models or the conflict between the current social identities and one's possible selves (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Therefore, parents could play a significant role in facilitating their children's language learning by watering their positive images towards language and towards themselves as language speakers in the future.

#### *The Imagined Community*

The notion of imagined community was first described by Anderson (1991), who proposed that our sense of nationalism is a fantasy image because we create this vision without even meeting all of our nation's fellows. Various scholars developed this notion in relation to language learning, including Kanno, Norton (2003), and Wenger (1998). Norton (2001) developed 'the imagined communities' concept to understand the correlation between language learning and identity. She proposed that language learning takes place not only through our actual engagement in accessible communities, but also through our imagined views of the language communities that we do not ever meet. This theory refers to the learner's imaginative vision of target language speakers that they have not yet met and how this vision influences their identity construction and language learning (Norton, 2001). The imagined communities are defined as "groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination" (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 241).

Moreover, language teachers can play a significant role in transmitting cultural images to their learners and enhancing the construction of their imagined community, and “what kind of adult the students will grow up to be and what communities they will join in the future” (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 287).

#### ***Imagination to provoke a reaction: the possible selves***

The idea of ‘Possible selves’ (Markus & Nurius, 1986) is a theory that links language learners to how they envision themselves in the future. This theory is built on learner’ imagination of themselves, what they wish to become and what they are afraid of becoming as members of the imagined communities, which can inspire learners’ vision of possible selves. Dornyei (2005) claims that “possible selves are specific representations of one’s self in future states, involving thoughts, images, and senses, and are in many ways the manifestations or personalized carriers, of one’s goals and aspirations (and fears, of course)” (p. 99). This notion can motivate language learners to create a plan for their future by creating a balance between their goals and fears through imagining possible negative outcomes if they have not achieved their wishes (Markus & Ruvolo, 1989). Imagination can also provide teachers with opportunities to provoke learners’ reactions towards language learning by imagining their ‘possible selves’ (Markus & Nurius, 1986) in the future, and what they desire to be or what they are afraid of becoming.

#### ***Investment***

Simon (1992) argues that people struggle to fulfil their expectations; however, these expectations can be enhanced with the help of their imagination. Wenger (1998) also brought attention to the strong relationship between identity and imagination. He points out that imagination not only serves to encourage participation and engagement, but it also promotes a sense of belonging to those imagined groups. Hence, Wenger regards imagination as a way to create new visions of ones’ self, ‘possible selves’, and the world with no space or time boundaries. Norton (2001) proposes that imagined communities play a crucial role in second language learning through investment in communities that do not have the boundaries of the classroom. Therefore, imagined communities inspire a learner to create an imagined identity and possible selves for the future that facilitate investment in language learning and the struggle to meet these expectations.

This review of the literature about the importance of motivation in second and foreign language learning emphasised the impact of certain self-images on ESL through influencing pupils’ motivation. This also provides an overview of what research says about identity influence in language learners’ motivation.

I am intended to shed light on the interaction between females’ language learning and their identity construction, whether actual or imagined, within Saudi society, which may affect their language learning. Furthermore, it examines how learning English influences and is affected by Saudi females’ identity construction and how learners cope with their local ideologies and the new ideologies held by the English language.

In order to support my argument for the impact of pupils’ future expectations and attitudes towards the imagined community on motivating them and enhance their learning, it is important to provide a brief background about the context of teaching and learning English in Saudi.

**Methodology**

I discuss my research design, the methodology, and the methods used in the current study. I also explain the rationale beyond using a case study approach. Moreover, I discuss my research participants and then refer to the research ethics.

***Case study approach***

In order to match my study objectives, I adopted a case study method that involves one secondary school involving ESL pupils and teachers.

A case study can be explained as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). The choice of a case study approach is significant and appropriate for my study, as this approach is suitable for studying complex settings involving social aspects such as culture, gender and religion. Moreover, in order to answer why and how questions in my study.

***Research participants***

My study sample involved 132 second-year pupils from a secondary public school in Taif city and three Saudi English language teachers. I interviewed thirty pupils, divided into five groups of five to six pupils. In addition, I interviewed the three English teachers individually once or twice at the end of study according to their availability. I was the only person who had access to these data.

I describe the learning situation in Saudi Arabia and briefly define motivation in order to justify the argument being made. I then provide an overview of my study objectives and participants. After that, I discuss the relationship between language and identity for bilingual speakers. Then, I present arguments about categories of motivation and the role a teacher and parents may have in motivating learners and energise their self system. I also describes the concepts: imagined community, possible selves and investment with relevance to ESL. I then identify the main aim and objectives of my study followed by a discussion of the main findings. Finally, I conclude by summarising the main findings of my study.

***Methods of data collection***

According to Silverman (2013), a methodology encompasses the process of studying a certain phenomenon and selecting a case study, tools and methods used for data-gathering and analysis. On the other hand, ‘methods’ refers to procedures, tools and techniques utilized for data collection (Kaplan, 1973), including quantitative and qualitative techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, surveys and case studies. In this research I have used focus group and individual interviews, classroom observation, field notes, multimodal materials.

***Interviews***

In my view, the rationale of using interviews is because “interviews can reach the parts which other methods cannot reach ... allowing a researcher to investigate and prompt things that we cannot observe like interviewee’s thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives” (Wellington, 2000, p. 71).

I preferred to use pupil group interviews in order to “discover how interpretations were collectively constructed through talk and the interchange between respondents in the group situation” (Morley, 1980, p. 33). Also, this method is useful for reflecting the social realities of a cultural group and relevant to identify pupils’ implicit beliefs and thoughts about their English learning and how it might be affected by certain cultural practices whether inside school or in everyday life (Hughes & DuMont, 2002). Teachers’ one-to-one interviews were friendly conversations informally arranged according to the availability of the teachers.

### ***Multimodal materials***

In the last decade, multimodal sources have been increasingly used in qualitative research (Chaplin, 1994; Emmison & Smith, 2000; Guillemin, 2004; Mair & Kierans, 2007; S. Pink, 2001; Prosser, 1998) to argue that an image’s significance as a wall decoration goes beyond use as a tool to represent and display some aspects of the owner’s life (Morgan, 2001). Drawing as a research method is usually used as a complement to verbal means (Guillemin, 2004) that not only involves drawing, but evokes the drawer to express the conveyed meaning he/she intends.

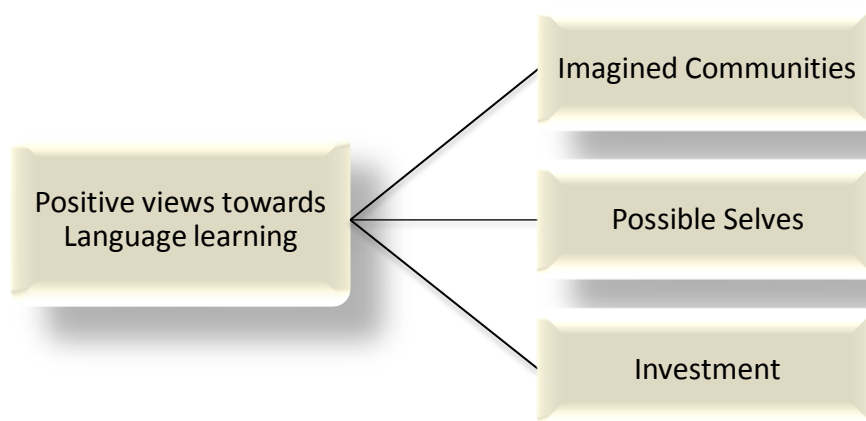
In this study, I used two forms of visual materials to support my research. The first form is photographs taken by me as the researcher. The second form includes drawings produced by respondents. The photographs do not reveal participants’ identities and have been ethically approved.

### **Discussion**

I aim to analyse and discuss how English language learners negotiate their identities as Muslim, Arab, and Saudi, who desire to be members of the global linguistic cultures. The origins of these positive views towards English and how they develop within the global cultural and social ideologies. It is also about the impact of beliefs towards English and its communities on the process of language learning. It discusses how positive views about English could facilitate language learning in the Saudi context, where culture and social principles play significant roles in everyday life.

In this study I discuss how some pupils could create idealised views towards English and its communities to invest in language learning by visualising idealised views of the linguistic communities and of themselves in the future as members of those communities. It also reflects on the origin of these idealised images and the role they play in language learning.

In order to promote my discussion I refer to three concepts as follows:



Positive views of language learning and its communities

These three notions clarify how learners adopt an idealised vision of the imagined communities and of themselves as part of those communities and the adjustment of those learners, who care about their own local ideologies and dream about participating in the language communities. These learners desire to select suitable language ideologies that do not contradict their local ideologies and help them to perceive English positively without any tension. These three concepts are post-structural and social concepts, which clarify that language learning is not only an exchange between speakers, but is a form of social interaction.

### Pupil interviews

The following quotations were typical examples of pupils' construction of their imaginative images of the linguistic communities that encouraged them to invest in language learning by imagining their possible selves in the future.

**Nouf:** I like English, and I like to use it while chatting with my friends. I need it to complete my education, and it is the language of modernity, globalisation, and communication. Most people use it. I like to watch English films – they are exciting. I have learned a lot about the Western people through those films. I wish to complete my university education abroad and communicate with those nice and respectful people there. People respect those people who study abroad. I know that it's not easy to leave your home country and study abroad, and I know it will be difficult, but this will add a lot of experience to my life, like exposure to new ways of life, new ideas, new cultures, and new experiences. I know that some cultural aspects might not suit me, but I can simply leave them if I don't like them. My mum always encourages me to learn English; she wishes to see me one day speaking English fluently. She always says that English is important.

(1-G S: pupil interview, April 2012)

Nouf identified five different goals that motivated her to learn English as follows:

- To complete her education.
- To be part of the modern and globalised world.
- To communicate with people around the world and discover new ways of life, new ideas and new cultures.
- To gain more social respect.
- To learn about other cultures.

Watching films provoked Nouf imagined communities and inspired her to invest in learning English by imagining herself in the future. She envisioned the language communities as an exciting, educated, modern, respectful people, which encouraged her to draw a picture of herself as a member of those communities in the future. Her image of herself as more respected, educated, and experienced person promoted her investment in English. These clear imagined images and future plan were deciding factors in Nouf's educational and professional identities, although, these visions were uncertain. In addition, her mother's wish and awareness of the significance of English was another motivating factor for Nouf to invest in English.

The difficult situation for language learners in Saudi Arabia was also exemplified by Amal, who tried to explain her own complicated experience. Amal's lack of social support, encouragement, openness, cooperation, and lack of sufficient space to use English pushed her to imagine herself as part of a fantasy environment that is more suitable to her wishes and needs.

**Amal:** English is freedom (laughing), polite people, Native English speakers will encourage us to learn English. They will be more open and deal with us in a good way cooperative, understandable, accept other opinions, no social restrictions. I will learn the language in only two weeks because I will speak and break my silence, I will be free from the social criticism. You can discuss and say what you want without being worried about anything, fabulous feeling. New culture and traditions and ways of life, but the most important thing is not to be influenced by their culture and change our own identity. But in Saudi if you use English, people think that you are arrogant. They will ignore you.

(2-1 L: pupil interview, May 2012)

She imagined idealised images of the linguistic communities to suit her needs and wishes. These fantasy pictures paved the way for her investing in language learning. She imagined the language communities as a hero who will free her from all the social restrictions. Opening the discussion by saying 'freedom' revealed her serious need for independence from social pressures such as:

- Social criticism and negative perceptions of English users as arrogant people.
- Silence and the lack of expression of opinions and needs.

Moreover, Amal regarded English as a gateway to travel and access other cultures and new ways of life. However, her love and sense of belonging to her local communities helped her draw some red lines between what she wishes to be in the future and what she wishes to keep for the future. She wishes to benefit from English to facilitate and support her future life, but not at the expense of her own local identities.

### Teachers' interviews

This idealised view of the imagined communities was also identified by teachers. The following two quotations were parts of the interviews with teachers 'D' and 'N' justifying why some pupils prefer to use some certain English words rather than Arabic.

**Teacher 'D':** Pupils speak English just to show off and to show that they are stylish. That's why pupils prefer to say some words in English, rather than in Arabic. For example, they like to say love in Arabic or wear a necklace with the word love written in English. This is in contrast to wearing a necklace with the word love in Arabic. One reason for this is that in Arabic, saying love is not accepted and restricted by rules in the culture.

(Teacher interview, May 2012)

Teacher 'D' stated that pupils perceive the linguistic communities as stylish, open, and romantic worlds. She exemplified that with the preference of wearing a necklace with the word 'love' in English rather than Arabic for two reasons:

- People have imagined images of the linguistic communities associated with love, openness, and modernity.
- The local culture does not prefer to express love explicitly as a way of showing modesty and politeness.

Using some English words is one of the strategies pupils use to invest in language to identify themselves as part of the open English culture.

**Teacher 'N':** Most pupils know certain words like smile, kiss, love, friendship, don't forget me, etc. Sometimes they ask me about the spelling of these words because they are more emotional at this age. And sometimes they are influenced by films like 'Titanic'. In fact, they learned many words from Titanic.

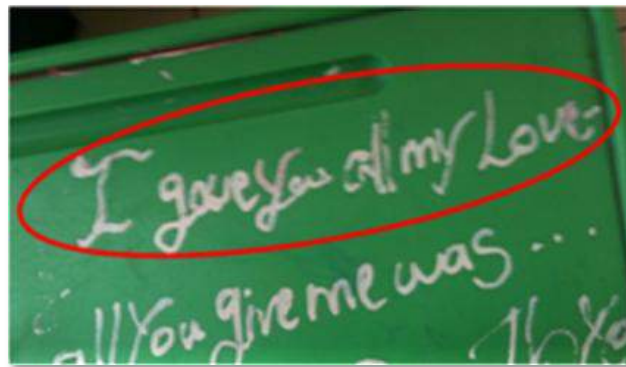
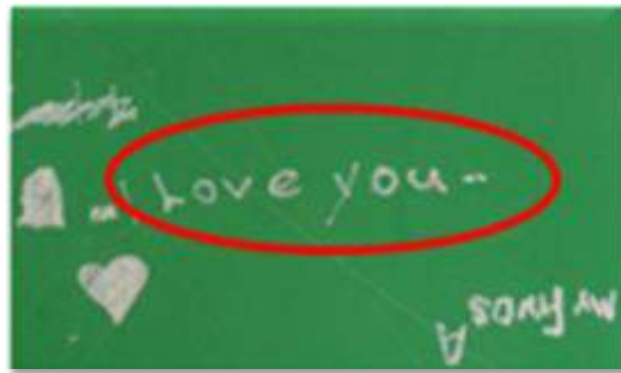
(Teacher interview, May 2012)

Teacher 'N' also discussed how some pupils were impacted by the Western culture by watching films such as 'Titanic' which shows Western people as extremely romantic. She explained how some pupils ask her about some English words that refer to love and feelings such as 'smile, kiss, love, friendship, don't forget me' illustrating their perception of English as a language of romantic people. She justified her pupil's situation based on the fact that they are teenagers, claiming that they usually care about feelings at this age.

### Multimodal data

Sometimes multimodal data such as pictures, images, and drawings can express real feelings and stories more than verbal words. This part of my data includes some photos taken by me or pupils, in addition to some drawings created by the pupil 'Samyah'. These pictures depict some unique creations of imagined communities by young female language learners in Saudi Arabia. These pictures illustrated how local and global identities merged together to construct unique second language identities within the Saudi context.

As I was carrying out my research, I discovered a difference between formal and informal language pupils use. I took the following photos of some pupils' writings on their desks; they are typical examples of pupils' creations of imagined communities.



Pupils' writings on their desks

I noticed here that pupils had sometimes inscribed aspects of their identity through English on the walls and desks of the school starting to live with the language around them and feel of belonging to the linguistic communities. These two photos show pupils' use of certain words that express emotions and feelings, such as love. The frequent use of this word indicated the romantic view pupils created towards the linguistic communities. Both photos show the actual use of the English word 'love' in English codes. Pupils used English codes to add a sense of prestige to their writing, as English is perceived in Saudi Arabia as a symbol of prestige. These photos narrated one tale in the English language in the Saudi context, in which learners try to identify themselves locally and globally within their current contexts.

Samyah also is one of those young learners who invested in language learning creating romantic idealised imagined pictures of the language communities. The following drawings were created by 'Samyah' as part of her everyday diary. Due to my strong relationship with this pupil, she expressed her willingness to participate with her diary even without my request.



### Samyah's drawings

These drawings identify an imagined image of a Western girl, who is stylish and romantic. Samyah preferred to express her love in English rather than Arabic according to the romantic image she created of the linguistic communities. Samyah tried to break her silence and search for a more expressive environment to express her emotions explicitly. These romantic imagined images about the linguistic communities motivated Samyah to imagine herself in the future as a romantic English speaker, which encouraged her to invest in English by identifying herself as part of these communities.

According to my data, second language learners themselves and those in the language communities suggested that pupils could create an idealised image of language users and of themselves in the future as being members of those communities.

Sometimes language learning can be facilitated because global ideologies have more power and domination over local ideologies, which leads to learners' willingness to become a member of the language communities creating an idealised view of those communities. In other cases, learners' ideologies might interact with each other to cautiously create a balance that fits with local and global ideologies. Sometimes, dissonance might occur due to contradictions between local and global ideologies, which can lead to a complete rejection of language learning.

This theme summarised the impact of positive and idealised views towards English on language learning, as Karahan stated that "positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English" (2007, p. 84). Karahan discussed the impact of idealised imagined communities on the construction of second language identity and on investing in language learning.

### Conclusion

In this study I explored the origins of imaginative views towards the English language and culture on language learning in relation to three concepts: imagined communities (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Wenger, 1998), possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), and investment Norton (2001). Some pupils' beliefs about the English language and culture appeared positive, impacted by positive imaginative views towards the English language and its speakers. My findings indicated that positive images towards speakers of English were a motivating factor in encouraging girls to learn and invest in English learning. According to my study, I suggested that

some pupils could create positive views towards English and its communities to invest in language learning by visualising idealised views of the linguistic communities and of themselves in the future as members of those communities. Perceiving speakers of English positively as exciting, educated, modern, respectful, gentle, attractive, powerful, clever, successful, and experienced elicited more social respect and seemed to inspire some of the Saudi girls in my sample to depict their future selves as members of those communities and pushed them to invest in English learning. These findings supported previous research into the effect of learners' beliefs about themselves and their linguistic communities on their language learning (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004).

Girls' perception of English as a tool to increase their self-confidence or to obtain a good future education and job seemed also to have an impact on pupils' encouragement to invest in English learning to approach these future goals. Furthermore, pupils' real-life models of speakers of English, such as a relative or a friend, appeared also to feed pupils' imagination of themselves in the future and energised them to invest in English learning. These findings also are in line with Gardener's (1985) and Simon's (1992) arguments regarding the effect of approaching a goal on motivating language learners and energising their investment in language learning.

My findings also suggested that girls' ideal and positive future images they created of themselves motivated them to invest in English learning. Also, pupils' desire to learn English to avoid certain negative results, such as academic failure or losing social respect, also encouraged them to learn English. These findings also reiterate other research that emphasises the significance of future self-images in enhancing language learning (Dornyei, 2005; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Markus & Ruvolo, 1989). This model argues that the ideal L2 self and the 'ought to' L2 self could be positively employed for the benefit of language learners. My findings are also in line with Higgins's theory (1987) of self-discrepancy that aims to decrease discrepancy by enhancing motivation and establishing a relationship between a person's current actual selves and his or her possible selves in the future.

Girls' practices of English usage also indicated the impact of imaginative views towards English on their attitudes and assumptions about the English language and culture. Pupils' romantic English writings on their classroom desks seemed to indicate that imaginative images towards the users of English had an impact on their perceptions of English as a language of love and romance. This perception also has been shown through girls' overuse of certain English words that relate to feelings such as the words 'love, miss you, sorry, and cute'. Samyah is one of the pupils involved in my study, her romantic drawings and English writings could also be a typical example of the beneficial use of visual materials in qualitative research. These drawings help me to discover pupils' hidden thoughts and feelings that are difficult for participants to express verbally (LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993; S. Pink, 2001; Sarah Pink, 2001; Prosser, 1998). These drawings are typical examples of the influential role imaginative pictures of the linguistic communities play on learners' beliefs about English language and its culture. Samyah's drawings and writing appeared to demonstrate her positive view of the English language and its users. These findings reiterate Karahan's (2007) statement that "positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English" (p. 84).

Saudi girls' positive imaginative views about English and its speakers or about their possible selves were not as simple as I had expected, since they were influenced by a complicated network of factors. One's positive possible self does not always lead to positive assumptions and attitudes towards language learning. These results are illustrated by the findings by Oyserman, who states that "a particular possible self may fail to sustain regulatory action because it conflicts with other parts of the self-concept" (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006, p. 118). Those pupils reacted negatively towards English learning despite their positive perceptions of the English language and culture. Therefore, there is a need for further deep research on investigating such situations in relation to the pupils' context and social attributes.

Teachers' narrations about their pupils indicated the impact of positive imaginative beliefs about the speakers of English on pupils' perceptions of English and its culture. Findings also appeared to indicate that teachers think that pupils are motivated to learn English because they believe the linguistic communities are romantic and stylish. Teachers also suggested that English learning could be facilitated if parents reduced their kids' fear of the English language. Moreover, teachers' narrations demonstrated the belief that some negative perceptions about the English language and culture held by some pupils' parents could impact learners' attitudes, practices, and assumptions about English and could sometimes demotivate them. These findings align with other studies (Gardner, 1985; Kormos & Csizer, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Williams & Burden, 1997) that emphasized the parents' role in motivating their children's language learning. These findings also are similar to those of Karahan (2007), who argues that positive beliefs towards language leads to positive actions towards learning that language. Findings also seemed to indicate that teachers emphasised the significant role parents play in inspiring kids' positive and negative images towards English language and culture.

### About the author

Salwa Al harthi is a language lecturer at King Saud University (Riyadh), Saudi Arabia. She has been teaching English for the past nine years. Currently, she is a Ph.D. student at the University of Sheffield, UK. Salwa's main research interests include: learner motivation, e-learning, sociolinguistics, language and gender, communicative and interactive English language teaching.

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## Optimality of Using Multiple Translation Procedures for Good Translations of Formal Written Texts

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### Abstract

This paper reports on a study that suggests the use of translation procedures next to the overall translation method for the achievement of good translation. Specifically, the study attempts to give insights into the optimality of using translation procedures that work alongside of major translation methods accounting for the advantages of these procedures in achieving fidelity. The study adopted a qualitative method that was based on discussion and critical analysis of different texts in English and Arabic. English and Arabic texts were chosen from different areas of knowledge for diversity purpose. English and Arabic languages operate interchangeably as source and target languages in the paper. Analysis reveals that literal translation method forms a major method in transferring the meaning of the source language into the target language. The use of multiple translation procedures has a crucial role maintaining referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original text. The involvement of different translation procedures makes language and culture differences closer. Adaptation procedure will help to spread the neutrality of loan words forming a strategy which serves to boost translation.

**Key words:** Fidelity, translation procedure, translation method, target language, source language, source text, target text

## 1. Introduction

This paper investigates the use of multiple translation procedures together with the overall translation methods that are used in transferring source texts into target texts, as an effective tactic for the achievement of good translation. Arguably, multiple procedures such as direct, indirect, equivalence, naturalization, semantic, metaphorical, etc., (Ghazala 2012 and Newmark 1981) can work jointly in the same target text providing reasonable fidelity to such texts. However, the use of multiple procedures depends on necessity; where necessity is determined by the nature of source and target texts. The nature of texts refers to issues such as linguistic components, diversity of content and context, etc. Therefore, the involvement of multiple translation procedures forms a crucial strategy for translators to do successful translation. Many recent translations are described as inadequate. Inadequacy probably, occurs because of the absence of the right translation procedures or because the use of a single translation procedure is not sufficient enough for the conveyance of the exact source meaning into the target language. For example, word-for-word translation method per se is not always enough for the translation of certain source texts since it has some drawbacks. <sup>1</sup>The use of such translation method requires at least one or more translation procedures that work beside it in transferring the source text. The task of translation will become more complicated when it deals with literary texts. Literary texts may have complex linguistic and stylistic natures which require the use of more than one translation procedure that meets such complexity. According to Ghazala (2012) the nature of language grammar, lexical words, tense, style, etc., always influences the types of translation procedures or methods to be used. Thus, a method /procedure that is acceptable and practical in the translation of a certain text might not be sufficient, acceptable or practical for another one.

Specifically, this paper attempts to investigate the optimality of using multiple translation procedures in formal written texts. Firstly, because we can observe that in many domains of our life, translated texts; the translation of novel, story, poem, etc., are becoming a fundamental part of literature that are frequently used by many specialists who repeatedly use or may even quote from these texts in their writings. Therefore, there is a need for the development of good translation that serves this purpose on international scale. This paper serves as a volunteer study in the field of translation in an attempt to provide contribution to good translation of written texts. Secondly, some translation problems involving linguistic, stylistic, cultural matters might occur due to differences between SL and TL texts leaving strong influence on translation loyalty. Specifically, there are particular difficulties such as imperfections, grammatical errors, cohesion problems, the presence of untranslatable words in the SL text, as well as the presence of words with ambiguous interpretations. Such problems require us to use multiple translation procedures which we assume to be the optimal option of good translation. Thirdly, there is a global need for mutual understanding that increases more and more everyday. The need arises due to the desire of many companies and individual seeking comparable information across international and cultural borders. The improvement of translation instrument will effectively serve this goal.

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<sup>1</sup> Word for word translation focuses on transferring the primary meaning of the source text ignoring a great deal of its depth. It does not pay much attention to linguistic/grammatical differences (e.g. word order, agreement, etc.) between the two languages, which results in spoiling the accuracy of the meaning. Word for word translation often disrespects language related issues such as identity, context culture, etc., of the target language making it a subject to the source language (Ghazala 2012)

This paper attempts to provide insights into the optimality of using multiple translation procedures in written texts.

## 2. Definitions of translation

Ghazala (2012) describes translation as an accurate and complete transfer of a message expressed in the source language (SL) into its equivalent in the target language (TL). Ghazala provides four areas which represent subject of translation. These include (i) word/phrase with equivalents in Arabic, (ii) new words with no equivalents in Arabic, words/terms descending from foreign languages but adapted to Arabic and (iii) foreign words that are used in Arabic but preserving their original pronunciation. However, according to Newmark (1981) translation is a sort of craft where a translator transfers the same content of a written text or statement communicated in the source language (SL) into its equivalent in the target language (TL).

It is possible to conclude that "translation" is viewed as a communicative activity that works to shift the meaning of a spoken or written discourse from a language into another language, while adequately maintaining the same meaning and linguistic features of such a discourse.

## 3. Types of translation methods

There are different types of translation methods as research in translation domain shows. Classification of these methods comes as a result of various attempts that have been done by translators and researchers who are concerned with translation to find an effective method of translation. The final result of their account arrived at different types of translation methods which will be the subject to be discussed in the next sections.

**Literal translation:** This refers to direct translation of words, phrases, clauses, sentences and whole texts. Literal translation method targets the denotative meaning of a message conveying it from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). Literal translation method works effectively where there is correspondence between the SL and TL (Hajjaj, 2009.; Ghazala, 2013; Newman 1981).

**Meaning or semantic translation:** Meaning translation is a type of literal translation. This type of translation is interested in translating the meaning of the source language into the target language. It focuses on the adequacy of the text giving care to how closely, accurately and completely the meaning is conveyed. Meaning translation pays attention to issues such as word order, grammar, etc. (Hajjaj 2009 and Ghazala 2012).

**Functional Equivalence Translation:** This refers to the translation of words, phrases, clauses and sentences in a way that performs the function of the source item/s. Thus, this method of translation seeks an equivalence that describes the same meaning (effect) in the source language by a different situation in the target language (Alabbasi 2010, Hajjaj 2009, Newmark 1988).

**Context translation:** This method considers contextual factors such as texts, audiences and translators. Supporters of this method believe that in translating some texts like religious, legal, scientific texts, translators need to focus on how official, descent or scientific the translations of these texts are. Thus, context translation is interested merely in the formality of the texts (Hajjaj, 2009).

**Faithful translation:** This method of translation focuses on conveying the exact contextual meaning of source language (SL) into the target language (TL) carefully paying attention to grammatical differences. Faithful translation even considers loyalty to cultural constraints and the degree of abnormality (deviation from the norm) in translation (Nemmark, 1988).

**Communicative translation:** This method attempts to translate the full message of the source language into target language preserving understandability and acceptability of the text to readers. The communicative translation method can work well in literary texts where many metaphorical use of language is very common (Nemark, 1988).

#### 4. Translation methods vs. translation procedures

Research in translation draws distinctions between translation methods and translation procedures. Firstly, translation methods refer to an overall tactic that translators employ throughout the whole text; i.e., an approach that, generally, fits well texts in the source and target languages. Secondly, translation procedures refer to the strategy which translators apply within a text dealing with its components; e.g., expressions, sentences, phrases, structure, idioms, etc. Translation procedures include two types. The first type is referred to as direct or literal procedures which work when the structural and conceptual elements of the source language correspond to those of the target language. Direct/literal procedures include borrowing (loan words, *claque*/ through-translation (collocations, names of organizations, etc.), and literal translation. The second type is known as indirect (oblique) translation procedure which works well when there is no way to directly transfer the structure and conceptual elements of the SL into TL. Therefore, some kinds of meaning alterations, grammar and stylistics adaptation are needed. Translation procedures include transposition, modulation, equivalence, functional equivalence, compensation, transference/ transliteration (e.g., in words such *décor*, *coup*, etc). Naturalization / adaptation is more developed translation procedure that adapts the pronunciation of loan words and their morphology to those of the target language (Ordudari 2007, Munday 2001, Newman 1988).

Importantly, Ordudari (2007) refers to translation methods as global strategies while he refers translation procedures as local strategies. In distinction between global and local translation strategies Bell (1998) and Jaaskelainen (2005) refer to translation methods as global strategies and procedures as local strategies explaining that global strategies deal with the entire text while local strategies deal with text's components.

#### 5. Literature review

There is little research in translation problems concerning the optimality of using multiple procedures in translating words, idioms and sentences within texts that do not have correspondences in the target texts. Arguably, one of the serious problems in translation is that some translators delete and often avoid translating words, idioms and sentences, etc., which do not correspond to the overall translation method of a given text. This is probably because they do not find equivalent/s in the target language or because they have difficulty translating some linguistic components in source texts into target texts. Phenomena such as these are very common in the field of translation. The side effects of elimination, in this way, might be a sort of unfaithfulness in the field of translation, which causes the source text to lose important parts. The problem might be solved if such translators think of using different translation procedures than deleting or avoiding translating parts of the text concerned.

In distinction between global and local translation strategies, Bell (1998) and Jaaskelainen (2005) explain that the idea of global and local translation strategies emerges due to various types of translation problems that the manipulation of different translation procedures/ strategies within texts. In this point, Bell comes into agreement with Ordudari (2007) and Krings (1986)

who refer to translation strategy (procedures) as a sort of conscious tricks which are used to solve solid translation problems.

The influence of cultural differences between the source and target languages has been a subject of discussion in translation research which might bring about translation problems. According to Behzad and Salmani (2013) combination of cultural items and beliefs of the nations differ from the language to language as each community has its own peculiarities, a process that forms a translation challenge. This challenge occurs because transferring such cultural items and beliefs is dependent on the degree of sharing these beliefs and cultural items between the two languages. Similar problems often trigger when translation involves the translation of names, abbreviations/acronyms, loan words, etc., as parts of cultural components. In this context, the translator often finds the use of a cultural transliteration procedure more optimal than a cultural equivalent procedure. James (2005) confirms that linguistics and culture are inseparable and have the same importance for translation implications. James explains that differences between culture and language in SL and TL might cause translation difficulties, while parallel in culture often provides a common understanding despite significant formal shifts in the translation.

Another translation problem has to do with the involvement of the correct conceptual equivalence when data is transferred from a language to another. This problem occurs because any language utterance has sets of semantic values. An expression that exists in the source text may carry a meaning that does not exactly have the same meaning as that of the target text. If a set of utterances, for example, is used mistakenly it might spoil the meaning of the source text. This problem appears in issues such as research and questionnaire translation, etc. (see Temple 1997).

## 6. Methods

A qualitative method was used in conducting the study. The qualitative method is assumed to be compatible in analyzing the results that come in the form of categories, ideas, etc. So, results manipulation is based on critical analysis and discussion in which the study presents, discusses and provides conclusions (see Fraenkel and Wallen 2006). It is assumed that there is a need for the use of more than one translation procedure in translation process. That is, the situation often requires the use of more than one translation procedures which depend on the text nature. Therefore, we expect to use multiple translation procedures along with the translation methods dominating the whole text. These procedures include procedures such as direct, indirect, meaning, naturalization, functional equivalence procedures, and etc. Importantly, descriptive statistics is involved in computing the percentage of corresponding and non-corresponding words/expressions of source texts, a tool which has been adopted to strengthen data presentation.

## 7. Material used

There are two languages that will be involved in this study. These encompass English and Arabic, which are used interchangeably as source and target languages. Moreover, the material has been written by native speakers. This means both English and Arabic texts have been written by the native speakers of these languages. Therefore, the study does not expect any problem regarding the accuracy of any language of these texts from the side of their writers. The study encompasses a number of formal written sample texts covering different fields of knowledge. They cover topics from humanities and science. In detail, there are four source texts comprising the field of education, literature, conversion of saline water and geographical information systems, respectively, which are written in English or Arabic. Linguistically, the texts are well chosen to meet the purpose of the study.

## 8. Presentation and Discussion

### 8.1 Introduction

The study includes 4 passages that function as source/target texts. The source and target languages are English and Arabic. Importantly, translation shifts from Arabic to English and vice versa. This means the two languages function interchangeably (taking turn) as source and target languages. In terms of material selection, the selected texts represent appropriate materials because the textual, linguistic and cultural components meet the purpose of the study at issue. Their components encompass written passages that have been chosen from various fields of knowledge written in different language styles. This variety requires the use of different translation procedures. In each section there are two texts; source and target texts. Importantly, to make life easier for readers both the source and target texts match each other in terms of paragraph number and organization. Moreover, words, expressions and sentences, etc., indicating different translation procedures are underlined and marked with low case numbers in the SL texts but in the TL texts footnotes including such expressions and sentences have been inserted so that readers reach them easily.

### 8.2 Source Text

Education in the United States is available to everyone, but not all schools are equal. Public primary and secondary schools are free for everyone; there is no tuition.<sup>1</sup> Almost 80 percent of all Americans are high school graduates. Students themselves decide if they want college preparatory or vocational classes in high school; no national exams determines this.<sup>2</sup> Higher education is not free, but it is available to almost anyone, and about 60 percent of all high school graduates attend college or university. Older people have the opportunity to attend college, too, because is Americans believe that 'you are never too old to learn'<sup>3</sup> (quoted from Hartmann and Kirn 2007)

### 8.3 Target text

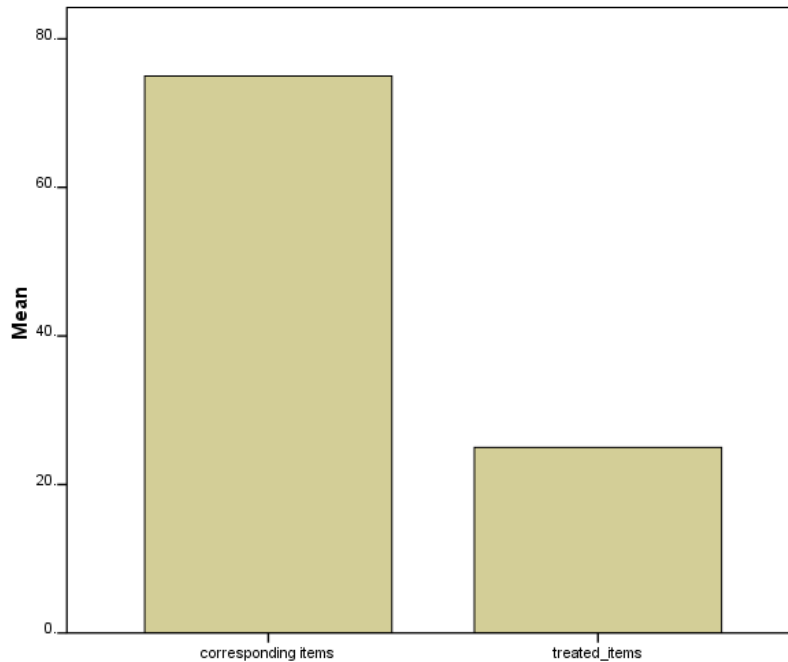
التعليم في الولايات المتحدة متاح لكل شخص , لكن ليس كل المدارس متساوية . فللمدارس العامة الابتدائية و الثانوية متاحة مجاناً لكل حيث لا توجد رسوم دراسية<sup>2</sup> . و ما يقارب الثمانين بالمائة من جملة الامريكيين هم عبارة عن خريجين مدارس عليا . و الطلاب وحدهم هم الذين يقررون مسارهم التعليمي ان كانوا يريدون. تاهيل جامعي او مهني و هم بالمدارس العليا بما انه لا توجد اختبارات قومية تحدد ذلك<sup>3</sup> . اما التعليم العالي فليس مجانيا و لكنه متاح تقريبا لكل فرد حيث ان نسبة 60% من جملة خريجي المدارس تلتحق بكليات او جامعات . حتى كبار السن لديهم الفرصة للالتحاق بالتعليم الجامعي وذلك لان الامريكيين يؤمنون بانه لاكبير على التعليم<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> tuition

<sup>3</sup> Students themselves decide if they want college preparatory or vocational classes in high school; no national exams determines this

<sup>4</sup> 'you are never too old to learn'

Figure 1. Corresponding language items (words) and treated items in 8.2 Source text



As figure 1 shows that generally the most dominating translation method is the literal method. Correspondence covers the majority of words, and sentences of the two texts; around 75% SL words correspond to words in TL text. However, 25% of such the words in the ST show no correspondence, which requires the use of translation procedures. For this reason the use of translation procedures/ strategies seems to be optimal. The study used the indirect procedure to translate the English word 'tuition' as (رسوم دراسية: line 3) as a better equivalence for Arabic phrase. Moreover, meaning translation procedure was used in translating the English sentence (lines 3, 4, and 5) as (الطلاب وحدهم هم الذين يقررون مسارهم التعليمي ان كانوا يريدون. تاهيلا جامعييا او مهنييا و هم ) (line 5 and 6), while a functional equivalence translation procedure was used in translating the proverb in lines (7 and 8) into Arabic (8 and 9 (لاكبير على التعليم). Table 1 provides summary of the procedures used.

Table 1. A summary of translation procedures used in transferring SL items into TL items.

No.	SL Item	TL Item	Procedure/s used
1-	tuition.	رسوم دراسية	Functional equivalence
2-	Students themselves decide if they want college preparatory or vocational classes in high school; no national exams determines this	الطلاب وحدهم هم الذين يقررون مسارهم التعليمي ان كانوا يريدون , تاهيل جامعي او مهني و هم بالمدارس العليا بما انه لاتوجد اختبارات قومية تحدد ذلك	Meaning
3-	you are never too old to learn	لاكبير على التعليم	Functional equivalence

The use of various translation procedures in the target text above probably contribute to the achievement of good transfer of meaning preserving uniformity while sticking to the origin in different ways. The use of translation procedures maintains the meaning of words, phrases and sentences that do contravene the rule of literal translation method as a global strategy. Moreover, the use of such translation procedures fits the source and target texts well helping translators avoid the phenomenon of adopting incorrect and even inappropriate scientific expressions as equivalents to those in the TL (see Temple, 1997). On the other hand, the ignorance of the appropriate translation procedure probably results in translation problems due to the process of overgeneralization which is extremely used by translators as a trick to get out of equivalence problems in translation.

#### 8.4 Source text

She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue.<sup>5</sup> Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired. Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses. One time there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people's children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses in it not like their little brown houses but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field -- the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, and little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters.<sup>6</sup> Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick.<sup>7</sup> But usually little Keogh used to keep nix and call out when he saw her father coming. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then.<sup>8</sup> Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home. (Reed, Pietrzak and Widger; 2012)

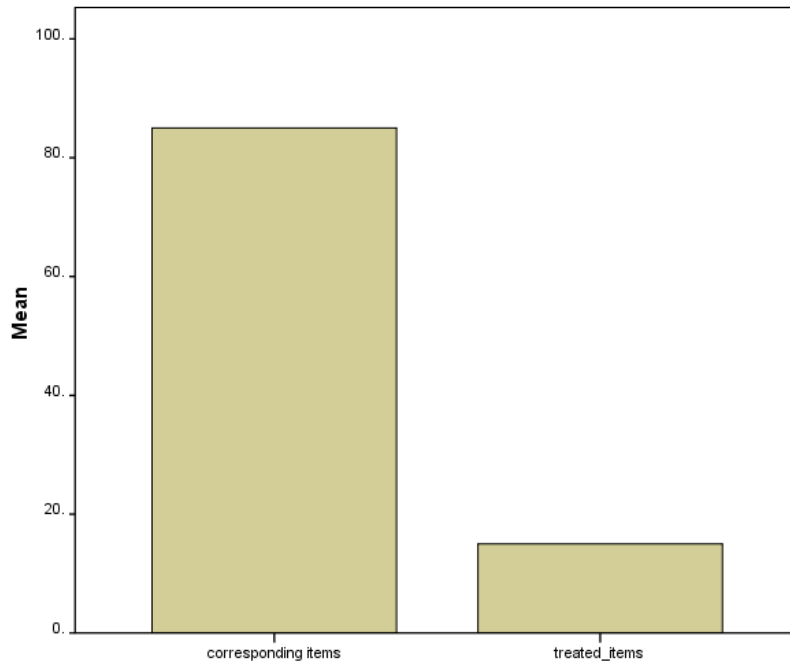
#### 8.5 Target Text

جلست لدى النافذة تشاهد المساء و هو يرخى سدوله على الطريق رويدا رويدا , حيث مدت راسها بين الستائر وقد غمرتها رائحة نبة الكريبتون المغبرة, لكنها كانت متعبة اذ تفعل ذلك. تنظر الى الطريق الذى يمر به قليل من الناس. اما ذلك الرجل الذى خرج من المنزل الاخير على الطريق , فها هو يمر فى طريقه الى منزله , حيث سمعت خطاه تنقر على طول ارضية الرصيف الصلبة ثم تمشى فوق سطح هش عند ذلك الممر والذى يقع قبل تلك المنازل الجديدة الحمراء بقليل. فقد كان هناك فى فترة من الزمان حقل فى هذه المنطقة والذى كانوا يلعبون فيه كل مساء مع بقية الاطفال ثم اشتراه رجل من بلفاست وشيد عليه منازل لا تشبه منازلهم الصغيرة السمرء, اذ انها منازل بنيت من طوب ناصع, و ذات سقف ساطعة. اطفال ذلك الطريق او الاطفال الذين كانوا فى ذلك الطريق هم ديفنس, وترز, تزي دنز و كيبيف الضربير و هى و اخوانها و اخواتها. ارنست لم يكن يلعب معهم لانه كبير ورشد. تذكر كيف كان والدها احيانا يخرجهم من الحقل مستخدما عصاة له من الخوخ الشوكى . كيبيف الصغير كان كعادته يقف جانبا ولا يلعب معنا ولكنه يصرخ منبها ايانا عندما يرى ابي قادما , كم كانوا سعداء بذلك ! ابوها لم يكن سيئا حينئذ و امها كانت على قيد الحياة, الا ان ذلك كان فى زمان غابر , فقد كبرت هى الان و اخوانها و اخواتها وماتت

يرخى سدوله على الطريق رويدا رويدا  
اطفال ذلك الطريق او الاطفال الذين كانوا فى ذلك الطريق ديفنس, وترز دنز و كيبيف.<sup>6</sup>  
تذكر كيف.<sup>7</sup>  
كم كانوا سعداء.<sup>8</sup>

امها. اما تيزى دينز فقد مات هو الاخر بينما رجعت عائلة و تزي الى انجلترا. تغير كل شى. فهى الان تخطط للذهاب بعيدا مثل الاخرين تاركة ماواها.

Figure 2. Corresponding language items (words) and treated items 8.4 Source text



As figure 2 shows, literal translation method represents the overall method which has been used in translating roughly most parts of the text. This is because it works well in transferring the meaning of literal texts; total mean of corresponding words equals 85%. However, around 15% of words and phrases do not correspond to literal translation method a problem which requires the use of some translation procedures. These procedures include metaphorical procedure *يرخى* (سدوله). In metaphorical procedure the purpose is to make the meaning of a word or phrase or any expression in this text clearer. But paraphrase translation procedure which is represented by examples such as (ماواها < او الاطفال الذين كانوا فى ذلك الطريق < رويدا رويدا >.) has been operated to give detailed description making clearer the meaning. Adaptation/natural procedure has been involved in transferring some source language items (ارنست, ديفنس, وتزي دنز و كيبف) Adaptation procedure sounds interesting since the matter has to do with names. For more detail, study the summary in table 2.

Table 2. Summary of translation procedures used in transferring SL items into TL items

No.	SL Item	TL Item	Procedure/s used
1-	Invade.....	يرخى سدوله	A metaphorical procedure
2-	-----	رويدا رويدا	Paraphrase
		تنظر الى الطريق الذى	Paraphrase
	crunching on the cinder path	تمشى فوق سطح هش	Paraphrase
3-	Cretonne	الكريبتون	Adaptation/ natural
	Before the new red houses	قيل تلك المنازل الجديدة الحمراء <u>بقليل</u>	Paraphrase

	the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, Keogh, Ernest	هم ديفنس, وتزى دنز كيبيف, ارنست	Adaptation/natural
4-	The children of the avenue	اطفال ذلك الطريق او الاطفال الذين كانوا فى ذلك الطريق	Paraphrase
5-	.....	تذكر كيف	Lexical gap
6-	.....	كم كانوا سعداء بذلك	Lexical gap

To provide more discussion on the previously mentioned points, it is possible to claim that translation procedures that have been used in this text successfully transferred the source meaning. Metaphorical procedure makes clear expressions that do not have correspondences in the target language. This appears in an example such as, ".....watching the evening invade the avenue" where the meaning intended is "...enter slowly ". On the same line, paraphrase translation procedure has been used as a strategy to clarify expressions. For example, being translated into Arabic an expression like "the children of the avenue." requires some illumination so that readers can understand which children the author refers to. Adaptation and lexical gap procedures also represent translation procedures that have been adopted in the transfer of the source English text into Arabic texts. The former is intended to treat names of people through naturalization while latter is intended to fill gaps. The discussion in this context is supported by the findings of (Salas 2000), in which Salas reports that the use of translation procedures (specific approaches) represents a good solution for some translation problems.

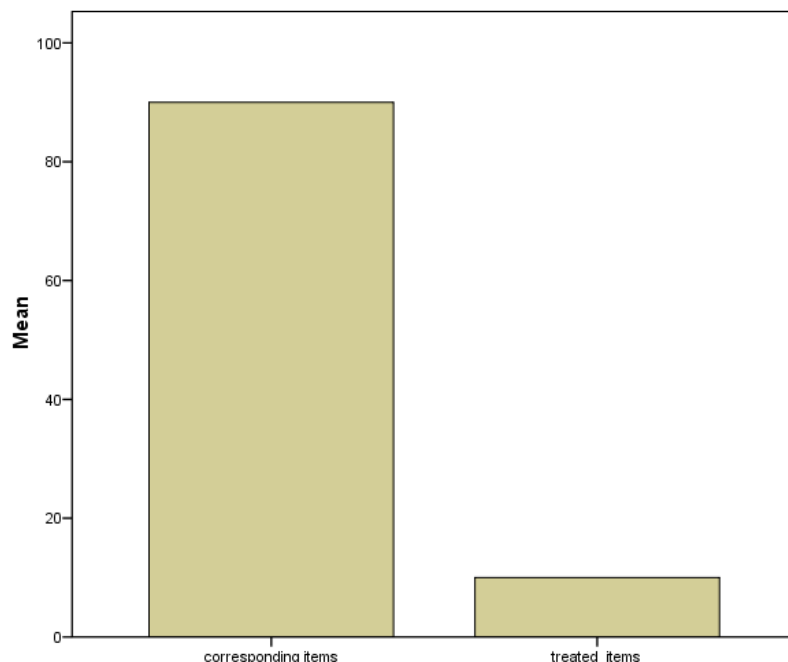
### 8.6 Source Text-C

لقد ظهرت حديثا صناعة تحويل المياه الملحة الى مياه عذبة وصالحة للشرب, او تقليل نسبة الاملاح بها حتى يمكن استعمالها فى الصناعة و الزراعة. وقد استعملت فى ذلك عدة طرق ناجحة منها طريقة تقطير الماء وذلك بالتبخير ثم تحويل البخار الى ماء مقطر بتعريضه الى لدرجات حرارة منخفضة او لضغوط عالية. وبالطبع فان الماء الناتج من التقطير يكون مكتمل العذوبة اى انه تم التخلص من جميع الاملاح الموجودة به. وفى طرق اخرى تعامل المياه الملحة بحيث تقلل درجة تركيز الاملاح لتكون صالحة لاستعمال معين, و عادة ما تكون المياه المستعملة مياه جوفية ذات درجات ملوحة كبيرة لاتصلح للاستعمال الانسانى او الصناعى او الزراعى (Abdelaziz, 1980).

### 8.7 Target text

The industry of saline water conversion has currently appeared converting saline water into fresh water or reducing the ratio of salt in it so that it can be usable in industry and agriculture. In this concern, a number of successful methods have been used one of which is water dripping that occurs by means of vaporization and then converting vapor into dripped water exposing it to low temperature or to high pressure. Absolutely, water treated by dripping will be fully fresh; i.e., there is an extraction of all salt existing in it. Other methods treat saline water in a way as to reduce the degree of salt concentration in order that it becomes usable for certain purposes. Usually the water used, herein, is underground water with immense degrees of salt which is not clean for use by man, in industry or agriculture.

Figure 3. Corresponding language items (words) and treated items 8.6 Source text



As the two texts show literal translation method forms the most dominant translation method to be used in this context for transferring the meaning of the source text 8.6. There are wide correspondences between SL and TL that arrives at 90%, while only 10% of the text components do not correspond. Therefore, some translation procedures are involved in transferring parts of the source text maintaining the meaning of target text. These include paraphrase, meaning procedures and structural procedures (illustration: table 3).

Table 3. Summary of translation procedures used in transferring SL items into TL items

No.	SL Item	TL Item	Procedure/s used
1-	في ذلك.....	In this concern	Paraphrasing
2-	الماء الناتج	Water treated	Meaning
3-	لاستعمال معين	Certain purposes	Meaning
	.....	Herein	Lexical gap

Some words and phrases that do not correspond to the general translation method in the target text they require certain translation procedures that contribute to accomplishment of the meaning of the text. The words and phrases which have been used in the source text draw attention to the fact that some Arabic expressions often require the involvement of different translation procedures. This makes it possible to describe the involvement of such paraphrases, meaning and lexical gap procedures an ultimate strategy. They fully maintain the meaning of the whole target improving several parts in the text.

### 8.8 Source Text

الهدف الاساسي لهذه الدراسة هو السعي لحل مشكلة متجذرة وقديمة في المجتمعات الزراعية الرعوية بولاية القضارف وذلك من خلال الاستفادة من التقانات الحديثة المتطورة التي توفرها نظم المعلومات الجغرافية كوسيلة غير تقليدية تستند علي اساليب آلية دقيقة و سريعة في تحليل البيانات المكانية و ربطها بالبيانات الوصفية الامر الذي يساعدنا علي دراسة واقع الحال للمسارات الرعوية بالولاية ومدى تداخلها مع المشاريع الزراعية والعناصر الاخرى المؤثرة علي موضوع الدراسة . تم جمع بيانات مكانية و بيانات وصفية من مصادر متعددة عن عناصر الدراسة وتم اجراء تحليل المتطلبات و تصميم نظام معلومات جغرافي للوصول لحلول ملائمة للمشكلة فتم توظيف نظام قاعدة بيانات اوركل (10ق) لتصميم قاعدة البيانات الوصفية لهذا النظام و ربطها مع برنامج (Arc GIS 9.3) الذي تم استخدامه لتكوين طبقات هذه العناصر و اجراء التحليلات المكانية عليها ولتصميم واجهات النظام المقترح تم استخدام لغة ( جافا سيرفر بيج ) لذا يعتبر النظام احد تطبيقات جافا وب . لغرض تحقيق اهداف الدراسة تم تشغيل واختبار النظام المقترح.

وكانت أهم النتائج هي : توزع المساحات المزروعة بالمحاصيل حوالي (7) مليون فدان تركزت في جنوب و وسط ولاية القضارف وان المسارات الرعوية الحالية هي (8) مسارات رعوية تقطع معظم هذه المساحات الزراعية الولاية الامسار واحد فقط. و تمثل المساحة التي تقطعها المسارات الرعوية من جملة المساحات الرعوية حوالي (15000) فدان . كما أثبتت الدراسة وجود تعدد واضح علي مسارات الرعي وطمس لمعالمها في كثير من المناطق الزراعية كما يوجد تداخل كبير بين المشاريع الزراعية فيما بينها وبين المسارات الرعوية (quoted from Mohammed 2013).

### 8.9 Target Text

The final objective of this study is to seek a solution for an old and deeply rooted problem, in the agricultural and herding communities at Gadarif state through the utility of the means of modern technologies. Modern technologies comprise geographical information systems that form an unconventional means based on accurate spatial data analysis linking it to descriptive data. These processes help us study the reality of pastoral tracks in Gadarif state in relation to agricultural lands and other influencing targeted factors. Spatial, statistical and descriptive data was collected from different sources and requirements analysis was conducted and a geographical information system was designed to reach appropriate solutions for the problem at issue. Therefore, Oracle 10g<sup>2</sup> was designed using a descriptive data base linking it to (Arc GIC 9.3) system which was used to compose layers of the target elements playing the spatial analyses on it. For interfaces design of the suggested system, Java Server Page (JSP) language<sup>10</sup> was used; the system under concern is considered as one of Java web applications.<sup>11</sup>

The most important of the study are that (i) A cultivated areas of about 7 million hectares should be distributed Southern and central Gadarif state, and that the 8 recent livestock routes should pass through such cultivated areas except one route. The area occupied by livestock routes is approximately 1500 hectares out of the total area assigned for livestock. The study revealed a clear intrusion on the grazing routes, which are surrounded by agricultural areas occurs making blur the border lines. There is also a big overlap involving the agricultural projects themselves from one side, and the pastoral tracks from the other.<sup>12</sup>

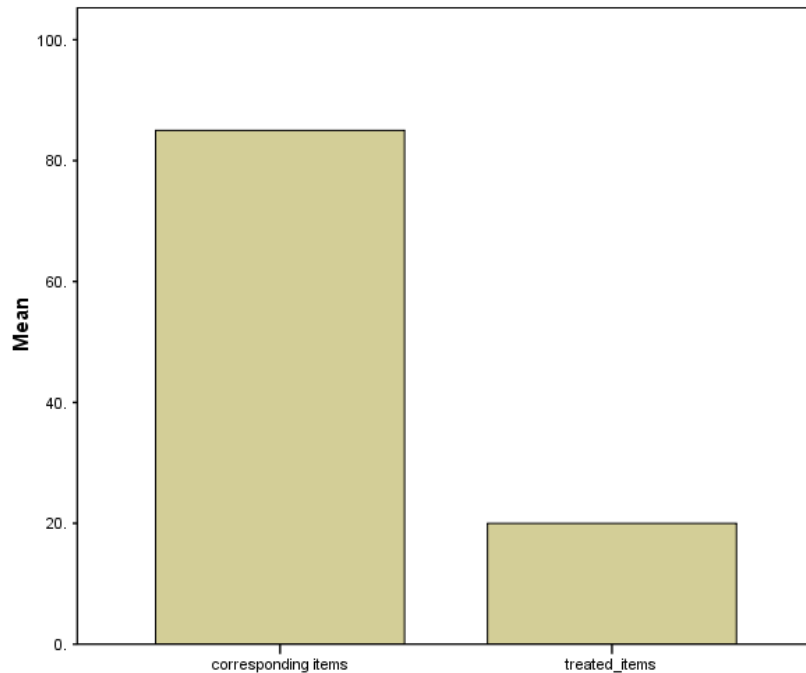
<sup>9</sup> اوركل (10ق)

<sup>10</sup> ( جافا سيرفر بيج )

<sup>11</sup> تطبيقات جافا وب

<sup>12</sup> كما أثبتت الدراسة وجود تعدي واضح علي مسارات الرعي وطمس لمعالمها في كثير من المناطق الزراعية كما يوجد تداخل كبير بين المشاريع الزراعية فيما بينها وبين المسارات الرعوية.

Figure 4. Corresponding language items (words) and treated items in 8.8 Source text



As figure 4 shows, generally, the overall appropriate translation method in this text is a literal translation method. Word-for-word method and one-to-one translation methods are inappropriate in this context. This is because the former method focuses on grammatical and word order correspondence while the latter considers correspondence on word level only. Literal method is more comprehensive which ranges from word for word, phrase for phrase, and sentence for sentence (see Newmark 1988). That is, it appears obviously that some words, phrases and sentences correspond smartly where translation of the source text (ST) into the target text (TT) runs neatly; around 250 words of SL correspond to TL words. However, correspondence is not fully complete since there are around 35 words do not correspond (see Figure 4). Therefore, some parts of in the source text require the use of translation procedures that maintain quality securing referential and pragmatic equivalence to original text (Newmark 1988). In our case, we used a number of procedures in translating the source language into the target language in the texts above. We adapted (اوركل10ق) as (Oracle 10g), (تطبيقاب جافا) as web applications and جافا (سيرفر بيج) as (Java Server Page-JSP: lines: 2,3 and 4:para 2). Moreover, an indirect procedure was used in transferring ( كما أثبتت الدراسة وجود تعد واضح علي مسارات الرعي وطمس لمعالمها في كثير من ) Lines 5, 6,7 and 8:para 3).

Table 4. Summary of translation procedures used in transferring SL items into TL items

No.	SL Item	TL Item	Procedure/s used
1-	تطبيق جافا	Java web applications	Naturalization/ adaptation
2-	جافا سيرفر بيج	Java Server Page-JSP:	naturalization/ adaptation
3-	اوركل	Oracle	Naturalization/adaptation
	تعد واضح علي مسارات الرعي وطمس لمعالماها في كثير من المناطق الزراعية كما يوجد تداخل كبير بين المشاريع الزراعية فيما بينها وبين المسارات الرعوية.	..... a clear intrusion on the grazing routes, which are surrounded by the agricultural areas making blur the border lines. There is also a big overlap involving the agricultural projects themselves from one side, and the pastoral tracks from the other.	Indirect

The involvement of multiple translation procedures, in the texts above, is necessary since the two texts do not show typical correspondences. The adaptation of the technical terms in the two texts, (lines: 2,3 and 4: para 2) helps to produce consistency in the source and target languages. It is clear that each text appears in only one language either English or Arabic. Thus, the involvement of adaptation procedure in transferring the meaning of words and phrases into the source text permits adaptability across the two languages. According to (Newmark 1988) as a phenomenon adaptability is very common in many languages and cultures where many words of foreign origin have been accepted with the same pronunciation. Therefore, the process of adaptation represents an essential prerequisite that can be developed for the achievement of translation consistency. Finally, an indirect translation procedure was used in (line 5, 6, 7 and 8: para 3). But this time it involves sentence level (not like the first case where the indirect procedure dealt with phrases; line 1, para1). The use of indirect translation procedure is important for two reasons. Firstly, there is no enough correspondence between SL and TL texts. Secondly, the involvement of the indirect procedure will provides precision.

## 9 Conclusion

The study reveals that literal translation method forms the most principal global strategy used in transferring the meaning of the source language into the target language all through this paper. The use of multiple translation procedures (as local strategies) is crucial in all the texts that have been involved in the study. However, the choice of the procedure depends on the nature of the source text and the words, phrases used.

The study concludes that functional equivalence, naturalization /adaptation, direct and indirect procedures, paraphrasing, etc., represent optimal translation procedures in translation process. They can add a degree of consistency for translation across language and cultural boundaries. They bring about language and cultural differences closer to each other facilitating the task of translation.

The use of some multiple translation procedures; e.g., naturalization / adaptation, helps to spread the neutrality of terms, names, loan words, expressions, new words ,etc., (such as geographical, organizational terms) throughout the languages of world contributing to the universality of translation and the correct spread of knowledge.

### 10 Suggestions

Future research in translation should do more effort in translation procedures that work as useful local strategies in maintaining the translation of formal written texts.

A further study should be done in the distance and closeness of lexical and structural non-corresponding components of English and Arabic.

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## The Positive and Negative Effects of Globalization on English Language Teaching and Learning

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss what has made English a global language and outline the (positive and negative) effects of globalization on English language teaching (ELT). Nowadays, the world is enchanted with what new information technology has made possible to the point that the world has become digitally controlled. This digital revolution has spread throughout the world and into many private homes and businesses. What we call it globalization is a result of this information technology which I consider now the basic of our daily activities. This technology has affected other sides of our life and interacted with our cultures and traditions through moving and merging some habits, customs, cultures or values of different societies into each other to create the concept of globalization. Among the things that have been affected by globalization is ELT. That is, with the rapid pace of globalization, there has been a major change in the field of ELT.

**Keywords:** English Language Teaching and Learning, Globalization

**Introduction**

It should be clear from the outset that defining globalization is a contested and divisive issue. For instance, Giddens (1990, p. 64) defines globalization as 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa', while Armstrong (1998, p. 426) describes globalization as 'process (e.g. the expansion and internationalization of financial markets), interactive networks (e.g. global corporate management; worldwide epistemic and interpretive communities), structures (e.g. newly emerging power relationships deriving from changing global investment patterns) and discourse (e.g. new social constructions of cognition, identity and meaning built upon postmodern global conditions).' Rothenberg (2003, p. 2) defines globalization as 'the acceleration and intensification of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations.' Rothenberg's definition (2003, p. 2) includes also effects of globalization on 'human well-being (including health and personal safety), on the environment, on culture (including ideas, religion, and political system), and on economic development and prosperity of societies across the world.'

Despite their differences, the above definitions are apparently consistent with each other in stating that globalization can create a world without boundaries in which people of this world can communicate with each other, interact and share their cultures, economies and generally their lives via developments in the fields of information technologies, communications and transportations.

Block and Cameron (2002) maintain that globalization is seen by some commentators as hegemonically Western and an expansion of American imperialism. Imperialism, as defined by Galtung (1980, cited in Phillipson, 1992, p. 52), is 'a type of relationship whereby one society (or collectivity in more general terms) can dominate another.' Broadly speaking, the domination that is inherent in any imperialism often comes to be associated with the language of that imperialism, as with English in the American and European imperialism. Phillipson (1992) argues that there is a strong relationship between the global spread of English and this Western imperialism. He (1992) goes on to argue that English has been supported and promoted to be used around the world specifically for political and economic purposes. This argument forms what he calls English linguistic imperialism. Phillipson (1992, p. 47) defines English linguistic imperialism as 'the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages.' Pennycook (2001, p. 61) explains this saying that 'the dominant role of English in the world today is maintained and promoted through a system both of material or institutional structures (e.g. through English maintaining its current position as the dominant language of the Internet) and of ideological positions (arguments that promote English as a superior language).' That is, being the dominant language in the era of globalization, and the mother tongue of the superpower countries, English has gained another dimension to its importance and superiority over other languages.

Globalization in the world today has been carried by several languages but English is the most dominant. There is a connection between Globalization and English. This is because, as Gray (2002) explains:

In the first place, the rise of transitional corporations does much to promote the spread of English. Typically these organizations have headquarters located in Europe, North America or Japan, and geographically dispersed (yet

flexible) centers of production, all of which are connected electronically.... This can imply business and legal documentation being produced in English, oral and written communication skills training in English for staff, possible spinoffs for the local hotel and tourist industries, and more English being taught in local schools. Secondly, the increase in the number of world organizations, many of which are themselves implicated in globalized networks, means that English continues to be in demand globally.... The third area is linked specifically to the Internet. English currently predominates on the Internet. (cited in Block and Cameron, 2002, p. 153-154).

McKay (2002) contends that the number of people using English today is vast and these numbers are growing. This growing is fueled by the advantages that English offers to those speaking it and these advantages facilitate and assist people who are familiar with the language and can readily use it. Expanding use of English around the world, according to Crystal, (2003) has reached a high status in more than seventy-five countries. This status of English in the world varies from one country to another. Kachru (1989) describes its status by using a figure of three concentric circles: 1) the Inner Circle, where English is considered to be the mother tongue of the country such as in the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and Canada; 2) the Outer Circle, where English comes as a second language in a multilingual country such as India, Singapore, and the Philippines; 3) the Expanding Circle, where English serves as a foreign language such as in Japan, Korea, and China. Graddol (1997) argues that the growing use of English between the citizens in the Expanding Circle countries inevitably leads to these countries joining the Outer Circle countries.

The expanding use of English around the world is due to a variety of reasons. Crystal (2003) maintains that this increase can primarily be attributed to the British colonization era of the seventeenth century. He goes on to maintain that this increase in use is related to the industrial revolution headed by Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, he argues that the role played by the United States of America as an economic and military power is the major reason for this increased use of the language since the last epoch of the nineteenth century. Graddol (1997) points out that this spread will continue to the 21st century.

The dominance of the English speaking countries in various fields gives English an even higher status, and helps it to be predominant over other living languages. Crystal (2003) states that English now is the dominant language of international relations, security and travel, media, education, and communications. McKay (2002) asserts that this widespread use of English in these areas makes it 'imperative' for any country wishing to become part of the global community. This is easily observable from the increasing numbers of people in the world today who want to learn English so as to benefit from the opportunities that speaking English can provide.

As the wide spread of English around the world has resulted in an increasing number of speakers of English, it has also led to a growing demand for teaching English. Pennycook (1994) maintains that there is a mutual relationship between the spread of English and the spread of ELT. English is now the language most widely taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries (Crystal, 2003).

ELT takes place in a wide range of contexts in many countries around the world. Because globalization has a big impact on political affairs, which play an important role in the world, financial affairs, global economy and technological industry, which contributes fundamentally to communication and media, conditions and circumstances underlying ELT are also changed by globalization (Block and Cameron, 2002). Some of these changes, as observed by Block and Cameron (2002), are economic and technological. The question arises here is whether globalization has positive or negative effects on the broad field of ELT in terms, for example, of profession, practices, teachers, students, coursebooks, methodologies, and so on. However, the following section will provide some of these effects.

### **The Effects of Globalization on ELT**

This section focuses on some of the effects of globalization on ELT. It discusses, respectively, the positive and negative effects.

#### ***Positive Effects of Globalization on ELT***

In this era of global English market, as stated by Pennycook (1994), ELT is considered to be a kind of service industry. This means that English language is seen as a commodity, and teaching it is a service provided for people. This commodification, according to Block and Cameron (2002), affects people's motivations and choice of language to be learned in that they may prefer English over other languages because it is associated with better jobs, higher positions and promotions. In support of this, Heller (2002, cited in Block and Cameron, 2002, p. 71) observes that 'many entry-level service jobs in tourism, travel, leisure and hospitality demand foreign language competence.' In Saudi Arabia, for example, job applicants who can write and speak English are much more likely to obtain positions in private sector business or government. Furthermore, Block and Cameron (2002) confirm that multinational companies and transnational corporations, which are connected electronically, train their staff in written and oral English communication skills. This great demand for learning English needs more teachers to teach it in, for example, schools, training centres, academic institutions and so on. This can imply that there are many career opportunities for English language teachers. Block and Cameron (2002, p. 156) also confirm that 'as demand for English grows, more providers of ELT service appear and competition becomes fiercer.' Within this massive service industry, moreover, it is important to consider some organizations such as TESOL (Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages), TESL (Teaching of English as Second Language), TEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language), the British Council and English foreign/second language examination market such as IELTS (The International English Language Testing System), TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign language) and so on. Such organizations and agencies, Phillipson (1992) asserts, contribute to promote ELT and create a new marketplace in the global economic forces. Pennycook (1994, p. 158) observes that 'now English is a global commodity to be bought and sold on the world market.'

Phillipson (1992, p. 48) states 'ELT seems to be marketable worldwide. There is a demand for material products and resources (books, jobs for English teachers, space on timetables).' Globalization provides a variety of subject matter in the new language material, to present different cultures and habits from various societies worldwide. Block and Cameron (2002) remark that the coursebooks of ELT, which are bought and sold globally, are carriers of cultural messages. Similarly, Pennycook (1994) confirms that the export of English carries with it cultural messages. This may attract English language teachers and learners to know something

about the world around them. Besides, globalization helps in sending many qualified native speakers around the world to teach English and this can help somehow in acquiring and knowing something about the culture of native speakers of English. Pennycook (1994) maintains that teaching practices can be seen as cultural practices.

Globalization contributes effectively in developing materials of English language teaching and learning through sharing and getting benefits and experiments from a lot of specialists, experts and methodologists all over the world. In support of this, Gray (2002, cited in Block and Cameron, 2002, p. 156) asserts that some European countries export materials and offer their own ELT programmes to the rest of the world. Pennycook (1994) argues that ELT practices, beliefs, techniques, approaches, methodologies and materials that emanate from the West represent very particular understandings of language, communication, learning, education and so on. This could be seen through the application of computer networks in ELT that can help language learners access multimedia materials.

Globalization supports and strengthens communication between millions who have completely different cultures. One form of this global communication trend is ELT. For example, the use of the Internet technology (for example, online learning) to learn English can encourage communication between teachers and learners who are in different places. Warschauer and Kern (2000) maintain that nowadays language learners can communicate with their teachers, fellow classmates, and native speakers by electronic mail. In addition, Block and Cameron (2002) point out that computer mediated communication (communication over a network) helps learners understand both language use and intercultural exchanges.

Being a global service industry, as suggested by Pennycook (1994), ELT provides this service for a range of specialized areas through the field of ESP (English for Specific or Special Purposes). For example, in Saudi Arabia English seems to be the only instruction medium in some schools such as medicine, engineering and computer science. Some courses such as EST (English for Science and Technology) and EMP (English for Medical Purposes) are taught in these schools. Clearly, this expands the role of ELT to supply several academic disciplines.

Global technology offers new teaching equipment which can help teachers in ELT such as overhead projectors, laboratories transparencies and so on. In addition, teachers can use the Internet to benefit from the unlimited teaching websites that provide them with the newest researches and articles in the broad field of ELT.

The above discussion of the positive effects of globalization on ELT implies that ELT is considered to be a great business. Indeed, ELT plays a key role in providing better jobs for some people. It also expands communications, interactions and integration of people either in the local or global contexts. Currently, it has both local and global position that implies its importance for many corporations, companies, and other specialized fields. In this era of technology upheaval, it has become much more modern, advanced and developed.

### ***Negative Effects of Globalization on ELT***

It could be argued that although some global ELT approaches or methodologies can be effective and useful in some ELT classrooms, they can be inappropriate for particular ELT classrooms in which they may be used. Pennycook (1994, p. 159) affirms that 'the export of applied linguistic theory and of Western-trained language teachers constantly promotes inappropriate teaching approaches to diverse settings.' Both the process and content of ELT can include some values, traditions, and social habits that may not socially and culturally correspond with particular

environments. This is because, as argued by Ellis (1990, cited in Pennycook, 1994, p. 177), 'Western-produced textbooks remain ethnocentric and give little consideration to the sociocultural context in which they may be used.' For example, some ELT coursebooks, which are published in the West, may be inappropriate for Muslim teachers and students because these coursebooks may introduce things which are prohibited in Islam such as having sex outside marriage or drinking alcohol.

With regard to the technological changes (for example, networked-based language teaching) produced by globalization, Warschauer and Kern (2000) argue that these changes affect ELT and learning in general and the improvement of some learning skills. One of the examples, they give, is the reading skill. They (2000) go on to argue that there is a shift in reading practices especially among young people who grew up with computers. That is to say, in some cases the screen is replacing the page. Different psycholinguistic processes may be required to decode information from a screen rather than from a page, especially when this is done at the click of a mouse, and the increase use of electronic dictionaries. This can imply that some regarding skills such as skimming, scanning, and guessing words from a context may be weakened and not enhanced.

Globalization may cause some laziness and dependence on others. Some teachers of English may not be able to become productive and creative in improving their ELT methodologies, but they may be dependent on others who can supply them with new materials and methods. Besides, they may be not well-trained to use the new teaching equipment in their ELT classrooms. This may create an atmosphere of frustration and complexity for them and their students. The fact is that, as observed by Warschauer and Kern (2000, p. 1), 'if language teaching has become more exciting, it has also become considerably more complex.'

It is clear from the above discussion that globalization generates the issue of the cultural appropriacy of some global ELT approaches and materials for particular ELT contexts.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has presented some recent definitions of globalization, and described how it is linked to English language and ELT. Indeed, globalization is a process that implies radical changes in our life. It has increasingly promoted the spread of both English language and ELT. It is argued that there is a reciprocal relationship between English and ELT. Clearly, while they promote each other, their current global position implies their importance to many global and local aspects.

It has been the purpose of this paper to argue that globalization has seriously influenced the field of ELT all over the world. It strikingly contributes to the improvement of ELT. However, global ELT may introduce some particular forms of culture that are not suitable for a particular ELT context.

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## **Translation of Legal Texts between Arabic and English: The Case Study of Marriage Contracts**

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### **Abstract**

Over decades, there used to be a number of studies on Legal translation since it was one of the most challenging issues for translators and it still a critical and authoritative translation produced by legal bodies. Actually, translating legal texts might raise some problems in translation pertaining to the differences between the Source and Target Texts. Thus, it can result in a certain amount of ambiguity with respect to the legal texts, as it belongs to people's beliefs and cultures. This study investigates the quality of the translated message from Arabic into English. Hence, the focus is on the changes of the message in the translation process that is attributable to functional & verbal equivalence in Arabic and English as well. The study will rely on Baker's theory (1992) to examine whether the semantic changes affect the quality of the translated message in terms of equivalence, along with Newmark methods (1988) in translation. The study will analyse as well five different forms of marriage contracts translated by different native translators in the Arabic as a source language and their correspondence into English as a target language, in order to identify the cultural and linguistic equivalence by using functional comparisons between the Arabic and English legal systems.

**Keywords:** Marriage Contracts, Translation Shift, Problems of Equivalence, Semantic Change.

## Introduction

Translation is the gateway for understanding and dealing with others and their civilizations. Most translation scholars and linguists agree that the translation process is achieved as a communicative process from a foreign language to the mother tongue, so translation considered a unique linguistic device that has the very important task of conveying the sense of the text from one language to another language. This is what Newmark calls "translation service". There have been lots of debates on translation methods; some scholars preferred word- for- word whereas others prefer sense- for- sense. Meanwhile, mistakes in this field of translation may be disastrous. It is a disaster to make mistakes in translation in general. For instance, mistakes in chemical texts can cause a fatal poisoning or a terrible explosion, whereas, in legal translation they can unlawfully make a defendant lose his expensive law-suit. In aeronautics they may bring a plane down from the sky on people's heads. Finally, in interpretation, the poor performance of an interpreter can also spoil the proceedings of a whole international conference.

The legal texts are considered more complicated than others due to the heavy responsibility they carry and to the scanty background of tough legal terms and their bound nature system Coulthard, Johnson (2010). The problem is due to the varieties of word synonyms in the legal Arabic system which have no equivalence in the English system in terms of marriage contracts, such as; المهر, شبكة, صداق. الخ; Mahr, Shabkah, Sadaq- (dowry), whereas, all of these examples attributed and affected by the culture and tradition of the Arabic language.

However, a number of professional translators encounter several challenges while trying to find out a matchable equivalent in the English legal system. According to Baker (1992), the most common problems that legal translators face during the rendering of a legal text are the lack of verbal / functional equivalence in the target language. Accordingly, Amer (2010) states that, the unfamiliarity of some translators with the modern theories and strategies of translation leads to problems and mistakes in translation. Accordingly the modern definition of legal translation is that a translation between two different languages, expressed in two different legal systems, this means that the legal term in the first language is limited to the legal system of that language, and that cannot be understood or thus translated only through the legal system, thus, the translator shall translate the legal terms from the source language and transferred them functionally equivalent in the target language (Cao, 2007). Hence, from the above definition we can state the LAW definition as: a set of codified provisions, lay down, issued by the legislature and have binding effect to the people so that the offender citizen shall be punished whenever committing sin. So, the word "law" refers to the different classifications in the legal domain. According to Vermeer (1984:98), the translation activity has various cultural and specific behaviors and there are differences between a priori knowledge of the recipients of the source culture and the priori knowledge of the recipients of the target culture, considering that the translator must not only be bilingual or multilingual, but also be bi - or even multicultural, working as a mediator between two cultures and the differences of those cultures should be clear. Eventually, he is "an expert in intercultural communication.

**Literature Review**

According to Newmark (1991: 27), "Translation is a skill of replacing a message or a text, in one language by a message or a text in another language". Also, Nida and Taber define the translation process as "a reproducing process from the receptor language (SL) to the sender language (TL) with carrying the same natural equivalence for both languages" (1965:12, 82). Also Halliday (2001) mentioned in his book that "the equivalent of the text among the source language and target language is to find an equivalent at the level of the entire text". However, legal texts are often treated as a distinctive type of language for special purposes (Taylor 1998). Clarity is sought in this type of texts because legal texts, such as charters, contracts, and treaties, etc., are supposed to defend the rights of a person / a group or to impose obligations, besides many other functions collectively known as 'legislations' as well. The Legal texts are to manage and monitor the human's conduct, the reason for which these documents should be granted the highest possible degree of clarity and adequacy.

Newmark (1981) discusses, with respect to the translation operation, the first approach with the text. According to him, it is not safe in most cases, to translate more than a sentence unless the first two paragraphs are read. Besides, translators should do more preliminary work as far as the text is difficult linguistically and culturally. A text should be translated by sentences rather than by words, as literally or closely as possible, as much as the translator can. Grammatically-bound words, jargon words and modal particles might not be translated for good reasons.

As for Vermeer (1984:98), the translation activity has various cultural specific behaviours and there are divergences between a priori knowledge of the recipients of the source culture and the priori knowledge of the recipients of target culture. It is important to note that, being bilingual or multilingual only is not enough; a translator has to be as well bicultural or even multicultural in order to produce a neat translation, and argues that any translation is determined by its purpose and an action exists only if it pursues a certain goal. Vermeer elaborates saying that the legal norms should be taken into consideration while the translator is executing his mission. Thus, he should select the most appropriate translation strategy in order to translate the legal text.

Nida (1964) suggests two types of equivalence for a precise translation; the formal and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence, focuses on the message itself, in both its form and content, whereas, the dynamic equivalence, is based on the principle of equivalent effect. Newmark (1981: 47) suggested in his book that, when the translator deals with legal documents such as international covenant, agreement, contracts etc., all his focus should be on the communicative approach, which is the way of conveying the same message in the target texts.

Stoddart (2000) says there are bound elements of translation theories behind the different concepts of equivalence which means that the conveyed message of the target texts is affected by the theory used in the source texts. Many scholars, linguists, theorists and translators such as Vinay, Darbelnet, Taber, Nida, Newmark, House and Baker, dedicated their works to the role of equivalence in translation. Nida and Taber (1994) highlighted the formal and dynamic equivalence and their changeable dual clash was modified many times. Vinay and Darbelnet

(1995) emphasized that translation is an equivalence oriented study and equivalence is the perfect approach to face the translation problems and decrease the error ratio of mismatching. House (1977), applied her theory on translation taxonomy and confirmed that equivalence must be involved in the translation process and could eventually be either overt or covert.

### Theoretical Framework

According to Mona Baker book (1992), 'In other words', the essential role of translation equivalence was described. In her book (1992-2006) she shows some relevant translation problems and outlines the five categories of translation equivalence that any translator should be familiar with, besides the way of employing and utilizing them in the text. These categories are; (a) equivalence at the word level, above the word level, the context equivalence; grammatical, the textual equivalence and finally the pragmatic equivalence.

Newmark (1988), in this theory defines and determines all methods of valid translation that the translator has to follow according to the genre of his text. He divides the translation process in terms of system and cultural importance, into two main polars, source language polar SL and target language polar TL. So, source language highlights on: a) Word-for-word translation, b) Literal translation, c) Faithful translation, d) Semantic translation. Then target language highlights on: a) Adaptation, b) Free translation, c) Idiomatic translation, h) Communicative translation. Newmark argues that translation methods are relevant to the examination of the entire text (Newmark P. 1988:45).

### Methodology And Data Analysis

The study data is based on five written texts of marriage contract taken from a total of 8 contracts found in Gaza, taken from Gaza Shariah Court. The selection criteria were based on the significant content of contracts and abundant usage of more than 6 Arabic idioms in each contract. The data were taken from Gaza strip during the period of 2010 to 2012, and translated from Arabic into English by a professional office of translation service in Gaza. It is important to mention that Arabic is the source text and English is the target text. The study analysis has employed a contrastive methodology of the ST data with the TT data in semantic term as envisioned by Newmark (1988) and Baker (1992).

### Data Analysis

- انكحتك موكلتي ابنتي علي مهر معجل وقدره ..... ومهر مؤجل وقدره (Contract text)
- I have given to you my daughter in marriage for down payment dowry of .....and deferred dowry estimated to. (E. translation)
- I marry you my daughter on dowry prepaid estimated to... and dowry delayed estimated to. (literal translation)

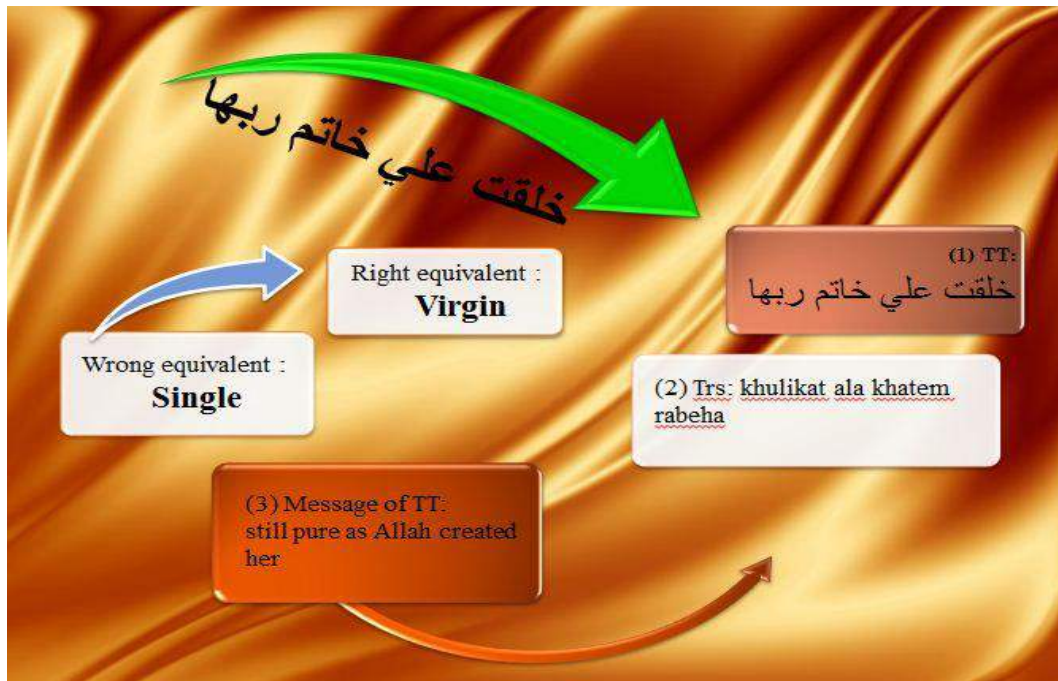
Observe the data in (a) and (b) and (c) We are concerned with the underlined sentences. It is noted that, the Arabic phrase مهر معجل وقدره is translated into English as it is shown in data

(b) “a dowry down payment” which does not give the same meaning as in (a). In fact, the word ‘dowry’ in English means the money or estate that a woman brings to her groom as endowment or devotion, in contrast with the Arabic word "مهر" or as it known among Arab translators as ‘Mahr’ which means a mandatory required amount of money which paid by the groom to the bride before the ceremony of wedding. In other words, the meaning of ‘Mahr’ or مهر in Arabic is the amount of payment which is have to be paid by the man to his wife before ceremonies, in contrast with the word *dowry* in English, which required the payment to be done by woman to her husband. So the use of the word ‘*dowry*’ in the English system is not an equivalent term for the word ‘*Mahr*’. In the Arabic or Islamic system, in fact, the most familiar way of translating the Arabic term مهر is to keep it as it is transcribing it in Arabic ‘*Mahr*’.

- a. اتفق الطرفان على صداق قدره الف دينار (Contract text)
- b. The two parties agreed on a cash dowry of thousand dinars. (E. translation)
- c. Agreed the two parties on dowry cash of .... (literal translation)

As observed in (a) and (b) the underlined phrases refer to different definitions and word orders between Arabic and English. The Arabic term in line (a) "صداق" is attributable to the term “*Mahr*” which is considered as a requirement to complete the marriage. *Mahr* is given to the bride as a kind of her appreciation and respect; the man should give a wedding gift or dowry to the bride, and she can use it as she wants. It is important to note that it is not allowed for her husband or her family to enjoy part of her dowry. Here the word *dowry* doesn’t give the same meaning in English as in (b) ‘*a cash dowry*’. Furthermore, the English term *cash dowry* gives another meaning, and is only used in some cases just to give a closer meaning or clarification to the word *Mahr*. In addition to that, the explanation of the English word should be elaborated in the margin. Therefore, regarding what have been shown above, the researcher discovers that, the divergence of meaning, and the lack of the English equivalent for such a word system are related to the semantic changes between the Arabic and English subsystem, which means that the use the word *dowry* in the English marriage contract is wrong and sometimes could be confusing to the translator.

- a. خلقت علي خاتم ربها (Contract text)
- b. Still *single* as ALLAH created her. (E. translation)
- c. Still *virgin* as God created her . .... (literal translation)

**Table 1.** *The illustration below shows some explanation.*

It is noted that the Arabic phrase *علي خاتم ربها* gives a dual meaning in English: "created on the ring of her god" or still single as God created her. Obviously the two literary translations do not give the exact meaning which is attributable to cultural and linguistic variation. The correct translation is "still virgin as ALLAH created her", which is more common in the Islamic discourse /interactions. There is a major divergence between "still single as God created her" and "still virgin as ALLAH created her" from a religious point view; the meaning of *single* is different from the word *virgin* in the religious text. In another context, the girl could be *single* but that does not mean she is still *virgin*, which means that she could have had a sexual interaction before marriage and that is illegal in Islam. Indeed, she is still single but not *virgin*. Here the intended meaning is the virgin one who is never been touched or had any interaction with men.

All the great literary translations should carry out with the implicit knowledge of the methods of translation as described in Newmark theory (1988). Also as Gide's preface to his translation of Hamlet clearly shows, one cannot help wondering, however, if the reason the Americans refused to take the League of Nations seriously was not because many of their documents were unmodulated and un-adapted renderings of original French texts, just as the

“sabir atlantique” has its roots in ill-digested translations of Anglo-American originals. Here, we touch upon an extremely serious problem, which, unfortunately, lack of space prevents us from discussing further, that of intellectual, cultural, and linguistic changes, which over time can be effected by important documents, school textbooks, journals, film dialogues, etc., written by translators who are either unable to or who dare not venture into the world of oblique translations. The following examples illustrate the differences of equivalence in translation between Arabic and English in the legal and colloquial translation.

English Equivalence of Arabic sentences in legal text:

(1)

- a. لا اسمح لك بحضور الجلسة
- b. I will not allow you to attend this session *colloquial sentence*
- c. You don't have permission to attend this session *colloquial*
- d. You can't attend this session *colloquial*
- e. You may not attend this session (*legal sentence*)

(2)

- a. كل المدرسين يجب ان يلتزموا بقانون الطوارئ
- b. All teachers must obligate to the emergency law *colloquial*
- c. All teachers shall obligate to the emergency law (*legal*)
- d.

(3)

- a. لا يجوز لك ان تدخن في هذه الندوة
- b. You cannot smoke in this symposium *colloquial*
- c. You may not smoke in this symposium (*legal*)

The previous examples demonstrate that, the literal translation of Arabic legal sentences into English is a very crucial matter, due to that the colloquial meaning differs from the legal sense, which means; in the first example (1) the translation of Arabic word “لا اسمح” into ‘won't allow or cannot allow or even have no permission’ in English does not carry the same legal sense as Arabic, due to the English equivalent of “لا اسمح” is ‘may not’ in English. The other two example in (2, 3) express that, the English equivalent of ‘obligation’ in the previous Arabic legal sentences are “shall and may not” but not “must or cannot” since the later does not convey the same message as in Arabic. As a result of that, using literal translation method in translating these sentences is not a good strategy, in other word, the functional translation method should be

taken into consideration in translating such texts. Functional translation is in some sense way better than the literal translation, which makes it easier to express crucial equivalent of the other language.

## 6. Findings

Translating the legal term from one legal system to another such as the Arabic and the English reveals some equivocal and oblique translation. The study reveals that every language has its certain terminology, and that exact translations of terms and the fact of matching the legal concept is sometimes impossible. In many cases a perfectly qualified translator or magistrate may not always be able to provide a correct translation for such terms.

For example: translating a term such as (examining magistrate) into Arabic, which is used in more than one legal system, is complicated. For instance, the word "magistrate" in all European languages means "judiciary man" رجل القضاء. The word is a relatively common use in the judicial system. But in the English legal system it's a "Judicial officer who is authorized to investigate research and examine the legal matters. On the other hand, the Arabic legal system such as the Moroccan legal system calls it 'Investigation Judge' قاضي التحقيق. In the Tunisian legal system it is called Magistrate of Investigation, حاكم التحقيق, and in the Lebanese legal system they call it as Forensic investigator. "المحقق العدلي". However, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia the synonyms of this term is Bureau of Investigation "هيئة التحقيق" due to the fact that the Saudi Arabia judiciary system is voided from the position of examining magistrate, so the translator is supposed to search tirelessly for the appropriate term of functional equivalent. For instance: the functional equivalent of the English legal term (defendant) in Arabic is المدعى عليه 'offender' but it is not 'complained of' "المشكومنه", or an 'opponent of' "الخصم". All these synonyms do not convey the same Arabic message. In spite of that, all these lexical words indicate the meaning of "defendant" in English but do not give functionally the same equivalence to Arabic.

The study shows that Arabic is a governed language due to the use of many orders especially the 'semantic governed. The translator adopts mixed techniques by translating the English source text with its equivalent into Arabic, besides, by adding other lexical words which show Arabic language a preservative language, since there are two explanations that appeared together in the same text, unlike the English text, which seems to be vacant of this type of juxtaposition. The study divulges the problematic of translation, referential equivocal from English to Arabic due to the fact that each language has its own nature. Arabic is a cogent force, it is simple, attractive and gets the point across in as logically as possible. Although, the Arabic

structure is less complex than French and German which are grammatically more demanding than the English language. Arabic is more flexible than English for instance; the Arabic sentence can sometimes be built with no subject, and allows both Verb Subject Object and Subject Verb Object sentence structures, unlike the English sentence.

### **Conclusion**

Long convinced that legal translation has to be literal, translators and linguists frequently focus their attention on terminological issues. To develop translation competence, translators need instructions in terms of translation theory. Legal translators in Arabic can benefit from the translation training that focuses on the application of pragmatics, which is a relatively a modern science, to legal translation. Translation competence presupposes not only in-depth knowledge of legal terminology, but also thorough understanding of the communicative legal function of such texts. The paper has shown that current trends of translator training, such as functional theories, are more effective than training approaches used almost two decades ago. Being exposed to and aware of modern approaches to translation help translators emphasize more on the communicative and functional nature of legal translation.

Consequently, they will be able to focus on "particular instantiations of language use, in specific texts and contexts" (Colina 2002, 6). Such approaches can effectively bridge the gap between academic and professional worlds of translation.

Vinay (1995) observed the equivalence-oriented translation as an operation that "replicates the same situation as in the original, while using completely different wording" (p. 342) (ibid). Equivalence is the perfect technique when the translator is dealing with idioms, proverbs, clichés, nominal or adjectival phrases and the onomatopoeia of animal sounds. Again, Vinay and Darbelnet assert that the equivalent expressions between language pairs can be granted only if we get them as a list in a bilingual thesaurus as 'full equivalents' (p. 255). They conclude by declaring that the need for creating equivalences arises from the situation, and it is in the situation of the S.L text that translators have to look for a solution. (p. 255).

Legal translation differs from other types of translation in two basic components: the legal system and the term associated with that system, thus understanding the legal term and its translation into another language depends on the understanding of its locus in the legal system to which it belongs. For instance, the Arabic language has some words which have the same lexical structure, same phoneme and morpheme but different meaning due to the legal system and the terms followed by that system. This means that the translator can only translate the legal term into the TL by understanding its position in the legal system of the SL. Legal translators should

add one more skill to their linguistics and translation skills which is the comparative skill between two legal systems: the legal system of SL and the legal system of TL.

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Appendixes

A

**عقد زواج**

المنظمة الشرعية في .....

١. تاريخ العقد في .....

٢. المكان الذي جرى فيه العقد .....

الاسم الكامل	البلد	مكان الإقامة	العمر	الجنسية	الصفة
الزوج - الرجل البالغ - العاقل - الأحرار					
الزوجة - البنت - بكر / ثيب البالغة العفلة					
٤. مستندات تحقق السن وعدم الزواج .....					
٥. المهر ونوعه					
المهر					
نوع المهر					
٦. كيفية دفع المهر .....					
٧. الموثوق للعقد .....					
٨. شروط أحد الزوجين الخاصة .....					
٩. شهود العقد والوكالة والتعريف .....					
١٠. التكلفة على الشروط .....					
١١. موافقة الوالي أو إذن المحكمة .....					
١٢. صيغة العقد : قال ويكبل الزوجة وهما مطلقاً للزوج المذكور نفسه زوجته وأختها موكلي ابني... على مهر ممول قدره... وتوليمه المذكورة ومهر مؤجل قدره... فأجاب الزوج المذكور فوراً وأنا قبلت ورضيت بزواجها وتكليفها نفسي على المهرين المذكورين وتوليمهما.					

لنا .....

بعد التحقق من استكمال الشروط وعدم الزواج في .....

توقيع المأذون .....

شهود التعريف والوكالة الخاصة الزوج أو وليته الزوجة أو وكيلها التعلق على الشروط تصديق المحكمة

Palestinian National Authority  
Judicial authority  
Gaza Shariah Court  
Marriage Contract

The Religious Court of:

- 1) Date of contract
- 2) Place of contract
- 3) Full Name:

The male spouse, a bachelor/married man of legal age and of sound mind  
The female spouse, a virgin/non-virgin of legal age and of sound mind

Town:  
Place of Residence:  
Age:  
Nationality  
Profession:

- 4) Documents of Age Verification and Eligibility:
- 5) Amount and type of Dowry:  
Dowry - Payment;  
Deferred Payment;  
Extras;
- 6) Method of Payment;
- 7) Contract initiators;
- 8) Special Conditions by either spouse;
- 9) Witnesses of Contract, Representative and Identification
- 10) Condition Fulfillment Indemnity:

II) Approval of Guardian or Permission of Court.

II2) Contract Formula: The representative for the female spouse (her father) said, addressing the aforementioned male spouse, 'I have given my daughter... to you in marriage for a dowry he down payment of which is .... The extras of which are mentioned above and the deferred payment for which is .... The male spouse immediately replied: 'I accept your daughter in marriage and confirm the dowry's down payment, deferred payment and extras stipulated above.'

I....., the register authorized to perform marriages in ..... having ascertained that the conditions have been fully met, and that eligibility is established, have executed this contract in the manner detailed above.

Signature of the Authorized Registrar:  
Identification and Representation Witnesses  
Male Spouse or Representative  
Female Spouse or Representative  
Guarantor for Implementation of Conditions  
Endorsement of the Court:

## Self- Directed Learners

**Hind Al-Jamal**

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### Abstract

The inclination to support teachers' self-directed development goes hand-in-hand with students' need to acknowledge their skills and direct their own learning. Therefore, this paper sheds light on the key features to address while planning for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) tasks, especially projects. A clear path is drawn for both instructors and students to understand the basics of planning, executing, and presenting a project that enables further student engagement and and—ultimately—sustained learning. By incorporating the most recent teaching methods into brain research to present meaningful experiences, a clear framework determines the necessary roles for both teachers and students to ensure full ownership when equipped with basic tools. These tools aid teachers in monitoring and assessing students' progress and process. Furthermore, it focuses students' attention on their observation of projects and highlights the effect of the project on their character and language acquisition, creating a community of autonomous learners.

**Keywords:** self-directed, project-based-learning, students' engagement, sustained learning, autonomous learners

## Introduction

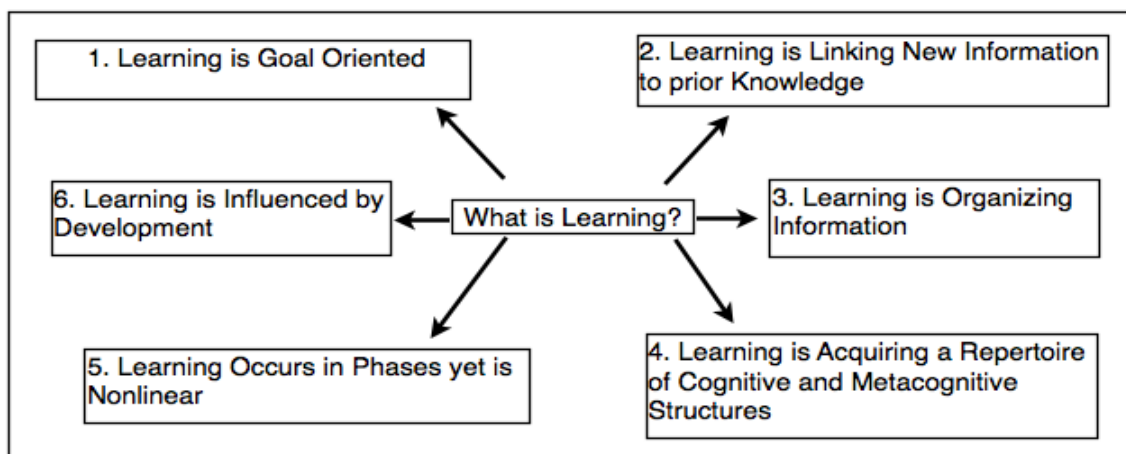
Nurturing citizens who are independent and seek knowledge is a necessity, not a matter of choice. Students need instruction that creates opportunities for stimulating questions and cognitive technology-based tools that engage them in the process of learning and result in a community of inquiry and self-directed, autonomous learners. The main aim of this paper is to enable teachers to identify the main features of learning based on cognitive studies, teaching methodology, and language acquisition theories. This should take the form of well-structured, planned projects that stem from students' own need to find answers for their inquiries on day-to-day subjects and discussed ideas and concepts. The key question is to determine the necessary roles for both teachers and students to ensure full ownership and engagement through the planning and executing of the planned project when equipped with the necessary tools.

## Language Learning

Students' exposure to a foreign language as a second language L2 requires an essential distinction for teachers to notice: learning and acquisition. According to Crystal (2010), learning a foreign language is a conscious act of using the language in a defined situation, whereas acquisition occurs in a natural communicative setting. Students become focused on certain language features and usages, as opposed to fluency. Gaining proficiency is questionable; therefore, teachers' preparation of tasks defines the nature of their students' learning. Yule (2006) describes how "those individuals whose L2 exposure is primarily a learning type of experience tend not to develop the same kind of general proficiency as those who have had more of an acquisition type of experience" ( p. 163).

Learning a foreign language is an effortful and complex task for students to undertake involving different language systems, cultures and ways of thinking. The Oxford Dictionary defines learning as "the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience, or being taught." Slavin (2000) explains that learning involves the acquisition of abilities that are not innate. Furthermore, learning depends on experience that is associated with feedback from the environment. Brown (2007) points out "learning involves some form of practice, perhaps reinforced practice" (p. 8). Under several notions, learning involves active, conscious, and cognitive organization. Jones, Palincsar, Ogle, and Carr (1987, p. 4) have summarized the intellectual process in approaching learning in Figure 1.

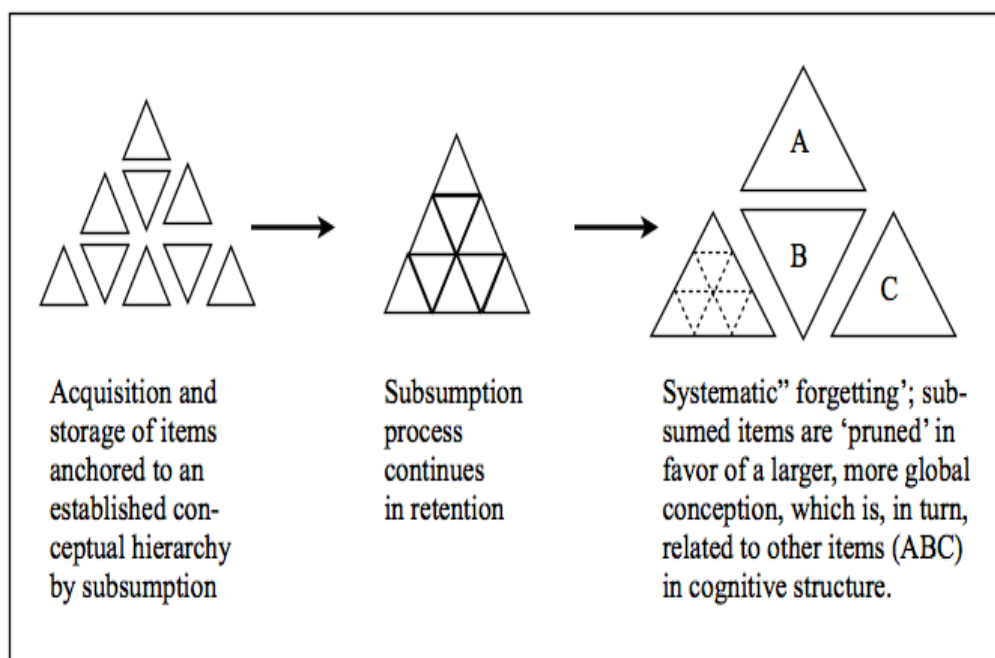
**Figure 1. Research-based statements about learning (Adapted from Jones et al., 1987, p. 4)**



The emphasis of this approach is on the goals set by the skilled learner, which are to understand the meaning of the task at hand and to regulate one's learning. The information that learners obtain is stored in memory within knowledge structures called schemata. Jones et al. (1987) present three different "types of schemata: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and conditional knowledge" (p. 10). The first is content-specific, consisting largely of knowledge of concepts and facts — the "what" of learning. The second schema consists of information that tells us how to do something — the "how" of learning. Finally, the knowledge of the conditions and contexts associated with specific procedures are regarded as the "when" and "why" of learning, respectively.

Brown (2007, p. 92) asserts that any learning situation can be meaningful if it applies to two things: learners who have a meaningful learning set and a task that is potentially meaningful. Figure 2 presents the process of meaningful learning.

**Figure 2. Schematic representation of meaningful learning and retention (subsumption).**  
Adapted from Brown, 2007, p. 92.



The learners' understanding is reinforced when it is presented to a clear repertoire of activities. Garnett (2005) describes brain activity while learning as follows:

When the brain is exposed to a stimulating experience the neurons connect with each other. If this kind of stimulating experience is sustained then the connections between neurons are strengthened. If we can subject our students to lots of high stimulus material and challenge in lessons, then more neurons will connect and so increase learning. The stronger the connection between the neurons, the more effective and lasting the learning will be. (p. 9)

It is essential to revisit the obtained learning and demonstrate it, in order to keep the retained knowledge from being lost or forgotten, and to maintain the strong network connections between the neurons. As explained by Chall & Mirsky (1978), brain research suggests that “the verbal and spatial mode of information is important but what is more important is the organization or transformation performed upon it that establishes its constructed and remembered meaning” (p. 65).

### The Nature of Language

People try to communicate their thoughts and ideas using language, whether written or spoken. In order for students to transfer their own feelings and express their thoughts, the first step is for them to acknowledge symbols that combine in the form of sounds into words that represent our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Chaffee (2012) explains that “most words are complex, multidimensional carriers of meaning; their exact meaning often varies from person to person. These differences in meaning can lead to disagreement and confusion” (p. 232). Understanding the different components of meaning can lead students to a better realization of the second language and its expression.

According to Chaffee (2012), the different types of meaning are the semantic meaning (denotation), the perceptual meaning (connotation), the syntactic meaning, and the pragmatic meaning. The semantic meaning represents the denotation of the word which shows the relationship between the linguistic event and the nonlinguistic one. It is clearly portrayed in the students’ use of the dictionary to understand the representation of a new word or expression. The perceptual meaning presents the relationship between the linguistic event and the individuals’ own understanding, as well as its relationship to his/her personal associations. The syntactic meaning represents the relationship between words in a sentence. The teacher can specify content words, the descriptive words that elaborate word meanings, and the joining words that relate words to each other. Finally, the pragmatic meaning presents the words uttered with the situation.

For instance, the word “computer” is defined in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* as “an electronic machine that can store and work with large amounts of information,” which presents the semantic meaning. The perceptual meaning can refer to a desktop computer that your father owns and relate to your childhood memories of electronic games. In the sentence “My daughter owns a new computer that she spilt water on,” the syntactic meaning shows that the content words are *daughter*, *own*, and *computer*, while the descriptive words that extend meaning are *new* and the connective *that*, which add *spilt water on* to the meaning. The pragmatic meaning carries different interpretations: It can mean that my daughter needs a new computer, that I need to take it to the workshop, or that I am not happy with her behavior and will do something about it. Therefore, the following steps can help teachers to pave the way to better language practice:

**Step one:** Sounds

**Step two:** Word denotation

**Step three:** Word connotation

**Step four:** Syntactic meaning

**Step five:** Pragmatic meaning

**Learning Experiences**

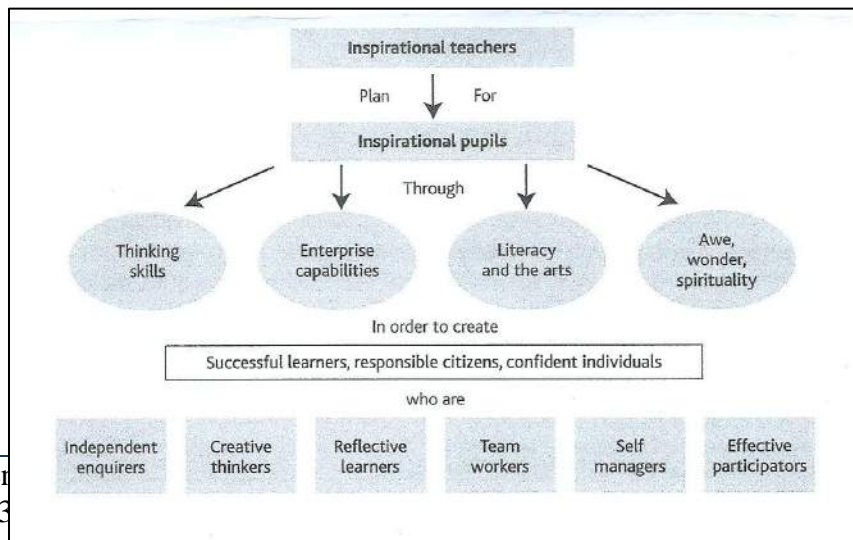
The shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning has become a necessity. Teachers define their role as knowledge providers, thus hanging on to the idea that students receive information while providing. Their preconceived assumptions that learning will occur consequently deprives students of becoming autonomous. Crystal (2010) explains: “Today, the active role of the learner is an established principle. It is recognized that there are important individual differences among learners, especially in personality and motivation, that can directly influence the teaching outcome” (p. 388).

The guidance role of the teacher does not eliminate the students’ need for direct instruction. Students need role models who inspire them and create learning experiences that support their understanding and usage of the language, as well as relating it to their community, life, and future. Ryan (2011) presents an interesting analysis of both inspirational teachers and pupils in which teachers focus on their students’ benefits as individuals. Thorough planning and reflective thinking are essential to the teachers’ development; in order to obtain a clear vision of both the teachers’ own teaching and the students’ learning, constant self-reflection should be incorporated in the teachers’ practice. Al-Jamal (2012) asserts that “encouraging teachers to write about their teaching practice can bring significant insights and increase understanding about their practice” (p. 50).

Inspirational teachers create learning experiences that:

- ❑ Engage students in higher order thinking skills;
- ❑ Develop enterprising behavior;
- ❑ Develop their morals and value systems;
- ❑ Enhance emotional intelligence (Ryan, 2011) ;
- ❑ Activate students’ role as knowledge seekers;
- ❑ Challenge and stimulate their brains;
- ❑ Promote and strengthen their communication skills;
- ❑ Strengthen their sense of responsibility in society;
- ❑ Enhance curiosity; and
- ❑ Value students’ production and respects all responses.

**Figure 3. Inspirational teachers, inspirational pupils. (Adapted from Ryan, 2011, p. 16)**



## Natural Growth

Parents believe in the teachers' ability to help their children understand the world within his/her field, thus providing a complete picture of the world. Teachers can achieve this via aiming at lessons that should involve students in:

- Open discussions where different viewpoints are evaluated;
- Fact-finding and evidence proofing;
- Active and challenging tasks;
- Proposing thoughtful questions;
- Independent opinions;
- Organized and systematic approaches to situations;
- Self-discovery and understanding of one's own beliefs;
- Innovative directions and analysis; and
- Effective use of technology.

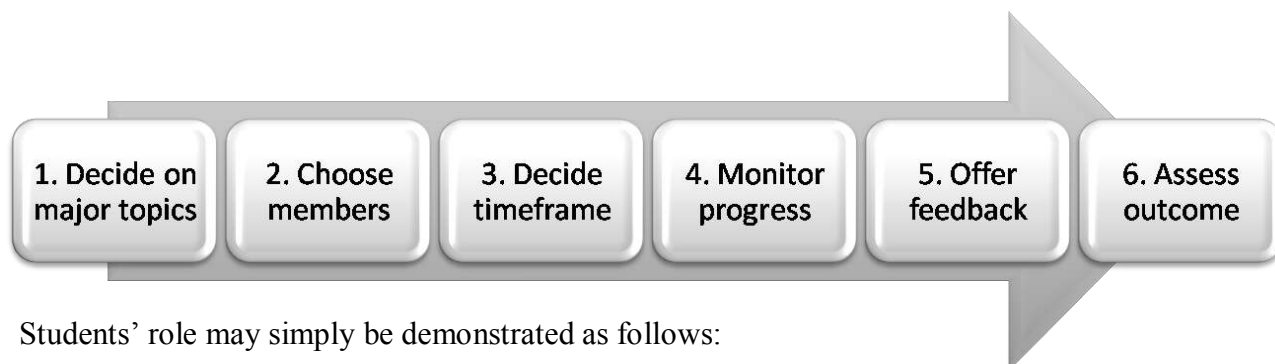
There are four major points that facilitate students' learning and help teachers see the significance of their work. Griffith and Burns (2012) refer to them as "The Big Four": feedback, autonomy, challenge, and engagement. Both teachers and students need *feedback*. For teachers, this is related to determining the students' progress in order to aid teachers in directing the lesson. Students need feedback to judge the quality of their production and improve their work. *Autonomous* learners need sufficient time to refine their knowledge, attitudes, skills, and habits; thus, the 30: 70 extends students' time to exceed the teachers' (i.e., students discussions and questioning exceeds the teacher's speech time). Providing differentiated learning with an open eye towards students' diverse levels will consequently *challenge* their abilities and result in further immersion within the lessons. *Engagement* ensures sustained learning through experiencing authentic real-life situations.

## EFL Projects

Project- based learning is a starting point for autonomous learners (Thomas, 2000). It is not possible to construct a curriculum based on projects through the years from fourth to twelfth grade, due to the necessity of applying the assigned curricula from the Ministry of Education; however, it is possible to benefit from the main characteristics of project-based learning to accomplish the intended outcomes and ensure the quality of process and product.

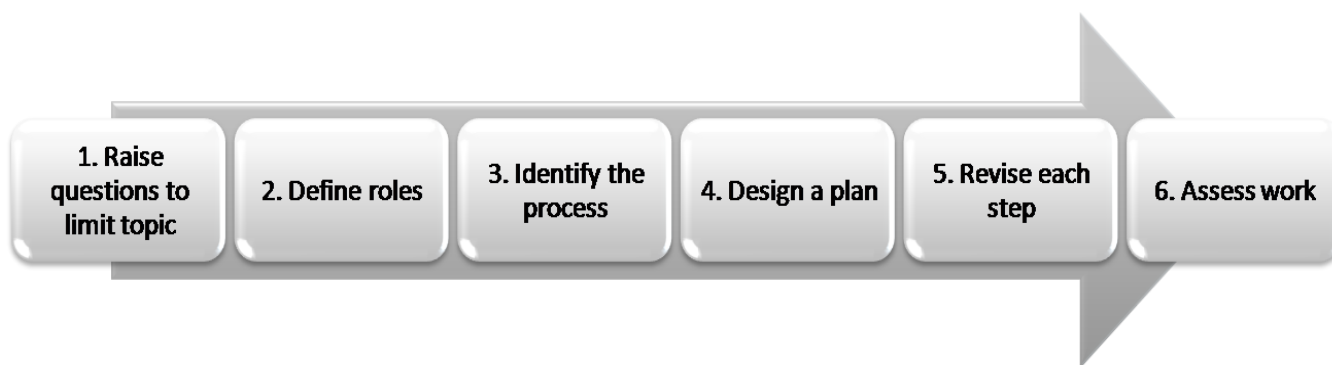
The following diagram presents the most important stages to ensure students' engagement in their EFL projects. The teacher's role can be as follows:

**Figure 4. Stages to ensure students’ engagement**



Students’ role may simply be demonstrated as follows:

**Figure 5. Students’ role throughout the project**



The following rubric can help monitor and assess students’ development and product:

**Table 1. Rubric to Monitor and Assess Students’ Progress and Process**

Project:	Class:				
Group Members:					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
1. Preparation					
• All group members contribute in the discussion prior to the setting of the project.					
• Students raise questions that limit their topic and stimulate thought.					
• Students give clear justifications for the necessity of their project.					
• Students decide on roles and time limits.					
2. Monitor Progress					
• Students work independently on the project.					
• Students activate their prior knowledge.					
• Students use different resources to support their findings.					
• Students keep records of their progress and an adjusted plan.					
• Students use the textbook as a resource.					
• Students use technology.					

• Students demonstrate their work via charts and figures.					
• Students present innovative projects.					
• Students maintain group members' responsibilities.					
• Students use teacher's feedback to adjust their work.					
1=Excellent 2= Very good 3=Good 4= Moderate 5= Needs extra work					
Teacher's comments:					

The following questionnaire can help students understand the main points to consider in their project. It can be presented prior or after students' accomplishment

Table 2. *Questionnaire to Measure Students' Perception of Projects*

Perception of Projects	1	2	3	4	5
As a result of this project....					
1. I enjoyed the active learning style in this class.*					
2. The teaching style used matches my preferred learning style. *					
3. My team was able to complete the project independently.*					
4. This class stimulates higher-order thinking.					
5. The textbook used in class was helpful.*					
6. I developed a trusting relationship with my team.*					
7. The class developed my leadership abilities.*					
8. The class improved my ability to work in teams.*					
9. I can relate real-life situations to conceptual knowledge.					
10. This projects stimulated use of technology.					
11. I used various resources, including the teacher.					
12. The project fostered group discussions.					
13. The project developed conflict resolution.					
14. The project enabled me to link my prior knowledge to the new knowledge.					
1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly agree * Adapted from Okudan, G. & Rzasa, S. (2006)					
Student comments:					

The following questionnaire can help students' assess their skills and learning outcomes.

Table 3. *Questionnaire to Measure the Effect of the Project on Students*

• Effect of Task	1	2	3	4	5
As a result of this task...					
1. I am more willing to take risks.*					
2. I will be less afraid of competitors who may challenge my ideas. *					
3. I can analyze problems to study their structure.					
4. I have ideas for innovative products and services.*					
5. I can more easily make independent decisions.*					
6. I am more of a creative thinker.*					
7. I have a better understanding of my own skills.					
8. I better understand what starting my own company would be like.*					
9. I am able to raise questions.					
10. I can define my goals.					
11. I am able to revise my own learning.					
12. I am able to justify my choices.					
13. I have realized my important role in society.					
1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly agree					
* Adapted from Okudan, G. & Rzasa, S. (2006)					
Student comment:					

**Conclusion**

Incorporating projects into students’ daily schedules may increase their autonomy. Hence, creating tasks that provide authentic experiences for students to cooperate and rely on their own skills will enable for further self-exploration and realization of strengths, possibilities, and the necessary cognitive, physical and social skills. Thus, teachers need to:

- Identify their major roles as instructors through a well- designed process to incorporate EFL projects;
- Clarify the students’ role with a clear framework;
- Use specific tools to monitor and their assess students’ progress and process;
- Measure their students’ perception of projects; and
- Measure the effect of the project on students.

**About the Author:**

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## The Teaching of Translation at the University Level: Constraints and Aspirations

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### Abstract

This paper is an attempt to address the situation of translation learning and teaching at the university level with special reference to its teaching in the universities of the Arab World/ countries. It is worth pointing that the paper is a kind of reflection touching upon certain aspects of translation learning and teaching with specific focus on the three dimensions/ aspects being the learner, the teacher and the teaching material(s).

**Keywords:** aspirations, constraints, university level, teacher, learner, teaching, learning

**Aim of the Paper**

This paper aims at shedding light on the fact that although translation courses are offered in a large number of the Arab Universities, yet translation teaching is still associated with a number of problems and/ or constraints. The issue as a whole is related to the three points being the core issue of this paper; they are the teacher, the learner, and the teaching material(s). The paper, thus, is an attempt to bring to the notice of the people concerned the nature and the situation of translation teaching at the university level. Clearly, the paper is an attempt to address those constraints and aspirations with special reference to the three points mentioned. Such points are considered, as far as this paper is concerned, the bases for discussing and improving the teaching of translation at the university level.

**Introduction**

Giving a definition to translation is debatable among the people concerned with translation. Bell (1995) has surveyed this and depending on this survey, it has been gathered that some people consider translation as a science while others view it as an art. Bell (1995: 5), however, defines translation as " the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another, source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalencies."

With reference to whether it is an art or a science, the view advocated by those who regard translation as an art rests on the assumption that it requires the translator to display his/ her ability to use all the skills and artistic qualities that he/ she has acquired from knowledge and practical experience. On the other hand, those who advocate it as a science state that it is so because it needs the translator to show his/ her skills in expressing how certain aspects of a scientific nature are related to translation and translating. In brief, it creates understanding among people of different socio-linguistic backgrounds. Wardhaugh (1990) supports this idea clarifying that language and society enjoys an inevitable relationship.

**Translation at the University Level**

It is of importance to point out that this paper focuses on translation within the confines of the two languages, Arabic and English. In other words, it deals with translation teaching and learning as a bilingual learning activity requiring the knowledge of two tongues. This is based on the fact that translation is a very important component of any language learning program particularly in the universities of the Arab countries. The main function of translation is to convey the context of two codes, Arabic and English, here, between two parties know as the sender and the receiver, due to the fact that it is the gateway for understanding others, their cultures, and civilization (Deeb: 2005, and Mouton:2005). It is for this that the need for teaching translation arises, especially at the university level. Moreover, it is one of the ideal means for understanding others' cultures, apart from its function as a means for understanding sciences, arts and other things and by translation, people can share such things. In the views of Dulay et al (1981), Ellis (1985), Wardhaugh (1990), Dingwancy and Maier (1996), cultures can be understood by means of translation. And this is one of the main reasons why a number of translation departments and centers have been established in different Arab universities. Therefore, and in the light of such importance, it is pertinent to state that translation has witnessed a very great attention at the university level, and thus, has moved from being a course in a department of English to occupy departments for translation. This view is shared by many people such as Newmark (1981), Newmark (1995), Fawcett (1997), AlGhussain (2003). Thus, it

is necessary, of an educational point of view that for translation to be taught and learnt successfully, it must be made a course of interest for its learners.

Virtually, the aim of teaching translation at the university level is to introduce students to translation theory and train them how to translate from one language to another; here Arabic to English and vice versa. However, in certain cases this teaching and training may not give its full fruition for certain reasons. Yet, the general remark that can be stated here is that a good number of translation teachers, who are supposed to teach and train students to translate, are sometimes not well qualified as they have different backgrounds such as literature, linguistics, and so on. In other words, due to the shortage of specialist trained teachers, such institutions assign teachers to teach translation just because such teachers have interest in translation. This is what is shared by Amer (2010), who has experienced this in the University of Gaza where teachers teach it without being trained. In addition to the attention paid to the teacher and the teaching materials, the objectives of the translation courses that are taught in such institutions should be revised. This is supported by Machida (2011), whose concern is that the objectives of teaching translation must be clear, which would make the teaching material well received and learnt by the learners. Al-Sakr (2010: 3) found out that “the present translation courses at Hodeidah University do not meet the requirements of the course design in terms of at least course objectives and course content.” Due to the lack of training translation teachers, the lack of proper teaching textbooks and/or materials, and the lack of a clear approach and/or method, translation teachers, usually resort to giving texts according to their interest and choice. Thus, the teaching of translation becomes mostly teacher-oriented giving less attention to students’ needs and interests. Thus, students may end up with the belief that this is all that they can get from learning translation, but not the real art of translating. Moindjie (2006: 59) ascertains that translation has gone further than linguistics pointing that “translation has gone further as a unifying communicative factor of lingual, cultural diversity, and academic knowledge.” This is, according to Moindjie (2006) crosses all borders, and ages.

### **The Need for this Research**

The need for writing this paper is to highlight the constraints that usually stand in the way of translation teaching and learning and the aspirations that can lead to finding solutions to such constraints. It must be clarified here that translation teaching can be like teaching any other course in the way that there are three dimensions, and these dimensions are the learner, the teacher and the teaching material(s). Thus, the three dimensions are of great importance in making the whole process of handling such a course go as expected. It must also be added that the three dimensions are interrelated in the sense that they must all go hand in hand in the proper manner that is planned by the educational institution offering such a course/ courses. This is due to the fact that if any of the three dimensions goes wrong at a certain stage, the other two are to be affected. Translation teachers, above all, can make translation teaching a wonder if well qualified and trained.

Since the constraints are mainly linguistic ones in the sense that learners can face problems with vocabulary items, grammar structures, semantic, pragmatic, stylistic problems and things of that sort, these constraints can be overcome by means of a well-prepared course/ courses and well qualified and trained teachers. Such constraints are represented by the differences between two languages which are the core work of learning and teaching translation in the way that they can make a real art or the opposite. These lexical, syntactic, semantic, stylistic, pragmatic and possibly discourse points or aspects may differ from one language to another. They are, in a

sense, the mechanisms that can enable the learner to tackle the text and reproduce the required form of the translated text or part of a text in an acceptable fashion.

### **Sources of Difficulty in Teaching Translation**

It is not the items that learners put, but how such learners put those items in the positions required by the translated text. This view is shared by Brumfit (1986), Bialystock (1987), Menacere (1992) and Decure (1993). At another level, the complexity that the majority of translation learners encounter can largely be attributed to the disparity among languages in terms of the positions occupied by such items in the sentences of different languages. In this regard, it is stated that the reasons for disparity among languages in relation to the lexical and grammatical devices are that they vary considerably in their distribution in a sentence and also their syntactic forms. According to Zaki (1996), European languages share common linguistic origins which would leave a greater span of difficulty between different languages as Arabic and English especially if we get into very specific types of translation such as religious and literary ones due to the fact that languages differ in a number of areas. This is on one hand, and on the other hand, the lexical mechanisms are another difficulty facing learners. Because both grammatical and lexical tools differ from one language to another, certain degrees of misunderstanding and confusion are created for the learner translator. Another source of difficulty created in the face of the learner translator is the translation and also formation of relative clauses (Zagood, 2012). As-Safi (1996) also points to the different constraints that stand in the way of learner translators such as the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic ones. Shaheen (1991: 26) clarifies that "In the Arab World, the problem of designing adequate translation courses" continues to remain as it is. However, he adds, "There have been a few attempts at designing undergraduate translation syllabuses at Arab universities, the prevailing characteristic of which is subjectivity."

### **How to Establish Translation Teaching**

Practically speaking and with the framework of the suggestion of Menacere (1992:19), who states that to establish the translation as a skill, "learners must be introduced to certain language treatment mechanisms which can start with certain language items as prepositions and adverbials." He further says that for Arab-speaking learners, teachers should not even start with presenting such learners with texts to translate. Learners should, rather, be oriented to this via a different approach which is the four language skills. He reiterates that foreign language learners should be better introduced to translation through the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. This technique is a very useful translation technique between any other two languages, apart from English and Arabic (Snell-Hornby, 2002 and Colina, 2003).

As a variation of this suggested technique, it is additionally proposed that Arabic texts can also be supplied as translation materials which will be a successful asset as far as translation is concerned. Newmark (1985) suggest that teachers can start with simple sentences to be followed by compound and then complex sentences. It is also ideal that teachers can draw their learners' attention to the connectives and how they are used in the two languages (Newmark: 1985). This will help learner translators attempt simple texts in any of the types of texts mentioned above. Their translation skills and abilities will develop step by step, and this, according to Menacere (1992), is a very practical technique.

It is obligatory that translation teachers are to be well equipped with a number of skills and abilities. Among such skills and abilities are familiarity with the text type, and textual cohesion and coherence, and knowledge of the pragmatic and semiotic differences between the two languages.

### **Stages of Tackling the Text to be Translated**

Menacere (1992) views translation as a science and this is why he states that it should be handled in a scientific manner. Thus, he contends that it should be tackled in three-phase processes which are input, transition and output. In the first phase, the receptive skills are involved for information gathering. In the second phase, the transition phase, the collected information is organized representing the first draft of the discourse.

As far as the language produced at these two phases is concerned, it is sophisticated and unorganized. At such phases, the lexical, grammatical and the cohesive devices are employed for the purpose of producing contextualized discourse. At the final phase, the output phase, the final version of translation is produced in which a unified coherent and contextualized discourse is the final output. Likewise, Newmark (1995) supports this view regarding the phases of translation, which are, in his opinion, the three fundamental assets for teachers and learners.

Further, Macau (2003:134) concludes saying that as translation is “eminently communicative and real, any translation task could and should be constituted by many different activities concerning the different skills.” Similarly, Porcaru (2007) confirms that for teachers to engage learners deeply in a translation task, the four language skills can be involved.

### **Suggested Techniques**

The ideal technique for tackling the translation problems can be understood in how the information in a text is presented so that such information can be processed accordingly. The type and range of lexical and grammatical items used in a text determine how learners are to process such texts according to the nature of the topic addressed as there are different types of topics such as literary, scientific, commercial and technical topics. Additionally, there are emotive and figurative ones.

To start with, teachers can ideally start with simple factual topics. Menacere (1992: 19) adhere to this confirming that “the factual language is the type most appropriate in the early stages, for the language is concrete, simple and the teacher can systematically control the language practice.” It is worth pointing here that the discourse of the factual language can be descriptive, narrative, expository, argumentative or instructive depending on the writer's aims.

It is suggested by Amer (2010:5) that in order for translation teaching to give its expected fruition, teachers should “select the translation text that meets the objectives”, and use a step-by-step method. In such steps, “certain aspects such as the lexical, syntactic, stylistic and semantic level of difficulty” can be dealt with. Regarding the length of the topic, the text can be divided into segments and given to students as they are divided into groups.

### **The Role of the Translation Teacher**

According to Harmer (2008), different roles can be played by the teacher depending on the learning situation so he/ she can be a facilitator, a controller, a tutor, a participant, a resource person, an assessor, an organizer, an observer, a performer, and a teaching aid. In relation to translation teachers, they have to exert great efforts by means of training learners get aware of the nature of translation and more competent in the discourse types that are related to the

translation business. This, undoubtedly, would move the learner translator from the easy to the difficult, from the simple to the complex and from the unknown to the known.

Another task of the teacher is giving priority to training learners get more competent in the translation discourse types. The teacher is also to get learner translators adapted to any new technique that the teacher introduces. This is due to the fact that in certain circumstances, learners get on well with certain methods and/ or techniques, and in some other circumstances they do not. To this, Bossano (1985: 19) thinks that “learners studying translation usually accept the most familiar, well established and friendlier methods and/ or techniques. At the same time, they reject the unfamiliar, non-democratic methods and/ or techniques that are associated with anxiety.” Menacere (1992) concludes that there is no one way to teach translation, but the possibilities and indications are endless.

Translation teachers are also required to be aware of terminological resources such as monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, specialized dictionaries, access to international data processing nets and they should also be well aware of a wide range of texts on translation theory and practice.

Most importantly, translation teachers are required to be aware of the grammatical equivalence of the two languages in such a way that each language has its own grammar structure(s), which usually differ from one to the other, and hence, cause translation problems. Such teachers are required to be well aware of the fact that when there is a lack of a certain device in one of the languages, it is definite there is a problem for learners. Such devices, according to Baker (1992) can be in the form of number, tense, voice, person and gender. Conclusively, translation teachers are required to be well aware of a diversity of teaching techniques, and they also have to be eclectic in using whatever techniques that suit their learners’ needs and the teaching situations.

### **The Role of the Student**

In the view of Amer (2010: 6) the student has a major role to play in the teaching of translation. In addition to the interest that he/ she should have in learning translation and translating, he/ she should have sound knowledge of the reading and writing skills that are the means for translation. They should have adequate learning of the theories, procedures and strategies of translation in addition to initiative, creativity, honesty, accuracy, patience and dedication.

### **Recommendations**

#### ***Recommendations for the Teachers of Translation***

- Translation teachers have to be fully aware of the different discourse types that are dealt with in translation.
- Translation teachers have to make use of all possible ways so as to make translation a very accessible task for their learners. Clearly speaking, there is a number of techniques for getting this achieved. They should make learners aware of the fact that language is a means of communication among nations and people through which different aspects of social and behavioral nature can be communicated.
- Teachers have to get learners more and more familiar with the religious and cultural background of the translated texts.
- Teachers have to be well prepared and trained in how to get their learners gradually progress from the easy to the difficult, from the simple to the complex and from the familiar to the unfamiliar.
- Teachers should have the spirit of teamwork so as to do the job with satisfaction.

- Teachers should keep away from using the teacher-centered teaching and use the learner-centered teaching.
- Teachers should use methods and/ or techniques that foster responsibility and independence.
- Teachers should foster creativity and encourage cooperation through small group techniques.
- Teachers, from time to time, should use texts that have been translated before to make students compare such translated texts with their translation of such texts.
- Teachers should try their best make their students feel that they are translating professionally which will make them have a real feeling of the job.
- Teachers should instill within their learners that understanding the different discourse types is one of the golden gates for getting into practical translation. Clearly teachers are urged to remind their learners, from time to time, of these discourse types being factual, cultural, religious, political, figurative, emotive and imaginary.
- To facilitate translation learning more, teachers can assign certain parts of a text to different groups in the class, and after the groups attempt translating these parts, the teacher discusses the different attempted translations with the whole class so that a final draft is produced for final review with the whole class. In such a way, the teacher facilitates learning the language and also enables learners of the craft of translating.

#### ***Recommendations for Institutions Centers and Departments of Translation***

- There should be clear strategies and/ or techniques to be used appropriately according to the discourse type of the text.
- If teachers are overloaded with teaching loads, their institutions can help in preparing brief manuals on how to do the job.
- All the points or levels of contrast between the source and the target language starting with the word level up to the pragmatic and sociolinguistic level are to be dealt with well. This is due to the fact that similarities can be a help and differences can be a hindrance so what is known as the positive transfer of L1 (Arabic here) represented by similarities can help such learners deal well with the similar areas in L2, whereas negative transfer represented by differences can hinder such learners when translating.
- Translation courses must be taught by bilingual instructors.
- Translation teaching should be planned in a way to allow classifying problems into their linguistic, cognitive, and pedagogical components, and such problems should not be left to the intuitive solutions of isolated problems by individual teachers.
- It is preferable that descriptive texts are to be used for beginning learners, after which they gradually move to the expository, narrative, argumentative texts and so on.

#### ***Recommendations for the Learners***

- Learners studying translation are required to have a good mastery of the vocabulary and grammar of both Arabic and English. This is due to the fact that when translating, they deal with the grammar of the two languages.
- At the stylistic level, such learners are supposed to have a certain degree of competence in the stylistics of both Arabic and English being two important components to be considered when translating.
- Students of translation should be taught and/ or trained to translate texts of gradable degrees in the way that the length should go gradually from short, quite longer, longer until they get to full texts. Such texts should cover a variety of subject areas such as religion, literature, media,

science, education, politics and so on, which are set in any type of text structure such as expository, narrative, persuasive, informative, descriptive, and newspaper articles.

- Students should develop dictionary skills as a gradual step to be followed by other steps.
- Students should be taught and/ or trained to have self-dependence in using contextual prompts to infer meanings and shades of meanings of what they translate.

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## The Impact of Translation on the Moroccan Political Discourse

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### Abstract

The present article investigates the influence of concept transfer and translation on the political discourse used in Morocco. It has been attested that the Moroccan political register suffers from an acute lexical gap to express a number of aspects of the modern political system. Translation from European languages has, thus, represented an important source of the political register used in the political texts and speeches. This is explained by the adoption of a modern political system which has developed in different historical and social contexts totally different from the Arab traditional communities. Yet, this transferred register is very heterogeneous as it consists of items which have been translated following different translation strategies ranging from providing native equivalents to mere transliteration.

**Keywords:** Neologism, Loan translation, Political discourse , Political register, Transliteration,

## 1. Introduction

Language and politics are closely connected in the sense that the practice of politics is highly dependent on language. Discourse analysts assume, indeed that politics cannot be conducted without language and that politics itself can be defined as the use of language in the constitution of social groups. (cf. Nahrkhalaji, S. 2006: 3). The importance of language also lies in the function of politics as it aims at mobilising population, attaining reconciliations and resolving conflicts mainly through discussions and speeches. This, therefore, makes communication central to politics. Thus political discourse as an important manifestation of political action has been an interesting subject of politicians, linguists and translators (cf. Hague et al. 1998:3-4).

The Arab political register suffers from an acute shortage of terms to express new concept and ideas which have been introduced by the European political system. This has rendered Modern Standard Arabic used in Morocco a receptive language of a flow of French and English terms to fill in the wide lexical gap.

The Moroccan traditional political system was not very elaborate with respect to its structure and organisation and didn't include all the complications of the western system (Benzakour et al. 2000, Benalazmia 2013). The political register and discourse in Morocco and in the Arab world in general has undergone a considerable change. This change is in fact a reaction to the adoption of a new and modern political system in the beginning of the twentieth century and to the massive transfer of new political concepts which require integration into the political language and discourse expressed in Arabic<sup>i</sup>. Consequently, the politicians and the translators resorted to different translation solutions to express these new concepts in Arabic. These solutions range from finding an equivalent in Arabic to the new concept to borrowing and arabising the term.

The present article investigates the interaction between translation as a process of concept transfer from one language into another and political discourse in Morocco. We argue, herein, that translation has had a considerable influence on the political discourse in Morocco in the sense that it has been an important source of the register used in this discourse. The transfer of this register has been undertaken through different translation strategies i.e. meaning extension, neologism, loan translation and transliteration from European languages

The remaining sections of the article are organized as follows: section 2 provides a brief review on political discourse; section 3 introduces the of political discourse in Morocco; section 4 delineates the main characteristics of political register; section 5 discusses the contribution of translation as main source of modern political terms through semantic extension, neologism, loan translation and transliteration.

## 2. Political Discourse Analysis

Political Discourse analysis is a branch of critical discourse analysis which investigates the different forms of political communication and language. This discourse is produced by its actors i.e. politicians. The vast majority of studies on political discourse are about texts and talks of professional politicians or political institutions at the local, national and international level (cf. Van Dijk 2000:3).

Critical political discourse analysis deals with the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through verbal communication, including the various forms of resistance or

counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance (cf. Fairclough 1995, Van Dijk 1993). It also investigates the opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and text and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes (cf. Fairclough, 1995: 132).

In addition, political discourse analysis views discourse not only as heavily influenced by ideology but also as productive of the latter, and considers reality as textually and intertextually mediated via verbal and non-verbal language systems. In this respect, political discourse analysts try to find out why a particular word or phrase or structure has been chosen over another. Political discourse interacts with translation in the sense that it helps explain that lexical choices and omissions may point to different ideological and socio-cultural values (cf. Schaffner, 2002).

### 3. Political discourse context in Morocco

The social and cultural context of the practice of politics in Morocco is characterised by a high rate of illiteracy of the Moroccan voters. A survey on the Moroccan culture variables reveals that 57% of voters are illiterates, while 19% of them have a primary school level, 17% a secondary school level and 7% a university level, (cf. Bourqia 2011; 101)<sup>ii</sup>. According to the same survey, the media represent the main transmitter of political information and discourse in Morocco, and that television is the most important medium of information diffusion (Bourqia: 98).

The same survey reveals that most Moroccans are sceptical about political parties and the utility of political action in general. Only 12,9% think that political parties in Morocco endeavour for the good of the Moroccan people. The level of political implication and affiliation is also very low: 92,3% of the surveyed people said that they have never attended any political meeting and 91% of them have never been affiliated to a labour union. Election campaigns represent the period of time when Moroccans are interested in politics most and the most important opportunity for transmitting political ideas. Paradoxically, 53,1% of the surveyed people think that politics is an interesting affair and that 72,9% of them admit that they are free in their political choices (Bourqia, 2011: 99).

Political communication revolves around a number of ideas which focus mainly on the need to believe in the utility of political action and the predominance of public interest over that of individuals. There is also a tendency to use simple symbols which have ideological and cultural connotation. These symbols help to identify and distinguish between political parties especially for the illiterate population.

Political discourse in Morocco is one of the most diffused and influential discourse types as it dominates the media in general and it is addressed to the Moroccan population in general including the illiterate rural people. Moroccan politicians use a discourse where there is a mixture of political traditional terms such as الشيخ 'the chief of a tribe', القبيلة 'the tribe', and new terms such as الديمقراطية 'democracy' and البرلمان 'the parliament'.

The language used in the political discourse is not always straightforward and uses terms and expressions that are not always accessible to the uneducated people who are typical target of political mobilisation. Moroccan politicians tend to simplify their ideas and political ideology by using common figurative language used in the Moroccan popular culture.

Yet, the majority of the terms and expressions used in the Moroccan political discourse express new concepts and have been introduced through translation especially from French. These terms are either new derivations from existing roots in Arabic, literally translated equivalents or simply transliterated forms.

#### 4. The Moroccan Political Register

The contemporary Moroccan political register reflects the historical, social and political changes which took place in Morocco especially during the first half the twentieth century with the establishment of the modern state (cf. Bourqia, 2011: 32). This register is characterized by the use of two main categories of political terms. The first one is very limited in number and consists of the original political terms which describe aspects of the Moroccan traditional political system which have been preserved after the modernisation of the system by the French protectorate, namely the traditional rule system such as سلطان *sultan* ‘king’, البيعة *albay3a* ‘allegiance’ الرعية *arra3iya* ‘the people’; and public administration such as الولاية *wilaya* ‘The wilaya administrative local territory’ القائد *qa'id* ‘the officer of the makhzen’, الحسبة *al hisba* ‘the market supervision’. Other terms of this category are listed below (cf. Bourqia: 2011: 32-38):

khilafa	‘the first Islamic rule’
umma	‘nation’
hizb	‘party’
chura	‘consultation’
dawla	‘state’
siba	‘dissidence, a political system where some tribes challenge the central political rule’
zawya	‘sainthood, religious gathering’
qa'id	‘a local governor of the Mekhzen’
Mekhzen	‘Moroccan traditional central government system’
umana	‘tax collectors’
Cheikh	‘head of a tribe’
Dahir	‘a decree enacted by the King’
Wali l3ahd	‘crown prince’

The maintenance of many of these terms in the contemporary political register is explained by the fact that they describe aspects of the Moroccan political system which have been preserved after the introduction of a modernisation process by the French protectorate. Write the dates. You are writing to international readers

Some of these concepts have equivalents in French and English such as *wali l3ahd* ‘the crown prince’ and *dawla* ‘state’ while most others, such as *makhzen* and *cheikh* do not and are transliterated as such in French and other European languages. Hence, this latter category of terms have been preserved as such in French language, through a process of transliteration, as describing authentic concepts peculiar to the social and political organisation of the traditional Moroccan state which do not exist in the French political system.

This reveals that there is a coexistence of traditional and modern political register in the Moroccan political and the Arab political discourse in general. Similarly, we should also expect that certain original terms would disappear from the contemporary political register as the concepts they stand for were dropped and not adopted. Indeed, items such as *3asabiya* ‘defending a tribal identity’, *ta3a* ‘obedience’, *hisba* ‘market supervision’ are less commonly more used in the modern Moroccan political discourse.

## 5. Translation : a source of new concepts and terms

### 5.1.1. Background

Throughout the history of the contact between the western and the Arab cultures and languages there has been a mutual transfer in both directions. But, given that Arabic and European languages are not cognate languages, the process of transfer either through borrowing or translation has faced serious difficulties. Bensaid Alaoui (2014) refers to a very old case which dates back to the Abbasside era when translation into Arabic was flourishing with the establishment of Bayt Alhikma. Isaak Ibn Hanin, one of the notorious translators of that era, who translated Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* into Arabic, couldn’t find an equivalent in Arabic to the terms *theatre*, *actor*, and *audience* as these concepts didn’t in fact exist in the Arabic culture at that time. The closest equivalent to these terms which he could find were: theatre مكان الرؤية, audience الرائي, actor مرئي. This shows the degree of difficulty which the translator faced to transfer these new.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Arab renaissance, most modern political terms were introduced into Arabic; and it was thanks to the contact between the Arab scholars and the western civilization that the concepts like *al-watan* الوطن, *al-mowatana* المواطنة and *al-wataniya* الوطنية appeared in the Arabic texts as our ancestors didn’t know what these stand for. Rifaa Tahtaoui (1801), one of the first Egyptian scholars who went to study in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also found serious difficulties in transferring some western concepts into Arabic which didn’t exist in his culture. For instance, he couldn’t find an equivalent to the French terms ‘republique’ et ‘republicains’ which he arabised as الحريون which is associated to the concept of freedom more than to the system of government (cf. Bensaid, 2014b).

To overcome the problem of equivalence in Arabic, Bensaid (2004b) argues in support of the option of borrowing of European words instead of finding native equivalents in Arabic. He pointed out that it is far better to borrow a foreign word which preserves all its meaning and its cultural connotations than to look for an archaic native Arabic word or coin an ‘equivalent’ which cannot express the cultural meaning and the historical context of the original term as some of the translators do, and as Arabic Language academies call for. Most of these terms are not accepted by language users and they do not go beyond limited translations or glossaries.

He mentioned the renaissance scholars like Khir Eddine Tounsi (1868) who directly borrowed and used items like the French ‘directoire’ ديركتور which refers to the rule of the

group in France after the revolution or 'achitecture' أرشيتكتورا which were nativised later on by finding Arab words for them (cf. Bensaid, 2004b).

Bensaid (2004a) argues further that it is far worse is to mistranslate some western concepts whose meaning is clear in people minds as being based on the historical and social contexts in which they were born. While the equivalents chosen for these western concepts were born in an Arab historical and social context which is totally different. A typical example illustrating this is the use of the Arabic term علمانية as the equivalent of the English word 'secularism' and to the French 'laïcité' which isn't, in fact, an adequate translation. Both the English and the French terms have basically the same meaning and refer to the separation between the church and the state in the practice of politics. Yet, the interpretation given to these terms in Arabic is a complete separation between religion and all government institutions including non political ones. This represents a deviation from the original meaning of the terms which refer to the fact that separation occurs only in politics but not extended to other areas. Thus, the general assumption generally adopted in Arabic literature that علمانية represents a complete negation of religion in all fields is not correct both logically, based on concept interpretation, and historically. The suitable equivalent is the transliterated form of the French item لا ئيكية and not علمانية. (cf. Bensaid, 2014a).

The practice of transliteration has been active for the last two centuries and involves mainly technical and scientific terminology. English and French represent the source language of these terms given that they are languages of the colonial powers which occupied the Arab world. Yet, these items have not undergone the same principled processes of integration into the phonological system of Arabic, the host language viz., *barlamant* برلمان and *tiknolojya* تكنولوجيا (cf. Elmagrab, 2011).

The class of items which integrated the political register through translation is quantitatively far more significant than the native ones. It represents the set of items which describe the modern political system in Morocco. The concepts underlying these terms and expressions have been introduced into the Moroccan political system from the French system or from translation undertaken by North African and Middle Eastern scholars in the beginning of the twentieth century. As these terms have integrated Arabic through different translation strategies they can be classified according to the type of translation method adopted in their transfer into Arabic.

### 5.1.2. *Equivalence through semantic extension*

This refers to translation which opts for a literal equivalent of a political term already existing in the target language, Arabic, but which is attributed a different meaning from the initial literal one. The term is thus introduced to the political register in Arabic through semantic extension. For instance, the word 'left' or 'la gauche' was literally translated as *yasar* يسار. Then, its meaning has been extended to refer the leftist political movement. Semantic extension equivalence is also shown in the following terms:

French term	Arabic literal equivalent	Political meaning
organes	'أجهزة'	'political bodies'
mouvement	'حركة'	'political movement'

camarade	‘رفيق’	‘a politician with a socialist affiliation’
référendum	‘استفتاء’	‘referendum’
la droite	اليمين	“right political movement”
la gauche	اليسار	“left political movement”

The terms yamin and yassar are typical Arabic items which are used commonly and literally to refer to two opposing space directions. They also have religious and cultural connotations in Arabic with yamin referring to the positive and the good and yassar to the less positive and the wrong. Yet, and even though they have been part of the basic vocabulary of Classical Arabic they weren't assigned any extended political meaning until the borrowing of the these political denotations from the western political system.

The same thing can be said about the terms rafiq رفيق haraka حركة and istiftaa استفتاء which are common Arabic items which have acquired a new political meaning because of the presence of certain common semantic features between the literal meaning of these Arabic words and that of their French equivalents. Other western political concepts have been transferred through neologism.

### 5.2. Equivalence through neologism

Neologism is defined as ‘newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense.’ (Newmark, 1988: 140). This translation strategy opts for generating a new word from an existing root which has common semantic features with the newly borrowed concept. The word *jam3iya* جمعية for instance the equivalent of ‘association’ was derived from the Arabic verb *jama3a* ‘collect’. Similar terms which have been derived from existing roots to serve as equivalent to a new political concept are listed below:

French	Arabic equivalent	Arabic root	English
Citoyen	مواطن	وطن	‘citizen’
Elections	انتخابات	نخبة	‘elections’
Gouvernance	حكمة	حكم	‘governance’
Socialisme	الإشتراكية	شارك	‘socialism’
Reactionnaire	رجعي	رجع	‘reactionary’
Association	جمعية	جمع	‘association’
Communiste	شيوعي	شاع	‘communism’

The term *watan* وطن was used in the Arab ancient political discourse and it referred to the same meaning as it does today ‘the country’ but the terms *mowatin* مواطن ‘the citizen’ *mowatana* مواطنة ‘being a citizen’ didn't exist in the ancient political discourse and are in fact derivations from the root *watan* to refer to new political concepts originating from western civil political

culture. If we compare the roots of *citoyen* to its equivalent *muwatin*, we can infer that they refer to two different space entities i.e. *cit * which originates from the ancient Greek's city and *watan* which is also an old Arabic word for country. This shows that Arabic adopted a similar process of neology as French in deriving new political concepts and words from one basic root referring to a spatial and political entity.

Derivation in Arabic is a highly productive process and is allowed by the flexibility of the language's morphological system. This also offers a wide possibility to generate extended predictable meaning on the basis of the meaning the root words. Most of these derivations such as *ichtirakia* اشتراكية, *chouyou3i* شيوعي and *hakama* حكمة were never attested in the Classical Arabic and would sound rather odd though they are theoretically possible derivations.

### 5.3. Equivalent through loan translation

This refers to the case where Arabic borrows a political concept such as 'civil society' but there is no original equivalent word or expression for this concept. This case provides a literal translation of the foreign terms. The item 'civil' here is translated as *madani* مدني and 'society' as *mojtama3* مجتمع. The following phrases have also been transferred thorough loan translation.

French	Arabic	English
Opinion publique	الرأي العام	'public opinion'
Culture politique	الثقافة السياسية	'political culture'
Approche du genre	مقاربة النوع	'gender approach'
Politiques publiques	السياسات العمومية	'public policies'
Droit de l'homme	حقوق الإنسان	'human rights'
La langue de bois	لغة الخشب	'waffling language'
Reforme politique	إصلاح سياسي	'political reform'
La guerre froide	الحرب الباردة	'the cold war'
Le tiers monde	العالم الثالث	'third world'

The literal meaning of most of these equivalents would sound odd with respect to the contexts in which they are used. For instance, the phrase *الرأي العام* means some kind of general opinion and not the opinion of the public. While in Classical Arabic there is use of *العامية* to refer to the public *عامية القوم*. This, in fact, makes the phrase *رأي العامية* closer to the intended meaning in Arabic than the adopted equivalent *الرأي العام*. Similarly, the term *إصلاح* was used in the old Arab political register in the singular form in collocations such as *إصلاح الحكم* and *إصلاح شأن الرعية*. Some of these equivalents are literally vey odd hybrid collocations as in *تصويت الأقلية* 'the vote of the minority'. The term *تصويت* 'voting' itself is a recent derivation from the noun *صوت* 'the voice', which stands as a literal translation of the French 'la voix', commonly used in expressions such as 'donner sa voix' 'give one's vote' literally translated as *أعطى صوته*.

Long Arabic structures used in the Moroccan political discourse are also simple calquing of French expressions. 'Les rêves et aspirations des peuples' 'the dreams and aspirations of the peoples' was calqued as أحلام وتطلعات الشعوب in Arabic. Yet, the preferred syntactic structure in Arabic is أحلام الشعوب وتطلعاتها. The expression سياسة العصا و الجزرة is also a case of loan translation of the French 'la politique du baton et de la carotte' 'policy of the stick and the carrot'. Structures which exhibit compound adjectives such as الحوار الأورومتوسطي and التعاون الإفريقي are not common Arabic structures and are in fact loan translations of the expressions 'dialogue Euro-Méditerranéen' and 'la coopération Arabo Africaine'.

#### 5.4. Equivalence through transliteration

There are cases in which more radical solutions are opted for in which French terms are simply transliterated. In cases where no equivalents are available in Arabic and when it is difficult to proceed through meaning extension or through neologism, the translator resorts simply to transliteration or to an arabized form of a foreign word and adopting the word as it is and transcribing it with equivalent Arabic letters. It is quite common in the Moroccan political discourse to come across items such as إيديولوجيا and برلمان, ديموقراطية. In the leftist discourse of the socialist and communist parties the terms بورجوازية and فيودالي بروليتاريا are also quite common. . Other terms of this category are listed below:

French	Arabic	English
Parlement	برلمان	'parliament'
Libéralisme	ليبيرالية	'liberalism'
Idéologie	إيديولوجيا	'ideology'
Impérialisme	إمبريالية	'imperialism'
Démagogie	ديماغوجية	'demagogy'
Prolétariat	بروليتاريا	'proletariat'
Féodale	فيودالي	'feudal'
Bourgeoisie	بورجوازية	'bourgeoisie'
Stratégie	استراتيجية	'strategy'
Mécanismes	ميكانيزمات	'mechanisms'
Technocrate	تقنوقراطي	'technocrate'

These items stand for not only loan concepts but also whole borrowed words which have preserved their original sound structure. These terms refer back to the tendency opted for by Rifaa Tahtawi and supported by Bensaid that transliteration can be a solution to the filling of lexical gaps in Arabic and transfer of new concepts while preserving all their connotative social and historical connotations. Some of these have alternative equivalents in Arabic which are sometimes used interchangeably such as إقطاعي and فيودالي, الطبقة العاملة and بروليتاريا.

## 6. Conclusion

The Moroccan political discourse makes use of two distinct categories of political registers one which is traditional, original, and limited in number and a modern western register which is quantitatively more important. This latter category has integrated the Moroccan discourse thorough translation which in fact has heavily affected the Moroccan political discourse by providing the majority of the register used by politicians.

We have seen that translation has considerably enriched the political register used in this discourse by introducing new concepts and filling a large number of lexical gaps following from the adoption of the western political system. The heterogeneity characterizing this translated register is due to the different transfer strategies adopted in the course of translation. This variation in translation strategies can in turn be attributed to the priorities of the translators themselves. On the one hand, there are those who were more concerned with preserving the identity of the host language and they attempted to find native equivalents to foreign terms. But on the other hand the focus of other translators was more on preserving all the semantic aspects of the foreign terms including those pertaining to its historical development and social and cultural backgrounds.

### About the Authoe:

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<sup>i</sup> An important characteristic of this borrowed register is that its use is not limited only to the Moroccan political discourse but also in the Arab political register in general used different Arab countries and in different periods of time which started from the Arab renaissance era in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>ii</sup> This is based on the Arab Democracy Barometer and Afro-Barometer; a survey undertaken in 2005 by the Institute for Social Research of the University of Michigan. See [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org). The data used here are those related to the survey about Morocco undertaken in 2006.

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## Exploring Female Teachers' Perceptions towards Teacher Observation: Issues and Challenges in the Arab Context

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### Abstract

The present study investigated EFL teachers' perceptions towards class observations and their challenges. Teachers' observation was clearly recognized by educational researchers' views such as Sheal (1999) and Lawson (2011), who argue that observations can provide beneficial feedback to teachers, and can generally improve the overall effectiveness of the teaching/learning process. So, the purpose of the study is to identify teachers' point of views about class observations, the challenges that they face and the suggestions they advise to improve. More specifically, this investigation was carried out in an attempt to promote both professional of teacher development. Eighty teachers were selected randomly from all women's campuses of the English Language Institute of an Arab university. The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire based on two parts. The first part comprises 5 point Likert-scale items and the second part includes open ended questions. Data analysis was presented in terms of frequency, percentage, and interpretations of the open-ended questions. Findings revealed that teachers agree and strongly agree with the fundamental role of class observation as a way to learning and gradual improvement in teaching. The participants also highlighted the importance of observers' pre and post observations mainly their positive feedback in motivating them to improve the teaching practices. Besides, the majority of teachers viewed that class observation is not the only form of professional development but they are in need of training and workshops.

**Keywords:** Teachers' observation, professional and teacher development.

## 1. Introduction:

This paper explores EFL teachers' perceptions of teacher observation and its challenges in an English Language Institute, King Abdul Aziz University. Teacher observation has always been a controversial issue. On one hand, it is perceived as evaluation of teacher performance and on the other hand, it is seen as a factor in the process of teacher development (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). However, though observation is aimed at teacher evaluation, it should be focused at reinforcing teaching and learning (Harris, 1986).

### 1.2. Arab Context

The English Language Institute is situated in King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In order to abide the CEA (Commission on English Language Accreditation) accreditation standards, teacher performance and the quality of teaching are major priorities to be considered to meet the needs of foundation year students. Thus, teacher observation is an important factor in ensuring that teachers are improving their performance in the classroom. Initially, teacher observation has been undertaken by academic coordinators to ensure faculty members are performing their ultimate best in meeting the students' needs. Eventually, an observation committee is formed (where qualified observers are trained by Oxford University Press trainers) to observe faculty members. The observers are holders of master and doctorate degrees and have had a sufficient experience in teaching.

The observation criteria form that is currently used in the English Language Institute includes criteria based on: planning and preparation, classroom environment, lesson delivery and language proficiency. The score range from 1 to 5 (from unsatisfactory to outstanding). Teacher observation is taken as a form of evaluation which is a part of faculty annual performance rating for every faculty member. The main purpose of teacher observation is to ensure that teachers are progressing and are updated with the latest trends in teaching methodology. Thus teachers make an effort to attend in house training and excel themselves by attending local and international seminars, conferences and also be updated in the EFL field.

The observation procedure takes place with a pre-observation meeting between the observer and the teachers. Next the observation was arranged with two observers coming into the classroom. Next a post observation meeting would be arranged to discuss the overall score for the teacher and a development plan would take place if the teacher scores less than a 3. Those teachers who score 3.5, 4, 4.5 or 5 meet the criteria of competent teachers.

### 1.3. Statement of the Problem

The rationale behind this study is to get a deeper perspective of how teachers think about observation and their comprehension of the process of observation and its importance in relation to teacher development. Being the head of this committee has put me in many challenging situations. As observation is a sensitive matter, the researcher wanted to investigate the teachers' perceptions regarding observation and its complete process in our institute. Diversified issues hinder the effectiveness of teacher observation as a useful tool in teacher development. Such issues are the negative attitudes towards teacher observation. More specifically, teachers are found to be unsatisfied with their given scores. Accordingly, they view teacher's observation as generally evaluative rather than developmental. It is therefore of relevance for this study to investigate these issues.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Teacher Observation

In order to run any institution successfully, competent teachers are a core component. In the process of getting accreditation, one of the main core standards of CEA (Commission on English Language Accreditation) body is to have qualified faculty and in relation to our mission statement:

*The Mission of the English Language Institute (ELI) is to provide intensive instruction of English as a foreign language, delivered by qualified instructors using an internationally-oriented curriculum, to Foundation Year students in order to enhance their English language skills and facilitate their academic progress.*

Thus, teachers have to be continuously trained and seeking professional development to be source of expertise and also major facilitators of knowledge for students.

Teacher observation has taken a more serious stand where recorded detailed documentation takes place which necessitates including pre-observation and post-observation meetings rather than only a walk-in observation.

Literature about teacher observation has acknowledged its fundamental role in enhancing the quality of teaching performance for the welfare of students' success. For any school or higher education institution, teacher quality is of prime significance (Stronge & Tucker, 2003). Teacher observation has been a controversial issue as means of evaluation and professional development (Sheal, 1989; Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Thus, any form of teacher evaluation could help in reinforcing teaching innovation and learning for teachers (Harris, 1986). Malderez (2003) points out that observation is commonly used in education as a tool to support development. He highlights four types of observation: observation for development; observation for training; observation for evaluation and observation for research. Classroom observation has been a key method in training both pre-service and in-service teachers and in providing feedback about classroom performance. It is thus an incentive in both Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and teacher assessment (Lawson, 2011).

Freeman (1982) asserts the different approaches to observation such as Supervisory Approach/ the Alternatives Approach, and the Non-directive approach. In the Supervisory Approach, the observer is usually the supervisor or administrator who visits the class and communicates with the teacher post observation. The observer gives an overall feedback of the lesson and teacher's performance. There may be a power relationship between the supervisor and the teacher being observed where the supervisor holds a superior role. If the observer lacks experience she may not abide by the evaluative standards. In the Alternative Approach, where the emphasis is on the observer's role, is to suggest multiple alternatives to what he or she has perceived in the classroom.

Next, the observer manifests challenges in a non evaluative way. To this end, the observer hopes to motivate the teacher to think critically. Thus, the relationship between the observer and the teacher being observed is one of equality which prevents the power relationship as mentioned in the Supervisory Approach. In the Non-Directive Approach, experience of the teacher is the ultimate focus where the teacher reflects upon her progress as an instructor. This may imply recognizing and understanding their own personal growth cited in Carl Roger's (1961) work. In the view of the critics mentioned, teacher observation may be taken into several directions as evaluative, learning and developmental on behalf of the teacher.

Teacher observation may vary from school and university. Observers may be teachers, peers, or administrators. To this point, Sheal (1989) perceives “observations...to be seen as judgmental, and one more aspect of administrator power.” p. 93. Furthermore, she claims, observations are often unsystematic or subjective, because “administrators and teachers generally have not been trained in observation or the use of systematic, observation tools.” Consequently, they tend to use themselves as a standard, and they observe impressionistically because observation is used for evaluation, teachers primarily consider observation as a threat. This may lead to tension in the classroom, and simultaneously between teacher and observer at any stage of the observation process such as the pre-observation and post observation meeting. Finally, conferences focus on the teacher’s behavior rather than developing the teacher’s skills. “Observers’ feedback are often subjective, impressionistic, and evaluative, teachers tend to react in defensive ways” whereas useful feedback is not heard (Sheal, 1989, 93).

Burton (1987) cited in Bailey (2006) argues that “observation as a means of staff development must be kept separate from administrative supervisory requirements” (1987: 164). Bailey (2006) notes a fundamental part of language teacher supervision is observing lessons. Supervisors observe language lessons for various reasons, including seeing how well the curriculum is coordinated, monitoring students’ difficulties. It is necessary to observe teachers and evaluate their performances at times. Supervisors can have access to portfolios, review teacher’s diary that promote teacher development. Hence, the developmental purpose of observation that aims at benefiting teachers as well as improving the quality of evaluation. In this respect, Cosh (1999) encourages the notion of observation as developmental rather than evaluative. She links it with the concept of reflective practice where teachers are given opportunities at continuous stages to reflect upon their teaching by recognizing their weaknesses and improving them.

Wang and Seth (1998) point out that teacher observation has its share of problems pertaining to teacher observation as mentioned as a discouraging experience and feeling of resentment among Chinese teachers. They wanted to transform the idea of classroom observation and to encourage it as a source of improvement of quality teaching. The overall aim of using the approach was to help teachers adopt a developmental attitude towards classroom observation by providing opportunities for self-development. In the self-development approach, teachers were given autonomy to make decisions pertaining to observers, time and discussions feedback. Teachers were put on a positive stance with a learning process where collaborative learning opportunity takes place where teachers and observers learn from each other. The support of administrators and the cooperation of teachers are essentially relevant in supporting teacher observation. Sheal (1999) points out that classroom observation has traditionally been conducted by administrators and senior teachers mainly for the purpose of teacher evaluation. Additionally, he notes that educational researchers argue that observations can provide beneficial feedback to teachers, and can generally improve the overall effectiveness of the teaching/learning process. There is also the Walk-through observations which has been defined as a brief, informal observation where no evaluation takes place but a kind of support to obtain knowledge of teaching practice of the teacher (Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, & Poston, 2004). Harding (2014) emphasizes that teacher observation needs to be a main concern not only for teachers but also for managers, students, and quality control inspectors. In the same vein, he points out that the core focus of observation is not only to enhance teaching but also to ensure effective internal

and external monitoring in terms of standards of accreditation and quality assurance, which in turn, would meet students' needs and improve administrative procedures. Accordingly, observation is recognized as a problem solving aspect in the educational setting as well as in the workplace

### ***2.2 Teacher Development***

Wichadee (2011) notes that teacher observation as a one way of promoting professional and teacher development. Professional development usually aims at promoting training and career development while teacher development is more focused on inward growth of an expert where one becomes confident and experienced in one's profession and teaching journey (Underhill, 1986). Williams (1989) claims that classroom observations often cause problems for teachers and trainers. They tend to be judgmental, relying on trainers subjective judgments rather than developmental, developing the teacher's ability to assess his or her own practices. Classroom observations generally form a part of any teacher training program whether initial training or in-service training. She argues that classroom observations always present problems for the teachers and trainers, and generally cause considerable stress to teacher, teachers should be given an opportunity to develop their own decisions, and enhance their ability to self-evaluate their teaching practices. Williams (1989) states that the teacher classroom visits should be developmental rather than judgmental. This classroom observation will involve visits, and lastly answering the self-evaluation questionnaire. The purpose of the visit will be developmental, and focused to the teacher's needs which may enhance a sense of responsibility, future development, positivity, and finally flexibility among teachers.

They further signify that teacher's preferences were not taken into consideration but now they are (Akbari, Samar, and Tajik, 2013). Teacher supervisors in the past were authoritarian and directive. She advocates that teachers must be given voice to experience wishes and concerns. Wang and Seth (1998) note the power relationship between observers and teachers. By giving opportunities for teachers to decide what they would like throughout the observation process will enhance the process of observation. More importantly, Lam (2001) did research by inquiring teachers' preferences and concluded that respecting their perception of practice including teacher development and peer observation in teacher observation practices would result in greater improvements.

Scrivener (2011) advocates the importance of observation as a learning experience for the teacher. He highlights the importance of getting feedback from another person's perspective since we tend to not realize some aspects of our teaching unless someone else observes it. He claims that all kinds of observation can lead to useful learning. He points that observation may be classified into training, developmental and assessment. Training is to be considered as a part of a training program to help trainers identify a teacher's current level of skills and needs. The teacher is being observed and assessed as part of a program or syllabus to achieve a certain set of specified goals. Developmental suggests the teacher herself identifies what areas would be most useful to receive a feedback on. Assessment takes place in a form of criteria where assessment manifests against criteria of quality through internal and external inspection. Furthermore, Learning during classroom observation plays an important role in practice teaching (Richards and Farrell, 2011).

In order for classroom observation to occur successfully, there are few suggestions to be taken into account as Waxman (2013) contends. Firstly, observers need to be trained ones by attending training sessions. Secondly, observation is used in teacher development projects with the aim to improve classroom instruction in order to gain comprehension and improved models for innovating instruction. Thirdly, teachers can improve their classroom instruction given appropriate feedback and suggestions for enhancement, and it would be a guide for teachers where colleagues could reflect about their practices on their own. Finally, self-awareness is developed where teachers can modify their areas of weaknesses. Sheal (1989) further implies that training staff be aware of the observation process: pre and post observations, the importance of observation, procedure, and examples with the use of videos to allow them to be familiar with the observation process, so as not to be threatened by it. Furthermore, he argues that supervisors need to be comfortable with being observed as well. Another positive incentive for teacher observation to take place successfully is peer observation. According to Grosling (2002), peer observation encompasses a shared understanding and mutual willingness aiming to use the observation as a process to learn about teaching. Ali (2012) highlights the benefits of peer observation as a source of an empowering professional development for teachers where knowledge is shared among colleagues. Harding (2014) encourages peer observation as a method of cross-training that widens and strengthens the experience of the teacher. He agrees that teacher observation represents a major factor in the individual's development and he also acknowledges that student's feedback, blind and self observation are fundamental incentives for improvement in teaching. Blind observation implies pretending there is an observer providing feedback but actually the observer is not present, thus encouraging the teacher to observe her or himself to improve her/his teaching practice. Similarly, he recognizes the importance of creating a cultural aspect for the observation where sharing ideas and attitudes takes place among managers, and administrative staff who were being observed by each other.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Setting

The present study is carried out in King Abdul-Aziz University (KAU). Within the Arabic context, KAU is highly interested in fulfilling continuing professional development of its teachers in order to design relevant and authentic curriculum and achieve success and professionalism in its teachers as well as students.

#### 3.2. Participants

The participants include 80 female teachers of English Language, but only 50 who responded to the questionnaire. The study is based on female teachers only because in the Saudian context, male and female teachers teach in separate campuses. The participants are not only new teachers but also those who have few experiences in teaching.

#### 3.3. Purpose and justification of the study

The present study investigated the concept of class observation from the observers' perspectives, pointing out to the challenges they face and the suggestions that teachers recommend. Hence, the research questions guiding the study are the following:

1. *How do EFL teachers perceive teacher observation?*
2. *What are the challenges that EFL teachers face in teacher observation?*
3. *What implications do teachers suggest for teacher observation?*

The rationale behind choosing this issue is the importance of teacher observation in improving teaching practices as well as students' performance

### ***3.4. The Questionnaire***

The questionnaire aimed at eliciting teachers' perceptions of the class observation and the challenges they face. This research instrument is divided into three main parts according to the purposes of the research questions mentioned in the review of the literature. Therefore, the first part of the questionnaire aims at exploring the teacher's attitudes towards teacher observation. This part is composed of 9 items of a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strong agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The purpose of the second part is to figure out the challenges that teachers face in teacher observation. This part includes 8 items under the same scale of measurement. Then the questionnaire ends with an open-ended question from which one can elicit sufficient information and suggestions from teachers about the ways to improve classroom observation.

### ***3.5. Data Analysis procedure***

In the present study, the data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Since the sample is limited, the quantitative phase was done manually. At first, the teachers' perceptions were calculated in percentages then presented graphically. Secondly, delineating the variation among teachers' responses to their perceptions as well as the challenges that they face in class observation constitutes the qualitative analysis. Besides, another part of the qualitative analysis includes analyzing the suggestions that teachers recommend for improving teachers' observation. The results yielded by the questionnaire and data analysis outlined above are reported and discussed in the following section.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

The variation in teachers' responses towards class observation items were studied in considerable detail from a pedagogical and psycholinguistic point of view. In this respect, teachers' perceptions towards class observation were analyzed in relation to its role in education and the challenges that teachers face during such a process.

### ***4.1. Teachers' observation in relation to learning and professional development***

In the questionnaire, there were 9 items designed to elicit the teachers' perceptions towards the concept of class observation. Figure 4.1 represents the responses' degree of agreement for the items.

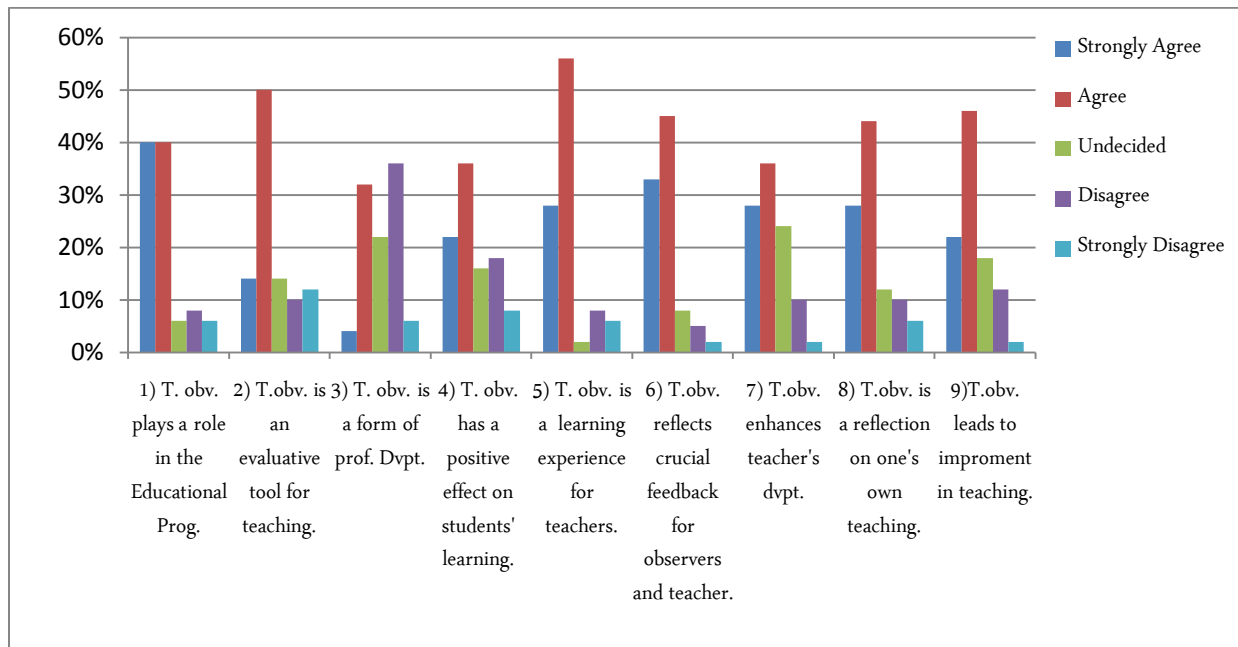


Figure 4.1 Items of teachers' observation (T.obv.) in relation to education and learning

Figure 4.1 shows that the majority of teachers agreed and strongly agreed with statements 1, 2, 4 and 6. About 55% of the teachers emphasized the relationship between teachers' observation and its role in education and learning. The participants reported that teachers' observation provides contrastive feedback to teachers, allows them to improve their teaching practices, which in turn enhances the educational program. For instance, teachers' observation is considered a chance for new teachers to get support from experienced and expertise colleagues. Accordingly, the observer and the one being observed will together process the activity, figure out the most difficulties in the task and suggest solutions to improve the teaching approach and skills for students. Accordingly, teachers' observation strengths the learning efficiency within the teachers being observed as well as students. Hence, Observation is an important part of learning how to teach. Much of what beginner teachers need to be aware of cannot be learned solely in the university class. Therefore classroom observation presents an opportunity to see real-life teachers in real-life teaching situations. In their reflections, many colleagues mention their observations and how these observations influence the way they plan and teach.

Concerning the relationship between teachers' observation and professional development, the present study presented interesting findings related to statements 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9. About 45% of teachers agree with the statement 'Teachers' observation is a reflection on one's own teaching' pointing out that it is an opportunity for self-analysis in teaching. Through reflection, teachers become empowered and gain an awareness of their teaching competence and performance. Consequently, such a reflection on one's own approach of teaching with its strengths and weaknesses leads to gradual improvement to professional teaching. Nevertheless, what is surprising is the subjects' disagreement and indecision about statements 3 and 7. This may be explained by the fact that teachers believed that they are other different forms of professional development in addition to teachers' observation for examples trainings, workshops,

seminars, conferences and webinars. They reported that attending course trainings and workshop played a crucial role in enhancing one's teaching and become a professional in such a field rather than just being observed. Moreover, there is a possibility that the respondents might be affected by the observers' evaluation about the limitations of their teaching performance, which may in turn affect their self-confidence instead of encouraging them for further development.

**4.2. Challenges faced in teachers' observation**

Turning to the responses to items about teachers' challenges faced in observation, agreement to statements 2, 6 and 8 are the most intriguing of the finding as presented in the following Figure 4.2, below

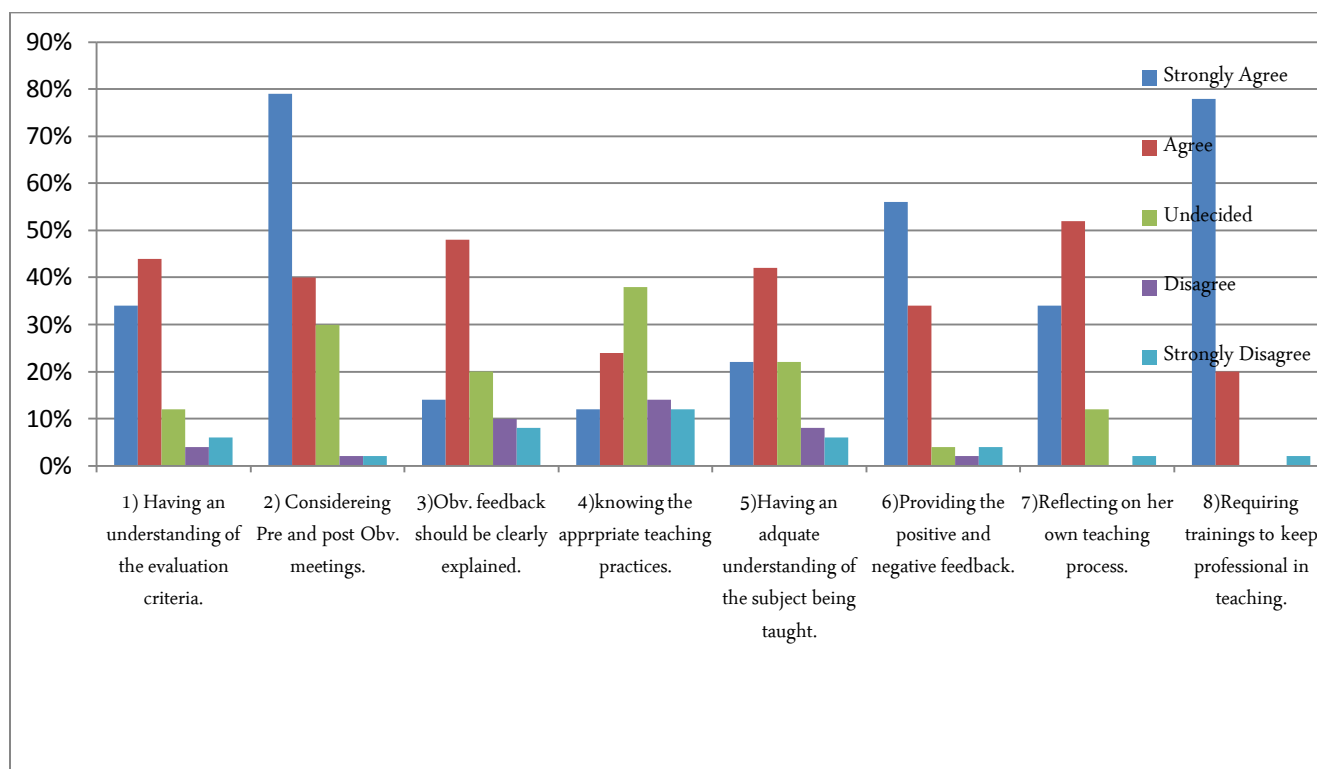


Figure 4.2 Items related to challenges faced in teachers' observation

About 75% of teachers agreed and strongly agreed on the importance of training in enhancing the teaching skills as well as the observers' feedback. This tendency to higher agreement levels can be explained by the fact that teachers view trainings and workshops are crucial in keeping them updated of the appropriate teaching methods and styles. They perceive that attending such meetings is beneficial as presentations and discussions between teachers would provide more clarifications about the teaching process, the investigated skills taking into consideration students' affective and psychological factors. Another biggest challenge that surfaces teachers is the fundamental role of the pre and post observation meetings. New teachers as well as observers agreed that such meetings are useful in evaluating the strengths and

weaknesses of the teaching practice of teachers and so working on solutions and improvement to be professional in teaching.

Another challenge that teachers should take into account in class observation is their awareness of the evaluation criteria. Almost all participants agree and strongly agree with the need to have a clear idea about the different criteria upon which their lesson plan is based. To be aware of objectives and the three main phrases of the lesson is highly important in designing a well-organized course. Such phrases constitute the warm-up activity, the procedure and the production phrases. Taking these basics into consideration presented a challenge to teachers as they need much practice on that with some feedback from colleagues in order to gradually improve in teaching and be creative in constructing motivating lessons to students.

Looking carefully at items 4 and 5, teachers seemed not only to agree but also to be undecided about the appropriate teaching practices and the adequate understanding of the subject being taught. Such variation can be explained by the fact that new teachers in particular face some difficulties when teaching subject-specific discipline as an example. Consequently they need suitable work-based activities or training to understand how to teach the specific discipline content and the appropriate teaching approach to be used according to the students' level.

#### ***4.3. Suggestions to improve teachers' observation***

As mentioned previously, the majority of teachers reported the importance of observers' feedback in improving teaching. Therefore, from the open-ended question, about 50 % of teachers stress on the role of the observer. They suggest that the observers should have high standards of conduct and ethics such as patience and understanding. Besides, the participants contended that the observers should have an encouraging positive feedback rather than focusing on the mistakes only in an attempt to motivate the teachers to gradually develop and improve her teaching practice.

As another recommendation, approximately 20% of teachers suggested peer observation to be done before the formal evaluation. Through peer observation they will be able to learn from their colleagues especially those who are more trained and experienced before being formally observed. Peer observation and demo lessons would also help the teacher's learning culture. One teacher suggested that demonstration lessons by well-trained teachers may help support the teachers. It is necessary that there is equality between the observer and the observee, and cooperation to deal with the challenges of the classroom. Teacher's observation should be for the purpose of teacher development such as keeping a journal, self-observation, peer observation etc. Such views and ideas which have been previously highlighted in the literature are relevant for both professional and teacher development.

16% of teachers suggested that teacher observation occurs with the aim of professional development, this would empower teachers to reflect on their own teaching and identify pedagogical needs and initiate innovation for the benefit of the learners. The observation should be immediately followed by training and workshops that deal with the weakness of the teachers. Mentoring sessions should take place where teachers find ways to work on their weaknesses. Teacher and observer exchange roles which makes observation more successful which is a requirement of updated training and workshops.

About 10% of teachers suggested ways to improve the process of observation. One noted that the observation duration should be less than 50 minutes. They also suggested for more regular observations to take place and maximum time should be given to the teachers to prepare before the formal observation. Several observations should take place throughout the year which help the instructor develop in a safe, comfortable environment. Moreover, an emphasis on post observation meeting is necessary and an immediate feedback should be given. One suggested selecting a suitable time of the day for the observation. Teacher observation should be done in an informal set-up and new teachers, in particular, need attention. Other crucial factors should be taken into consideration as essential recommendations are the student's level, choice of time and the technical constraints.

Another recommendation suggested by some teachers concerns the "informal" peer observation. Such a type of informal observation between colleagues and via a voluntary participation of an expert allows transferring tools of instructional practices and ideas for novice teachers. They believed that such process would enable them to strengthen their self-confidence in teaching performance. It also increases the sense of collaboration and enhances trust through allowing colleagues to observe and comment upon each other teaching. Similarly, the informants recommended the integration of microteaching sessions that help trainee teachers to develop their teaching practices by teaching a small fraction of a lesson to their colleagues in presence of an experienced teacher or mentor and that should be included as part of the training.

Furthermore, the participants pointed out to the importance of a developmental progress tracking program for teachers. Such a program aims at measuring or observing self-improvement over time. This will be reinforced by follow-up observations to see how previous feedback had been incorporated. A form of follow-up includes the use of video to both observe one's own teaching and record the teaching of exemplary teachers so that one can compare, understand the procedures and improve her teaching methods.

In addition, teachers believed that institutional encouragement is highly essential in motivating teachers to develop professionally. They suggested the promotion of rewards for teaching excellence. Rewards offer opportunities and challenges for teachers to compete, to be creative and professional in their teaching. To illustrate, rewards increase teachers' involvement in various activities to which they typically give considerable time and care.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1. Summary of the findings

The present study focused on investigating teachers' perceptions towards class observation. First, teachers' observation was explored in relation to learning and professional development. Second, the study investigated the challenges that the teachers face in observation and the suggestions they recommend.

Upon closer examination of the data, majority of teachers realize the importance of teacher observation and perceive it is an evaluative tool in teaching. Almost half of the teachers perceive observation to be a fundamental concept on improving teaching. It is considered as a learning experience to teachers through which they benefited from the efficient feedback and learn a lot about the updated practices of teaching. In this respect, approximately all teachers perceive that

pre and post-observation meetings as relevant and that the observation feedback are sufficiently and clearly explained to the teacher.

Data have also revealed a relation between teachers' observation and professional development. Most teachers think that teacher observation enhances teacher development and also allows one to improve one's ability in teaching as well as reflecting on the teaching process. In a word, teachers' observation represents a key aspect for ensuring improvement in teaching. Such observation allows for positive feedback which in turn can provide reassurance, allay anxiety and increase the self-confidence of the one being observed. Also, the feedback of the pre and post observations enables the observer and the one being observed to self-evaluate their teaching skills and this leads to gradual improvement in teaching. Yet, some teachers viewed that teachers' observation is not the only form of professionalism. Rather, there are other various forms of professional development such as attending trainings and workshops, and even work-based learning activities when teaching discipline-specific students.

Furthermore, the study has also explored the challenges in observation and the suggestions to improve it. Concerning the challenges, majority of teachers argued that they should attend the pre and post observation meetings. New teachers as well as observers agreed that such meetings are useful in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching practice. Another biggest challenge that they faced is related to the course content and the appropriate teaching approach. Therefore, they believed that they need suitable work-based activities or trainings to understand how to teach the specific discipline content and the appropriate teaching approach to be used according to the students' level.

As regards teachers' suggestions to improve class observation, most teachers agree and strongly agree on the fact that observers should have an encouraging positive feedback rather than focusing on the mistakes only in an attempt to motivate them to gradually develop and improve their teaching practices. Also, they suggested that demonstration lessons by well-trained teachers in trainings and workshops courses would effectively help to pedagogically support teachers. They also recommended organizing peer observation meetings with colleagues with a voluntary help from an expert. That in turn would increase the sense of collaboration and enhance trust through allowing colleagues to observe and comment upon each other teaching. Teachers also suggested that the institutional financial recognition of good teaching let them strive to do a better job through trainings, attending conferences and seminars. Thus, rewarding forms as merit-based pay, scholarships and promotions would motivate teachers to work better for professionalism.

## **5.2. Limitations and contributions**

In terms of research design, the data collected via a questionnaire yielded only a partial picture of the teachers' perceptions towards class observation. The use of varied instruments such class observations, role plays and interviews would have provided a more comprehensive and clear image about classroom observation process, teachers' perceptions and challenges.

A second area of concern that limits the strength of these findings relates to the representativeness of the sample. Clearly, the study was based on a fairly small sample presented female teachers only; consequently, it is difficult to generalize the findings. Another limitation concerns the limited accessibility to teachers which is due to the teaching duties and also for some of them to voice their views may still be a difficult experience.

In spite of these limitations, the present study contributed to exploring teachers' perceptions towards class observation, the challenges they face and the suggestions that they recommend. Thus, this small scale research is a step forward to propose positive changes for the welfare of teacher development and also to contribute additional knowledge pertaining teacher observation in the Arab context. Future research studies about teachers' observation taking into consideration other educational and affective variables such as teachers' educational level, teachers' specialty; teachers' personality traits would provide interesting findings. In the same way, further studies about teachers' perceptions in other different eastern and western contexts will probably offer new insights into the relationship between class observations and teaching practices.

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## English Varieties and Arab Learners in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries: Attitude and Perception

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the attitudes of post-secondary Arab learners towards native and non-native varieties of English. A stimulus tap was incorporated within semi-structured interviews where respondents listened to 6 speakers (an Indian, Arab, Thai, British, American, and Canadian) and then answered 5-Point Likert scale questions. The findings revealed that the interviewees encountered difficulties identifying the speakers' first languages. Whilst the British and Canadian speakers were perceived more positively than the other speech samples and were easier to understand than the Thai speaker, they were less understandable to the interviewees than the Arab and Indian speakers. The American speaker was perceived less positively than the other speech samples and was also the least understandable. The paper concludes with a discussion of the findings and specific recommendations that could facilitate improving Arab learners' tolerance of their own (as well as other non-native) varieties of English. The data in this paper forms part of a broader study investigating the attitude of Arab learners towards the shifting ownership of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

**Keywords:** Arab learners; English as a lingua franca (ELF); native speaker (NS) / non-native speakers (NNS) of English; accent; attitude.

## Introduction

English as a lingua franca (ELF) has gained the status of a world language in less than a lifetime and has become the most widely taught, read, and spoken language that the world has ever known (Kachru and Nelson, 2001; McKay, 2002; 2003; Crystal, 2003; Graddol 1997). This worldwide spread has been conceptualized by Kachru's (1985) 'three concentric circles model' representing the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used. The inner-circle represents countries where English is used as a native language (the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand) and hence are known as native speaking (NS) countries. The outer-circle is primarily made up of countries where English has a colonial history and is used as a second language (such as Malaysia, Singapore and Kenya). The expanding-circle represents the rest of the world where English is used as a foreign language. The majority of the world's English users are now to be found in the periphery (the outer and expanding circles) which are also countries referred to as non-native speaking (NNS) countries (Graddol, 1997). Some researchers proposed alternative descriptions of the spread of English in an attempt to improve Kachru's model and better reflect its sociolinguistic realities (for example Rampton (1990), Modiano (1999), Rajadurai (2005), and Svartvik and Leech (2006)). However, Kachru's model seems to be the most influential one (Jenkins 2003) and is widely used and referred to in ELF literature, for example in Lowenberg (2002), Matsuda (2003) and Jenkins (2006).

The impetus behind exploring attitudes towards native and non-native varieties within these circles stems from the influence of attitude on communication; the ultimate goal behind using a language (Kenworthy, 1987; Ludwig, 1982). Literature on ELF has widely used the term 'intelligibility' which, as a technical term, does not have a precise definition subscribed to by all linguists (Derwing and Munro, 2005, 1997; Pickering, 2006). One of the definitions adopted by some researchers was that established by Smith and Nelson (1985) who refer to 'intelligibility' as the listener's ability to recognize individual words, and they distinguish it from 'comprehensibility' which they use to refer to the understanding of the meaning of the words or utterance in their given context. Numerous studies provide compelling evidence that a negative attitude towards a certain variety has a negative influence on perceiving the intelligibility and/or comprehensibility of speech (Jenkins, 2007; Smith and Nelson, 2006; Rajadurai, 2007; Scales *et al.*, 2006; Pickering, 2006). Perceived intelligibility and/or comprehensibility could also be affected by several factors, one of which is listeners' familiarity with how certain accents of English sound. Another factor is frequent exposure to certain varieties (Ingram and Nguyen, 1997; Smith and Nelson, 1985 and 2006; Rogerson-Revell, 2007; Gumperz, 1982; Gass and Varonis, 1984; Rajadurai, 2007; Smith, 1992; Taylor, 1991; Giles and Smith, 1979; Jenkins, 2000; Tauroza and Luk, 1997). However, the influence of attitude on intelligibility and/or comprehensibility seems to be overtaking the influence of familiarity. That is a negative attitude toward the speaker of a particular variety of English will tend to increase intelligibility/comprehensibility thresholds in spite of the listener's frequent exposure to that variety (Fayer and Krasinski, 1987; Eisenstein and Verdi, 1985). Wolff (1959) found that although the languages spoken by two communities in the Niger Delta, the Nembe and the Kalabari, were linguistically similar, the Nembe group, who were economically poor and politically powerless, said they could understand the speech of the Kalabari. However, the politically powerful Kalabari claimed to find the Nembe's speech unintelligible (in Jenkins, 2007). Similarly, Giles and Powesland (1975) and Ryan and Carranza (1975) found that some

accents or language groups are rated more favourably than others regarding status or position in the social scale. Hence, developing a tolerant attitude (along with other factors such as familiarity and accommodation skills) is argued to enhance both NSs' and NNSs' skills to communicate intelligibly and comprehensibly. This idea has been demonstrated by some scholars, for example Taylor (1991); Kubota (2001); Smith (1983) and (1992); Rajadurai (2007); Smith and Nelson (1985); and Bamgbose (1998). It is worth mentioning that the concepts 'NSs' and 'NNSs' used by them refer to the dichotomy between the speakers from the inner-circle (who are traditionally referred to as NSs) and the outer and expanding circles (who are referred to as NNSs). By using these terms, this paper has no consensus to marginalize the significance of the calls to replace NSs/NNSs concepts with other terms that would better serve the users of English as a world language. Examples of these alternatives terms are 'language expert', 'English-using speech fellowship' and 'multicomponent speaker' (Selvi, 2011). Meanwhile it is also worth mentioning that attitude does not seem to function at a subconscious level. According to Munro *et al.* (2006), although prejudice might penetrate these listeners' assessment of accented utterances, the listeners can choose to downgrade or ignore a speaker's accent in evaluating his/her comprehensibility. For Munro *et al.* (2006), when listeners constrain their subjective attitudes towards accented utterances, they are able to rate speakers' comprehensibility on a dispassionate, if not objective, basis. Hence, it is worth exploring attitude and developing a discussion of its implications.

### **Attitudes towards Native and Non-Native English**

The worldwide spread of English entails the emergence of several varieties of English (for example Singaporean, Indian English and African English) along with so-called native speaker varieties (NS). Although these newly emerging varieties are linguistically equal, they are not considered to be socially equal as they do not seem to be given the same value as NS varieties (McKay, 2002; Phan Le Ha 2005). It is arguable that international norms and rules of the language are not set by all these Englishes, nor even negotiated among them; and control over what is correct and/or incorrect English rests with speakers for whom it is the first language (Seidlhofer, 2004; McKay, 2002; Phan Le Ha 2005). This traditional point of view seems to marginalize the increasing number of studies which critically evaluate the rule of native-like accents in communication (whether among NNSs or NNSs and NSs). An example of this is the work of Wells (2005), Kubota (2001), Yamaguchi (2002), and Smith (1976, 1983) who suggest that even the so-called NSs need to move away from their own models to communicate internationally. In other words, inner-circle Englishes do not necessarily guarantee successful international communication, and what is required from NNSs to communicate internationally is to be intelligible, but not to sound Canadian, Australian, British or American accents. Furthermore, the work of Lenneberg (1967) and Scovel (1995) within the field of second-language acquisition (SLA) suggest that native-like pronunciation appears to be biologically conditioned to occur before adulthood. Researchers, consequently, demonstrate that aiming for native-like pronunciation is an unrealistic burden for both teachers and learners (Cook, 2002; Levis, 2005). Moreover, intelligibility should be the dominant goal of teaching pronunciation (Jenkins, 1998; Celce-Murica *et al.*, 1996; Wells, 2005). These reasons are less likely to develop NNSs' satisfaction towards their own accented Englishes and shift their ultimate goals in learning English from approximating NSs' accents to intelligibility.

Despite research demonstrating the aforementioned ideas, NNS accents are not perceived as positively as NSs' whose norms seem still to dominate pronunciation teaching practices (Levis, 2005). A growing number of studies suggest that NNSs perceive NS models of English as the most appropriate model for international communication, and many learners seem to prefer to model themselves on NSs. According to Pillai (2008), while on the one hand there is a desire among Malaysians to use their own brand of English to construct a sense of belonging and identity, there is still the underlying notion that Malaysian English is *wrong* or *incorrect* English. A study by Dalton-Puffer *et al.* (1997) in Austria confirms the low desirability of non-native English amongst learners. The overall preference is for the three native varieties used in their study: Received Pronunciation (RP), near-RP, and General American (GA). A survey by Timmis (2002) in over 45 countries demonstrates that there is still some desire to conform to NS norms, and this desire is not necessarily restricted to those students who anticipate (or are currently) using English primarily with NSs but with NNSs as well. Fraser (2006) also indicates that NS pronunciation is still highly desired. Despite finding Japanese English easy to understand, participants do not value it highly or want to use it as a model for teaching pronunciation. Matsuda's (2003) qualitative case study on Japanese students ascertained that NS English, especially American pronunciation, was highly desired as a model, whereas Japanese English was not respected. Despite the fact that Matsuda's respondents demonstrated recognition of the worldwide spread and function of English, Britain and the US were the only two inner-circle countries mentioned by them which revealed their aspiration to sound like NSs of these two countries. In another study, Iori (2011) interviewed Taiwanese students who had little exposure to any other varieties of English than the one used as a teaching model in their classroom, namely American English. Iori found that although the majority of the participants agreed that there was no problem with using the language with distinctly Taiwanese characteristics, they still regarded American English as the standard and target model for learning. This might be due to several factors that will be discussed in the following section.

### **Factors Influencing Awareness and Attitudes towards Non-native Varieties of English**

Factors that could possibly influence attitude towards NS/NNS accents could be divided into two broad categories that resemble two faces of the same coin. The first category is *ethnolinguistic vitality*, a construct proposed by Giles *et al.* (1977) and Giles and Johnson (1981; 1987). It holds that there are three factors that can either increase or decrease the speaker's desire to retain his/her identity through accent in communication. These are: *status factors* (economics, financial, political, and linguistic prestige); *demographic factors* (absolute numbers, geographical concentration and birthrate); and *institutional support* (recognition of the group and its language in the media, education and government). The stronger these factors are, the more the group accent tends to be retained. The other category is 'linguistic imperialism' a phenomenon introduced by Phillipson (1992). This exemplifies the inequalities that have been maintained by the UK and the USA through dominating post-colonial countries (like India) and neo-colonial countries (such as countries in Europe) which exploit the weaknesses of former decolonized states and control them economically through maintaining the decolonized states' economic dependent position (Haag, 2011). Inequalities are also exemplified by spreading the ideology of the UK and the USA through the English language (Phillipson, 1992). The economic, financial, and political status of the US and UK facilitated extending their domination over the other countries, and maintaining the linguistic prestige of their own varieties of English.

English language teaching (ELT) practice is a clear example of the linguistic imperialism of the inner-circle countries. This is exemplified through the heavy reliance of the expanding circles on the textbooks and the testing systems like the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which are developed and published in the inner-circles, mainly in the UK and US (Matsuda, 2003; Al-Issa 2006). This has, to a large extent, contributed to the current outcome scenario: NNS learners perceive NS varieties more positively than NNS varieties and continuously seek NS models (Lowenberg 2002, Matsuda 2003, Phan Le Ha 2005, Al-Issa 2006). Even if English learners tolerate NNS and do not designate the differences between them and NS varieties as ‘mistakes’ or ‘errors’, especially in differences relevant to pronunciation and accented NNSs Englishes, they still perceive NS English as ‘better’ English compared to other NS Englishes (Phan Le Ha, 2005). The attitude of learners could also be attributed to course tutors; non-native speaking teachers of English who lack tolerant attitudes towards their own varieties seem to carry this attitude to their learners (Smith 1976, Matsuda 2003).

While the above scenario might be true in the case of the expanding circle countries who based their ELT programme material and practices on the inner-circle, there is also the outer-circle which seems to have released itself from the control of the inner-circle over ELT by developing its own testing system (Lowenberg 2002) and receiving wide institutional support and recognition as an official variety of English, such as Indian and Singaporean English (Kachru, 1986; Rajadurai, 2005). Hence the outer-circle is also referred to as the ‘norm-developing’ countries, while the expanding circle is referred to as the ‘norm-dependent’ countries and the inner-circle is referred to as the ‘norm-providing’ countries (Kachru, 1985). The literature has recorded differences in the attitude of the speakers of English in the ‘norm-developing’ and ‘norm-dependent’ countries towards their own English varieties (Jenkins, 2007). However, the norm-dependent countries also have ethnolinguistic vitality privileges which have not yet been made clear and demonstrated to learners in the ELT context, and this made NSs sound more dominant and superior to any privilege which the NNSs might have. These privileges are: the high economical status of many of the expanding circle countries (Jenkins, 2007), and the demographic factor and widespread existence of ELF users which dramatically outnumber the total population of the NSs, and exceed the number of the users of English as a second language in the outer-circle countries. These privileges could be focused on to develop a tolerant attitude towards NNS accents from the expanding circles to their own and other NNS Englishes.

### **English in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries**

The developing economies of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) have relied heavily on expatriate labour at all levels to support the spectacular development which has taken place over the last 50 years. In most parts of the GCC expatriates outnumber locals (Randall and Samimi, 2010) and these expatriates mainly represent countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines and use English as a medium of communication. This situation has had fundamental sociolinguistic implications, one of which is the emergence of English as a lingua franca at all levels of the societies (Al-Issa, 2010) and which is arguably taking over the role of a lingua franca instead of Arabic (Randall and Samimi, 2010). In some parts of the GCC countries, for example, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), expatriates are nearly 90% of the labour force. The majority are non-Arabs and use English to communicate. Graddol (1997) considers the

UAE, in addition to Lebanon, Somalia and Sudan, as countries in the transition stage from a foreign to a second-language-user country.

The linguistic imperialism of the inner-circles which is exemplified through their control over ELT programmes could be no clearer anywhere else in the periphery than in the GCC, particularly in the field of higher ‘transnational’ education. The term ‘transnational education’ refers to education programmes when learners are in a country other than the country where the awarding institution exist. In these institutions education is delivered in one of three ways: distance education, partner-supported delivery or a branch campus. The GCC countries have been the largest recipients of transnational higher education globally, whilst Australia, the UK, and US have been the largest providers. Different forms of transnational provision dominate different countries within the GCC. For example, Oman has no international branch campuses, but does have private higher-education institutions that have foreign partners, whilst Qatar and the UAE have many branch campuses. In fact, the UAE hosts over 40 international branch campuses, which represent almost a quarter of all international branch campuses worldwide (Becker, 2009 cited in Wilkins, 2011). Critics consider transnational higher education as the new neo-colonialism which benefits the providers much more than the receivers (Wilkins, 2011). This significantly seems to increase the possibility of depending on the inner-circle as the main provider of course materials and norms.

## Methodology

### *Stimulus Tape*

In the 1960s, Lambert developed the ‘matched-guise’ technique for measuring attitude towards speeches. In this technique a passage is read by the same speaker who theoretically can pronounce all varieties required correctly, and only one passage written in ‘standard English’ is used. This technique, however, has not been employed by many researchers and has been modified to the nature and purpose of their research. Such research tends to assume different guises and includes more than one speaker in the stimulus tape. One of these studies is by Dalton-Puffer *et al.* (1997) and tested learners’ attitudes towards native and non-native varieties of English in Austria. Another two studies are by Hiraga (2005) who examined British attitudes toward six regional varieties of British and American English and McKenzie (2004) who explored the attitudes of Japanese nationals towards standard and non-standard varieties of Scottish English speech. Since the present study investigates Arab learners’ attitudes towards NS and NNS varieties of English, it is important to have the speakers produce accented English (according to their first languages (L1s)) and bring their identity into their spoken English. Thus, including several speakers will be more representative of L1s’ accents.

The six speakers represent Kachru’s (1985) three circles; the inner, outer and expanding circle. All are fluent speakers of English and are either MA or PhD students. They talked for not more than two minutes about one particular common topic, their field of study and their attitudes towards their majors. Having different rather than identical texts (even though on the same topic) avoids repetition of the same text which itself might affect understanding by listening repeatedly to the same scripts. Speaking spontaneously (rather than reading a written script) will also avoid removing the speakers’ speech from the context of real life (Hiraga, 2005).

Because of the complexity revealed by Davies (1991) and Medgyes (1998) about identifying who the NS is, it is worth presenting the linguistic background of each speaker instead of simply

describing them as NSs or NNSs according to their nationality or to their L1. The background as documented by each speaker is as follows:

Speaker #	Speaker's first language	Accent of speaker in the stimulus tape	Background of speaker	Kachru's concentric circle that the speaker presumably represents
Speaker 1	English (Br.E)	Received Pronunciation (RP) or near-RP	Born to British parents, educated and brought up in the UK	Inner-circle
Speaker 2	Thai Language	Thai accent	Has been learning English since the age of eleven, educated and brought up in Thailand where English is used as a foreign language and also acts as an official language in many settings.	Expanding circle
Speaker 3	Malayalam (which is a southern Indian state language of Kerala)	Indian English	Started to use English at the age of three.	Outer-circle
Speaker 4	English (Am.E)	American English	Comes from South Carolina which is in the southern part of the United States.	Inner circle
Speaker 5	Arabic Language	Arabic accent	From Jordan, started to learn English at the age of eleven, has lived, been educated and brought	Expanding circle

			up in Jordan.	
Speaker 6	Two different dialects of Chinese	Canadian English.	Her father is Fijian and her mother is Cantonese. From birth to five, the speaker was raised in a home environment of both of these dialects. She has lived in Canada since she was three years old and started to learn English from the age of five.	Inner circle

### *The interviewees*

The interviewees were 10 volunteer GCC learners (6-males and 4-females) aged from 18 to 25 years old at the post-secondary level in a private higher education institute which has an affiliation with a US university and they belong to different disciplines: Information System (IS); Computer Sciences (CS); Business Administration; and Accounting. They are being taught English in the first year at college by both NS and NNS teachers of English, and have been learning English for a minimum of 10 years before joining college. For ethical reasons, the interviewees' were assigned false names in this study.

### *Semi-Structured Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were used for their adaptability and flexibility which could facilitate the integration of the recordings within the interview schedule. All the interviews were taped and conducted in Arabic, the interviewees' first language, according to the interviewees' request. Using the interviews' L1 reduced the language barriers that could have existed if English has been used and increased the interviewees' opportunity to articulate themselves sufficiently. During the interviews, the interviewees were required to identify what the mother tongues of the speakers were. And then respond to the following 5-point Likert scale immediately after listening to each speech (see also Appendix A):

1. How do you like the way this person speaks?
2. How easy do you find it to understand this speaker?
3. Would you like to sound like this speaker?
4. How easy do you think it would be for you to communicate with this speaker?

Follow-up questions were based on the interviewees' responses. This gave the interviewees an opportunity to elaborate and explain their responses.

### *Data analysis*

All the interviews were translated into English by the researcher while they were being transcribed. Analysis started with *identifying*, *clarifying* and *coding* themes and concepts that

were most important and spoke to the research questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). The software packages N-Vivo was used in analysing the interview data and MS-Excel was used in analysing the responses of the 5-point Likert scale. In presenting the findings the study considered the top two categories as indicators of a positive response rather than the top one only. The reason is that there is no definite assumption of equal interval between the categories in Likert-scale questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

## Finding

### *What are the speakers' first languages?*

The respondents found difficulties identifying each speaker's L1s. As interviewees listened gradually to one speaker following another and started to compare accents, decisions about a speaker's L1 became easier. Figure 1 shows the number of the interviewees who correctly identified the L1 of each speaker and indicates that that six of the ten interviewees recognized that Speaker One (the British speaker) is a NS, and seven identified the Speaker Six (the Canadian speaker) while only four of the subjects could identify Speaker Four (the American) as a NS.

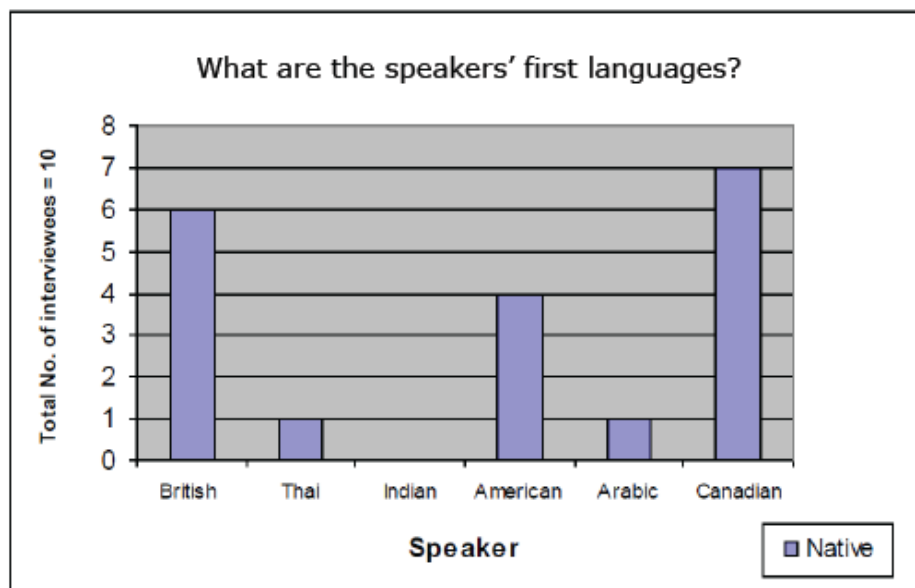


Figure 1. *What are the speckers' firdt language?*

There are two factors that seemed to influence the interviewees' decision of the speakers' L1s. The first was the approximation of the speaker's accent to a model which the interviewees already recognize, and this model might be their own. Hanin said about the Arabic speaker:

*'...he talks like us... If I have presentation I will speak just like him I'll be very close to him we pronounce the word the way we write it we pronounce all the letters in the word. He exactly speaks the way I do'.*

The second was frequent exposure to certain accents. It was easy for all of the interviewees to identify the L1 of the Indian speaker. Five interviewees indicated that they 'got used to this'

model, as the expatriates in the interviewees' country comprised a large number of Indians which allowed frequent exposure to Indian speakers of English.

Speaker Four (the American speaker) was the most difficult model for interviewees to identify. Six of the ten interviewees reckoned that this was an Asian speaker, either '*Philippino*' '*Malaysian*' or '*Chinese*'.

#### ***How do you like the way this person speaks?***

Responses to this question revealed that the Canadian speaker's speech was perceived most positively and 9 of the 10 interviewees placed him in the top two categories (either it was liked 'very much' or 'quite a lot'), followed by the British speaker (8), the Arabic speaker (7), the Indian speaker (4), and then the Thai and American speakers (1 for each speech sample) (Figure 2).

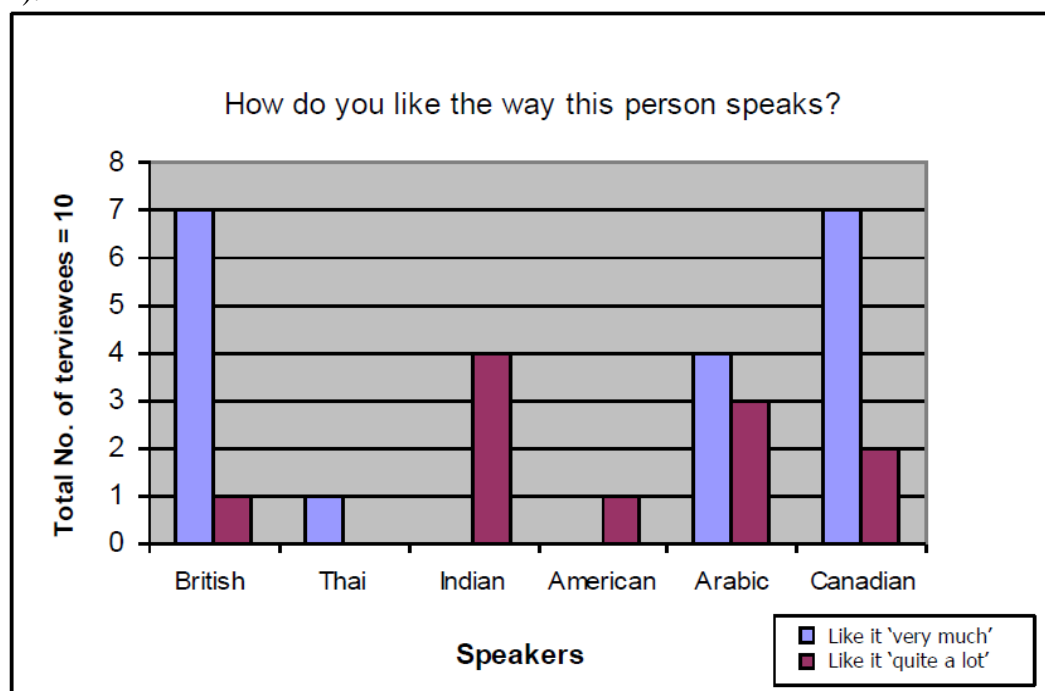


Figure 2. *How do you like the way this person speaks?*

The speaker's L1 does not seem to be the criterion upon which the interviewee depended to answer this question. While four of the ten interviewees reported that American speaker's model as NS, none of them liked it 'very much', only one liked it 'a little', and most of the responses fell in the category 'not much' (See Appendix A for more details about the subjects' responses). The interviewees gave preference to other criteria over the NSs accent and demonstrated that while communicating 'understanding' the speaker was more dominant than having a NS accent. Among these was Hamdan who said: *'I tried to understand her, I tried to catch some of her speech but I could not'*. Asma was one of the interviewees who seemed to have perceived the American speaker speech samples less positively than the other speakers. Explaining her position, Asma said:

*I feel that her speech is not clear. She swallows and mumbles. It is really difficult. I cannot imagine that there is any listener who can understand her. She merges the letters together you don't know how many words she pronounces at once is it only one word or two together. It is very difficult to communicate with this lady.*

### ***How easy do you find it to understand this speaker?***

The interviewees' own model, the Arabic speaker, was the easiest to understand where 9 responses fell in the top two categories where it was either 'very easy' or 'quite easy' to understand, followed by the Indian speaker (7), the Canadian speaker (6) the British speaker (5) and finally the Thai speaker (2) (Figure 3). None of the responses fell in the two top categories in responding to the American's speech. Six of the 10 interviewees' responses fell in the 'average' category, 3 in 'quite difficult to understand' category and only one found this speech 'very difficult' (Appendix B).

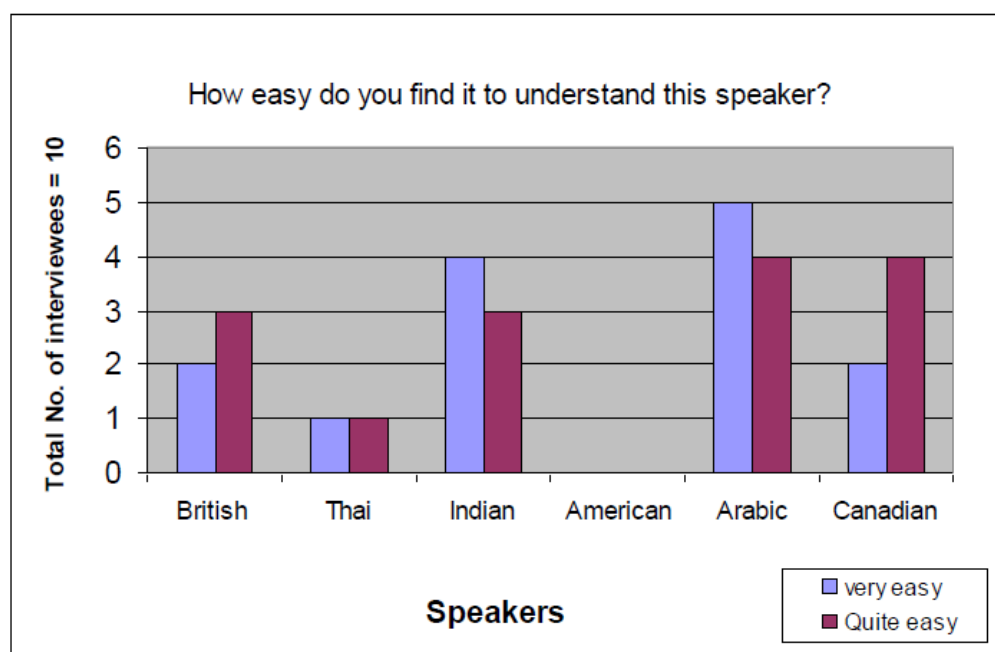


Figure 3. *How easy do you find it to understand the speaker?*

### ***How easy do you think it would be for you to communicate with this speaker?***

The interviewees reported that the Arab speaker would be the easiest to communicate with. 9 out of the 10 interviewees placed him in the top two categories, followed by the Indian and Canadian speakers (7 for each), the British speaker (5), the Thai speaker (2) and finally the American speaker (1) (Figure 4).

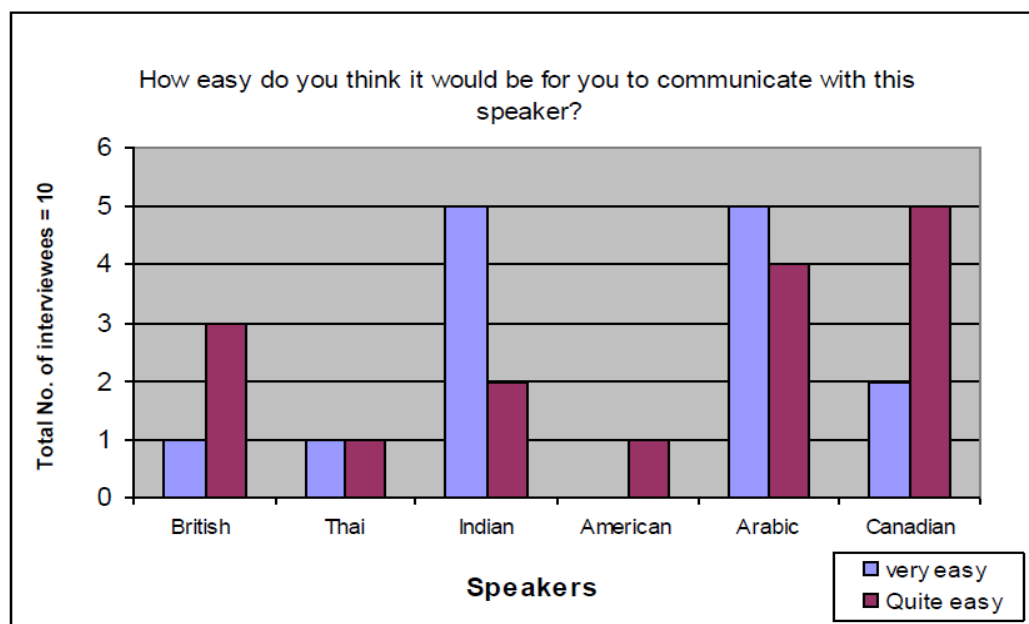


Figure 4. *How easy you think it would be for you to communicate with this speaker*

Sounding more like the interviewees' own way of speaking and frequent exposure could be the reason behind the interviewees' expectations of communicating easily with the Arab and Indian speakers. Mahmoud said about the Indian speaker:

*Very easy ... his Indian language interferes with his English but he pronounces English in a simple way and also because I got use to this model even the Philippines (referring to speaker two, the Thai speaker) after two, three or four days I will understand what he means when he draws the endings of words.*

Salah said this about the Arab speaker:

*I understood him this is why I like this model very much but this doesn't mean that I see him as proficient in English. I can understand him because his English is close to mine. But comparing him with the others, the first speaker (the British speaker) is the best.*

The four interviewees who could identify the American speaker as NS anticipated communication with her would be difficult. They elaborated in their responses and one of them, Asma, explained:

*If I learn English very well, if I become proficient in English I'll be even better than her. While speaking in English the person should consider the level of the interlocutors. What is important is not to speak like English people while the level of the listener in English is low. For example, the teacher should be able to help her students understand. There are differences between the level of good and weak students. The person with a very good level of English might understand me if I use this model. The person should have the ability to communicate her ideas. The most important thing for the speaker is to express herself.*

Another interviewee, Elham, expressed the same attitudes towards the American speaker and indicated that what matters is not to sound like NSs but to be able to communicate. She said:

*Not everybody can speak using the native-like model but the most important thing is to communicate and be understood. I might use the native-like accent but how people can understand me it is not the matter of being proud showing off but it is a communication processes.*

### ***Would you like to sound like this speaker?***

Figure 5 below shows that the responses of 8 out of 10 interviewees fall on the top two categories; 4 interviewees would like to sound like the Canadian speaker ‘very much’ and the same number of speakers would like to sound like her ‘a little’; 7 like the British and Arab speakers; 3 like the Indian speaker, 2 like the Thai. None of the responses fell in the first two positive categories in responding to the American’s speech.

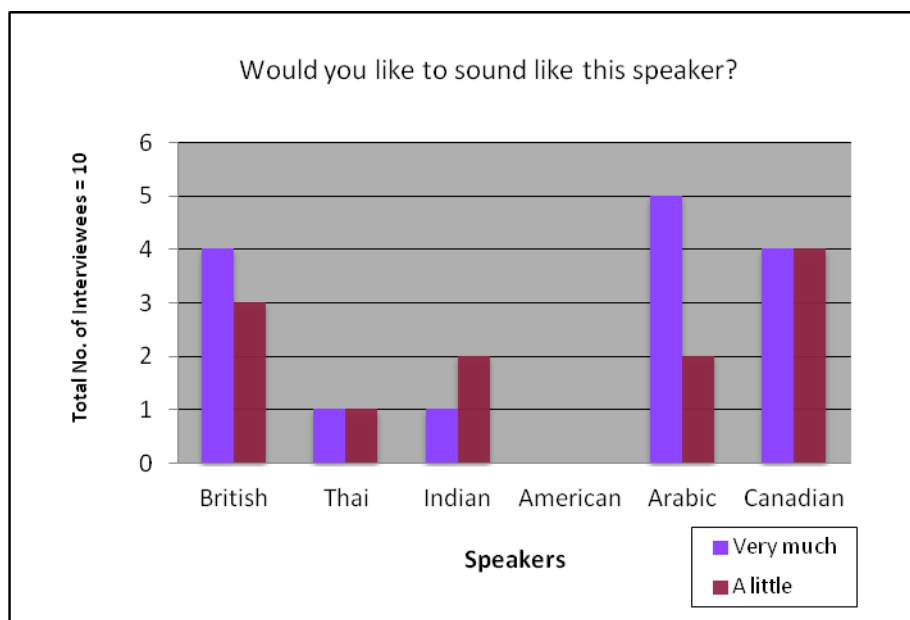


Figure 5. *Would you like to sound like this speaker*

The responses to this question revealed that some of the interviewees aspire to the NS model although (as shown in the responses above) they were not necessarily the easiest to understand. Salem expressed his aspiration to the NS model, mainly the Canadian speaker and said:

*If I have such a model, I can use it in different ways. I can speak with some people clearly and slowly ... I can modify my English according to the level of my interlocutors.*

Salem’s response contradicted Hamdan’s whose response to this question was ‘not much’ although he liked the way the British speaker sounds ‘very much’ (in response to question two). The reason was that Hamdan recognises that a NS accent is unattainable. He said: *‘I consider my abilities I wouldn’t be able to reach his (speaker one) level in speaking’*. Elham likes to sound

like the British model only ‘average’ and, explaining her response, she said: *because the people whom I'm communicating with might not understand it*’.

Seven interviewees reported that they would like to sound like the Arab speaker (either ‘very much’ or ‘quite a lot’) and the reason was the approximation of this speaker to their own models. This approximation, however, was considered for some interviewees as a disadvantage rather than an advantage. Among these is Hanin who did not like to sound like the Arab speaker and explained: *‘he is close to the way I sound and I'm not satisfied with it*’. Similarly, Mona said: *‘If I want to learn a language I should learn it correctly*’. According to Mona, ‘correct’ in this context does not only mean to have the English that sounds like a native-like accent, but to have the ability to communicate in English in all settings where English is needed. Mona explained this and said:

*I feel that he (the Arab speaker) has learned English to function in his job only and I don't think that he can anywhere else ... I feel that he has learned English only because his job requires him to learn this language but not because he wants to use it in other situations. I think that he knows in English only what is related to his job.*

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the attitude of Arab learners towards 6 speech samples of NS and NNS speakers. The interviewees could identify most easily the L1s of the Arab and Indian speakers who were also the easiest to understand and probably to communicate with. This could be attributed to the interviewees’ familiarity with his/her variety of English being either their own or due to their frequent exposure to its speakers as in the case of Indian variety of English, where Indian speakers in the interviewees’ country (in additions to other Asian speakers) comprise a large number of the expatriates. Considering this, the present study is in line with the other studies that suggest the positive influence of familiarity on understanding speech. Some of these studies are Ingram and Nguyen (1997), Smith and Nelson (1985) and (2006), Gass and Varonis (1984), Rajadurai (2007), Tauroza and Luk (1997). This could also be the reason behind expecting communication to be easier with the Indian and Arab speakers than the others in this study.

Similar to the study by Dalton-Puffer *et al.* (1997) in the Austrian context, in this study the overall preference is for the two NS varieties which the interviewee could identify as native speakers, the British and Canadian. The present study also contradicts other studies in terms of how much the speakers would like to sound like their own model. Matsuda (2003) in the Japanese context found that American pronunciation was highly desired as a model, whereas Japanese English was not respected. Pillai (2008) in the Malaysian context found that, although Matsuda's participants recognized the appropriateness of speaking English with their own adaptation of the model to reflect their own identity, they still perceive Malaysian English as wrong. Opposing Matsuda and Pillai, the interviewees in the present study prefer to sound like the Arabic speaker as much as the British and Canadian speakers. The two models which were perceived most positively and could be easily identified as NS by most of the interviewees.

The interviewees also demonstrated recognition that what matters in the current position of English as a lingua franca is to be able to communicate rather than approximate to a NS accents.

This might explain the interviewees' position above. However, some also expressed their aspiration towards an NS accent especially to that of the British and Canadian speakers. Several reasons could explain this position. One could be the absolute reliance on the inner-circle countries on ELT material which consequently controls classroom practices. Furthermore, many of the higher education institutes, including the one to which the interviewees in this study belong, are affiliated with either American or British universities. This could explain the reason behind the interviewees' position who perceived the British and Canadian speakers' speeches most positively and expressed their aspiration to sound like them, although Arab and Indian speakers were easier to understand than the speakers who the interviewees identified as NSs.

### Conclusion

The impetus behind investigating attitude in this study stems from the potential which a positive attitude has in reducing the intelligibility/comprehensibility thresholds, where focusing on these two constructs is the main interest of ELF research. Hence, exploring the factors behind the current attitude towards NS and NNS varieties of English and promoting a more tolerant attitude towards NNS varieties become essential. This could be done pedagogically in several ways: Firstly, improving learners' recognition of the worldwide spread and landscape of English devoting time to explain it in classroom teaching; secondly, exposing learners to several NNS varieties in classrooms teaching as familiarity with these varieties increases intelligibility and comprehensibility of its speakers to the learners; thirdly, rethinking goals and objectives and shifting teaching interests from imitating native-like pronunciation into improving learners' accommodation skills and communicating intelligibly and comprehensibly; and finally, focusing on the powerful aspects of the expanding circles which could help promote tolerance towards NNSs and which the ELT learners might not be aware of. These factors are: the high economical status of many of the expanding circle countries and the worldwide distribution of their speakers which outnumber the total population of NSs.

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### Appendix A:

#### The 5-point Likert scale used during the interview

1. How do you like the way this person speaks?

Like it very Much     Quite a lot     OK     Not much     Not at all

2. How easy do you find it to understand this speaker?

Very easy     Quite easy     Average     Quite difficult     Very difficult

3. Would you like to sound like this speaker?

Very much     Quite     Average     Not very much     Not at all

4. How easy do you think it would be for you to communicate with this speaker?

Very easy     Quite easy     Average     Quite difficult     Very difficult

### Appendix B

#### Responses of the participants to the Stimulus Tape

**Question 1:** What is the nationality of the speaker?

**Question 2:** How do you like the way this speaker speaks?

**Question 3:** How easy do you find it to understand this speaker?

**Question 4:** Would you like to sound like this speaker?

**Question 5:** How easy do you think it would be to communicate with this speaker?

Speakers	Question 1		Question 2					Question 3					Question 4					Question 5				
	Native	Non-native	Like it very much	A little	OK	Not much	Not at all	Very easy	Quite easy	Average	Quite difficult	Very difficult	Very much	A little	OK	Not much	Not at all	Very easy	Quite easy	Average	Quite difficult	Very difficult
1 British	6	4	7	1	1	1	0	2	3	4	1	0	4	3	3	0	0	1	3	5	1	0
2 Thai	1	9	1	0	6	2	1	1	1	4	2	2	1	1	1	3	4	1	1	4	3	1
3 Indian	0	10	0	4	2	4	0	4	3	0	3	0	1	2	1	3	3	5	2	0	3	0
4 American	4	6	0	1	3	5	1	0	0	6	3	1	0	0	4	3	3	0	1	5	3	1
5 Arabic	1	9	4	3	3	0	0	5	4	1	0	0	5	2	2	1	0	5	4	1	0	0
6 Canadian	7	3	7	2	1	0	0	2	4	4	0	0	4	4	2	0	0	2	5	3	0	0

## Common Practice Errors Related to Syntactic Structures in English-into-Arabic Translation

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### Abstract

This paper handles common practice errors related to syntax in English-into-Arabic translation. The researcher collected material from student translations at BA and MA levels, translated texts, and subtitled or dubbed movies and documentaries. The researcher categorized the data and provided a discussion and interpretation of the errors. He found out that such errors can be attributed to several factors: incompetence in the SL or the TL or both, translator's attitude, misunderstanding of modification (what constituent modifies what), shallow encyclopedic knowledge of the translator, ignoring the context, and influence of dialects.

*Key words:* errors, translation, Arabic, English, syntax, competence

### Introduction and Background

Psychologists have told us that individuals acting alone do not normally cause too much trouble; it is only when they form into crowds that they become unmanageable. Similarly, individual lexical items . . . . , can only stage sporadic strikes; it is when they group into long syntactic stretches that they begin really to launch all-out assaults on the translator. (Wong 2006: 130)

The researcher would like to point out that literature on or about this topic per se is rare. Most of what one finds is within language acquisition which is not the core of this paper. Common errors in translation are rarely addressed in the way they are in this paper. Therefore, section about a review of related literature would only be imposed to fulfill the general format of a research paper rather than for its own sake. So, the researcher discusses what is available of literature within the introduction to give the reader a background of the topic.

Translation is more and more practiced, especially with the development of technology and the production of cultural material that needs to attenuate language boundaries. Translators commit errors some of which have become common because they are repeated without being highlighted to be avoided.

Wilss (1980: 118) argues that the translator depends on

his interlingual text synchronization capability. This capability consists of two subcapabilities which stand in complementary relation to each other. He must have an SL text-analytical competence and a corresponding TL text-reproductive competence. Both competences must cover, in order to guarantee an optimal transfer, all text-constitutive elements.

The translator's awareness of the different levels of meaning is an issue emphasized by many scholars in the field of translation. Wilss (1980: 85) proposes the following points as guidelines for translators:

1. the defining of textual segments and structures on the microcontextual level (within the clause/sentence), and
2. the defining of textual segments and structures on the microcontextual level (going beyond the clause/sentence rank).

Many reasons stand behind common translation errors: lack of comprehension, inappropriateness to audience, and inappropriate time. They can occur at different levels: language, pragmatics, and culture. They are encountered as over or under-translation, discursive or semantic inadequacy, etc. Elements are mingled and numerous cases overlap. Such classifications will always have either too few or too many terms, at least for as long as there is no clear awareness of why translation errors should be classified in the first place (Loddegaard and Dollerup, 1992: 282). Pym (1998: 60) indicates that when a text undergoes many transformations in the TL, it is no longer a translation. Pym goes on "translation culture' could be a rough synonym for a 'translation regime,' understood as a set of 'implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge." Since the task of translators is critical to the production of scholarly discourse, they need to be sensitive to the

peculiarities of the SLT. Along this line Bennet (2006) asserts that failing to do so “may effectively compromise the perceived truth value of the assertions made.” Cobley (2011: 108) argues “The act of interpretation . . . is an act of assignment.” Therefore, the translator needs to be careful in his interpretation of the SLT for proper rendition. The interconnectivity of the clauses that make a discourse is vital for its interpretation, and eventually, its rendition. Discourse connectors play a vital role in determining sense. Caenepeel (2011: 5) indicates, “. . . the truth-conditions for a discourse consisting of more than one sentence cannot simply be formulated as the sum of the truth-conditions of each of the sentences in isolation.”

Even though we might think of the situation as Pym assumes, I find it necessary to find a way to categorize errors so that translators can avoid them for the very reasons he goes on to specify.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study aims at investigating the effect of common errors related to syntactic structures encountered while translating from English into Arabic. The researcher also tries to call the attention of translators and students of translation, language, and practitioners to those errors so that they are handled with care.

### **Method of the Study**

#### *1. Data Collection:*

The sets of data were collected from several sources: practice translation courses; TV news bulletins, documentaries, and dubbed or subtitled movies; and text and reference books that the researcher has come across. Collected examples were so numerous, but only some representative samples are used in this paper.

#### *2. Data Analysis:*

Errors were categorized according to their types. Errors related to redundancy, word order, passivization, etc. are put together. The researcher tries to explain the sources of these errors to be avoided. He focuses on cases where syntactic structure is optionally deviant. Wilss (1982) says, “Obligatory shifts in syntax occur when the translator, in rendering an SL textual segment is forced to find new ways of expressing it in the TL.”

In the following sections, common errors that are related to syntactic structures are given and discussed to illustrate this issue.

### **1. Redundancy**

Arabic and English, generally speaking, exhibit some differences that are related to the function of tense. A misunderstanding of the function of a given tense or aspect may lead to a mistranslation of the text in which it occurs. So the translator needs to be aware of the similarities and differences between tenses in Arabic and English. Al-Aswad (1983: 74) proposes:

Arabic and English tenses are similar in function, in that the Arabic perfect and the English past are used for narration, and Arabic imperfect and English non-past are used for describing the situation.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The leader has been the faithful guardian of our nation.	كان القائد وما يزال حارس أمتنا المخلص	ما يزال القائد حارس أمتنا المخلص

The translator renders the present perfect (has been) as كان وما يزال for a situation/action that began in the past and is still true up to the present moment. The expression (ما يزال) can express such a situation/action. This means that there is no need to say (كان وما يزال) because (كان) only marks the beginning of the action which is already expressed expression by (ما يزال). The same can be said about any expression that has the pattern فعل وما يزال يُفعل such as صدر وما يزال يصدر "has been exported" mistakenly translated as صدر وما يزال يصدر. However, this error does not result in gain or loss in translation.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
Women who take birth control pills are more subjected to blood clots than the others	النساء اللاتي يتناولن حبوب منع الحمل أكثر عرضة للجلطات أكثر من غيرهن	النساء اللاتي يتناولن حبوب منع الحمل أكثر عرضة للجلطات من غيرهن

The translator unnecessarily repeats أكثر in the text.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
Things were falling down	كانت الأشياء تسقط إلى أسفل	كانت الأشياء تسقط
The army units were going forward	كانت وحدات الجيش تتقدم إلى الأمام	كانت وحدات الجيش تتقدم

The translator provides a literal translation by adding the prepositional phrases إلى الأسفل which is implied in تسقط and إلى الأمام which is implied in تتقدم.

## 2. Misplacement of the Definite Article الـ

The definite article in Arabic can be used with nouns, adjective, and adverbs, but it cannot be used with بعض and غير, except when غير is not followed by a noun. In some cases the definite article is mistakenly used with articles such as (غير).

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
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1.Privileges should not be given to the unqualified persons	يجب أن لا تعطى الامتيازات للأشخاص الغير مؤهلين	يجب أن لا تعطى الامتيازات للأشخاص غير المؤهلين
2.Metroids destroy each other	تحطم النيازك بعضها البعض	تحطم النيازك بعضها بعضا

In 'Translated Text' in (1), we should not add the definite article *ال* to the word *غير* because it refers to *الأشخاص* which is already definite, so there is no need to redefine it. However, it should be used with the word *مؤهلين*. This common error does not really affect the meaning, though the user sounds inversed in Arabic. *الـ* could be used with *غير* and *بعض* when they are not followed by nouns; when they come at the end of an utterance. For example, *لا أتكلم كثيرا كما يفعل الغير* (I do not talk much like the others).

In (2), the definite article is wrongly used with *بعض*. Though the reader gets the message, the structure is not idiomatic. In this case, the acceptable structure is *بعضها بعضا*. Moreover, *البعض* indicates that only some members of a group are involved.

### 3. Problems with Coordinators and Subordinators:

It is evident that there are common errors resulting from the misuse of certain Arabic coordinators.

#### 3.1 Using Two Successive Coordinators:

The translator uses two coordinators in a row.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The computer has sped up the development of science and made our life easier	لقد سرع الحاسوب تقدم العلم، كما وإنه قد جعل حياتنا أسهل	لقد سرع الحاسوب تقدم العلم، و جعل حياتنا أسهل

The expression *كما وإنه* exhibits redundancy in coordination. *كما* and *و* have the same syntactic function and meaning: they are both used to show apposition. So, there is no need for two such items in one position. Using *كما إنه*, *كما*, or *و* is enough to express this idea. *كما* is used for the addition of another idea to a previously mentioned one.

#### 3.2 Improper Substitution of a Coordinator for a Subordinator

In this case the translator wrongly assumes that the coordinator *و* can substitute the subordinator *أن* as in this example:

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
He previously said that we discussed this topic.	سبق وقال أننا قد ناقشنا هذا الموضوع	سبق أن قال أننا قد ناقشنا هذا الموضوع سبق قوله أننا . . .

The use of the coordinator و with a verb does not conform to the grammar of Arabic. The subordinator أن should be used: سبق أن قال, or it could be سبق قوله. This error indicates a problem with competence in Arabic grammar.

#### 4. Misplacement of Modifiers and Other Elements:

It is a well-known fact that the position of a modifier with respect to the modified influences the meaning. This fact is sometimes overlooked in the process of translation resulting in wrong renditions.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
I personally came to tell you.	جئت لأخبرك شخصيا.	جئت شخصيا لأخبرك.

In the English expression, the adverb 'personally' modifies the pronoun 'I' only, and it is used to emphasize the idea that the subject, "I," and not anybody else, was the one who carried out the action. The word شخصيا 'personally' modifies the addressee represented with the pronoun ك 'you' because it is placed at the end of the expression, for such adverbs in Arabic modify the closest preceding noun position. So, the given translation does not provide the intended meaning. To modify the subject, شخصيا must be placed after the verb whose inflection shows that the subject is 'I.'

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
Studios are actively rebuilding the sites to film them before winter.	تعيد الاستديوهات بناء المواقع لتصويرها بنشاط قبل الشتاء	تعيد الاستديوهات بناء المواقع بنشاط لتصويرها قبل الشتاء

The adverb 'actively' modifies 'rebuilding,' but in the translation, بنشاط modifies تصوير giving a different meaning. To give an equivalent meaning, بنشاط should be placed after المواقع.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
To specify the vision of each pilot	لتحديد كل رؤية طيار	لتحديد رؤية كل طيار

'Each' modifies 'pilot,' but كل 'each' in the translation modifies رؤية 'vision' providing a different meaning. So, it should be placed after طيار.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
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The enemy destroyed them before they even engaged in a real battle	قضى العدو عليهم قبل دخول معركة حتى	قضى العدو عليهم حتى قبل دخول معركة حقيقية
A bear eats everything even oysters.	يأكل الدب أي شيء والمحار حتى	يأكل الدب أي شيء، حتى المحار

In the translation, حتى 'even' comes at the end of the translated text suggesting that there is more to be said. For the intended meaning, it should be in the position shown in the suggested translations. These errors indicate translator's incompetence.

### 5. Misplacement of the Negative Article لا

The negative article لا negates the element that it modifies, when positioned before it. Sometimes translators mistakenly make it modify the wrong element. This mistake occurs frequently in translated texts so that it has become common as in this example:

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
We must not give up	لا يجب أن نستسلم	يجب أن لا نستسلم

The LT does not show option. In the translated text, لا modifies يجب, negating necessity. In this position, the expression لا يجب indicates that there is an option whether to give up or not (i.e. a possibility not an obligation). Therefore, a back translation could be "we don't have to give up."

### 6. Errors Related to Passive Structure

Under the principle of naturalness, Arabic does not prefer agentive passive, i.e., a structure that English allows with no restrictions. Along these lines, Mouakket (1986: 47) argues that in the case of a passive Arabic sentence:

the agent is not found on the surface structure, and this is a characteristic of the Arabic passive voice. In such a case, the agent deletion is to be considered an obligatory operation in the procedure of choosing the subject of the sentence.

The following example illustrates this point:

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The letter was sent by the president.	أرسل الخطاب من قبل الرئيس.	أرسل الرئيس الخطاب.

There is agentive passive in English. The translated Arabic there is agentive passive where من قبل is parallel to the English "by the president." It seems that the Arabic من قبل is a syntactic borrowing from English because it is alien to the Arabic structure and there is no evidence for

this kind of use in the Arabic literature before this one was imported. It seems that scholars are agreed that Arabic prefers an active structure rather than an agentive passive one like the ill-formed one above. Al-Najjar (1984: 160) asserts, "the active voice structure is more preferable and more well-formed." Also, Cown (1958: 59) and Wright (1967: 269-70) are agreed that if the agent is present, the active voice must be used. The Arabic expression من قبل is used in a completely different sense; it means at one's side. This meaning is evident in this Hadith (Prophetic Tradition): أنت على ثغرة من ثغر الإسلام فلا يوتين من قبلك

where من قبلك cannot be interpreted as a by-phrase. It simply means "at your side" because the meaning of the Hadith is roughly "You are guarding Islam at your position, so let it not be undermined (attacked or criticized) at your side." In other words, it means 'be a good guard.

The other meaning for من قبل is 'from the side of' as in an expression like this one جاء مبعوث من قبل الرئيس الأميركي. It literally means 'an envoy came from the side of the American president' in which من قبل cannot mean 'by (the American president)' because the overall meaning of the expression does not allow this.

The translator should make sure that من قبل is not given as a mistranslation of the English by-phrase. Here, it is better to render English agentive passive into Arabic active for naturalness.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The trunk of a cactus tree consists of a spongy structure that can hold water	تتشكل ساق شجرة الصبار من قبل تركيب اسفنجي يمكنه حفظ الماء	تتشكل ساق شجرة الصبار من تركيب اسفنجي يمكنه حفظ الماء/الاحتفاظ بالماء

The translator uses من قبل though the English structure is not passive. The Arabic given translation suggests that the spongy structure is an agent that makes the tree, which is not the case. The relationship between the structure and the tree is a situation of existence and of agent and patient. Therefore, this sentence cannot be rendered as agentive passive because it would give the wrong message in the TLT. So, the suggested translation is more appropriate.

There is a tendency for some people to use the passive void تم and its derivations, especially in the media.

Sometimes, the use of تم is acceptable when it means 'completion'.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The assembly of the blades must be completed today	يجب أن يتم تجميع الشفرات اليوم	

The use of يتم gives the intended meaning of the SLT because it indicates the completion of the action. The Arabic passive could also be used here يجب أن تُجمع الشفرات اليوم. Another way is يجب أن تنتهي من جمع الشفرات اليوم.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion

The data that we collected helped us find diamond.	لقد ساعدتنا البيانات التي تم جمعها على العثور على الماس	لقد ساعدتنا البيانات التي جُمعت على العثور على الماس
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Also, the use of تم here is acceptable because it indicates the completion of the action. However, the passive voice is better. Moreover, the translation can be in active voice in Arabic if we are sure of the agent. So it could be لقد ساعدتنا البيانات التي جمعناها على العثور على الماس.

However, there are many cases where تم is inappropriately used as in these examples:

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
ISON is being watched today.	تتم اليوم مراقبة المذنب آيسون	تجري اليوم مراقبة المذنب آيسون

The translator mistakenly uses يتم to indicate a passive action in progress to match that in English. يتم here means ‘will end’. يجري can be used to express this idea as in the suggestion.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
Please be informed that spending from the budget will be after two months	يرجى العلم أن الصرف من الميزانية سيتم بعد شهرين	يرجى العلم أن الصرف من الميزانية يبدأ بعد شهرين

The use of سيتم is inaccurate; it means “spending will end” while the SLT indicates ‘beginning’. This necessitates the use of يبدأ ‘start.’

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The reservoir of water that gathered over years is being depleted.	إن مخزون الماء الذي تجمع على مدى سنين يتم الآن استنزافه	يجري الآن استنزاف مخزون الماء الذي تجمع على مدى سنين

Also, يتم indicates the end of depletion which is not so. The SLT asserts that depletion is going on. So the use of يجري is more accurate.

## 7. Errors Related to Genitive Structures

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
He is the ruler and the guardian of our nation.	هو حاكم و حارس بلدنا	إنه حاكم بلدنا و حارسه

Arabic does not allow compound genitive nouns as those in حاكم وحارس followed by a modifying third noun like بلدنا, giving the genitive sequence حاكم وحارس بلدنا. The acceptable sequence of such structure should be حاكم بلدنا وحارسه (مصطفى الغلايني، 1993: 213). Though the ill-formed translation does not affect the meaning, it looks as if provided by a non-native speaker of Arabic and a kind of literal translation violating the naturalness principle. This error may be seen one of those that function as a regularizing process in Arabic, especially when there is a lengthy imbedded material between the head and the second element when it becomes difficult to detect the pronoun and its antecedent. Also, it is better to start with إنه or يُعد because there is a BE form in SLT. However, it seems that this kind of error is becoming established in Arabic, especially when there is a string of words in between. In this case it becomes easier when they are juxtaposed, a manifestation of language change.

### 8. Imitating the English Subordinate Structure (Syntactic Borrowing)

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
The more the product is the more the income is.	كلما زاد الإنتاج كلما زاد الدخل	كلما ازداد الإنتاج ازداد الدخل.

The translated text suffers from two problems: the repetition of كلما and the use of the non-formal word زاد instead of ازداد. The word كلما is a subordinator. So it starts a subordinate (dependent). Therefore, the translated text is a fragment as such because it consists of two subordinate clauses. Here the translator is following the structure of the SLT while he is supposed to restructure the meaning following the structure of the TLT.

### 9. Errors Related to Word Order

English is basically an analytic language, i.e., it shows syntactic relationships by word order and function words. Arabic is basically synthetic, i.e., it shows syntactic relationships by its frequent and systematic use of inflected forms (Hawkins, 1980). The unmarked word order in English is SVO, while it is VSO in Arabic. Any other grammatically permissible word orders in both languages are marked. Bakir (1980: 6) and Al-Najjar (1984: 154) point out that Arabic has these word orders: VSO, SVO, VOS, SOV, OSV, and OVS. Moreover, Gunther (2012: 4) states that “different syntactic positions in the functional structure of the clause overtly express different interpretations.” The following example illustrates this point:

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
The boys left early	الاولاد غادروا مبكرين	غادر الاولاد مبكرين

The SLT has an unmarked word order (SVO). This means that there is no special focus on any part of the sentence. The Arabic translated text is marked because it is SVO which means that there is special focus on the subject. So the Arabic version here shows gain in meaning by

changing the word order from unmarked to marked. Therefore, the suggested Arabic translation is more accurate because it maintains the natural word order.

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
Outrage was latent in the bull	كان كامن غضب جامح في الثور	كان غضب جامح يكمن في الثور

The verbal element كان (and its group) cannot be followed with the word order: Adjective + Noun (head) + Adjective (predicate) as in the structure كامن غضب جامح . The two possible structures: (1) كان غضب جامح يكمن في الثور or (2) كمن غضب جامح في الثور .

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
Authorities said that unidentified persons carried out the attack	قالت السلطات إن الهجوم قام بتنفيذه مجهولون	قالت السلطات إن مجهولين نفذوا الهجوم

The translator alters the order of elements; he brings the object الهجوم 'the attack' as the subject and uses a pronoun that refers to it with the verb تنفيذه to fill the gap. In the SLT, the focus is on 'unidentified persons' which is lost in the given translation when it is moved to the end of the sentence. Also, the translator comes up with an unnecessarily complicated structure for the reader. So the suggestion is more accurate.

### 10. Shift of Focus (Expectancy)

Main ideas are expressed in main clauses; peripheral ideas, in peripheral structures, subordinate clauses or phrases. Sometimes, the translator may lose track of such sensitive relationship between ideas and structures resulting in the wrong assignment between structures and ideas. Nida (1983: 36) points out

... shifts involve an increase in markedness. The tension which is introduced in such shifts between the normal and the non-normal, between the usual and the unusual, between the expected and the unexpected, accounts for significantly greater impact involved in such shifts.

The source text	Translated Text	Suggestion
It came in the news that an Israeli soldier was slightly injured in a clash with some Palestinian demonstrators in which two Palestinian children were killed.	جاء في الأخبار أن طفلين فلسطينيين قد قتلوا في صدام بين متظاهرين فلسطينيين وجنود اسرائيليين وقد أصيب فيه جندي إصابة طفيفة	جاء في الأخبار أن جنديا إسرائيليا أصيب بجروح طفيفة في صدام بين جنود إسرائيليين ومتظاهرين فلسطينيين، قتل فيه طفلان فلسطينيان.

We notice that the given translation does not maintain the focus in the TL. The translator changed the structure of the main idea (injury of the Israeli soldier) to be in a peripheral clause, and the (killing of the Palestinian children) to be in a main clause. This violates the principle of loyalty. Therefore, the given translation is ill-formed because of the shift of focus. We can assume that such an error may occur as a result of one or more of the following reasons:

1. Indifference of the translator about the task of translation;
2. The translator's incompetence in one of the SL or the TL or both;
3. The translator's incompetence in translation as a skill;
4. The translator's intention in creating this kind of noise (distortion of the message); and/or
5. The structure he is dealing with is too lengthy so that the translator loses track of which ideas are expressed in main clauses and which are expressed in peripheral ones.

### 11. Errors Related to Comparative Structure

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
The two animals are more similar than what you believe	إن الحيوانين متشابهين أكثر مما تعتقدون	إن الحيوانين أكثر شبها مما تعتقدون

Because the translation is very close to the SLT, it yields an odd structure, though the reader can get the message. The suggestion provides the appropriate structure. This indicates translator's incompetence.

### 12. Errors Related to Misunderstanding of Prepositional Phrases

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
(1)When sea water moves in we say we have high tide	عندما يتحرك الماء إلى داخل البحر نقول لدينا مد عال	عندما يتحرك الماء إلى داخل اليابسة نقول لدينا مد
(2)We had to move away from there.	كان علينا الابتعاد عن هناك	كان علينا الابتعاد من هناك
(3)He teaches this technology in schools all over the world	يعلم هذه التقنية في مدارس حول العالم	يعلم هذه التقنية في مدارس في جميع أرجاء العالم

In 'Translated text' in (1), literal translation causes the problem. This leads to misunderstanding to the meaning of the sentence that the word المد means (the case in which sea water covers more

of the shore land) and not inside the sea. So *داخل البحر* is inappropriate; the concept would be that of low tide which is in Arabic *الجزر*. We may say *داخل اليابسة*. The translator here does not figure out that there is ellipsis: ‘moves in land.’ So the translator thinks that the movement of the water is inside the sea. This error changes the meaning from high tide to low tide.

In (2), the translator provides a literal translation of the preposition ‘from’ as *عن* which seems colloquial. The proper translation is *من* which collocates with the words *ابتعاد* and *هناك*. In some other contexts, such as with the words *ابتعاد* and *خطر*, we would say *الابتعاد عن الخطر*. The problem seems to be at the transfer stage. The translator keeps in mind in the SL structure while trying to convey the meaning in the TL, rather than abandoning the SL structure and considering the TL structure only.

In (3), the translator mistakenly renders ‘all over the world’ as *حول العالم* which actually means ‘round the world.’ The best translation is *في جميع/ثتى أرجاء العالم*. Again, the translator does not recognize the difference in meaning between ‘all over the world’ and ‘round the world.’ This seems to be a competence problem.

### 13. Errors Related to Agreement:

There are many errors related to agreement. In most of the cases, if not all, the problem could be related to language competence. These errors can be classified as follows:

#### 13.1 Subject-Verb Agreement:

##### 13.1.1 Subject-Verb Agreement (number):

This error is evident in many cases illustrated as follows:

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
The two ministers held a meeting to discuss the problem.	قاما الوزيران بعقد اجتماع لمناقشة المشكل	قام الوزيران بعقد . . . عقد الوزيران اجتماعا .

When the sentence starts with the verb, it comes in its singular form. So the dual and the plural inflections are not appropriate in such a case. Actually, the second suggestion is better.

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
The scientists jot down important notes. (context shows two scientists)	العالمان كتبوا ملاحظات هامة	كتب العالمان ملاحظات مهمة العالمان كتبوا . . . .

In the context, there are two scientists. So the number inflection should be the dual **كُتبا** if a marked structure is desired. But the suggested unmarked text is better.

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
Both of you are excellent leaders.	كلاكما قائد ممتاز	كل منكما قائد ممتاز كلاكما قائدان ممتازان

The problem is in the concord between **كلاكما** and **قائد** because the first denotes dual number while the second denotes singular number. So the text should either be **كل منكما قائد** or **كلاكما قائدان** for proper concord.

### 13.1.2 Subject-Verb Agreement (Gender):

This error is related to two sources. In one, the translator might be translating from the script where the gender of the speaker or the addressee is not clear because some English pronouns do not show gender. Consider this example:

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
We both (f) train together	نحن الاثنان نتدرب معا	نحن الاثنتان نتدرب معا

The dialogue is between two girls. However, the translation indicates that the speaker and the addressee are males. So this calls for the suggested translation.

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
You want me to go with you?	أنت تريدني أن أذهب معك؟	أنت تريدني أن أذهب معكِ؟

In the same dialogue, a girl is asking another girl, which, again, calls for the suggested translation.

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
1.Those females were brought from the national park.	هذان الأثنان جاتا من المنتزه الوطني	جاءت هاتان الأثنيان من المنتزه الوطني
2.Produce a gun with range controller	إنتاج مدفع ذات ضابط مدى	إنتاج مدفع ذي ضابط مدى (مزود بضابط)

In (1), the problem is in gender agreement where هذان is masculine dual while the noun it modifies الأنتان is feminine dual, thus the suggested text. In (2), مدفع is singular masculine while the relative pronoun ذات is singular feminine, which calls for ذي.

### 13.2 Noun-Pronoun Agreement:

#### 13.2.1 Noun-Pronoun Agreement: Human vs non-human

The translator deals with non-humans as humans with regard to related pronouns as illustrated in the following examples:

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
We could not follow the wolves because they went deep in the forest.	لم نستطع اللحاق بالذئاب فقد توغلوا في الغابة	لم نستطع اللحاق بالذئاب؛ فقد توغلت في الغابة (لأنها توغلت)

This error occurs very frequently. It could be related to the influence of colloquial dialects where there is no distinction between human and non-human pronoun reference. In this example, the inflection in توغلوا is plural masculine human with ذئاب which is plural non-human which requires the pronoun توغلت.

## 14. Errors Related to Misuse of Pronouns

### 14.1 Improper Assignment of Pronouns

This problem is especially evident in documentaries. It occurs in two ways: the use of human related pronouns with animals, and the use of masculine pronouns with feminine nouns.

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
1.Experts of whale behavior expect that many new whales will be born at the same time.	يتوقع خبراء في الحيتان أن عددا من الحيتان الجديدة سيولدون في وقت واحد.	يتوقع خبراء في الحيتان أن عددا من الحيتان الجديدة ستولد في وقت واحد.
2.He needs some sharks. He needs them for his research	يحتاج بعض أسماك القرش. يحتاجهم لأبحاثه	يحتاج بعض أسماك القرش. يحتاجها لأبحاثه (يحتاج بعض أسماك القرش لأبحاثه)
3.The dominant bison drives other males from the herd.	يبعد الجاموس المهيمن الذكور الآخرين عن القطيع	يبعد الجاموس المهيمن الذكور الأخرى عن القطيع

The problem arises from the fact that the translator does not realize that in Arabic feminine-like pronouns are used with non-humans and inanimates. In this case, the term سيولدون (1) indicates that the antecedent is human masculine plural. The fact is that it is الحيتان which is plural masculine non-human. Therefore, the proper expression is ستولد. In (2) يحتاجهم the pronoun هم is used with masculine plural (them-m.). The correct form is يحتاجها with the pronoun ها (them-f.). However, collapsing the two sentences into one might be better. In (3) الآخرين (the others-m.) indicates masculine plural. The correct form is الأخرى (the others-f.).

#### 14.2 Improper Inflection with Pronouns

The original text	Translated text	Suggestion
1. These animals would be wanted for justice	لكانوا هذه الحيوانات مطلوبين للعدالة	لكانت هذه الحيوانات مطلوبة للعدالة
2. The policeman found the criminal in an abandoned house	وجدوا رجال الشرطة المجرم في بيت مهجور	وجد رجال الشرطة المجرم في بيت مهجور

Though the subject is plural, the verb which precedes it cannot show number inflection. Therefore, كانوا renders the sentence ungrammatical. In this case, the singular form كان should be used with the agreement for non-human plural. The reader of this translation in (2) would consider رجال الشرطة the object because the plural masculine subject is cliticized to the verb وجد thus وجدوا. So back translation yields 'They found the policemen . . .' Therefore, the only endophoric reference for a plural pronoun subject is 'the policemen (leaving المجرم loose),' but the context does not allow this anaphoric relationship. In the SLT, 'the policemen' is the subject and 'the criminal' is the object. Therefore, the suggested translation is more accurate.

#### 15. Errors Related to Errors in SLT

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
Your lawyer is better than me.	محاميك أفضل مني	محاميك أفضل من محامي

In the context, the comparison is between the lawyer of the speaker and that of the addressee. So the given translation does not give the intended meaning of the SLT as the suggested one does. This means that the translator should be aware of the progress of the context to provide an accurate translation. An auto-correction process should be at function to capture such problems and filter them from the TLT, unless they are intended to be so by the author of the SLT.

#### 16. Errors Related to Confusing Grammatical Categories:

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
There were 150 individuals on	كان على متنها 150	كان على متنها 150 فردا

board the plane.	أفرادا	
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In this case, the translator literally renders 'individuals' the plural أفرادا. At first it seems to be the correct translation, but the whole Arabic structure is considered, it cannot be so. Here, it should be فردا 'specification' rather than the plural. Therefore, it should be rendered as فردا.

### 17. Errors Related to Wrong Correction of SLT

In some other cases, the translator may incorrectly assume that there is an error in the SLT that requires correction.

The source text	Translated text	Suggestion
Cleopatra married her brother, Ptolemy.	زوجت كليوباترا أخاها بطليموس	تزوجت كليوباترا من أخيها بطليموس

The translator thinks that the SLT cannot be interpreted in other than the sense given in the translation: that "married her brother" means she caused him to marry someone; therefore, Cleopatra and Ptolemy cannot be a wife and a husband. This assumption comes from the fact that Cleopatra and Ptolemy are biologically a brother and a sister. This assumption is based on today's cultural norms. However, the historical fact states that Cleopatra and her biological brother Ptolemy did marry each other. This calls for the suggested translation. So the translator needs to be aware of such historical cultural matters and not to impose his own interpretation of the SLT on the TL reader. This calls for translators to widen their encyclopedic knowledge so that the auto-correction process does not fail.

### Conclusion:

It is possible to come up with the following general conclusions:

1. Competence in the SL and TL systems is extremely vital for the process of translation in order to render correct translations. Many examples cited above prove this deficit and show how serious the results are.
2. Some of the errors do not really affect the meaning of the message. However, when we consider professional translation, even such errors should not be there. They show that there is a problem with language command that must be treated.
3. The translator should be aware of the fact that grammatical structures may greatly contribute to the meaning of the text. Word order and constituent modification are examples to the point. Grammatical structures also indicate what the author of the SLT focuses on, which the translator must maintain in the TLT.

4. Redundancy in grammatical structures, though does not affect the meaning, is also evident. It leads to wordiness and may also indicate language incompetence.
5. Naturalness of SLT is required even if the translator has to alter the structure. This especially needed in English agentive passive which, as scholars in the field of translation are agreed, should be rendered as active structure to achieve naturalness in Arabic. The translator should also be careful when dealing with the verb **تم** and its derivatives to avoid the low level media type of language. This is also evident in the improper use of pronouns, which reflects the presence of informal language.
6. The translator should maintain the focus of the author of the SLT, and should not impose his own attitude on the text whether he likes the topic or not.

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## Towards a Critical Thinking Classroom

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### **Abstract**

The major objective of the present study is to investigate the effectiveness of using Richard Paul's "Elements and Standards of Reasoning (E&Ss)" on improving the Critical Thinking skills as well as writing skills of EFL Saudi students. Students were identified as high, mid and low-level students. The progress of each group was measured through a progressive series of rubric assessments of their writing, examining five key areas important in rhetorical composition: clarity of writing, analysis of author's argument, use of supporting information, organization, and grammar and syntax. Through the introduction of this focused Critical Thinking training, student composition improved in all of the five key areas, among all the groups.

**Keywords:** critical thinking, writing skills, critical thinkers, passive learners, standards of reasoning

## 1. Introduction

Critical thinking, reading, and writing are among the most important skills necessary for succeeding in college. Teachers may assume that their students already have mastered basic academic skills. Now they will expect them to take more responsibility for in depth learning by reading and evaluating information then writing their conclusions and opinions in a formal, organized style. These skills can be improved by using specific metacognitive strategies at each stage of the process of learning.

Thinking is a natural process, but left to itself, it is often biased, distorted, partial, uninformed, and potentially prejudiced; excellence in thought must be cultivated (Scriven and Paul, 2004). John Dewey (1933) pointed out that learning to think is the central purpose of education. To some scholars, including Michael Scriven, “training in Critical Thinking should be the primary task of education” (1985).

The world is swiftly changing and with each day the pace quickens. The pressure to respond intensifies. New global realities are rapidly working their way into the deepest structures of our lives: economic, social, environmental realities – realities with profound implications for teaching and learning, business and politics, for human rights and human conflicts. These realities are becoming increasingly complex; and they all turn on the powerful dynamic of accelerating change. This is a new world for us to explore, one in which the power of Critical Thinking to turn back on itself in continual cycles and re-cycles of self-critique is crucial. (Paul, 1981).

### 1.2.1 Background of the Problem

Students do not have the critical skills necessary to compete is not in itself a crippling predicament— were the conditions right, the problem could be easily and quickly remedied. However the lack of Critical Thinking in students is an *institutional* problem, reflected in the attitudes and policies of educators.

Teachers believe they are already teaching critical skills, and students believe they are already learning critical skills, and both groups are resistant to change (Durr, Lahart & Maas, 1999). So whether we consider the future of our students in an international or domestic context, we cannot avoid the conclusion that there is a problem: students are not learning the critical skills they need, and teachers are resistant to learning and teaching them. If we are to avoid economic disaster at both the individual and national levels, we need to start training our students to think critically; and we simply don't have the time for bureaucrats to make the necessary changes that will affect our kids, and their kids' kids, *et al.* The teachers who have the ability need to start incorporating CT training in their lessons *now*, while their districts catch up.

Writing skills are often overlooked in EFL education. Through teaching EFL and ESP classes the researcher has observed that most students have difficulties in learning English specially writing. Students are all the time acting as passive learners. They lack the Critical Thinking skills required to allow them to learn and react critically to what they have learnt.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study will research the effect of focused Critical Thinking training on the composition skills of EFL learners, specifically through educational techniques developed and advocated by Richard Paul—his “Elements and Standards of Critical Thinking” (E&S's).

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that Paul's techniques can be effectively taught to and used by EFL students of diverse skills and language abilities to improve their Critical Thinking and writing skills as measured in five areas:

1. Clarity of Writing
2. Analysis of author's argument
3. Use of supporting information
4. Organization
5. Grammar and Syntax

The target audience of this study is senior EFL learners, who can incorporate Critical Thinking methods into their learning.

### ***1.4 Importance of the Study***

It would be difficult to underestimate the importance of this study. As Richard Paul states, the fundamental characteristic of the twenty-first century is ever-accelerating change: A world in which information is multiplying even as it is swiftly becoming obsolete and out of date, a world in which ideas are continually restructured, retested, and rethought, where one cannot survive with simply one way of thinking, where one must continually adapt one's thinking to the thinking of others, where one must respect the need for accuracy and precision and meticulousness, a world in which job skills must continually be upgraded and perfected — even transformed (1995).

This modern dynamic is unique in human history, and our present national approach to education is simply not well-adapted to equipping students with the skills necessary to thrive in the emerging world. If we, as a nation, hope to maintain our present position of economic and cultural prestige, we need to act sharply and decisively; and if we as individuals hope to survive *in* it, we must direct ourselves to act the same way on a personal level. This study will demonstrate how we can *immediately* do that at the classroom level.

Moreover, while Critical Thinking is an ancient practice, its exercise has long been reserved for the elite. That needs to change. Critical Thinking is the instrument of social change, and it is imperative that it gets into the hands (and minds) of those who most desperately need change; of those who will be most affected by this changing world.

### ***1.5 Hypotheses of the Study***

The research hypotheses are:

1. There is a measurable effect of incorporating Richard Paul's Elements and Standards of Reasoning (E&S's) on improving senior level EFL students' Critical Thinking skills.
2. Students improve and continue to improve in their Critical Thinking as well as their writing skills.

Using Richard Paul's E&S's allows students to show improvement in clarity of writing, level of analysis, use of supporting information, organization of ideas, and accuracy of grammar and syntax

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1 What is Critical Thinking***

Effectively, the history of Critical Thinking begins in Athens circa 430 B.C. when Socrates, opposed by the intellectually shrewd but arrogant Sophists, introduced a method of

inquiry in which he examined his antagonists with probing questions designed to challenge their epistemological foundations. What he revealed was that most of what we knew—or rather *believed* we knew—had no basis more reliable than hearsay, speculation and assumption. Unfortunately, not much has changed in the 2,500 years since Socrates' death.

Long after the Greeks, Critical Thinking remained on the minds of Western philosophers. Scholastic, Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers, such as Thomas Aquinas, Francis Bacon and Immanuel Kant dedicated themselves to the pursuit of true, defensible knowledge. By cutting through the jungle of assumptions that choke intellectual progress, these men followed the tradition pioneered by Socrates, devoting themselves to methodically reconsidering common beliefs and explanations, sifting them through the lens of reason in order to distinguish between those that were well-established in logic, and those which lacked an evidentiary foundation.

When examining the vast literature on Critical Thinking, various definitions of Critical Thinking emerge. Here are some samples:

"Critical Thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (Scriven, 1996).

"Most formal definitions characterize Critical Thinking as the intentional application of rational, higher order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, problem recognition and problem solving, inference, and evaluation" (Angelo, 1995, p. 6).

"Critical Thinking is thinking that assesses itself" (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996b).

"Critical Thinking is the ability to think about one's thinking in such a way as 1. To recognize its strengths and weaknesses and, as a result, 2. To recast the thinking in improved form" (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996c).

Perhaps the simplest definition is offered by Beyer (1995): "Critical thinking... means making reasoned judgments" (p. 8). Basically, Beyer sees Critical Thinking as using criteria to judge the quality of something, from cooking to a conclusion of a research paper. In essence, Critical Thinking is a disciplined manner of thought that a person uses to assess the validity of something (statements, news stories, arguments, research, etc.).

Critical Thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.

Educators are not alone in recognizing the importance of critical thinking. The demands of employment in a global economy, the survival of a democratic way of life, and personal decision making in a complex and rapidly changing society require people who can reason well and make good judgments.

The society needs citizens who can fair-mindedly evaluate the relevance of different perspectives on complex problems. Additionally, making sound personal and civic decisions requires the ability to interpret accurately information filtered by media that emphasize

promotion and imagery over reason (Goodlad & McMannon, 1997; Halpern, 1998; Holmes & Clizbe, 1997; Hudson Institute, 1987; Hunt, 1995; King, 1994; Packer, 1992; Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991). For students, workers, and citizens, ThinkingCritical Thinking is an essential tool for performing successfully in a complex and rapidly changing world. In each of these roles, as David Perkins (1989) points out, we must examine the factors impinging on a situation, forecast the outcomes of possible courses of action, evaluate those outcomes and weigh them relative to one another, and try to choose so as to maximize positive outcomes and minimize negative ones. Further, the beliefs we hold, and consequently the inferences we later make and attitudes we later assume, depend in part on our reasoning about the grounds for those beliefs. Accepting beliefs wisely serves the ultimate end of later sound conduct as well as the more immediate end of sound belief itself.

Critical Thinking can be seen as having two components: 1) a set of information and belief generating and processing skills, and 2) the habit, based on intellectual commitment, of using those skills to guide behavior. It is thus to be contrasted with: 1) the mere acquisition and retention of information alone, because it involves a particular way in which information is sought and treated; 2) the mere possession of a set of skills, because it involves the continual use of them; and 3) the mere use of those skills ("as an exercise") without acceptance of their results.

According to Facione (2007), critical Thinking is defined in terms of six cognitive skills: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation. these skills are discussed in greater detail below.–

1. *Interpretation skill*. Facione (2007) defines interpretation as comprehending and expressing meaning based on experiences, situations, data, and beliefs. The interpretation skill is comprised of two sub-skills: *categorization*, used when students locate appropriate key elements from the story and apply them to the mind mirror poster; and *clarifying meaning*, demonstrated when students review and discuss the connection between key elements and character identity.–
2. *Inference skill*. Inference means considering relevant information and determining the consequences resulting from data, statements, beliefs, or other forms of representation (Facione 2007). As a sub-skill of inference, students had to *draw a conclusion* to identify characters based on elements exhibited on posters.–
3. *Self-regulation skill*. The self-regulation skill is perhaps the most remarkable Critical Thinking skill because it enables critical thinkers to improve their own thinking. Self-regulation occurs when we self-consciously monitor and evaluate our own work with a view toward questioning, confirming, or correcting either our reasoning or results (Facione 2007). *Self-examination* and *self-correction* are two sub-skills of self-regulation. Students used self-examination to remind themselves that viewers should be able to see a clear and obvious connection between the character and corresponding mind mirror elements. As a result, students used self-correction skills to revise mind mirror elements to better reflect the character represented. Additionally, students used self-examination skills by reflecting on the connection between tasks and Critical Thinking skills used throughout the project.

Despite widespread expressions of concern about developing critical thinkers, studies have shown that most schools are neither challenging students to think critically about academic subjects nor helping them develop the reasoning abilities needed to deal successfully with the complexities of modern life. Our educational system continues to graduate students who do not

reason well. Recent studies by Perkins and associates (Perkins, 1989; Perkins, Faraday, & Bushey 1991) and Kuhn (1992) have documented the faulty everyday reasoning and poor argumentation skills used by most people. Even a college education appears to have a limited effect on graduates' Critical Thinking abilities, including making reasonable interpretations of texts and formulating well-reasoned arguments (Halpern, 1998; Keeley & Browne, 1986; Kurfiss, 1988; Perkins, 1985).

### ***2.2 Teaching Strategies to Promote Critical Thinking***

The 1995, Volume 22, issue 1, of the journal, *Teaching of Psychology*, is devoted to the teaching critical thinking. Most of the strategies included in this section come from the various articles that compose this issue.

**Classroom Assessment Techniques( CATS) :** Angelo stresses the use of ongoing classroom assessment as a way to monitor and facilitate students' critical thinking. An example of a CAT is to ask students to write a "Minute Paper" responding to questions such as "What was the most important thing you learned in today's class? What question related to this session remains uppermost in your mind?"

The teacher selects some of the papers and prepares responses for the next class meeting.

**Cooperative Learning Strategies:** Cooper (1995) argues that putting students in group learning situations is the best way to foster critical thinking. "In properly structured cooperative learning environments, students perform more of the active, Critical Thinking with continuous support and feedback from other students and the teacher".

**Case Study /Discussion Method:** McDade (1995) describes this method as the teacher presenting a case (or story) to the class without a conclusion. Using prepared questions, the teacher then leads students through a discussion, allowing students to construct a conclusion for the case.

**Using Questions:** King (1995) identifies ways of using questions in the classroom:

*Reciprocal Peer Questioning:* Following lecture, the teacher displays a list of question stems (such as, "What are the strengths and weaknesses of..."). Students must write questions about the lecture material. In small groups, the students ask each other the questions. Then, the whole class discusses some of the questions from each small group.

*Reader's Questions:* Require students to write questions on assigned reading and turn them in at the beginning of class. Select a few of the questions as the impetus for class discussion..

Thus, after reviewing the different studies it became clear that students have to develop their knowledge while learning. They should not limit their ideas to be able to think and write critically and express their own opinions with creativity. To enhance and expand students' creativity regarding Critical Thinking teachers must make their lesson entertaining by creating lots of fun activities to grab the students' attention and to keep them interested all the time. Moreover, both the students and the teachers must respect each other's opinions and share ideas in order for the students to be critical thinkers and become successful writers in the futures.

## **3. Method**

### ***3.1 Research Design***

This study utilized qualitative, action-based research in which student progress (the effect of the training) was evaluated by comparing student writing samples from before the focused CT training— based on five areas of writing-centered skills— to samples from after the focused CT training, evaluating the effect on student Thinking through a progressive analysis of their

writing through rubric assessment over the course of several weeks (accounting for four in-class writing assignments). Specifically, the study looked for signs of heightened writing skills, reflected by an increased clarity of writing, level of analysis, use of supporting information, organization of ideas, and accuracy of grammar and syntax, which was measured quantitatively using a rubric system.

This study measures the effects of the training in these areas on a senior level research writing course that had spent the four weeks prior to the researcher's introduction to the class working on senior projects.

Through interviewing both students and teachers in Yanbu University College it became clear that most students find it difficult to write in English. Writing is a challenge for most EFL learners. The study was limited to senior female students at Yanbu University College. This current study samples EFL Saudi female students from Yanbu University College and hopes to offer a broader look at how ThinkingCritical Thinkingskills could be used more to improve students' writing.

This study works from the principle that the purpose of Critical Thinking is to motivate action; and from the demonstrated understanding that an emerging awareness of Thinking strategies on the part of the learner leads to an awareness of thinking capabilities, which are reflected by an ability to make connections to prior knowledge, increased self-reliance in terms of educational pursuits, and a willingness to take a risk in order to explore solutions to problems. This research was carried out in Yanbu University College.

The present study used an experimental research design. The experimental design used had one group of students who were subjected to pre-testing and post-testing means of collecting data. Students were exposed to a systematic training of some activities based on their Critical Thinking skills used to develop their writing.

As stated earlier, the objective of this study is to ascertain the effects of teaching/learning Richard Paul's "Elements and Standards of Reasoning" on senior level students' writing in the areas of clarity of writing, analysis of student's argument, use of supporting information, organization, and grammar and syntax.

All Critical Thinking instruction was done by the researcher. Rather than seeing their progress on the rubric, students were assessed points on their essays by the researcher.

### ***3.2 Research Procedures***

#### ***Stage One***

#### ***Before Focused Critical Thinking Training***

##### ***Activity 1***

##### ***Exercise 1:***

Brainstorming: How to Graduate from College

Students were asked to brainstorm the answer to this question, "What are all the things that could interfere with graduating from college?"

Then students have to choose one item from the list and generate as many solutions for this problem as possible. This is a good creativity exercise as well as getting students to apply creative problem solving to their own lives.

#### *Exercise 2:*

When the initial observation period began, the students were nearly finished with a unit that focused on an essay on studying abroad.

The students were given a long essay about “Qualities of a Good Teacher” and put into eight groups based on scaffolding practices that favored placing students with like-performing peers.

By highlighting sections with various colored markers and pens, the students were given the assignment of identifying the author’s thesis, the supporting evidence; the background information used, and were asked to state three questions they would ask the author if she were present. The students were given two and a-half two hour periods to complete the assignment for a total of five hours.

After the two and -a -half class periods, the students were given the following in-class writing activity:

Write a well-developed argument that shows the degree to which you agree and/or disagree with idea that abuse and neglect have no place in a loving relationship— especially between a teacher and student. Use carefully chosen evidence to support your reasoning.

The students were given two hours to complete the activity. All work had to be done by hand (no computers were allowed) and in pen.

#### ***Results of Activity 1***

The activity was assessed by the master teacher based on a 1 -5 rubric (designed by the researcher) that examined five aspects of writing and analysis:

1. Clarity of Writing
2. Analysis of author’s argument
3. Use of supporting information
4. Organization
5. Grammar and Syntax

The results from this first activity provided a good idea of where the students were in terms of the five points of measurement before the focused CT training. It called attention to the areas that needed improvement (Use of Supporting Information, Organization, Grammar and Syntax) and provided a strong point of reference in measuring the effect of the E&S’ on the students’ composition. (See Appendix A)

#### ***Stage Two***

##### ***Focused Critical Thinking Training***

Learning only begins when teachers challenge students with real questions that demand a solution (Moeller, 2005), and Critical Thinking is best observed when students see the value in it and are self-motivated (Dellet, et al.).

Therefore, this study placed a high priority on helping students see why Critical Thinking is important to them, and quickly applying it to questions that are interesting and relevant to their lives (Bomer, 2000), rather than spending a lot of instructional time on uninteresting abstract concept learning.

On the first day of the research, the students were given a questionnaire that asked what they know about Critical Thinking (see Appendix B). Not surprisingly, most of the students believed they had a good understanding of what Critical Thinking is, believing they had been taught it “since freshman year”. This belief mirrored research done by Richard Paul, which showed that most students believe that they’ve been trained how to think critically, though the reality is quite different (1993).

Also very few of the students had a coherent understanding of what CT is, and what it involves. Question 1 of the questionnaire (“What is critical thinking?”) yielded respectable responses (e.g. “Not believing everything you hear”, “Thinking things through”, “Asking questions”), but the questions that asked the students to be more specific made plain their unfamiliarity with formal CT practices. For instance, out of the twenty students, only nine (24%) were able to name a components or elements of Critical Thinking (as defined by Paul).

However, when asked “What Standards do you use when you evaluate someone’s thinking?” 90% of students were able to name at least two standards that roughly matched descriptions used by Paul in his “Standards of Reasoning”. Popular answers were “logical”, “true”, and “enough information”, which correspond to Paul’s “logical”, “accurate” and “broad” Standards, respectively.

When asked “Why is it important to understand how to think critically?” their answers were unfocused— “To learn how to think”, “To understand the world”, “To appreciate life”, “To get right answers”. Interestingly, none of the students personalized the importance of learning Critical Thinking skills —e.g. “So that I can learn how to think... So that I can understand the world... So that I can know myself”. This fact perhaps reflects the students’ general lack of CT skills.

Next, the class was given a series of questions. Some of those questions were:

Is abusing students right or wrong?

Is cheating right or wrong?

Is hitting students right or wrong?

These questions were designed to elicit an obvious answer: “They’re wrong!” But when the students answered this way, they were asked to explain why these actions are wrong. After discussion, the students found that though they generally thought themselves to be trained critical thinkers, they had no reasons for why they held to certain moral principles. They got a glimpse of t Thinking wasn’t just an abstract thing they thought they had learned—it became real life. The students were then encouraged to write their own questions for discussion. After a brief lecture about the importance of CT, the students seemed ready to learn how to think.

Diane Painter argues that in teaching Critical Thinking it is “important to provide many opportunities for varied learners to make sense of ideas and information” in a context where challenge is moderate (2000). Thus, the E&S’ weren’t immediately defined for the students; rather, the students were put into their groups and asked to develop their own understandings of the concepts on the page, based on their prior knowledge of the definitions of the words (Hedberg, 2002). The groups then shared their definitions in front of the class. These definitions were combined and shaped into accurate definitions that were compiled onto a single sheet and distributed the next meeting period.

At the beginning of the next class meeting, each student was presented with a copy of the “Elements of Reasoning and Universal Intellectual Standards” (Appendix D). In order to practice using these new CT tools, the class was engaged in a discussion. They were given the chance to

select a topic to discuss and they agreed to discuss “Punishment and reward in the classroom”. Students were divided into two groups and they were given ten minutes to write their reasons for their ideas. The board was divided into two parts.

Both groups were given ten minutes to write their reasons for holding their positions on the board. At the end of the ten minutes, the two sides cross-examined one another using the E&S’ to assess why the other side held the views they held (i.e. Purpose, Information, Point of View, etc.), and whether those reasons stood up to assessment (i.e. Logical? Accurate? Clear?). The students were then allowed to revise their boards before another cross examination.

The students found this exercise to be a lot of fun, taking great delight in their CT new tools that would allow them to assail their peers ‘position. The key, though, was to get the students to use the E&S’ by name, and establish the expectation that they use them in all future exercises.

### *Stage Three*

#### *After Focused Critical Thinking Training*

##### *Activity 2: Language teaching and learning.*

After the introduction and training in Paul’s E&S’, the students were introduced to an article, the students read about empowering the learners, “Empowering The Learner and All That Rubbish by Dr Anthony Bynom, 2013

In reading this article, the students went through it and answered the following questions:

1. What is the author’s Purpose? Is his Purpose Clear?
2. What is his Point of View? Is his Point of View Logical?
3. What Information does he use to support her view? Is his information Accurate? Is his information sufficiently Broad?

This exercise took one two -hour class session to complete.

##### *Results of Activity 2*

The activity was assessed based on a rubric that examined the same five aspects of writing and analysis as the first essay (See Appendix B). Though the class-wide gains in Clarity, Analysis, Support, Organization and Gram marks were modest (10%), the results of the CT training were encouraging for one particular group — the Lower-level students who saw their average score go from 9.5 on the first essay to 14 on the second! In other words, the Lower level emerged from 4.5 points behind their ELL and Mid- level students to equal these two groups in terms of overall achievement.

Although the success for the Lower-level students was encouraging, modifications needed to be made before the second assignment in order to obtain similar gains among the rest of the class.

Although the success for the Lower-Level Students was encouraging, modifications needed to be made before the second assignment in order to obtain similar gains among the rest of the class.

##### *Activity 3*

To begin, the students were put into their groups, and after a brief lecture by the researcher, they were given the article “**Is Attitude the Key to Success**” essay. They were told that “this article can change your life and can be a starting point for your new and more positive life. We are sure you will understand everything after your “Is Attitude the Key to Success” essay will be finished”.

How are they going to support your thesis? What arguments will they use to prove your position? In the next class time, the students were again assembled into their groups, after which the class was Students were engaged in a discussion using the “KWL” strategy to uncover their current

Students have the main question to answer. Do you believe that attitude, particularly positive attitude and thinking, are the main keys to success?, They were then encouraged to send one group representative to use a laptop to do an internet search on the case to gather information, which they took back to their groups. They were told that their opinions will be the thesis statement of the **“Is Attitude the Key to Success” essay**.

knowledge and desired knowledge. They were given very little direction from the researcher on how to approach the article. They were simply told, “OK, get to work on the article... use your Elements and Standards”. The students used most of two-hour period dissecting the article to uncover the author’s Purpose, Point of View, etc. To make a well-supported essay on “Attitude Is the Main Key to Success” use examples of rich and successful people. Whose name comes to your mind first?

Let us take Bill Gates as one of the best examples for your **“Is Attitude the Key to Success” essay**. Next, find out his secrets of success, his opinion about positive attitude. Surf the Web, collect several quotes, and use them in your essay on “Attitude Is the Key to Success”.

There is one more way to collect evidences for **“Is Attitude the Key to Success” essays**. You definitely have successful teachers or friends in the college. Why do you not talk to them? Sure, all of them think positively.

Interview several people and then present results of your investigation in the “Is Attitude the Key to Success” essay.

The following class meeting, the students were again grouped together, and after a twenty minute discussion about the case.

They were asked to get to work on the article... use their Elements and Standards. The students used the entire class time to complete the task.

Following the strategy from Activity 2, the students were given a modified but essentially identical outline to the one they used on this activity. The results were similarly encouraging.

### ***Results of Activity 3***

This final activity was assessed based on a 1-5 rubric that examined the five aspects of writing and analysis which this study has focused on. Again, the class as a whole, and as individuals, exhibited encouraging gains and improvements in all areas of the rubric assessment for the first time since the research began. The students improved in clarity of their writing.

The effect of focused Critical Thinking instruction based on Richard Paul’s Elements and Standards of Reasoning, when measured by a five-point rubric, became clear, in that students’ level of writing is highly improved. (Appendix C)

### **Conclusion**

The clear value of using Richard Paul’s E&S’s in developing writing skills of senior students is in the improvements students made in terms of clarity of writing, level of analysis, use of supporting information, organization of ideas, and accuracy of grammar and syntax. As the research results indicated, measurable improvements were made the very next activity after introducing the E&S’s.

The improvement in students' composition skills is dynamic, with most groups improving throughout the research. Critical thinking has been neglected in some schools in Saudi Arabia. Writing skill is considered as an important part to learn a language. If the students do not know how to write, there will be gaps in their learning the prior knowledge and skills necessary for writing skill. So, students must have a lot of vocabulary, follow the grammar rules, have knowledge about the topic, plan to what are they writing and they need lots of practice.

Critical thinking is an important skill that we need in every area of your life. Using critical thinking well allows us to open our thinking for new ideas and things. Also critical thinking make learning clear and make students understand the purpose of what they are thinking. This study showed an overall positive result of using critical thinking to improve students writing skill.

It is recommended for teachers to promote their students' critical writing and enhance their writing skills to understand their students' problems, and always try to motivate them to learn. Writing is the difficult skill for them so they have to make them feel that teachers understand their situation and are willing to see more effort from them in next classes.

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**Appendix (A)****Results of Activity 1**

Average	3.3	2.6	2.50	2.6	3	13.8
High Level Students	4	3	4	3	4	18
Mid Level Students	4	3	2	2	3	14
Low Level Students	2	2	2	1.5	2	9.5

**Appendix (B)****Results of Activity 2**

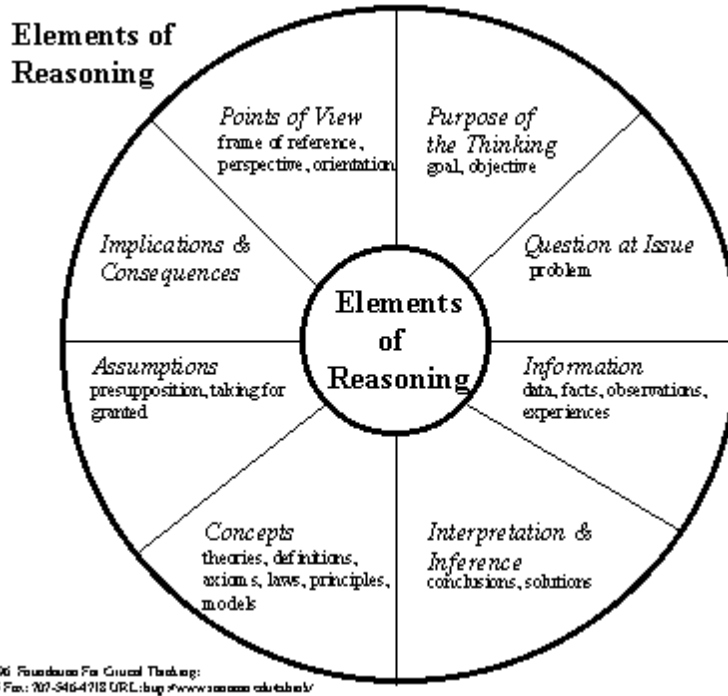
	Clarity	Analysis	Support	Organization	Grammar	Total
High Level Students	4	3	4	3	4	18
Mid Level Students	4	3	2	2	3	14
Low Level Students	2	3	3	3	3	14
Average	3.3	3	4	2.6	3.3	15.3

**Appendix (C)****Results of Activity 3**

	Clarity	Analysis	Support	Organization	Grammar	Total
High Level Students	4	5	5	5	4	23
Mid Level Students	4	4	4	4	4	20
Low Level Students	4	4	4	4	3	20
Average	4	4.3	4.3	4.5	3.6	21

Appendix (D)

Elements and Standard of Reasoning



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## Inductive and Deductive Approaches to Teaching English Grammar

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### Abstract

Adult learners' perceptions on inductive and deductive teaching approaches for English grammar were examined. The written performance of two student groups taught via an inductive and deductive approach, respectively, and created by random allocation was also contrasted. Specifically, the form, meaning and use of the past perfect were assessed on the day of explanation, and ten days later, using a reading text and practice and production exercises. Learners overwhelmingly preferred the deductive approach, but minimal differences between the inductive and deductive groups' performance were found, probably related to the underpinning use of local cultural contextualization while language teaching both groups. The study shows a deductive approach with terse explanations, and aided by the systematic use of concrete, meaningful examples during the procedure, particularly when drawn from a familiar local cultural context, is both successful and relates to learners' expectations. Teachers can therefore bring grammar 'to their notice' deductively, through rules and socially-relevant examples. However, tasks that promote grammar-noticing and consciousness-raising 'inductively' were generally shown to be as effective, and the inductive approach was used successfully if local contextualization was adopted. Importantly, teachers therefore need not feel constrained to predominantly use a deductive approach, assumed to be more suitable for non-BANA countries.

**Keywords:** British-Australasian-North American countries (BANA), contextualization, deductive and inductive approach, noticing and consciousness-raising, tertiary, secondary and primary educational sectors (TESEP)

## Introduction

### *Baseline approaches to language teaching and learning: Inductive and deductive*

Learners of English around the world may have different preferences for teaching approaches of grammar used in the English class, and possibly benefit to a different degree according to the approach in use. There may be a disconnect between what Western teachers perceive to be the most appropriate model of teaching, and the preferred and most effective ways in which the learning of English takes place. The aim of this study is therefore to contrast the use of inductive and deductive approaches while teaching English grammar among learners of English in tertiary, secondary and primary (TESEP) sectors around the world. These may often be in contrast to the approaches to language learning and teaching practised and promoted in Britain, Australasia and North America, i.e. BANA countries (Holliday, 1994).

Inductive teaching is a bottom-up approach that gives learners greater responsibility for their own learning. Grammatical rules are not given, and instead, carefully selected materials illustrating the use of the target language within a context are supplied. Learners must therefore 'induce' grammatical rules from such experiences of language in use. Language rules are induced from carefully graded exposure to and practice with examples in situations and substitution tables (Gollin, 1998). Students therefore discover, with varying degrees of guidance from the teacher, the target language and induce the rules themselves. Harmer (2007) states that learners "try to work out how it is put together, [and is particularly useful] where language study arises out of skills work on reading and listening texts" (p.207).

Deductive teaching involves the use of metalinguistic information presented explicitly by the teacher to the students at the onset of the lesson. This generally involves the provision of specific language rules, demonstrating how the new structures are formed and a breakdown of their components, and illustrating the type of contexts where they can be used (Al-Kharrat, 2000). Language rule input is therefore, in the first instance, supplied by the teacher in a systematic and logical manner, often through the use of grammatical terminology. Successively, learners are exposed to examples showing the meaning and use of the new grammatical structures, and then asked to create similar new sentences (Gollin, 1998). Harmer (2007) stated that these "Explanation and practice sequences are usually PPP-like" (p.203), where PPP refers to the present, practice and produce method, and where students learn in linear, step by step sequences.

### *Teaching methods in relation to teaching approaches*

Inductive and deductive approaches form the basis of well-known teaching methods: for example, grammar translation and cognitive code teaching are deductive, while audio-lingual, silent way, and total physical response are inductive (Krashen & Seliger, 1975). Communicative language teaching is also essentially inductive, based on functions and notions syllabuses, rather than grammatical structures (Richards, 2006). Both approaches are practiced in BANA countries, but the deductive approach is primarily and often exclusively used in TESEP learning environments. Yet TESEP is practised in BANA countries (essentially Kachru's inner circle) in addition to the outer and expanding circle countries, while 'BANA practices' can be found in the private language provider sector in TESEP environments (Macalister, 2011). For example in Egypt, placed within the expanding circle of English (Kachuru, 1985), education and language providers such as the American University in Cairo advocate the use of inductive practices

alongside with those having a deductive approach normally associated with TESEP countries (Mallia, 2013a).

Notwithstanding the different attitudes towards the role of grammar-teaching, Swan (2006) notes the post-Krashen view, namely that overt attention to language form is, in fact necessary, and effective when combined with opportunities for communication. Teaching via the (mainly inductive) approaches adopted in BANA countries enjoys great prestige worldwide, as opposed to the (mainly deductive) approaches used in TESEP countries, possibly because greater learner motivation and better understanding and retention of language have been said to be linked to it (Gollin, 1998). Of several widely-used course books, most therefore tend to use the inductive approach, possibly attributable to the popular influence of consciousness-raising activities where learners progressively become aware of how the meaning and use of language and how it is formed; *Activate* and *Matters* made use of the deductive approach (Nitta & Gardner, 2005). Because the inductive approach for grammar teaching has been often unquestioningly considered to be superior for many years (Seliger, 1975), teaching materials used and methodologies adopted are therefore often similar and used indiscriminately across BANA and TESEP scenarios worldwide.

#### ***Learners' and teachers' socio-cultural experience and effective classroom practices***

Teachers of English are often made to operate with the assumption that good working practices, such as adopting one teaching approach over another, are equally effective worldwide, despite differences in local socio-cultural factors and the resultant ways of learning (Küçük, 2011). For example, in Indonesia a “model of grammar teaching through consciousness-raising activities involving the learners to identify and understand the grammatical point in context” (Roza, 2014, p.1) was used without exploring learners' needs and preferences, and no comparison of results to more traditional approaches was made. Conversely, a study in Sudan specifically explored local learners' language learning preferences prior to implementing classroom practices (Mallia, 2013b). Therefore fewer *a priori* generalisations should be made about any single approach being a suitable ‘one size fits all’, notwithstanding the large volume of literature about approaches adopted for teaching grammar globally, including Middle East countries such as Iran (Chalipa, 2013) and Saudi Arabia (Al-Kharrat, 2000). This should not be surprising as there are substantial differences, in fact, among learning and teaching situations around the world (Swan, 2006). But although an inductive approach is often universally assumed to be the better choice, in some TESEP countries a deductive approach may be more appropriate: it may be more time-effective, acknowledges local cultural perceptions on language learning, is appropriate for large class sizes, and comfortably accommodates the predominant exam-culture mentality that values accuracy through written testing (Küçük, 2011). For example, learners and local teachers in Egypt, Eritrea, Sudan and South Sudan preferred a more holistic strategy, balancing inductive communicative language learning taught via scenarios using a Western socio-cultural context with more deductive ‘traditional methods’ (such as focus on forms), and using a more meaningful local socio-cultural context (Mallia, 2014).

Teachers of English often accept without challenge assumptions of what constitutes good working practices for teaching approaches. However, practices as diverse as deductive teaching through explanation and examples, inductive discovery activities, rule learning, decontextualized practice and communicative practice, for example, should not be rejected *a priori* on doctrinaire grounds (Swan, 2006).

There may therefore be problems associated with the assumption by one culture that ways of doing things and perceiving the world is the same for others; the purpose of this paper was therefore to:

(1) Examine qualitatively adult learners' perceptions on inductive and deductive teaching approaches for English grammar during a general English course in a TESEP environment;

(2) Evaluate quantitatively the written performance of two student groups from a TESEP community taught via an inductive and deductive approach, respectively. The following sub-research hypotheses were of interest:

(i) There is a difference between the 'immediate' restricted production of verbs in the past perfect between students taught via a deductive and inductive approach;

(ii) There is a difference between the 'immediate' free(er) production of verbs in the past perfect between students taught via a deductive and inductive approach;

(iii) There is a difference between the 'immediate' noticing of verbs in the past perfect in a reading text between students taught via a deductive and inductive approach;

(iv) There is a difference between the 'delayed' restricted production of verbs in the past perfect and past simple between students taught via a deductive and inductive approach;

(3) Determine qualitatively if using the inductive, deductive or both approaches was feasible for resident or visiting teachers in a TESEP community, considering local teaching perceptions (e.g. favoring the use of deductive approaches), or pressure from international dictates (e.g. favoring the use of inductive approaches).

## Methods

### *Participants and course*

Adult, police personnel (7 women and 43 men) from South Sudan, aged between 20-46, attending a 3-month general pre-intermediate English program, were included in this study. While their written competency was representative of their prescribed language level, their oral competency was relatively strong. This relates to the fact that English (together with Arabic) is spoken to varying degrees across the country. However, while fluency was adequate, accuracy was often lacking: for example there often was confusion between the uses of the present simple and present continuous. Language complexity and flexibility were also limited, for example there was virtually no use of the perfect tenses.

The past perfect was the specific new language item being tested, assessed through written output. This was a convenience sample, consisting of a group of 50 learners following a three-month general English course. The main pre-selection criterion was not having any oral or written competence with the past perfect, established by the course instructor (researcher) over the previous three months of the course prior to the start of the study. Twenty-six learners were randomly allocated into two groups of thirteen. No confounding variables (e.g. gender, age etc.) were solidly identified as being influential, and groups 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). An additional twenty-four learners, the remainder of the same learning group, joined the second phase of the study. The course instructor was not from the TESEP community, and was raised and educated in a BANA environment, but familiar with local customs, culture and values through social interaction within this TESEP community.

The learners came from various tribes and were representative of the rural societies of South Sudan in terms of educational background and also social and cultural values. Many were bilingual, also using Arabic as a *lingua franca*. They were essentially group-centered people from rural, agrarian societies with a well-organized social structure and had people-oriented jobs. These are characteristics of field dependent (FD) learners, generally said to be inductive learners (Ebrahimi *et al.*, 2013). Paradoxically, this group of learners clearly benefited from a deductive teaching approach as evidenced from the two-month familiarization period prior to the study. However, they also appeared to benefit from other teaching strategies associated with an inductive approach to teaching such as task-based learning, and techniques such as role-play, enactment, story-telling and other creative forms of language learning where learners had to ‘notice’, understand and apply new language in context. Over the three-month course leading to this study, the learners therefore were exposed to both approaches, although they appeared to prefer learning via (deductive) sequential progression, in-keeping with an authority-oriented learning style. They therefore enjoyed a structured environment, content to rely on the teacher’s directions and explanations. Learners felt insecure when facts did not fit the schema, and preferred sequential learning, and somewhat disliked ‘discovery learning’. This is possibly related to their employment within the police force, and routinely experiencing explicit training and briefing. This may explain their preference and comfort with a deductive approach from the onset of the course, through to the start of this study. Although this was a convenience sample, results can be extrapolated to adult South Sudanese, particularly as the social and educational background of the study sample is representative of the larger local population. Many analogies can probably also be drawn with other adult FD learners from rural TESEP societies around the world with a well-organized social structure and people-oriented jobs.

ESL learners in South Sudan routinely have the opportunity for practicing English fluency both during work and socially. But there was an emphasis on accuracy in this course, and this was not so much because English is unavailable, but grammatical forms and lexis in use in this society may be limited: for example the perfect tenses are rarely, if ever used. There may also be widespread and systematic confusion between grammatical meaning and use: for example the present simple is used instead of the present continuous, and vice versa. Swan (2006) stated that opportunities for bettering accuracy may be best brought about by “pedagogic intervention: explicit teaching and systematic practice” (p.7), and this was a major factor when considering the type of syllabus to adopt. The need for better accuracy was important to improve the police public image with the civilian public. Inaccurate speech is highly correlated with low levels of education, which constitutes part of the negative image many local police units are currently battling. Capacity (and image) building via the addition of accuracy to fluency of speech may greatly aid the police in counteracting this perception.

The syllabus adopted was guided by the use of an established series of course books, *New Cutting Edge* (elementary and pre-intermediate level) and followed the given sequence of language items, particularly grammar, but also lexis, pronunciation, discourse, and practice of

the four language skills. Modifications to the course book when delivering the syllabus content included (i) nesting of language in local cultural contexts, such as local customs and events, farming and agriculture practices, as the included Western contexts often distracted or confused, rather than enhanced language learning, (ii) supplementation tasks strengthening of students' accuracy, (iii) modification of lexis to suit cultural context, (iv) also presenting grammar via a deductive approach (the course book systematically uses an inductive approach), and (v) addition of specific tasks such as writing job-related letters, emails, and giving presentations were also addressed to allow access to other police-training activities using English as the language of instruction.

### *Measurements*

Autobiographical data including that on age, gender, educational background, use of English, and preferred learning approaches for learning English grammar, was collected by administering a written questionnaire in English. Issues of validity (i.e. accuracy of learners' writing in reflecting their thoughts) and reliability (i.e. repeatability of questionnaire to different groups) may be a concern (Fink, 2003). Therefore oral instructions and clarifications were provided by the teacher to the learners as they filled in the questionnaire to ensure response validity, namely to ensure that learners fully understood the given options and made an informed choice. Both inductive and deductive groups were treated as one at this stage to avoid issues of reliability, and specifically the issue that different amounts of help might have been given to the participants when compiling the questionnaire. They were also kept as a single group when pre-teaching essential vocabulary (because/as/while/when), to further avoid reliability issues due to possible differences in the teacher's instruction method and amount of detail given. Lexis was taught via simple, locally-contextualized situations. For example, the use of 'because', and 'as' to show one action occurring as a result of another, with the causative (initial) verb in the past perfect, and the resultant (secondary) verb in the past simple was given (e.g. *The warriors were tired as/because they had practiced all day*). The use of 'as' for showing two concomitant actions (using both verbs in the past simple) was also illustrated (e.g. *Our neighbors waved as we walked by.*) The use of 'while' for showing two concomitant actions (using both verbs in the past simple) was also illustrated (e.g. *John dug furrows while George removed weeds.*) The use of 'when' for showing two concomitant actions (using both verbs in the past simple) was also illustrated (e.g. *People worked the river-side fields when there was no rain.*) The exclusive use of the past simple for showing a clear series of actions in the past where the sequence is intuitive was finally demonstrated (e.g. *The policeman picked the gun, opened it, and loaded the bullets*).

Both study groups had the similar written materials and tasks during the study and were instructed by the same teacher in one learning environment familiar to all the learners. Addressing the possible issues of validity and reliability also helped restrict differences between groups to solely the approaches under investigation, i.e. inductive or deductive. The materials consisted of: (i) a reading text containing target language with the context centered on aspects of local work, family life culture and activities that fully reflected the learners' simple daily experiences, given to both the inductive and deductive learning groups; a verb template to fill in with the past perfect in the positive, negative and question forms, based on language forms 'noticed' in the text for the inductive group; a printed hand-out that had the full conjugations in the past perfect of the verb 'to work' in the positive, negative and question form for the deductive group; brief notes to guide inductive group learners when discovering the concomitant

use of the past simple and past; 'immediate' controlled practice of the past perfect via a gap-fill exercise for the inductive, deductive groups, and 'delayed' controlled practice for the past simple and past perfect for the new, inductive, and deductive groups.

### ***Procedure***

The study aimed at testing the null hypotheses that there was no difference in the immediate and delayed written output between two groups of adult learners of English, one taught via a deductive and the other an inductive approach. The target language used for evaluation in both cases consisted was the past perfect and distinguishing its use with, and from the past simple. The inductively-taught group was set as the control group (inductive teaching represents the standard method in the course book), and the deductive group was the experimental group.

An initial assessment of the approximate sample size  $n$  (13 learners per study group) was established as detailed by Martin *et al.* (1987). Using the convenience sample, namely drawing from the 50 available adult learners following a 3-month general English program, was therefore feasible.

In the first phase of the randomized comparative trial, twenty-six learners were randomly allocated into two groups of thirteen: learners were each allotted a number which were placed in a bag. As each number was drawn, the corresponding learners were alternatively allocated to the deductive group and inductive group. Each number tag was placed back into the bag after extraction to ensure that successive numbers had the same probability of being extracted (repeat draws were ignored and placed back). In the second phase, the remaining twenty-four learners of the total group of fifty formed the third group.

Experimental bias was minimal as variable information was collected via the research instruments in writing (e.g. gap-fill answers, closed questions in questionnaire etc.). The information was objective and did not require interpretation and evaluation. The independent variable was 'approach' (inductive, deductive), and the dependent variable was the correct or incorrect use of the past perfect and past simple.

Instructions for the inductive group commenced with learners reading a text. The context of the reading was created with aspects of work, family life culture and activities that fully reflected those of the learners. They therefore understood the meaning and use of verbs tenses via recognition of their own life-style patterns, e.g. '*The women had finished work in the gardens when the children arrived from school*', so clearly the past perfect is used for the verb that came first, and past simple for the second. This helped understanding the meaning for ambiguous cases, e.g. '*The farmer closed the gate*' when I had got to the farm', versus '*When I got to the farm the farmer had closed the gate*', and using only the past simple when verb sequence is clear, e.g. '*The cattle entered the field and ate the crops*'.

Verbs included in the reading were those already covered during the course, namely the present simple, past simple, present continuous, past continuous and present perfect, and also those being brought to their notice in the current lesson, the past perfect. They then underlined all verbs, sorting them into categories, labeling those already covered during the course, and also

creating a category, 'new verbs', i.e. noticing and noting those in the past perfect. The learners were subsequently given a verb template to fill in with the past perfect in the positive, negative and question forms, based on language forms 'noticed' in the text. Learners were then guided by the teacher through the use of brief notes that helped them discover the concomitant use of the past simple and past perfect (with 'because' and 'as'), and the past simple alone (with 'while', or when the sequence of events is intuitive). The text itself provided examples for noticing. The learners then tackled a gap-fill exercise (practice), filling in the past perfect or past simple, and then also produced five 'real-life context' sentences (freer practice). Another task, where learners had to choose between the past perfect and past simple was done 10 days later, together with the deductive group and 'new group' of learners.

The instruction sequence for the deductive group started with exposure to a sequence where the general rules were given, followed by examples and ending in practice (Stern, 1992). Specifically, the lesson commenced with the use of a printed hand-out that had the full conjugations in the past perfect of the verb 'to work' in the positive, negative and question forms. The general rules for meaning and use for the present perfect (including scenarios where the past simple was to be used alone or with the past perfect) were illustrated through contextualized examples after a teacher-fronted demonstration on the rules for forming and using the verbs. Learners in the deductive group were then given a reading text (the same text given to the 'inductive group') where learners had to underline all verbs, creating categories according to the tense. Again, the familiar cultural context within which each tense aided the learners to illustrate the meaning and use of the verb tenses, in particular the use of the past simple alone or with the past perfect. The verbs identified as being in the past perfect were then categorized into the positive, negative and question forms. Like the inductive group, learners in the deductive group completed a contextualized gap-fill exercise followed by the production of 'real-life context' sentences of their own using the past perfect, and the other gap-fill 10 days later.

The following day, both groups (26 students) were joined by 24 other members of the class that had not participated in the first phase. They were placed into three groups according to the original (pre-study) placement at the start of the course. All classes continued to cover new items in the syllabus, generally with the use of richly contextualized scenarios and this also included exposure (mainly inductive) to the form, meaning and use of the past perfect and past simple. After ten days all 50 students were tested for the form, meaning and use of the past perfect and past simple through the use of a new gap-fill exercise.

### *Statistical analyses*

Information on the variables of interest was collected on the first day of the study and included differences in the means between the deductive and inductive groups for the number of correct (i) answers for a gap-fill exercise, needing the formation of verbs in the past perfect; (ii) sentences formed using verbs in the past perfect, and (iii) verbs in the past perfect identified in the reading text. Differences between group means were analyzed through the use of Student's t-Tests. The level of significance used in the study (alpha level  $\alpha=0.05$ ) was adjusted with the Bonferroni correction (Shouki & Edge, 1996) to buffer possible Type I errors due to having three multiple dependent variable (outcome) measurements on the same study population. A Type I error is when a significant difference between study groups is declared when there is none. A conservative alpha level  $\alpha=0.017$  was therefore used for the equivalency of  $\alpha=0.05$  more generally adopted for the study. Conversely, a Type II error is when a significant difference

between study groups is not declared when there is one. The 'power' is the likelihood of the study identifying a true difference between groups correctly. The acceptable Type II error for this study was set at  $\beta = 0.2$ , making the power of the study 0.8 (Power =  $1 - \beta$ ).

Information on the variables of interest was also collected for eight differences in the proportions of errors made when using the past perfect and past simple between the new, deductive and inductive groups. Performance was evaluated via the simultaneous examination of all answers using the multiplicative law of probability test statistic  $X^2$  (Anon, 2012). This lessened the risk of Type I error, but also ensured a more comprehensive analysis of group performance based on a pool of language items, as single assessments are more prone to give spurious results. The difference in the means of the correct answers for exercise 3 was obtained Student's t-Tests contrasting the mean from the deductive group with that of the inductive group, and similarly between their pooled and the new group.

## Results

While all students spoke both English, Arabic and at least one local language, a questionnaire showed that 96 per cent of all students were more comfortable speaking English. Of all students, 52 per cent spoke English 'sometimes' on a daily basis, 40 per cent spoke English 'a lot' on a daily basis, six per cent spoke English 'rarely' on a daily basis, and two per cent 'a few times per month'. At the police workplace, 44 per cent said they often used English, 54 per cent said they sometimes used it, and two per cent said they almost never used English. In the social milieu, six per cent of the students said they often used English, 88 per cent said they sometimes used it, and two per cent said they almost never used English.

Questionnaire results also indicated that learning grammar via the deductive approach with rules being explained first, followed by examples and the opportunity to do exercises was the preferred method for 78 per cent of the learners. A further 16 per cent also preferred the deductive approach but without the necessity for examples to be given after explanation of the rules. The questionnaire also showed that the inductive approach was preferred for learning grammar by six per cent of the learners, with a total of 94 per cent preferring the deductive approach.

The differences in the means between the groups are summarized in Table 1. The difference in the means between the deductive and inductive groups for the number of immediate correct answers produced in the gap-fill exercise needing the formation of verbs in the past perfect (exercise 1) was significant ( $p=0.011$ ; Bonferroni corrected  $\alpha=0.017$ ). Therefore students using the deductive procedure, on average, fared better in forming and using the past perfect, with over seven correct answers out of eight. Those following the inductive lesson scored under five correct answers in the same exercise. The research hypothesis was accepted, and there was a significant difference between the average numbers of correct verb formed and used across groups with different teaching methods (inductive and deductive) during initial production.

No significant difference ( $p=0.34$ ) between the two groups for 'immediate' free(er) production of verbs in the past perfect was found between students taught via a deductive and inductive approach. The null hypothesis was accepted: there was no significant difference between the average number of errors between the inductive and deductive groups during initial production of written sentences.

There was a significant difference ( $p=0.006$ ; Bonferroni corrected  $\alpha=0.017$ ) for 'immediate' noticing of verbs in the past perfect in the reading text. Students with the deductive procedure were better at identifying the past perfect, with over nine correct identifications, on average, out of 13 possibilities. Those in the inductive group averaged fewer than five. The research hypothesis was accepted, and there was a significant difference between the average numbers of correct verb identifications across groups with different teaching methods (inductive and deductive) during the initial phase.

There was no significant difference ( $p=0.304$ ) between the means of the deductive and inductive groups delayed restrictive production of verbs in the past perfect and past simple in the gap-fill exercise 10 days after the initial explanation (exercise 3). There was also no significant difference ( $p=0.058$ ) between the means of the pooled inductive and deductive groups, and the group of learners that has missed the original inductive or deductive lesson (exercise 3). The null hypothesis was accepted: there was no significant difference between the average number of errors across groups with different teaching methods (inductive and deductive) and also the latecomer 'new' group during delayed written production.

The differences in error frequency with the past perfect and past simple among students are summarized in Table 2. The null hypothesis was accepted, and there was no significant difference ( $p=0.601$ ) in the proportions of error types across groups during delayed written production. This result was based on the multiplicative law of probability  $X^2$  test statistic.

Overall, results indicate that learners overwhelmingly prefer the deductive approach. Learners with the deductive approach perform significantly better, at times, for immediate language tasks. There is no significant difference in performance of 'delayed' written production when using either the deductive or inductive approach. Both approaches therefore appear to be favorably productive for resident or visiting teachers in a TESEP community.

### Discussion and conclusions

Learners overwhelmingly preferred the deductive approach, and were convinced they would perform considerably better through it; this was not so. The minimal differences between the inductive and deductive groups perhaps relate to the underpinning use of local contextualization for both groups. Very often, the 'culture-laden' tasks (presented deductively or inductively) were not perceived to be 'part of the real lesson', but a social opportunity to exchange experiences and views on local (the learners') and world (the teacher's) culture. This resulted in the dramatic lowering of affective barriers (including the teacher's), and rapport-building that could only be described as excellent. Subsequent language learning for learners using either approach felt relevant, and also aided confidence-building and experimentation with new language.

The strategy of nesting new language in locally-relevant contexts and scenarios was seen to be a highly important aid in enriching both deductive and inductive approaches throughout the length of this course. Local contextualization and adaptation of materials may therefore be a key underpinning factor for efficacious language learning. Indeed, not applying this strategy may be a problem in many situations, particularly when the target culture and that used by teachers and textbooks increasingly vary. A long-term study with Nubians showed they routinely had to learn English using content with Egyptian-Arabic socio-cultural references, often uninteresting, irrelevant and often did not facilitate bringing out the meaning and use of new language. While

‘traditionally’ comfortable with deductive approaches, Nubians were also keen to experiment with communicative language learning using inductive approaches, particularly if the disconnect with their cultural reality was eliminated, irrespective of the approach used (Mallia, 2010). In other studies, sub-Saharan (Mallia, 2013b) and Iranian learners (Alemi & Sadehvandi, 2012) struggled more with the confusing ‘alien’ cultural contexts than the ‘new’ use of essentially inductive ‘communicative approaches’. The need for more ‘local’ topics is also evidenced in other countries (e.g. see Al-Kharrat, 2000; Rubdy, 2001).

The ‘new’ group reinforces the importance of local contextualization: they performed equally well as the previous groups, even with brief, but equally rich contextualization of the target language. English teachers create contexts of use that are relevant to the specific group of speakers in Europe, reflecting specific cultural norms of correctness and appropriateness (Jenkins & Seidlhofer, 2001), and the same rationale suggests this may be equally or more important for learners of English from distant and varied cultures such as those in non-BANA countries. This group therefore succeeded in ‘picking up’ inductively specific (and challenging) aspects of language during subsequent lessons. The outcomes of language lessons are always negotiated implicitly or explicitly by the interaction that takes place in the classroom, and this may be facilitated by including familiar cultural contexts. By expanding their knowledge of “surface and deep action” (Holliday, 1994, p.113) of the local culture, teachers may therefore develop a useful knowledge-base relevant to the target learners. Indeed, language development needs to belong to people, reflecting their culture and way of thinking (Holliday, 2009).

Another recommendation stemming from this study is that the deductive approach, with explicit and extensive grammar instruction, can be employed successfully with lower-level adult learners. The study shows a deductive approach with terse explanations, and aided by the systematic use of concrete examples during the procedure, particularly when drawn from a familiar African context, brimming with “classroom authenticity” (Swan, 2006, p.12) is both successful and relates to learners’ expectations. Teachers can bring grammar ‘to their notice’ deductively, through rules and socially-relevant examples.

Regarding the use of the inductive approach around the world, Holliday (1993) had already started to observe that “Many teachers in state English language education around the world are unsure about the appropriateness of the communicative approach to the conditions prevalent in their classrooms” (p.3). In another study, the use of culturally relevant and contextualized role-play in a task base learning scenario (i.e. having a strongly inductive approach) was well received by learners from several non-BANA countries, complementing the more traditional, deductive facets of course methodology (Mallia, 2013c). In this study tasks that promote grammar-noticing and consciousness-raising ‘inductively’ were also successful, and generally shown to be as effective: the inductive approach therefore also succeeds if local contextualization is adopted. Importantly, teachers need not feel constrained to predominantly use a deductive approach due to (over-)favorable local perceptions about it in non-BANA countries.

By understanding their grammatical output, learners were directly helped with their accuracy, but also their fluency by increasing their sense of security, confidence, and achievement, contributing to their overall learning process, as suggested by Scheffler and Cinciata (2010). A deductive approach was generally seen to be more time-effective in achieving this. However, this new ‘confidence’ was often better exteriorized during inductive tasks.

Learners in non-BANA countries are ‘traditionally’ discouraged to interact with each other in class, therefore promoting the use of the deductive approach may result in an overly teacher-led environment, aggravating this trait. Encouraging pair/group work for most exercises in class counteracted this, encouraging students to make grammar choices based on discussion, think about and explain their choices. Conversely, the inductive approach intrinsically encouraged peer-interaction and experimenting with new ways of learning and learner-autonomy.

Outside the classroom the learners’ natural aptitude for group work, discussion and sharing was highly evident. Pragmatically, learners missing classes due to obligatory work duties easily obtained notes and explanations on form, meaning and use of grammar from their colleagues. Furthermore, they spontaneously worked cooperatively to problem-solve outside the classroom and while doing homework. The ‘new’ group therefore also had the opportunity to learn metalanguage deductively from their colleagues. This efficient exchange of information and dialogue, coupled with inductive learning in class, help explain why there were no significant differences among all groups when assessed after 10 days.

The ‘deductive’ group had an essentially teacher-fronted ‘grammar presentation’ initial phase, but immediately passed on to pair work during the ‘practice phase’ to review the given examples together and tackle exercises, and also tasks given for freer practice. The use of terse ‘deductive approach’ style and distribution of class notes, and learners’ willingness to share metalanguage, independently of the teacher, emerges as a powerful combination to help develop autonomous learning.

This study therefore suggests that teachers adopting a deductive or inductive approach can give satisfactory results in non-BANA countries. There appears to be a slight favorable edge when the deductive approach is used, specifically for ‘immediate’ production of language. The use of local contexts to illustrate language meaning and use may be an underpinning factor favoring the balanced use of both approaches.

**Table 1. Differences in correct answers between student group means**

Output (test)	Group+	Mean	Standard error mean	Standard deviation	Difference of means ( 95% C.I.) ++	p-value
Exercise 1 <sup>^</sup> (8 answers)	Ind	4.85	0.99	3.58	-2.85 (-4.99 to -0.70)	0.011*
	Ded	7.69	0.31	1.11		$\alpha=0.017$
Sentence production (5)	Ind	2.31	0.62	2.25	-0.85 (-2.63 to 0.94)	0.337**
	Ded	3.15	0.60	2.15		$\alpha=0.017$
Reading text (13 answers)	Ind	4.77	1.21	4.36	-4.77 (-8.06 to -1.48)	0.006*
	Ded	9.54	1.04	3.73		$\alpha=0.017$
Exercise 3 <sup>^^</sup>	Ind	5.15	0.62	2.23	-0.92 (-2.74 to 0.89)	0.304***

(8 answers)	Ded	6.08	0.62	2.25		$\alpha=0.05$
Exercise 3 <sup>^^</sup>	Ded.+Ind.	5.54	0.44	2.23	1.37 (-0.05 to 2.79)	0.058***
(8 answers)	New	4.17	0.56	2.76		$\alpha=0.05$

<sup>^</sup> Exercise 1 Immediate production of past perfect / past simple (same-day gap-fill)

<sup>^^</sup> Exercise 3 Delayed production of past perfect / past simple (gap-fill 10 days later)

+Group: Ded = deductive learning, n=13; Ind = inductive learning, n=13; , new group n=24

++C.I. = confidence interval

\* Student's *t*-Test, statistical significant difference,  $\alpha=0.05$  (Bonferroni's adjustment: Lower  $\alpha=0.05$  to 0.017)

\*\* Student's *t*-Test, no statistical significant difference,  $\alpha=0.05$  (Bonferroni's adjustment: Lower  $\alpha=0.05$  to 0.017)

\*\*\* Student's *t*-Tests , no statistical significant difference,  $\alpha=0.05$

**Table 2. Differences in error frequency with the past perfect and past simple among students**

Group* (method)	Error frequency								$X^2$ **
	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Q.5	Q.6	Q.7	Q.8	
Deductive	1	7	0	0	0	0	6	5	12.07
Inductive	4	7	0	0	0	0	6	6	
New	0	9	3	0	1	2	8	13	

\* Inductive group n= 13, deductive group n=13, new group n=24

\*\**Multiplicative Law of Probability test statistic*  $X^2 = \sum [(\text{observed frequency} - \text{expected frequency})^2 / \text{expected frequency}]$ . For  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,  $X^2 = 12.07$ . As it does not exceed the critical value ( $X^2 = 23.685$ ), the null hypothesis is accepted: there is no significant difference ( $p=0.601$ ) in the proportions of error types across groups with different teaching methods.

(For questions 1-8 (Q.1-8) see Appendix 7)

#### 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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## **The Influence of Arabic on Nigerian Literature: a study of selected works of Abubakar Imam in Hausa**

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### **Abstract**

The heritage of a people is, without doubt, the bedrock of their identity. The sheer size of the Northern part of Nigeria makes it a very important part of the country. This vast region has been having a common identity forged by literacy in the Arabic language. For many centuries before the coming of the imperialists, Arabic provided universal understanding among people of the Northern Nigeria. It was so important that even the imperial agents studied Arabic language in order to penetrate the culture of the people of the area they wanted to colonize. When the foreign power eventually succeeded in enthroning its own language as the official language, Arabic still remains very visible not only as a religious language but also as a springboard for literary endeavors in both local and foreign languages of the North. This paper therefore intends to study the influence of Arabic on the Nigerian Literature using Magana Jari Ce and Ruwan Bagaja by the renown Hausa writer, late Alhaji Abubakar Imam, as a case study. The paper is divided into: introduction, short biography of Abubakar Imam, Arabic influence on selected stories, general analysis of the stories, conclusion and recommendation.

**Keywords:** heritage influence, identity, Arabic language, Nigerian literature.

**Introduction:**

Arabic writing and literature are leading components of Northern Nigerian heritage. Writing in Arabic is so widespread that even the indigenous language, Hausa, and other minority languages were written in ajami (Dr. M.M. Jimba 2010, p. 111) writing non-Arabic languages using Arabic orthography. An in-depth navigation of the culture of the North without some degree of Arabic knowledge is almost impossible. It is this fact that compelled even the early imperial colonialists to equip themselves with the knowledge of Arabic (Galadanchi, S. A. S. 1994, p. 76) to enable them penetrate the Northern region with ease. This makes it practically impossible to divest Northern Nigerian identity from its Arabic heritage.

Literacy had been established in the North long before the coming of the Western education. It became very evident to the colonial masters that there was need for access to the culture of the natives and this could be achieved through encouraging the very few among the natives with the ability to read and write in English to embark on this project. Competition in story writing was introduced after which successful entries were published; this attempt was very successful as, according to Ibrahim A. M. Malumfashi and Aliya Adamu Ahmed, (2007)

The natives came in contact with a whole new world of ideas, while the colonialists used it as a form or an avenue of understanding the mindset, culture and traditions of those they had to live with. (p. 77)

This whole idea of publishing was a very effective stimulus as the exercise was well embraced and it is the more reason why the colonial masters had to use the existing heritage as tool in introducing their own methods and language of education. The leading personnel used in this exploration so as to successfully domesticate Western education were those who were well grounded in Arabic education. This marked the beginning of writing Hausa stories using Roman letters.

This paper intends to study how Arabic has impacted on the selected stories of Imam Abubakar one of the pioneer writers of Hausa stories. His environment was predominantly the Hausa speaking Northern Nigeria. Although he wrote Hausa in Roman alphabets, it is very clear that the corpus of his sources and styles are influenced by Arabic language and literature. The works from which this paper springs are *Ruwan Bagaja* and *Mayana Jari Ce*.

Alhaji Abubakar Imam (1911 – 1981 A.D)

"Imam was a man of many roots; his earliest ancestry could be traced to Dikwa in the former Borno Empire (in the present Borno State). His great grandparents found themselves in the present Niger State, after a migration many centuries before the Sokoto Jihad in 1804

." ( Revival of Abubakar Imam, Sunday Trust, Retrieved 13/11/2012)

He was born in Kagara in 1911 A.D. Kagara was a division of Kwantagora Province of old Northern region. The Province, together with some other provinces, later formed what used to be known as North Central State. The area is presently a part of Niger State of Nigeria.

Alhaji Imam trained as a teacher at Katsina Training Centre and thereafter took to teaching at Katsina Middle School in 1932. He wrote his first story *Ruwan Bagaja* when he was just 22 years old. His talent and commitment to creative writing was recognized and appreciated by Dr. Rupert M. East who invited him to Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria where he was exposed to more technicalities of writing. On his return to Katsina he was charged with the responsibility of writing more books. It was then that he wrote *Karamin Sani KunKumi ne* in 1937. Imam was appointed pioneer editor of the popular Hausa newspaper *Gaskiya Ta fi Kwabo*, which first came into circulation in 1939. He was the helmsman of this newspaper for twelve years.

He made his first trip to England in company of some West African Commonwealth journalists in 1943. He was appointed the first chairman of Public Complaints Commission by the North Central State in 1974. In addition to the aforementioned works, he wrote some other works namely *Yakin Duniya na Biyu*, *Tafiya Mabudin Ilimi* and *Tarihin Annabi da Halifofi*. Alhaji Abubakar Imam died on Friday 19th June, 1981 at the age of seventy. ( N.N.P.C., *Gabatarwa (foreward)*, 1982, p. 1),

Abubakar Imam was a recipient of many honors including as O.B.E. (Order of the British Empire); C.O.N. (Commander of the Order of the Niger), N.N.M.C., and LL.D. from the University of Ibadan.

### Sources of his stories

An irrefutable fact is that Imam's stories are well rooted in both the culture and literature of his traditional environment. He sourced his stories largely from huge volume of narrations made to pupils in Arabic *Islamiyah* schools in the pre-Western education structure of the North. This system is very much in practice in almost every part of the region. Pupils were gathered by their teachers in a spacious field where lessons on many topics were taught in local languages. This practice was not only peculiar to the North but it also cut across West Africa. The difference, however, is that while the tales and lore taught to children in many parts of Africa are purely indigenous to those areas, the stories told to young children in the Hausa-speaking areas are mostly Arabic stories translated and adapted to suit the understanding of the children.

Imam was not only a product of this system, he also acquired quality and advanced knowledge in Arabic and Islamic disciplines before he was introduced to Western Education. His father, Shaykh <sup>o</sup>Uthman, was a revered scholar, a respected *imam* and a highly honorable and honored judge. Imam started his early education under the tutelage of his father and had become firmly structured in Arabic and Islamic education before he finally started venturing into Western brand of education. . (Sarumi, A. I., 2012, p. 179) This massive literacy background, to a very large extent, inspired his creativity thereby making his works a true picture of his society.

### The mode of his stories

The mode chosen by Alhaji Imam in his stories reveals clear influence of an Arabic literary genre known as *maqamah*, an art that first became popular in the Abbasyd dynasty when Arabic literature blossomed tremendously –accommodating many new genres. It is a genre of Arabic rhythmic prose. (Hans W, 1961, p. 801) The first person who popularized this art was Abul-fadhil Ahmad bin Al-Husayn Al-Hamadhani popularly called Badee<sup>o</sup>uz-Zaman. He was born in the middle of the fourth century A.H. He wrote his *maqamat* in Naysabur and died in 398 A.H. (Ahmad al-Askandary et al. (n. d.) P. 80).

*Maqamah* is a literary speech meant to be read to the audience in just one seat. Each *maqamah* is prepared in a way that it would be narrated in a short period of meeting. (Dayfi Shawqi, 2005, P. 247) The audience contains, largely, educated people, and its plot is woven around a protagonist with a narrator giving reports on the activities of this main character. In each of the *maqamah* the protagonist always finds himself in a precarious situation but as well always manipulates his ways to get out of problem. The protagonist in most cases disguises his person to conquer his victims, but as the scene approaches its end the narrator uncovers the tricks, makes this known to the protagonist but keeps it, mostly, away from the audience.

This mode was adopted in *Ruwan Bagaja* where Alhaji is the protagonist and Malam Zurke plays the role of a supporting character. The similarity here is that the stories revolve round the two main characters, but in clear contrast to *maqamah*, the protagonist is also the narrator. Also, in *Ruwan Bagaja*, Malam Zurke, and not the audience, is the victim of Alhaji's manipulation. Also the stories here are not rhythmic, but they are scenic in nature. Like in the *maqamah*, they both reconciled at the end of every scene. This is just like the scenario we see in *maqamatul-Hareery* and *maqamatu Badee<sup>6</sup>uz-Zaman al-Hamdhani* and several other *maqamat*.

### **Pedagogical traits**

This is another direct influence of Arabic literature on the works of Alhaji Imam. Stories in his works are not just told, they are didactic i.e. meant to teach moral lessons. An example of didactic story in *Ruwan Bagaja* is that of his first meeting with Malam Zurke.

Alhaji, a stark illiterate, found himself in the midst of other illiterate people. Because of his ability to recite *Suratul-Fatihah*, he was made the Imam of the village. His cause was further helped by the fact that many recitations are done silently. He was so respected in the village and held in high esteem. Such was the status until Malam Zurke entered the village. After observing a congregational prayer behind the Imam, Zurke was appalled that such an illiterate was made prayer leader. He bared his mind and people were shocked at his observation. Narrating his encounter with Zurke, he says:

*“Da gari ya waye aka je gun salla, ya ji ban iya kome ba, sai ya fara sarana gun Sarki, yana cewa a gwada mu das hi a ga wanda ya fi.”* ( Abubakar. I., 1966, p.8)  
*The following day we went for prayer; he (Zurke) then discovered that I knew nothing, and thence started condemning me before the King and suggested that competition be organized between us so as to see who is more versed.*

Alhaji, however, demonstrated rare courage by accepting to challenge Zurke to a competition. He also insisted that it was to be to the full glare of the villagers. Zurke, in turn, accepted this challenge because of his conviction that Alhaji knows very little.

Unfortunately for Zurke he allowed Alhaji to take the initiative of starting the questioning as he felt there is no question from him he could not answer. This arrogance cost him dearly as Alhaji simply outsmarted him. Exploiting his popularity among the villagers, Alhaji drew a bend on the sand and asked Zurke to identify it and tell people what it meant Zurke faltered by first calling it r (ر), then n (ن). Alhaji now took maximum advantage of the audience and said it was clear Zurke did not know anything as what he wrote is crescent i.e. shape of moon in its first day. The entire audience chorused in affirmation. Zurke was so ashamed and was chased away from the village. The episode reveals how important it is not to be haughty, and that it is necessary to show respect to whoever is in position of authority. That being knowledgeable alone is not enough to attain any leadership position and that knowledge must be matched with humility are thematically highlighted here. It is always safer not to underestimate anybody, most especially an opponent.

### **Interaction with Invisible Beings**

Another instance of the influence of Arabic literature on *Ruwan Bagaja* is the several encounters of Alhaji with invisible creatures. The existence of these invisible beings is a reality in Arabic literature. The holy book of Islam, Qur'an, not only attests to this, there is a whole chapter discussing their world and nature in the Book. (see: Qur'an 72) It is, therefore, a clear influence

of Arabic literature to see Imam giving the unseen creature prominence in his book. An instance of this is when Alhaji is been instructed, by a Jinni, on how to locate the well in which to draw the curative water:

*“Da shigarka za ka ga dukuna, goma sha biyu jere. Ka kidaya daki na biyar daga hannun dama ka shiga na shida. Ciki ne rijiyar ta ke...”* (Abubakar. I., P. 39)  
*On your entrance you will find many rooms, altogether twelve in a row. Count up to the fifth room to your right hand side, and then enter the sixth room; that is where the well is...*

An encounter like this is a familiar occurrence in Arabic tales to the point that it is a common aphorism among them that every poet has his/her own jinn from whom he/she draws the spirit of creativity and poetry.

### ***Magana Jari Ce (Volume III)***

This is the last volume of a prose work written by Alhaji Abubakar Imam. The stories in this book and the other two volumes are told by a vizier parrot bought by a king. The stories borrow a lot from the popular Arabic *Alfu laylah wa laylah (One Thousand and One Nights)*. The pattern of narration is not only similar to that of the Arabic book; the stories here are also between few people. In the source book it is between *Shari Zad* and *Shahr Yar* with *Dunya Zad* in presence. In *Maga Jari Ce* however, it is between father-parrot and his son *Fasihi*. Another Arabic story book Alhaji Imam borrowed from is *Kaleelah Wa Dimnah*. He adopted the style of telling stories through animals and birds from this book.

*Alfu laylah* tells stories of a king, *Shahr Yar*, who was betrayed by his wife. He thereafter vowed to henceforth kill any lady who is unfortunate to marry him. He was behaving fully to his vow by bringing to an end the life of any lady that partnered him in bed. This was on until one day when his vizier could not find any lady. This vizier had two grown up daughters. When he got home the eldest of them noticed the melancholic mood of their father. On prodding, the father explained his dilemma. The daughter immediately volunteered to be the next queen and by implication the next victim. The father conceded to this wish after a lengthy discussion and assurance that she would be spared. *Shahr zad* took along her younger sister *Dunya Zad* with whom she perfected her story telling plot. The stories of *Shahr Zad* to *Shahr Yar* on request from *Dunya Zad* are what we have in *Alfu laylah wa laylah*.

This brief account of the book was given in order to grasp better how it has influenced the author of *Magana Jari Ce*. Alhaji Imam himself did not hide this fact as he repeatedly alludes to the book in his work. An instance of this is when the vizier parrot told his son *Fasih* at the end of one story that:

*Yanzu zan baka misali daga cikin labarun wani littafi ne na larabawa da a ke kira Alfu laila.* (Abubakar. I., p. 51)

Now I will give you an example from stories in an Arabic book called *Alfu laylah*.

The entire content of *Magana Jari Ce* could be taken to be an adaptation of *Alfu laylah* and other Arabic story books in the local Hausa language. The style, content and mode are very similar. Just as the source teaches moral and many ways of conducting oneself in a society, so does *Magana Jari Ce*. An instance of the book setting out to reach moral is a piece of advice the vizier parrot gave his son at end of one of the stories when he said:

“ *ka yi kokari da rika wannan labara mai tsawo haka. Koda yake ba yadda aka rubuta shi ke nan ba cikin Alfu laila, ba laifi. Wannan ma ai ya isa zama maka misalin gargadi na shida da na ba ka.*” (Abubakar. I, p.60)

*You have tried a lot for keeping this lengthy story although that is not how it was written in Alfu laila. No problem, the one you memorized is enough as an example of the warning number six I gave you.*

Also, as *Alfu laylah* contains palace stories, so is the setting of *Magana Jari Ce*. This is not a mere coincidence but a clear case of influence as the writer had traversed, extensively, existing Arabic literature books including *Alfu laylah wa laylah*. (Sarumi. A. I., P. 193)

### Analysis

The significance of Hausa language in the cultural and literary identity of Northern Nigeria can never be over-emphasized. This is because the region, as depicted in the works of Alhaji Imam, has been a unique component of the larger federation now called Nigeria. The uniqueness was bestowed on the region by a very long tradition of literary writing. The tradition ensured sustainability of very a strong identity.

The study of this nature falls into the realm of inter-textuality. This theory was propounded by Julia Kristeva. It implies that “. . . a text cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system.” (Michael and Judith, 1990, p. 1) This is because, according to her, the writer is a reader of texts before he/she becomes a creator of texts. The presentation so far, to a very large extent, exposes the influence of Arabic on Hausa literature.

It is true that Arabic is different from the English language in which Hausa stories are written. It is also a fact that two literary works do not necessarily have to be in the same language for the influences to be considered. Hasan Jad is of the opinion that there could be impacts and influences between a literary language of a community and another. (Jad, H., 1978, p. 8) Hausa literature up to about the last two decades of the twentieth century was transformational because it was undergoing transition from being written in classical Arabic or *ajami* to being written in English.

It can therefore be conveniently said that the renaissance of Hausa literature spearheaded by Dr. Rupert M. East was not a case of reviving a dead literature nor creating a literature in an unlettered community. The inter-textuality in the writings of the authors of Alhaji Imam’s generation can mostly be noticed in contrasting their works with Arabic texts prevalent before transforming to writing in English. The influences are mostly reflected in themes and modes. The understanding here is that the content and mode of works by Hausa writers from that generation are the ones bequeathed by Islam and Arabic studies. The training acquired in colonial schools and Gaskiya Corporation notwithstanding, this heritage of Arabic literacy tremendously shaped the direction of Hausa writings.

The case of Alhaji, the protagonist in *Ruwan Bagaja*, brings to fore the influence of heroic attitude common in several Arabic texts. The heritage of sacrifice in order to safeguard family and communal honor is what made him leave home in search of *Ruwan Bagaja* in order to cure the prince of his mysterious illness. He was away from home and comfort for fifteen years at the end of which he successfully brought home the curative water a drop of which effectively cured

the sick prince. Alhaji instantly became a hero; this feat succinctly epitomizes the age long heritage of working to better the lot of the community.

The nature of the stories in *Magana Jari Ce* clearly displays the teacher in the author. This is not only in the fact that the stories are told by an elderly person but also from the fact that each story has goal, objectives and lessons. It could also be seen that the narration is interactive which ensures effective teaching and learning. Each of the stories is an anecdote of a sort buttressing the topic and sinking the lessons into the readers.

### Conclusion

This paper has tried to explain how Arabic language and literature are the original source of literary writing in Northern Nigeria. The identity of the North can therefore be ascertained from the heritage that tells of their uniqueness. This uniqueness is deep rooted in their early literacy through Arabic language. Western education brought by the imperial colonial powers later got inroad into the literary culture of the Hausas but did not succeed in total replacement of the established Arabic heritage. Even the imperialists had to study Arabic for a successful voyage in Northern Nigeria administration. The torchbearers of writing Hausa in Roman orthography heavily relied on their Arabic literature that was very ubiquitous to transform to writing in English. The message of their work as seen in *Ruwan Bagaja* and *Magana Jari Ce* is to sustain the heritage and hence the identity. This heritage of Arabic language and literature is not only relevant but necessary because it remains an integral part of the Hausa cultural identity.

In view of the above the present writer wishes to offer the following recommendations:

- that serious efforts be made towards studying the early writers in Hausa language to appreciate more the parental status of Arabic;
- that studying the heritage of Arabic language be more encouraged as the majority of the early literary activities among Hausa people of Northern Nigeria are documented in it;
- that production of the works of early writers of literary works in Hausa be embarked upon as they are now short in circulation;
- that extensive study of Arabic will enrich the creativity of modern day writers among the people of Hausa extraction and the entire Northern Nigeria as this will expose them to additional sources;
- that advanced study of Arabic literature facilitates understanding better the norms and values of the Northern part of Nigeria;
- and, that contemporary writers in Hausa language should promote moral positivity in order to preserve the true identity of the North.

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## The Effectiveness of Indirect Error Correction Feedback on the Quality of Students' Writing

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### Abstract

Giving feedback in the process of teaching writing is a common practice by writing teachers because it is believed to be able to help students write better. The feedback may be given directly or indirectly. The feedback may be given in the form of comments, questions, suggestions, and or corrections. It seems to be no dispute about the first three kinds of feedback. But for the corrections as the feedback in the process of teaching writing, there are two opposing views, one view believes that correction is counter-productive while the other view believes that correction is helpful. In this research, three kinds indirect correction feedback was implemented, sample end comment (SEC) feedback, coded correction (CC) feedback, and non-coded correction (NCC) feedback. Experimental research was used to find out which indirect correction feedback will give more effective result in the students' writing quality.

**Key words:** error correction feedback and writing quality.

## Introduction

The goal of teaching writing in colleges or universities in Indonesia is to help students to be able to write well. Writing well here refers to the ability to produce a piece of written text that meets all the characteristics of a good writing such as unity in the topic discussed, smooth organization of ideas, appropriate use of vocabulary suitable for its context, correct use of language in terms of word choice and correct grammar, and correct use of mechanics such as punctuation and spelling.

It is realized, however, that writing in English is not easy for most writing students. Writing in English as a foreign language is very much different from writing in the first language of most students in Indonesia. English is different from Indonesian in spelling, vocabulary, and grammar. That is why writing skill development takes relatively a long time. Writing courses in colleges or universities usually consist of Writing I, Writing II, Writing III, and Writing IV. To develop students' writing ability, teachers also have to help students learn grammar and vocabulary. The main purpose of teaching writing is, in general, of course, to help students to write in English well and more specifically to help students to write well in accomplishing their academic writing assignments such as a paper, a thesis, or a dissertation.

Nevertheless, many students still have problems in writing in English. The results of some research conducted so far have shown that errors are still made by writing learners. Roni (2006) revealed 40% of the subjects had problem in writing a topic sentence, 35% of the subjects had problem in diction, and 25% of the subjects had problem in description. Astasari (2009) found out that the highest frequency of grammar errors in writing is omission errors (41.51%), the second highest frequency is error of misformation (35.50%), the next highest frequency is error of addition (21.74%), and disordering errors come as the lowest frequency (1.3%). Fitriyah, et. al (2007) discovered that the errors the students made can be categorized into three main types, i.e. interlingual errors of inference from the native language, intralingual errors within the target language, and inaccuracies in measuring and appropriating to the sociolinguistic context of communication. Meanwhile, Muth'im (2010) identified two components of writing that still become serious problems for many learners. The two main problems were in organization (35.71%) and in language use (57.14%). In term of organization, for instance, the problems found were the inability of the learners to express the ideas fluently, the failure to show which ideas belong to the general statement as background and which ideas belong to thesis statement that will guide them to discuss in the body paragraph(s), the inability to organize the ideas in a well-organized and logical manner, and the failure to divide their ideas into paragraphs. In terms of language use, the problems found in this study were the inability to write complex constructions effectively, the mismatch between concord and agreement, the incorrect use of tenses; the incorrect use of number, the incorrect use of word order, the incorrect use of pronoun, and the incorrect use of preposition.

The phenomena revealed by those studies may make us, English teachers or lecturers teaching writing realize that one thing should be carried out to help students to get out of the problem. One thing that may be worth doing and appreciated by the learners is giving feedback. It is expected that the feedback the students receive from their teachers make them more focused and concentrated on what is being learned. Furthermore, it is also expected that the feedback given by the teachers makes them more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in one learning course so that they can make use of these strengths to overcome the weaknesses. Sharmini and Kumar (2011:1) claim "It is through feedback that writers are guided to achieve negotiated writing goals".

Feedback, according to Lewis (2002), is advantageous not only for the learners but also for the teachers. For teachers, it gives information about individual and collective class progress and, indirectly, is a form of evaluation on their own teaching. For learners, feedback is an ongoing form of assessment which is more focused than grades. In short, feedback is used by a teacher to help learners improve their learning. It is believed that by having feedback the students become more motivated in learning.

Feedback may be given in different forms and various intentions. It may be given in the form of comments, questions, and suggestions (Yingdong, 2006). Feedback given in the form of questions may be intended that the learners need to add more explanation or additional information about what they are doing in learning. Feedback given in the form of comments might mean to give support or encourage the learners to keep on learning. Meanwhile, feedback given in the form of suggestion means to suggest what should be accomplished by the learners so that their learning task and performance become better.

Correction is another form of feedback. Like other forms of feedback, correction is also used to help students learn better. Correction differs from other forms of feedback in its intention. As the name implies, correction is given in order that the learners can correct their incorrect learning performances. This might be in line with what Dasse-Askildson states "correction is designed to help them move toward a more target like form" (Dasse-Askildson, 2008, P. 1). In relation to this issue, Katayama (2007) suggests that the most favored correction method is for the teacher to give the students a hint which might enable them to notice error and self-correct. In other words, as Corder (as quoted in Ellis, 2001, P. 48) claims

"errors could be significant in three ways: (1) they provide the teacher with information about how much the students have learnt, (2) they provide the researcher with evidence of how much language was learnt, and (3) they serve as devices by which the students have discovered the rule of the target language".

In general, two seemingly contradictive approaches are implemented in dealing with errors. The first approach might be inspired by the Audiolingual Approach. According to Han (2002), this approach advocates minimal or no tolerance of learner errors and suggests that every effort be made to prevent them. This is in line with what Fang and Xue-mei (2007) claim that since an error may serve as a negative stimulus which reinforces 'bad habits', it should not be allowed to occur. Allowing incorrect language production is believed to result in fossilized language.

The second approach might be inspired by the Natural Approach (Han, 2002) which considers errors as a sign of students' learning, so correction is considered unnecessary and counter-productive. Han (2002) further pointed out Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an example of this kind. The primary concern of this approach is the development of fluency. In order that fluency develops well the practice of using language may not be hindered by teachers' intervention or correction. This might be in line with Savignon's (2001) claims that through practice and experience in an increasingly wide range of communicative contexts and events, learners gradually expand their communicative competence, consisting of grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence.

Two contradictive views of correction also occur in dealing with errors in writing. One view claims that correction does not make learners write better. Truscott (1996), for instance, has strongly voiced that grammar correction has no place in writing and should be abandoned. In his research on the effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately, Truscott (2007) found that within 95% level of confidence, correction has no better than a small beneficial effect

on accuracy, that any beneficial effects are too small to even qualify as small effects. To support his stance, Truscott quoted some research that had been previously carried out. For example, he quoted the result of Hendrickson (1981)'s study which revealed that no significant difference was found between the effects of comprehensive correction and correction of global errors only. Another study quoted by Truscott was the one conducted by Lalande (1982) who studied intermediate German students at U.S. universities, comparing one group that received coded correction and used error logs to track their errors to another that received explicit correction without logs. Lalande found that the former showed no significant gains, yielding modest effect size of .288. Truscott also quoted the study conducted by Frantzen (1995) who did a 15-week study with intermediate Spanish learners in a university setting in the U.S. She included an uncoded-correction group and a "grammar group" that also had extensive grammar reviews and was expected to correct their errors, with additional feedback from the teacher on these corrections. She found no significant differences between the groups on accuracy in their essay.

The other view believes that correction contributes to the quality of students' writing. The most prominent scholar who holds this belief is Ferris. To support her view point, Ferris (2006) herself conducted some studies. One of the studies she conducted reveals that a strong relationship between teachers' error markings and successful student revisions on the subsequent drafts of their essays was found. In response to the criticisms expressed by Truscott (1996), in her article published in 2004, Ferris (2004) quoted some studies that had been conducted previously. Kepner (1991) in investigating the difference between groups receiving error corrections or message-related comments found that error correction group made 15% fewer errors than the other group. Another study she quoted was the one conducted by Lalande (1982) who investigated differences between groups receiving direct or indirect corrections and found that indirect feedback group made more progress in accuracy overtime. Meanwhile, Zainuddin (2004) in investigating the effect of giving feedback to students' writing discovered that the provision of feedback improves student's writing. Positive results of error correction were also revealed by Naeini (2008) who found out that the performance of the participants in experimental group out-performed the performance of the participants in control group. Alroe (2011), after reviewing the results of some studies finally came to the conclusion that error correction can produce significant benefits.

Though the findings seem to contradict each other, they may not make writing teachers confused. These contradictive findings may be understood as the reflection of how the researchers approach certain research problem. Hartshorn, et al. (2010), argue that the conflicting findings may result from the three different contexts: the learner, the situation, and the instructional methodology. Moreover, the results of some research on the perception of learners toward correction show positive responses. Since teaching is intended to help students to learn better, the following findings may become strong reasons for the teachers to keep on giving feedback. For instance, Greenslade and Felix-Brasdefer (2006) claim that FL learners expressed a strong preference for feedback on formal features of their writing such as grammar, lexical, and mechanical errors. This is similar to what Katayama found that "students had strong positive attitudes toward teacher correction of errors and indicated a preference for correction of pragmatic errors over other kinds of errors" (Katayama, 2007, P. 289). Saito (1994) also discovered that students preferred teacher feedback (teacher correction, teacher correction with comments, error identification, commentary, teacher-students conferencing) to non-teacher feedback (peer correction and self correction). This is in line with what Rauber and Gil (2004) found that learners appreciate and consider the teacher's correction highly important for the

development of their language skills. Han (2002) then resumes that all provide evidence that L2 learners are indeed responsive to various forms of error correction, though the extent to which they respond varies. Struyven, Duchy and Janssen (2005) argue that research findings reveal that students' perception about assessment significantly influence their approaches to learning and studying.

Though the findings of research show contradictive results, from the perspective of pedagogy and the students' perception, there seems to be a mutual need between the teachers and the students in term of error correction. In relation to this situation, Diab (2006, p. 2) comments "if teachers and students both understand the purpose of certain correction techniques and agree on their use, feedback is more likely to be productive". Based on this awareness the researcher believes that teachers should go on giving correction feedback. He also believes that correction feedback given by a teacher is not intended to show the power of a teacher nor to find errors of students. Al-Makhzoomi and Freihat (2001, p. 143) stated "this method ignores the real purpose of writing and focuses only on the negative aspects of a writing task, placing the student in such a position that he/she cannot write for fear of making mistakes". On the contrary, it is given for the sake of students' learning. What writing teachers should do is to find the best and the most suitable way of giving correction feedback which is appropriate and works for certain groups of students in certain contexts. One point that teachers should bear in mind is that giving feedback, including correction, is a part of their jobs. Brown (2001) and Hamalik (2004) claim that one of the characteristics of a good teacher is giving optimal feedback to students.

Additionally, the nature of writing itself necessitates intervention from the teacher. This is especially true for L2 learners whose first language system is very much different from the target language. Ferris (2005, p. 4) argues that "... L2 students, besides being developing writers, are still in the process of acquiring the L2 lexicon and morphological and syntactic systems". It is reasonable that "they need distinct and additional intervention from their writing teachers to make up these deficits and develop strategies for finding, correcting, and avoiding errors" (Ferris, 2005, p. 4). Ferris and Hedgcock claim:

"teacher feedback also provides the opportunity for instruction to be tailored to the needs of individual students through face-to-face dialogue in teacher-student writing conferences and through the draft-response-revision cycle, during which teachers help students through their written commentary at various points" (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005, p. 185).

Since writing goes on through recursive processes of learning activities: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and writing final product, in the process of teaching and learning writing, the teacher, in addition to giving other forms of feedback, may correct the draft made by students so that they can revise them.

The second nature of writing is that writing appears in the form of a final product. In this context, Harmer (2004, p. 10) argues "there is a need to be absolutely clear and unambiguous". The clarity and the unambiguity of a piece of writing, in accordance with Chandrasegaran "can be achieved only when the target reader considers it so, that is, the reader thinks the text is 'right' for its purpose" (Chandrasegaran, 2002, p. 2). Since, in most cases, the reader(s) and the writer are far separated in terms of time and place, it is important to bear in mind that misunderstanding may not occur. Once misunderstanding appears, it is quite hard to fix it due to these two conditions.

The condition as described above makes the researcher interested in comparing the effectiveness of giving feedback on the quality of students' writing. According to Ferris (2005) feedback may be categorized into two kinds: direct feedback and indirect feedback. The first kind refers to the way of giving feedback in which a teacher simply corrects the incorrect use of the language.

There were three kinds of indirect feedback used in this study, namely: coded-correction feedback (CCF), non-coded correction feedback (NCCF) and sample end comment (SEC). CCF which is sometimes called as error identification is used with the assumption that by being helped by the availability of codes such as GR to indicate there is an error in grammar, or VOC to indicate there is an error in vocabulary, or WO to indicate there is an error in word order, or other codes to indicate other errors, it is assumed that the learners will be able to connect their memory to the area indicated by the code. Their prior knowledge is supposed to guide them to come to the right correction. This is in line with Krashen's (1985) Monitor Theory which claims that if the learners know the rule, they will be able to correct the incorrect production of language the performer must be consciously concerned about; he or she must know the rule. CCF is one form of indirect feedback.

The other form of indirect correction feedback is non-coded correction feedback (NCCF), also known as error location. In correcting the errors, the researcher uses underlining, circling, or question marks - rather than codes to indicate that an error is made in the writing, and the learners should correct it. However, because it is absent of any code, in order to be able to correct the incorrect performance of the language, the learners should find out what kind of error was made by themselves and be responsible to correct it. Of course, this kind of correction feedback is assumed to be more difficult than the first because the learners not only have to revise the errors but also have to find out what kind of errors they have made before they are able to revise the errors.

The last feedback is sample end comment (SEC). In this feedback, the researcher gives some hints and some comments on the errors they have made and at the same time asks the students to find out other errors in the text and correct them. This kind of error correction is quite similar to NCCF in the sense that an error has occurred in the hinted word or phrase. The difference is that the hints given are just for a small part of the text as sample. For the rest of errors that might occur, it is the responsibility of the learners to find out and correct them. That is why this is kind of correction feedback is assumed to be more complicated.

The reason to choose indirect correction as treatment in this study is that it forces learners to be more reflective and analytic than direct feedback (Ferris, 2005). Additionally, the subjects of this study are advanced students. As advanced students and helped by their language proficiency, they are assumed to be able to monitor any deviance found in their own writing and at the same time will be able to correct them altogether. There are two reasons why they are supposed to be able to correct any error or mistake found in their writing. First, in addition to attending a series of writing courses, they have also attended some supporting courses such as vocabulary and grammar in formal instruction classes. The formal classes they have attended play a very significant role in developing their language proficiency. Further impact of this language proficiency is that it gives benefit for their ability in writing English. Zare-ee (2011) found that the participants with higher EFL proficiency scores produced texts of significantly better quality. This is similar to what Ellis (2001) found that formal instruction shows that overall scores improved by 11 per cent from pre- to post-test compared to control group which did not receive any instruction in these features, which improved by only 3 per cent. Second,

they have passed pre-requisite courses which implies that at least they have already had adequate bases for correcting errors or mistakes.

This study is especially important when related to one of the recommendations made by Ferris (2004) who asked the next researcher to find out the impact of different error types on the student progress in accuracy. By knowing the result of this research the teacher teaching writing will be informed which method of correction results better, and they may consider what kind of correction feedback and how the correction feedback given works well.

The purpose of this study is to investigate different effects of different correction feedback on students' writing quality. Further comparison may be conducted between groups if overall there is a main significant difference between the different correction feedback.

### Research Methods

The design employed in this study is a true experimental. The choice of this method is that this research aims at finding cause and effect relationship (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006). The cause is the correction feedback given as independent variables (X) and the quality of students' writing as dependent variable (Y). There are three variations of the independent variable employed to three different groups of students in this experiment; sample end comment (SEC) feedback, coded-correction (CC) feedback, and non-coded correction (NCC) feedback.

To minimize the intervening variables that might affect the result of the study a number of actions were taken. The subjects were randomly selected and assigned in three different groups (A1, A2, and A3); the conditions under which the study occurred— such as the way(s) the treatment was/were implemented, and the way(s) in which the data were collected were also made constant. It is expected that no extraneous variables may affect the internal validity of the study.

The subjects of this study were English Department students taking Writing IV course. 120 students were taking Writing IV course: 54 students in Regular A and 65 students in Regular B. Both groups of students had quite similar conditions; they had passed lower writing courses required before taking Writing IV course such as: Writing I, II, and III, Structure I, II, III, Vocabulary I, and II, Reading I, II, and III. But for the purpose of the study, the researcher just chose the students in Regular A. Students in Regular A was selected as the subjects of this study because they were admitted to the university based on the standard national university entrance test (SNMPTN). Since their admission to the university was through the same test, they were believed to be more homogeneous in terms of academic proficiency. The admission of Regular B students, on the other hand, was conducted through two modes of test: written test and oral test. The test items and the administration of the two tests were made and conducted locally. Since the tests were made and administered locally it was believed to be less standardized. Additionally, Regular A students were studying their courses, including Writing courses, in the morning while Regular B students were studying their courses in the afternoon. The difference in schedule was also assumed to affect the result of their learning. Students in Regular A were, therefore, chosen as the subjects of the study.

These students were then randomly chosen and assigned into three different classes: group A1 (19 students), A2 (17 students), and A3 (18 students). The three groups were then randomly assigned to three different kinds of feedback: coded correction feedback (CCF) for A2, non-coded correction feedback (NCCF) for A3; and end sample comment (SEC) feedback for A1.

Before the treatment all the students were assigned to write an essay to be scored. Group A1 (SEC) was assigned to write the first expository essay about *The Importance of Education for*

*Indonesian Citizens* (Appendix 4a). Group A2 (CCF) was assigned to write about *The importance of English in Global Era* (Appendix 4b). Group A3 (NCCF) was assigned to write about *The Importance of Computer in Information Era* (Appendix 4c).

For the treatment, each of the students in their group was assigned to write an essay, each essay was then given correction feedbacks, the students were assigned to revise their essay based on the feedbacks, and resubmit their revised essay the following week to be scored by the researcher. This practice was repeated four times.

The students in group A1 (SEC) were assigned to write the second expository essay about *The de-limitation of high school graduates majoring in social sciences (IPS) in continuing their study to a medical school*. After they finished writing the second essay, SEC feedback was given to an individual student's writing. Based on the feedback given, one week later, the students had to revise their writing and resubmit the writing to the researcher. They were then assigned to write the third expository essay about *The Use of English as the Only Medium of Instruction in the Teaching and Learning English*. After the students finished writing the third essay, SEC feedback was given again to an individual student's writing. Based on the feedback given, one week later, the students had to revise their writing and submit it to the researcher. Again, they were assigned to write the fourth expository essay about *Simplifying the conditions of taking courses in the English Department of Lambung Mangkurat University*. SEC feedback was again given to an individual student's writing. Based on the feedback given, one week later, the students had to revise their writing and submit it to the researcher.

The students in group A2 (CCF) were given the same treatment with different correction feedback. They were assigned to write the second essay about *The de-limitation of high school graduates majoring in language in continuing their study to a medical school*. They had to revise their essay after being given CCF. For the third essay they had to write about *The Use of Indonesian as the Medium of Instruction in the Teaching and Learning English*. Again, they had to revise their essay after being given CCF. For the fourth essay, they were assigned to write about *Simplifying the Conditions of Becoming Students of English Department*. Again, they had to revise their essay after being given CCF.

The same treatment was given to the students in group A3 with NCC feedback. For the second expository essay, they were assigned to write about *The De-limitation of High School Graduates from Vocational High School (SMK) in Continuing their Study to a Medical School*. They had to revise their essay after being given NCC feedback. For the third expository essay they were assigned to write about *The balanced use of English and Indonesian as the Medium of Instruction in the Teaching and Learning English*. Again, they had to revise their essay after being given NCC feedback. Then, they were assigned to write the fourth expository essay about *Simplifying the conditions of becoming English Teachers*. Again they had to revise their essay after being given NCC feedback.

To assess the students' achievement in writing expository essays, each of the students was assigned to write the fifth essay. The students in group A1 were assigned to write the fifth expository essay about *The Punishment for People Smoking in Public Places*. The students in group A2 were assigned to write the fifth expository essay about *The Punishment for People Drinking Alcohol in Public Places*. The students in group A3 were assigned to write the fifth expository essay about *The Punishment for People Making Trouble in Public Places*.

The experimental treatment required each student to produce five different expository essays. For all the assignments, the direction, the type of essay to be written, the length of the essay, the time allotment, and the aspects of writing to be scored were made the same. The only

difference was the topics they had to write in each week for each group. The first three writing assignments were piloted to 26 students of English Department, Islamic State University (UIN) Malik Ibrahim Malang on May 3, 2011. The piloting students were asked to judge whether the topics the students should write were easy, quite easy, quite difficult, and difficult. Besides, they were also asked to give their comment(s) on the writing assignment topics. Most of the piloting students responded that the topics were quite easy.

Analytic scoring technique was used to score the essays, covering content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. The same rating was applied for each component, ranging from 5 for the highest to 1 for the lowest with different weighting; 5x for content, 5x for organization, 7x for language use, 2x for vocabulary, and 1x for mechanics.

Some training was conducted to get reliable scores between the raters. If the scores from the raters differ < 20 points (in the range of 10 - 100) it was tolerable. Nevertheless, if the difference was  $\geq 20$ , there should be re-assessment by the two raters. If the difference was still  $\geq 20$ , assessment by the third rater should be done. The final score agreed was the combination of the three scores given by the raters divided by three. To guide the researcher and the rater(s) to give score to students' writing, a scoring rubric was used. See Table 1

Table 1. *Scoring Rubric for Students' Writing*

No	Component	Range of scores	Weighting	Maximum Score
1	Content	1- 5	5	25
2	Organization	1- 5	5	25
3	Language use	1- 5	7	35
4	Vocabulary	1- 5	2	10
5	Mechanics	1 - 5	1	5
Total Score				$\sum X = 100$

Table 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 present descriptors used in the process of scoring the content.

Table 2. *Scoring Rubric for Content*

Score	Descriptors
1	the essay is not related to the topic chosen and was not developed either
2	the essay is closely related to the topic chosen but was poorly developed
3	the essay is closely related to the topic chosen and thoroughly developed
4	the essay is related to the topic chosen but was not thoroughly developed;
5	the essay is related to the topic chosen and was thoroughly developed;

Table 3. *Scoring Rubric for Organization*

Score	Descriptors
1	the essay has no paragraphing and is poorly organized
2	the essay has only an introductory paragraph and content paragraph but does not have a concluding paragraph where the shift from one paragraph to the other paragraph does not move smoothly

3	the essay has only an introductory paragraph and a content paragraph, but does not have a concluding paragraph though the shift from one paragraph to another paragraph moves smoothly
4	the essay consists of an introductory paragraph, content paragraph, but the shift from one paragraph to another paragraph does not move smoothly
5	the essay has an introductory paragraph, content paragraph and concluding paragraph, and the shift from one paragraph to an other paragraph moves smoothly

Table 4. *Scoring Rubric for Language Use*

Score	Descriptors
1	there is a fatal deviation in the essay in using tenses and in choosing part of speech and in the use of word order.
2	there is a slight deviation in the essay in using tenses and in choosing parts of speech, but no deviation in word order.
3	there is a slight deviation in the essay in using tenses and in choosing a word based on its part of speech, but no deviation in the use of word order
4	there is a slight deviation in the essay in using tenses, no deviation in choosing a word based on its parts of speech and no deviation in the use of word order
5	there is no deviation in the essay in using tenses, in choosing a word based on its parts of speech, and in the use of word order

Table 5. *Scoring Rubric for Choice of Words*

Score	Descriptors
1	inappropriate use of the word, repeated use of the same word, and no use of idiomatic expression is found in the essay
2	appropriate use of word choice, use the same word repeatedly and the use of one idiomatic expression is identified in the essay
3	appropriate use of word choice, various words used to refer to the same thing, and the use of one idiomatic expression is detected in the essay
4	appropriate use of word choice, various words used to refer to the same thing, and the use of two idiomatic expressions is encountered in the essay
5	appropriate use of word choice, various words used to refer the same thing, and the use of three to four idiomatic expressions is available in the essay

Table 6. *Scoring Rubric for Mechanics*

Score	Descriptors
1	more than seven errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the essay.
2	five to six errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization in the essay
3	three to four errors in spelling, punctuation or spelling in the essay

4	one or two errors in spelling, punctuation or capitalization in the essay
5	no error in spelling, punctuation or capitalization in the essay

The consideration to give different weight for each component is that each component has different degree of complexities. Content, for instance, was weighted 5x because it is very much influenced by the ability of the writer to organize the topic so that the unity of the content will exist. The ability to organize ideas so that the flow of ideas between sentences and between paragraphs runs smoothly plays important role. That is why the second component, i.e. organization, was also weighted 5x. The third ability is related to language use. Since this component is considered the most crucial one, as revealed by some studies presented previously, this component was weighted 7x. The fourth component which is also weighted is vocabulary. However, since the subjects of this study were in their latest semester, they were assumed to have adequate vocabulary during their study. That is why this component was just weighted 2x. Whereas, the fifth component, i.e. mechanics was only weighted 1x. The reason for giving that weight for this component is that the students were assumed to have been familiar with such things: punctuation, capitalization, and spelling not only in English classes but also in other courses other than English in their institution. In fact, they have already been introduced to the mechanics since they were in high schools.

### Research Findings

This result of the analysis using One-Way Anova shows that there is no significant difference between the three groups ( See Table 7). This means that each of the three treatments may be equally effective but no one of them is more effective than the other.

Table 7. *The Result of Analysis Using One-Way ANOVA*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	114.823	2	57.411	.762	.472
Within Groups	3842.644	51	75.346		
Total	3957.467	53			

### Discussion

The result of the research shows no significant difference in effectiveness between the three kinds of error correction feedback to the students' writing quality. It seems to agree with Truscott (1996) who claims that grammar correction has no place in writing and therefore should be abandoned. Truscott (2007) confirms his claims with empirical evidence from his research that within 95% level of confidence, correction has no better than a small beneficial effect on accuracy, that any beneficial effects are too small to even qualify as small effects. It also confirms Hendrickson (1981)'s study which revealed that there was no significant difference found between the effect of comprehensive correction and correction of global errors. The finding of this study also confirms Lalande (1982)'s study that intermediate German students at U.S. universities who received coded correction and used error logs to track their errors showed no significant difference in their achievement than those who received explicit correction without logs.

Some plausible explanations can be offered to understand this result. The first plausible explanation is that the learning time may not be sufficient to improve students' writing skill.

Lewis (2002) suggests that the feedback given provides useful information to students; it provides students with advice about learning, it provides students with language input, it is a form of motivation, and it can lead students towards autonomy. However, giving feedback in the form of error correction requires further relevant learning to take place before they can be self-corrected. Hyland and Hyland (2006) confirms that the role of feedback is widely seen as crucial for both encouraging and consolidating learning in education. The result of learning encouragement and consolidation, of course, cannot be observed directly in a short time. In this study, the subjects did not have enough time to understand the error correction feedback.

The second plausible explanation is that the students may not be well informed enough about some of the topics they were assigned to write and therefore may not be interested enough to write about the topic. Their writing about familiar topics, e.g. *The Importance of Computer in the Information Era*, and *The importance of English in Global Era* were better than their writing about *The De-limitation of High School Graduates from Vocational Senior High School* and *Simplifying the Conditions of Becoming English Teachers*. If they had been assigned to write about topics which were interesting enough for them to write, their writing could have been better.

### Conclusion

Based on the finding of this study and the discussion, several conclusions can be drawn. The first empirical conclusion is that Sample Error Correction (SEC) feedback, Coded Correction Feedback (CCF), and Non-Coded Correction Feedback (NCCF) are equally effective, or no one of the three is more effective than the others.

The reason why no one of the three techniques of error correction feedback is more effective than the others could be because the effects of error correction feedback can not be observed in a too short time, or it can be observed much later after the treatment is given. The writing encouragement and consolidation resulted from error correction feedback, for example, may not be observable right away.

### Recommendations

Based on the finding some suggestions are recommended. First, writing teachers can use any of the three techniques of error correction feedback for their writing classes interchangeably. Second, since the major weaknesses of the students in the study were language use and vocabulary, by the help of their lecturers and other learning aids, it is strongly recommended for the students to improve their knowledge and skill and these two components of writing.

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