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The GrandLit Prix Platform: A Constructive Tool to Support Literature Learning

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Abstract

The introduction of new literary texts in the second wave of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 has generated new frustrations among Malaysian secondary students as the selected texts originate from foreign countries. Students often have difficulty in comprehending literary texts that are not culturally and contextually related to the local scene and this leads to reduced motivation in learning literature, especially among low-performing ESL (English as a second language) students. Coupled with the fact that the integration of ICT in literature learning is currently considered pivotal to ensure quality learning among Gen Z students, as underlined in the national education blueprint, this study was aimed to investigate the impact of the GrandLit Prix platform in scaffolding students' literature learning as well as examining students' engagement in learning the Form 4 literary text "Leaving" by M.G. Vassanji during the implementation of GrandLit Prix. Three Form 4 Art-streamed students from SMK Pusa, in Betong, Sarawak, Malaysia were selected by purposive sampling as the research participants because they had low literature marks in the second school-based examination. The study administered a pre-test, post-test and interview, respectively, on the participants. Based on the reported findings, gamified literature learning left a positive impact on the students' understanding in learning literary text as they had recorded an improvement of 5% in their test scores. Additionally, the GrandLit Prix platform was found to intensify students' engagement level in learning literature because the students have understood of the story better and exhibited a positive behaviour in their literature learning.

Keyword: GrandLit Prix, gamified literature learning, ESL students

Introduction

The influx of Gen Z students in Malaysia has led to drastic changes with regards to the Malaysian education demographics, at which point the incorporation of information and information communication technology (ICT) and its tools are considered necessary to ensure retention and quality learning. In fact, Gen Z learners are "wired" in such a way that they respond differently to their surroundings with sophisticated and complex imageries, and this fortifies the need of audio-visual aids in their learning experiences (Rothman, 2015). As opposed to the millennials, the Gen Z learners are the generation in which smartphones take precedence. In other words, they are the first generation raised in the smartphone era, absorbing and losing interest in information almost simultaneously (Williams, 2015). Thriving on online video games and social media, Gen Z view many technologies as obsolete, even as young as they are, due to the ever-evolving nature of technology ("Generation Z: Born in the digital age", 2015). A research conducted in 2014 by Global Messaging, a mobile marketing company, showed Gen Z's dependency on smartphone technology and that 66% of respondents have listed gaming as their main hobby (Aron, 2014). According to Koulopoulos and Keldsen (2014), Gen Z learners are very much dependent on the way they game. Collaboration is necessary when dealing with massive online communities, and thus shaping the way they view education and learning.

In addition, Koulopoulos and Keldsen (2014) showed that great games have challenged and kept learners within a comfort zone, minus the frustration when they are faced with certain issues. It would appear that the incorporation of games into language learning would certainly share its fair advantages. Teachers can engage students more in learning activities while minimising their tendency to become frustrated with unfamiliar subject matter. Not only do Gen Z learners spend plenty of time on the Internet, but they are also reported to spend a significant sum of money on gaming and digital devices, and recorded an average of two-hour screen time daily (Morgan, 2014). Furthermore, Gen Z learners are described as multitaskers. They use several digital devices simultaneously, resulting in shorter attention spans (Bershidsky, 2014). This is very much a problem faced by educators nowadays. Students are easily distracted from their learning, some have only an eight-second attention span while others are diagnosed with attention deficiency syndrome due to severe digital immersion (Bershidsky, 2014). In other words, for teachers to engage and captivate students' interest towards language and literature learning, the incorporation of ICT and gaming tools is very much needed so as to promote meaningful and purposeful learning among our Gen Z learners.

In the 21st Century learning, interactive and fun learning is required to get learners attain certain behaviours. Gamification is the concept of incorporating game elements in non-gaming situations with the aim of creating useful and exciting activities (Cassells, Broin, & Power, 2015). Generally, its aim is to combine extrinsic and intrinsic motivations to empower learners with motivational skills. Therefore, gamification in learning can serve as an approach to change learners' attitudes and behaviours. According to Muntean (2011), gamification has proved to increase learners' engagement with the text because they feel more ownership and purpose. When a sense of ownership takes place, it will trigger more efficient learning behaviours. In terms of learning activities, the use of games enables active and participatory learning (Glover, 2013; Figueroa, 2015). This aspect is beneficial as it could help to facilitate learning retention (Lam, 2013). These findings suggest that there is a need for teachers to integrate gamification in language and literature learning because it can arouse students to learn.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the use of the GrandLit Prix platform in scaffolding students' literature learning experiences. It also further examines students' engagement in learning literature through the implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform. The two research questions featured in this study were: 1) How useful is the implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform in scaffolding low-performing students' literature learning? 2) Does the implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform engage low-performing students' interest in learning literature?

ICT and Literature Learning

In the twenty-first century teaching and learning environment, ICT is not unfamiliar. It is widely used in almost every subject and in courses taught in the primary, secondary or tertiary levels. In the field of language learning, particularly literature learning, the incorporation of ICT is proven to be beneficial to both teachers and students.

A study by Zainal (2012) on teachers' use of ICT in teaching English literature concluded that ICT aids comprehension and is a tool to promote learner's response to the literary text. The use of multimedia presentation and ICT tools has created effective learning environment during the literature lesson. Another study by Md Yunus and Suliman (2014) revealed that teachers have positive attitudes on the use of ICT tools in literature lessons. Though they seldom employ ICT in their teaching due to their minimal exposure to the Internet and Web 2.0, they believe that it could assist teaching and learning processes well.

Moreover, a result from a preliminary study on the use of mobile technologies for learning English language literature components in Malaysian schools by Rahamat, Shah, Din and Abd Aziz (2017) showed that students display readiness and have positive perceptions towards the use of mobile learning in literature learning. This finding signals that teachers can design a meaningful lesson and implement an interactive approach by using mobile learning in their literature class. The integration of ICT also affects students' motivation to learn. In a study conducted by Elbechir (2018), it was found that students are motivated to learn literature with the use of ICT. The use of visual aids, for instance, enables the students to closely engage themselves with the literary text and help to cultivate their higher-order thinking skills.

These studies implied that ICT can be a useful tool in scaffolding students to learn literature. Integrating ICT in learning literature is indeed aligned with the transformational key shifts, Shift 2 and Shift 7, introduced in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 which emphasis on the fundamental need to incorporate ICT and its tool in language learning (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). With this, Yeoh, Md Yunus and Aziz (2018) suggested that ICT facilities should be upgraded in Malaysian schools because teachers have expressed their optimism about the implementation of ICT in literature teaching and learning.

Literature Learning in the Malaysian Context

Literature in English was first introduced in Malaysian secondary schools as a compulsory component, aiming to broaden students' cultural and worldly perspectives (Abdul Jabar & Abdul Hadi, 2013). However, the selected texts failed to engage students' interest in literature learning as students were scared by the idea of learning literature as an appreciation towards literature and is important for students to grasp the underlying ideas (Isa & Mahmud, 2012). Md Yunus and Suliman (2014) further attested to the fact that studying a piece of literary text is difficult for most students as it encompasses the language as well as the contexts from which the text originated. Literature in English was then reintroduced by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education as a core component in the 2012 subject, prior to the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 launching. New literary text was then prescribed in 2010 to replace the former text that lasted for three years, from 2010 to 2013. However, the introduction of the National Education Blueprint in 2012 has led to a nationwide educational transformation and this includes literature in English too. With the launch of the National Education Blueprint, literature in English is now introduced under the English Literature Module. The module serves as a means to expose Malaysian students nationwide to the language by 15% to 20% (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). In fact, the plan is executed in the second wave of the blueprint and hence another new set of literature text are prescribed to all secondary students nationwide (Suliman & Md Yunus, 2014). The following table shows the selection of Form 4 and Form 5 literary text after the launch of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025.

Table 2. English literature component prescribed text from 2015 onwards

Form	Poem	Short Story	Novel	Drama
Form 4	1. *The Living Photograph* by Jackie Kay [USA] 2. *The Charge of the Light Brigade* by Lord Tennyson [UK]	1. *Leaving* by M.G. Vassanji [Tanzania] 2. *Tanjung Rhu* by Mingfong Ho [Singapore]	Nil	1. *The Right Thing To Do* by Martyn Ford [USA]
Form 5	1. *What Has Happened to Lulu?* by Charles Causley [UK]	Nil	1. *Sing to the Dawn* by Mingfong Ho [Thailand]	Nil

2. *A Poison Tree* by William Blake [UK]	2. *Captain Nobody* by Dean Pitchford [USA] 3. *Dear Mr. Kilmer* by Anne Schraff [USA]

From the table above, it clearly indicates that the current literary texts are from foreign countries. The literature element is to be taught in a single lesson of 40 minutes weekly, as a component of the English subject. Literature in English is categorised under the learning outcome, 'Language for Aesthetic Use', in the English curriculum specifications across all secondary levels.

The changes are brought about due to the difficulty faced by students in interpreting the former text. In fact, the President of National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP), Hashim Adnan, has claimed that it is more difficult to get students in English Literature as compared to to the Malay Literature ("Trained teachers for English Literature", 2012). If students find it difficult to comprehend and interpret Malay literary text, what more is there to say about the English ones, when English itself is treated as a foreign, rather than as a second language by most, especially those in rural regions. Isa and Mahmud (2012) also stated that literary text selected for Malaysian secondary students are not contextually and culturally bound and so increase the difficulty of understanding the text, let alone their appreciation. A mismatch between the selected literary text and students' actual language ability has resulted in a serious lack of motivation in learning literature by students (Ghazali, Setia, Muthusamy, & Jusoff 2009). This happens as most students have to spend a lot of time searching for, or guessing the meaning; thus, disrupting their progress due to regressive eye movement (Ghazali, Setia, Muthusamy, & Jusoff 2009).

The GrandLit Prix Platform

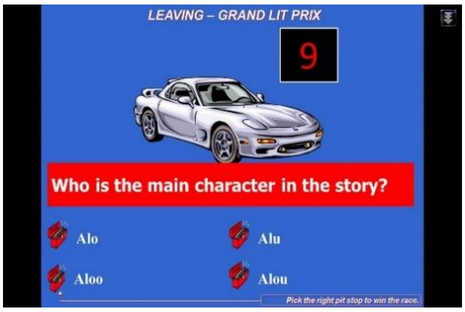
In recent years, there has been a substantial growth in the interest of using games for language learning. This phenomenon is concurrent with the drastic increase in multiplayer online gaming. It is indeed a reflection of the growing recognition among educators of the importance of extramural learning and finding ways to link learning to students' real lives. Due to the essential role which gaming plays, GrandLit Prix is created to help boost learners' understanding in literature, particularly of short stories. The game platform concept is adapted from Mark Damon's PowerPoint game from teacherworld.com/ppgames.

The platform is an offline digital game. It was developed by using Microsoft PowerPoint and created by consideration of the physical factors that affect real Formula One cars. In fact, it is integrated with Formula One car-like simulation so as to make literature learning more exciting through gamified learning experiences. There are three opponents in each race, and students will start the race by clicking a red key on the car steering. Each race consists of five pit stops and each pit stop contains one question. The pit stop can only be unlocked once the player answers the question correctly. However, the player is only given 10 seconds to answer each question before the timer goes off, signalling that the time is up. Unlocking the pit stop enables the player to race towards the next level. The settings of the platform, such as background sound, graphic pictures, colours and its link can be altered to suit the teacher's teaching and learning preferences. The text in every slide can be edited and teachers can set their own questions to be tested in the race. One of the key advantages of using a self-developed game is the ability to track data in order to ascertain how the game is played. This enables the teacher to correlate gaming with an individual learner's outcome and attitude.

In fact, the GrandLit Prix platform is created to add the "fun" element in learning literature. The instructions to play the game are as follows:

Choose three players or racers. If the teacher intends to ask the students to play the game in a larger group, divide them into three groups, each group consists of three to five students.

Ask the players or racers to draw lots to determine their circuits. The first game will start with the racer who chooses Circuit A. To add more fun, the teacher can name the circuit. The next racer will start the game after the first racer completes his race.



Each racer is given 10 seconds to answer each question.

This sign signifies that the racer has given the wrong answer. The racer will be asked to click on the red toolbox and return to answer the question again.

The succeeding racers can only start the race when the preceding player has completed.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978) and Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation (1943)

The implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform features the incorporation of the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygosky, 1978). Scaffolding and guidance are provided within the zone for learners to achieve elements within his range of competence. The Zone of Proximal Development signifies the actual developmental area in which learners will show their potential in achieving certain level of competence although they require appropriate assistance and adequate scaffolding before moving into the unknown (McLeod, 2010). When learners have mastered a certain level of competence, scaffolding is removed for students to venture into new elements. Indeed, it is pivotal for educators to be attuned to the learners' needs and preferences so as to identify whether or not the said learners are within the zone appropriate for scaffolding (Berger, 2009). Therefore, educators and teachers alike are gearing learners towards what they are able to master in the future from what they have previously achieved. Scaffolding is provided in the form of the GrandLit Prix platform in this study to enhance students' literature learning experiences in order to attain better understanding of the studied literary text. Another theory aligned with the implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform is the Human Motivation Theory of Abraham Maslow (1943). According to Maslow (2013), learners' physiological needs ought to be met before addressing higher personal goals. Therefore, teachers and school administrators alike should be mindful of understanding learners' needs in language learning before deciding on any subsequent action (Fiore, 2013).

For students to show their acceptance towards literature learning and subsequently exhibit positive learning attitudes, it is fundamental that students should feel confident and have a sense of achievement in their learning experiences. With the implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform, students' needs to be unique as an individual and confident in their learning take priority, as their teacher tackles their learning of seemingly unfamiliar literary text by relating that learning to the students' prior gaming experiences. By being able to construct meaningful literature learning, students are considered to attain improved self-esteem and movement towards self-actualisation.

Method of the Study

An action research was conducted to examine the usefulness of GrandLit Prix in scaffolding students' literature learning and students' engagement during the platform implementation. The Carr and Kemmis Action Research Model (1986) was referred to in implementing the GrandLit Prix platform during literature learning. The study was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 featured a teacher-controlled implementation of the GrandLit Prix. In Phase 2, the students took control of the platform incorporated during literature learning. Then, the research results were analysed. The study participants were three Form 4 art-streamed students from a rural school in Betong, Sarawak, Malaysia. The selection of these participants was based on purposive sampling. They were chosen due to their low literature marks in their English Paper 2 mid-year school-based examination. These students have low English language proficiency and this factor has led to their poor writing performance.

Data Collection Procedure

As aforementioned, the model employed in this study was adapted from Carr and Kemmis Action Research Model (1986). Figure 1 below shows the procedures involved in the GrandLit Platform implementation.

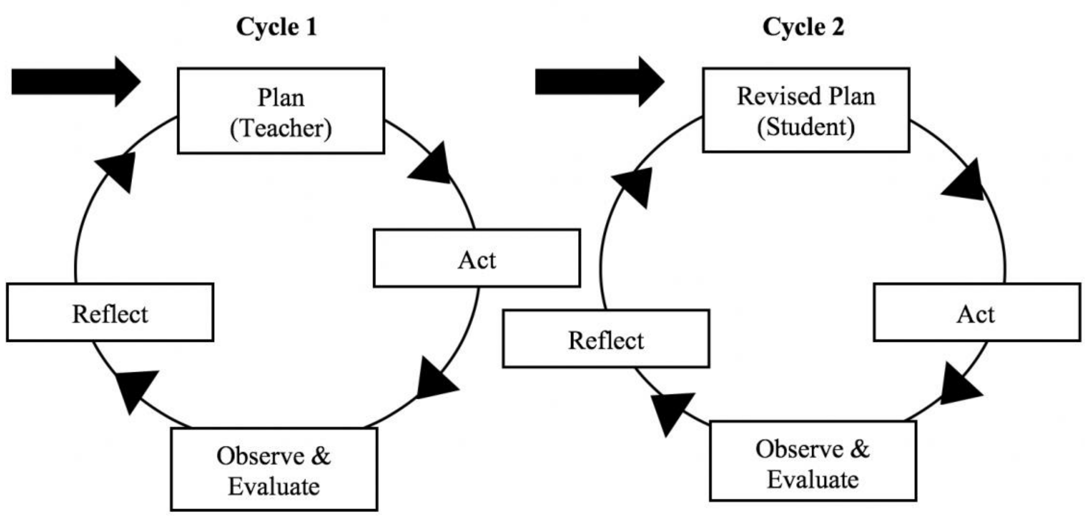


Figure 1. Adapted from Carr and Kemmis Action Research Model (1986)

In Cycle 1, the GrandLit Prix was implemented in teaching literature featuring the Form 4 literary short story, *Leaving* by M.S. Vassanji. However, the teacher was in charge of manipulating the platform and the students provided the relevant answers. In other words, the initial teaching and learning practice was very much a teacher-centred approach. Students were enthusiastic towards learning the aforementioned literary text. In contrast, the students were observed to be passive when they were required to provide answers, fearing that they might be reprimanded if the answers provided were inaccurate. Therefore, a revised plan was proposed, where students could manipulate the GrandLit Prix personally, via laptop or mobile. In other words, students could take autonomy with respect to literature learning. Interestingly, mobile phone, which is part of mobile learning, can be a tool to attract students' interest to learn English language (Kurniawan & Tanone, 2018).

The instruments used in this study were pre and post-tests as well as interview. The pre- and post-test scores were taken from the students' school-based examinations. Both pre- and post-tests feature questions from one of the literary short stories in Form 4, *Leaving* by M.S. Vassanji. The selection of the short story was based on the language panels' decision. The question for each test was evaluated on character and characteristic. This element drives the story as a whole. For that reason, students are expected to relate it with other elements of the short story like themes, moral values, setting, plot and characters and characteristics. The questions for both tests are as shown below:

Pre-test question	"Based on the short story you have studied, how did the main character show determination in the story?"
Post-test question	"The main character is a strong-willed person. How is this shown in the short story?"

On the other hand, the interview questions, validated by the Head of English Panels, included three themes: engaging students' interest; enhancing students' understanding and; scaffolding students' learning.

The implementation of the GrandLit Prix platform was conducted over eight sessions. Each session consisted of one run and the duration was approximately 15 minutes. Guidance was provided at the beginning of the session before the students took control of the remaining sessions. For each session, the students were tested on different elements of the short story, such as characters and characteristics, plot, themes, moral values as well as settings, before they sat the Form 4 Placement Test. The participants' scores were recorded for every session. The summary of the action plan is shown below:

Table 2. Action Plan

Phase	Details
1	- Identify participants - Meet the participants - Conduct briefing session
2	- Monitoring and guiding session - First round of GrandLit Prix session
3	- Second round of GrandLit Prix session
4	- Third round of GrandLit Prix session
5	- Fourth round of GrandLit Prix session
6	- Fifth round of GrandLit Prix session
7	- Form 4 Placement Test
8	- Data collection

Results

Participants' Scores for Each GrandLit Prix Session

Table 3. Participants' scores for each GrandLit Prix session

	GrandLit Prix Session				
	First (6m)	**Second (6m)**	**Third (6m)**	**Fourth (6m)**	**Fifth (6m)**
Ed	3	3	4	4	5
Mad	2	3	4	4	4
Maz	3	4	5	5	5

Based on scores, it can be concluded that students could comprehend the short story as there was an improvement in their scores. The first session tested students on the plot of the short story. Difficulty in sequencing the events led to their low score in that session. However, students' scores were slightly improved after that due to their familiarity with the game. Other than that, the fun elements like the insertion of timer and audio in the platform had engaged them well with the task.

Participants' Pre-test and Post-test Results

Table 4. Participants' pre-test and post-test results

No	**Students**	**Result**	
		Pre-Test (15%) (Mid-Year School Exam)	**Post-Test (15%) (Form 4 Placement Test)**
1	Ed	3	7
2	Mad	4	7
3	Maz	5	8

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the students showed improvement in the literature section. Both tests evaluated the elements of character and characteristics. In the pre-test, Ed and Mad scored below 5%. Their responses to the task were of little relevance. Though students managed to identify the main character in the short story, they misspelled the name ("Alo" instead of "Aloo") and there were a lot of sentence repetitions in their tasks. Moreover, the elaboration on the characteristics of the main character was blurry and the contents were poorly organised. As for Maz, his response to the pre-test task was intermittently relevant. The elaboration was not clear but he managed to give onetextual evidence from the short story to support his response to the task.

Conversely, the students scored above 5% in the post-test and this indicated that the students managed to write relevant responses to the specified task. Students could identify two textual evidences correctly and were able to state and relate the physical and social settings of the short story with the task. Apart from that, students gave their personal responses by using simple sentences in their analysis, though their essay structure is fairly organised. Although the results were not significantly high or excellent, it showed the students' acceptance of gamification in literature learning. The positive results also indicated GrandLit Prix as a constructive tool in scaffolding students' literature learning.

Students' Engagement in Literature Learning

Analysis of the interviews with students shared that the implementation of the GandLit Prix in the literature lesson has undoubtedly helped to captivate students' interest in literature learning. This finding was supported by the responses given by the students as follows:

"*The race make me like short story very much".* [Ez]

"*I hope teacher can do this (game) in English class everyday".* [Mad]

"*I read Leaving because I want to play game".* [Maz]

Based on these responses, it can be said that GrandLit Prix can be a great mechanism to arouse students' interest in reading the short story. Students could alleviate the difficulty in coping with the contents of the short story when learning was converted into an enjoyable game. This finding supports Muntean's (2011) view on the importance of gamification in learning.

In response to the question whether the game has helped to enhance their understanding on the elements of the short story, the students responded:

"I easy remember characteristics, place and so on". [Ez]

"I think quick because the game have timing and I remember important points". [Mad]

"I remember spelling, name, place they stay and others". [Maz]

It is also apparent that the GrandLit Prix helped to enhance students' understanding on the setting, characters and characteristics of the short story. This aspect supports Lam's (2013) view on gamification in learning as it aids the information retention. Furthermore, the fun and interactive elements in the game helped to facilitate the students recall the important elements in the short story like themes and plot. This finding coincided with the study done by

Koulopoulos and Keldsen (2014) in that the way learners game has influenced the way they learn.

In addition, the use of GrandLit Prix also helped to scaffold students' learning and it served as a springboard in students' literature writing. This was supported by their responses to interview when they were asked on how the game has helped them in learning the short story. Students' responses are stated below:

"Game help me write more point". [Ez]

"I have information about short story from GrandLit Prix". [Mad]

"I learn a lot and understand short story better. Now I can get more points write in essay". [Maz]

Therefore, these responses tallied with the studies by Lam (2013), Glover (2013) and Figueroa (2015) on the role of gamification in facilitating students' learning. This was proven by their efforts to write more content points in the pre-test. Therefore, it was a clear indication that the students understood the short story.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that gamification in literature learning was proven to be useful. The elements of gamification in GrandLit Prix, which included the elements of visual aids, undeniably benefitted the students. The students showed improvement in their marks for the literature section, which was above 5% as comparison to their pre-test marks. John and Md Yunus (2018) agreed that the use of ICT, particularly visual aids, really helps to enhance students' understanding as well as their interest in literature learning.

The findings also showed that the use of GrandLit Prix benefitted students in various ways. First, it created fun and interactive learning; hence, helped the students to learn the short story well. Second, it involved friendly competition and this has actually kept the students interested. These captivated students' interest to closely engage with the text and encouraged them to explore their own learning. As a matter of fact, the students' responses highlighted the instruction of the game that required the students to compete among themselves. Designing a fun literature learning game could reinforce students' motivation to learn. When students were motivated, they had better engagement with the task. Therefore, they managed to comprehend the literature text better. This was parallel to the findings from Cassells, Broin and Power (2015) who stated that exciting activities could arouse students' motivation to learn and enhance their ability to cope with the tasks. The findings in this study also supported the work conducted by Lam (2013), explaining how gamification can facilitate learning. In short, these findings seemed to be parallel with the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025's aspiration.

Implications

The implications of the study included the need for teachers to implement a more learner-centred approach in their literature classes. Traditional teaching methods such as "chalk and talk" no longer conform to the needs of today's students, especially the ESL students. Glover (2013) also believed that gamification benefits students in motivational and psychological aspects. Learning via GrandLit Prix, for instance, encourages students to interact and collaborate with their friends since the game requires the students to compete among themselves. This can be an excellent medium for cultivating positive social relations. Since the platform does not need an Internet connection, it can be used to develop effective teaching materials that can be used repeatedly. Due to its user-friendly features, it can be edited and also used for other subjects. Other than that, the integration of ICT elements in the game can promote independent learning. Since students these days are IT literate, they only need to be taught on how to play the game and explore at their own learning pace. Teachers on the other hand, only play the role of facilitators. Changing the teaching method once in a while allows teachers to have more time to explore new teaching materials.

For future research, both qualitative and quantitative data collection methodology can be employed by having larger samples of respondents, which could include lower form students of learning literature. This should provide a wider range of students, including those from urban, suburban and rural areas. Therefore, the findings may not be limited to only one school but also to students from different geographical areas. Increased sampling across numbers and years alongside a mixed methodology approach should result in more comprehensive and balanced findings to the benefit of learners, educators and policy makers.

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English Language Attitude among Filipino Prospective Language Teachers: An Analysis through the Mentalist Theoretical Lens

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1. Introduction

Language attitude (henceforth known as LA), as a topic, is considered to be fluid because it remains to be relevant despite having been an old subject (Lai, 2005). This is essentially true especially in the case of the Philippines, which as a country, has recently shifted from utilizing

English as a medium of instruction (MoI) to using local languages – in the early years of education specifically from kindergarten to grade 3 (Alieto, 2018).

Investigating attitude towards a language or its variety is considered as an essential aspect to explore relating to language policy and planning (Baker, 1992). In a similar vein, Ingram (1989) maintained that policy development and planning that relates to language-in-education can never be divorced from construct of LA. It means therefore that a sound language-in-education policy must account research work that probes into determining and understanding stakeholders' language attitude. Hence, it is no wonder that research focused on determining attitude towards a language or languages have been realized across different respondents, contexts and times.

Ejieh (2004) explored the LA of one hundred six (106) pre-service teachers from a college of education in a Yoruba-speaking area in Nigeria towards mother tongue use as language of instruction in primary school. The investigation determined that an overwhelming number of respondents (84.21%) are unwilling to teach in the mother tongue. The negative stance towards the use of mother tongue were reported by the respondents to be due to several reasons. The topmost reason is that the respondents believe that mother tongue education negatively affects the learning of chidren of the English language.

Similarly, the study of Khejeri (2014) which enlisted forty (40) primary school teachers in Hamis District, Western Kenya found that the English language is valued more than the mother tongue. In addition, further analysis of the data revealed that only 2% of the total respondents wanted the use of mother tongue by their learners inside the classroom. This is a very clear indication that the mother tongue is devalued as compared to English, and that there is strong preference for the use of English. Moreover, the respondents even claimed that there are more disadvantages than advantages in using the mother tongue in education.

With the established trend that English is the preferred language to learn because it is perceived to be most beneficial to learn as it is seen to be the only merchandisable language (Tupas, 2015), it becomes essential to explore the attitude of pre-service teachers specifically the would-be language educators towards English in the context of its use in the classroom as MoI.

Against this set background, the current study is conducted with multiple purposes. Primarily, it intended to determine the language attitude of pre-service language teachers. It is noted along this line that the determination of the language attitude of the respondents is realized through the utilization of the Mentalist Theory on language attitude. This is essentially important as most of investigations on LA view the construct through other theories such as that of the Behaviorist. However, it is contended that the viewing and understanding LA through the theoretical lens of the Mentalist provides a clearer view of the variable. Elaboration of this contention is provided in the succeeding discussion.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Language Attitude

From various angles, the concept 'attitude' has been differently defined. The differences of take about attitude have stirred "semantic disagreement" (McKenzie, 2010, p.19). On one hand, attitude is defined by Bohner and Wanke (2002) as an evaluation made towards either an object or idea which is referred to as the attitudinal object. On the other hand, Eagly and Chaiken (1993) explained that attitude is a hypothetical construct, which is to mean that attitude is an appraisement of an object, individual, abstract ideas, events and others. Moreover, attitude cannot be directly known or determined except through inference of observable responses. Added to this, attitude can simply be identified as either positive or negative (Gonza´lez-Rian˜o, 2002).

Further, another great concern that arises in the study of attitude in the field of social psychology is the overlapping of meaning of attitude with other related terms such as belief, opinion, ideology and others. The tendency to have the meaning of the terms blurred is rooted to their everyday usage outside the bounds of social psychology (McKenzie, 2010). However, it is possible to provide delineation between and among the given seemingly overlapping terms (Shaw & Wright, 1967) by simply being precise with the meaning of the terminologies (McKenzie, 2010).

Belief is cognitive in state, and is identified as one component of attitude according to the mentalists' perspective. In addition, as belief can trigger affective reaction and so can affective reaction be triggered by beliefs. Beliefs can either be descriptive or prescriptive. If it is descriptive, it is the kind of belief that relates to the perception about the world; example is the belief that success in educating people is to an extent dependent on the language to be used as instruction. Conversely, the prescriptive belief refers to those that contain imperative remarks like ought and should, example is the belief that young children should be taught in their own language for them to learn well (McKenzie, 2010).

In addition, opinion can be defined as a belief that is expressed or verbalised; hence, opinions can be considered as unconcealed beliefs. The characteristic being overt of opinions is one great distinction they have over beliefs. In addition, belief is different from attitude in the sense that contains beliefs or cognitions have no affective reaction unlike attitude which has (Baker, 1992).

Likewise, ideology is viewed in the field of social psychology as '*global attitude'*, (McKenzie, 2010, p. 20) which means that the term often refers to a broader social perspective unlike attitude which is narrower in scope and relates to specific objects (Baker, 1992).

2.2 Language Attitude according to the Mentalist

Two theories have been utilized by researches as frameworks for the study of language attitudes, the Behaviorist and the Mentalist (McKenzie, 2010). Both theories assert that attitude is a result of socialization done over time. However, studies anchored on the perspectives of behaviourism argues that all human actions are behavioral units and can be determined through the responses an individual makes to social situations. This main argument of the Behaviorist with respect to attitude is that it is a behavioral unit that can be inferred directly from the exhibited responses an individual makes in a particular social context. This means that mere observation of an individual's external behavior would be sufficient to determine attitude, and that introspection of respondents is not a necessity.

Furthermore, it means that external behavior is enough as predictor of attitude. As illustrated, if a person expresses dislike about a person, object or thing such behavior can be taken as negative attitude toward the attitudinal object. In this instance, attitude is seen to directly influence behavior and that behavior reflects attitude (Perloff, 2003). On the contrary, Baker (1992) claims that overt conduct cannot be relied upon as valid predictor of behavior as it may be deliberately or undeliberately done to conceal inner attitudes. In fact, McKenzie (2010) argued that an increasing number of evidence support that attitude exists in the mind of a person and is difficult or nigh impossible to be identified or determined directly.

Thereupon, this study espouses the Mentalist Theory. The theory views attitude as an internal state of readiness which cannot be directly observed but is possible to be gauged through introspection which is the basis for the reliance of researchers on respondents' report of their perception (McKenzie, 2010). The theory discusses a tripartite model of attitude formation – the cognitive, affective, and conative components. The theory assumes that attitude involves a cognitive component, an emotional response, and a behavioral predisposition.

Firstly, the affective component of attitude, as the theory relates, accounts for the emotional response toward the attitudinal object, in the case of the study is toward English, which can either be verbal or non-verbal in nature. Verbal affective responses are expressions of emotions raging from appreciation, disgust to anger. Being expressions of emotion towards the attitudinal object, verbal responses are easier to determine compared to non-verbal responses. This type of responses includes easily detected bodily reactions such as but not limited to a frown, smirk, and a smile. There are also bodily changes that are not easy to identify and an example is dilation of the pupil, change in heart rate among others which posts difficulty in determining as to whether the response is an indicator of a favourable or unfavourable attitude (McKenzie, 2010). Moreover, attitude has strong affective component (McKenzie, 2010; Perloff, 2003). For this study, appreciating literary works written in English, and sentimentally associating one's membership to the ethnic group and the language are examples of emotional response towards the language investigated in this study.

Secondly, the conative component of attitude refers to the manner an individual behaves in a particular way. The intended behavior is perceived to be a determinant of attitude. It is posited that a rational individual computes both the cost and benefit of a particular action. As way of illustration, a language teacher's passionate way of teaching a language is a result of the perceived value afforded to the language. The advantages of learning the language influence the teacher's actual behavior.

Lastly, the cognitive component accounts the held belief of an individual towards a language. The perceived value, importance and need of a language and learning the same relates to the last component of the tripartite model. The theory claims that belief or cognition toward a particular language forms part of the construct attitude. The main advantage of the mentalist theory of attitude is that "*it recognises the complexity of human beings and attempts to explain why an individual may hold ambivalent attitudes*" (McKenzie, 2010, p.24).

3. Research Questions

The present investigation directed towards pre-service teachers who are prospective language teachers purposed to answer the following research problems:

1. What is the overall attitude of the respondents towards English?
2. What is the language attitude of the respondents according to the aspects as determined by the Mentalist theory?
3. Is there a significant relationship among the aspects of language attitude of the respondents?

Hypothesis of the study

H_o: There is no significant relationship among the aspects of attitude towards English of the respondents.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The present research work utilized a quantitative-descriptive-correlation design. Moreover, the study is cross-sectional and non-experimental. Johnson (2000 cited in Perez & Alieto, 2018) claimed that if an investigation intends to describe a phenomenon, such as in this study which aimed to characterize the LA of the respondents towards the English language, is classified as descriptive. Moreover, Calderon (2006 cited in Rillo & Alieto, 2018) explained that a descriptive study involves the gathering, computing and tabulating data relevant to prevailing condition or trend. In addition, as the study involved no utilization of treatment nor of intervention (Torres, & Alieto, 2019), the current research is deemed to be non-experimental. Furthermore, the study is noted as cross-sectional because the gathering of data was completed within a relatively short period of time (Setia, 2016 in Buslon & Alieto, 2019).

4.2 Participants

The present investigation enlisted a total of one thousand fifty four (1054) elementary education students in their penultimate year with age ranging from 18 to 39. Additionally, the average age is 20.21 with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.124. Descriptive analysis of the respondents' age revealed that those who reported to be aged 20 forms the largest number of respondents with 32.73%. On the other hand, respondents who reported to be 19 years old form the second largest group with 29.14%. However, the least numbered are those aged 30 and above. Furthermore, with regard to respondents' gender, 76% or 802 are females.

Addedly, inclusion and exclusion criteria were set to determine whether a candidate qualifies as a respondent of the study in the final administration of the research tool. On one hand, for a candidate to be considered he/she must (1) at least had one month of practice teaching experience by the time this study was conducted, (2) must had been assigned to teach either in Kinder, Grade one to Grade three, (3) had had at least one month experience of teaching in English, and (4) must have had at least one month of teaching experience using mother tongue as MoI. On the other hand, the following would cause the candidate to be excluded from participating in the study: (1) if the respondent is graduating but had taken his/her practice teaching in the previous year by the time this study was realized, and (2) if the candidate has had less than 20 contact times, by the time the study was conducted.

4.3 The Setting

This study aimed at determining the language attitude of the pre-service teachers towards English in the context of its use in the classroom as MoI was conducted in five (5) locales. All of the institutions are state-run and offer the bachelor of elementary education or the BEEd program. The distribution of respondents across the research sites is as follows: Research Site 1 (33.776%), Research Site 2 (31.783%), Research Site 3 (19.165%), Research Site 4 (9.867%), and Research Site 5 (5.408%).

4.4. The Research Tool

An attitude scale is a questionnaire structured and fashioned to an overall attitude result (McKenzie, 2010). This means that the sum of the responses of respondents to the different items represents one overall attitude. Moreover, a self-devised Attitude towards English Questionnaire (AEng) was done through extensive literature review and adaptions from instruments used in the studies of Ejieh (2004), Ndhlovu (2010), Eshghinejad (2016), Sicam and Lucas (2016) and discussion of Khejeri (2014).

Preliminarily, as informed through literature, the main components of language attitude were determined. Item development under each aspect, the conative, cognitive and affective, was done through the authors' review of studies on the topic. The statements were taken from various authors with modification not limited to alteration of terms and appropriation of context to fit the context in which the study is realized. Different activities were taken which resulted to addition, deletion and refinement of items. In total, the questionnaire includes 36 items using a continuous scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Twelve (12) items for each aspect of language attitude.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 are provided for cross-referencing of the items of the questionnaire with the dimensions of language attitude. Moreover, the tables also include remark stating from whose study the statements took inspiration.

Table 1

Statements under the cognitive dimension

Items	Remark	Items on survey
It is possible to teach all primary school subjects in English	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	1
Teaching in English makes it easier for learners to grasp the ideas taught in class	Adapted from Khejeri (2014)	4
It is possible to teach my own subjects completely in English	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	7

Teaching in English will enable teachers to express themselves clearly in class.	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	10
Teaching in English enables pupils to understand easily.	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	13
Teaching in English will make lessons interesting to pupils.	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	16
Education in English will enable parents to participate in the education of their children.	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	19
All technical terms and expressions in my subject area(s) can be easily translated into English	Adapted from Ejieh (2004)	22
Being good at English helps students study in other subjects	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	25
Giving command in English is more effective than in any other languages	Adapted from Sicam and Lucas (2016)	28
Using English in class enables students to express themselves confidently	Adapted from Khejeri (2014)	31
English is an expressive and descriptive language	Adapted from Sicam and Lucas (2016)	34

As presented in Table 1, it can be gleaned that seven (7) or 58% of the total items for this dimension are inspired from that of Ejieh (2004), two (2) or 17% from Khejeri (2014), one (1) or 8% from Eshghinejad (2016), and two (2) or 17% from Sicam and Lucas (2016). These items are distributed throughout the questionnaire every even number.

Table 2 presents the statements of the AEng forming part of the affective dimension. These statements involve the emotional response of an individual towards the attitudinal object. Four studies (Ndhlovu, 2010; Eshghinejad, 2016; Khejeri, 2014; Sicam & Lucas 2016) mainly serve as guides in the formulation of statements constituting the affective dimension of the questionnaire.

Table 2

Statements under the affective dimension

Items	Remark	Items on survey
I like to get news in English	Adapted from Ndhlovu (2010)	2
I appreciate listening to songs in English	Adapted from Ndhlovu (2010)	5
I like it when people talk to me in English	Original Formulation	8
I have great interest in learning to speak fluently in English	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	11
I feel proud when I study or learn about English	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	14
I love studying in English than other languages	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	17
Studying English is enjoyable	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	20
I look forward to the time I teach in English in class	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	23
I feel more confident whenever I speak in English	Original Formulation	26
I appreciate people greeting me in English	Adapted from Sicam and Lucas (2016)	29
I want my learners to learn English fluently	Adapted from Khejeri (2014)	32
I feel satisfied when my students learn when I teach in English	Original Formulation	35

From Table 2, it can be noted that five (5) or 42% are informed by the study of Eshghinejad (2016), two (2) or 17% by Ndhlovu (2010), and by Khejeri (2014) and Sicam and Lucas (2016) both 0.8%, and 3 or 25% were originally developed . Seventy-five percent (75%) of the total number of items in the affective dimension took inspiration from existing studies on language attitude. On the other hand, 25% of the statements were originally constructed.

Table 3 shows the items classified under the conative or behavioral dimension of the AEng. The studies of Ndhlovu (2010), Eshghinejad (2016), and Sicam and Lucas (2016) served as guides for the development and construction of items under this aspect. The statements under this aspect of language attitude are the predisposition of an individual to act or behave in a certain way or manner.

Table 3

Statements under the conative dimension

Items	Remark	Items on survey
If given a choice, I prefer to teach in English	Original Formulation	3
I speak in English to friends	Adapted from Ndhlovu (2010)	6
I will study more about English to be able to speak fluently	Original Formulation	9
Whenever making personal notes, I write in English	Original Formulation	12
When a person speaks to me in English, I respond in English	Adapted from Eshghinejad (2016)	15
I communicate in English whenever I send messages thru email and text messages	Original Formulation	18
I think in English	Original Formulation	21
When I console a friend, I prefer to use English	Adapted from Sicam and Lucas (2016)	24
I give commands and requests in English	adapted from Sicam and Lucas (2016)	27
I prefer to write to friends and family in English	Original Formulation	30
I greet people in English	Adapted from Sicam and Lucas (2016)	33

I choose to speak to family members and relatives in English	Adapted from Ndhlovu (2010)	36

As seen in table 3, a majority of the items in this aspect is self developed which accounts for 50% of the total 12 items. Three (3) items were modified from the study of Sicam and Lucas (2016) accounting for 25%. Two (2) items were from Ndhlovu (2010) accounting for 17 %, and the last item is from Eshghinejad (2016).

The total composition of the AEng is as follows: 9 were originally formulated, 7 from both from Ejieh (2004) and Eshghinejad (2016), 6 Sicam and Lucas (2016), 4 from Ndhlovu (2010), and 3 Khejeri (2014). The thirty six (36) items were placed together without marking of aspects. Further, the items were randomly ordered in the questionnaire to minimize response set bias (Heppner & Heppner, 2004).

4.5 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The instrument was finalized for pilot testing. Four (4) major content sections are found in the questionnaire: the cover letter, the demographic profile, the items and the closing instruction. The cover letter includes basic information about the researcher and assurance that the information disclosed for this study shall be handled with great confidentiality. In addition, the instrument was administered for pilot testing to one hundred (100) students who met the inclusion criteria set for this study. Participants for the pilot testing were students from the external campus who shall not form part of the sample in the final administration of the questionnaire for data gathering. The *Cronbach's alpha* of 0.947 was the yielded reliability for the 36 items. George and Maller (2003) stated that as a rule of thumb if the value of Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.9 it is considered as '*excellent*', if the value of the Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.8 it is considered '*good*', if it is greater than 0.7 it is regarded as '*acceptable*', if greater than 0.6 it is remarked as '*questionable*', if greater than 0.5 it is noted as '*poor*', and if less than 0.5 it is claimed to be '*unacceptable*' (p.231). Therefore, the AEng then is noted to be of '*excellent*' reliability. Therefore, all of the 32 items were to be included in the final drafting of the instrument.

4.6 Procedure.

Shortlisting of the schools to be used as sampling sites was first done through inquiry about the number of students that may qualify as respondents of the study. Afterwards, letters were sent to deans and department chairs people seeking permission of the conduct of the study in their respective schools. Upon approval of the request, a schedule was set to meet with focal person assigned in each of the site. Series of meet ups were realized to discuss concerns and matters. When all concerns were address, a schedule was determined for the administration of the research instruments to the identified respondents in each of the school. Data collection in the five different sites was set in different schedules as determined by the focal person assigned to facilitate the investigation. The administration of the tool lasted, on the average, around 45 minutes.

4.7 Method of Analysis

For the possible investigation of the questions raised in this study, the numerical data were coded, entered and checked for error.

Analyses were conducted using the SPSS. Strict statistical procedures were observed to lessen bias and be as objective as possible.

The raw data generated from the questionnaire was tabulated. Table 4 gives interpretation for the computed arithmetic mean.

Table 4

Language Attitude Scale

Range	Description	Interpretation
5.15 – 6.0	Strongly Agree	Very Positive
4.32 – 5.14	Agree	Positive
3.49 – 4.31	Agree Slightly	Slightly Positive
2.66 – 3.48	Disagree Slightly	Slightly Negative
1.83 – 2.65	Disagree	Negative
1.0 – 1.82	Strongly Disagree	Very Negative

To determine the overall LA and the dimensions of LA of the respondents, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used.

To determine the significant relationships among the dimensions of language attitude of the respondents towards English, Pearson *r* or Pearson Product Moment Coefficient was used.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Respondents' Overall Attitude towards English

To determine the overall language attitude of the respondents, the arithmetic means for the aspects of attitude for the three languages were first computed. Afterwards, the overall means for the attitudes towards English was also determined. Table 5 presents the mean value and interpretations. Moreover, the standard deviation (SD) is provided to characterize how dispersed the scores are.

Table 5

Overall Attitude towards English

Variables	Overall Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Attitude towards English	4.504	0.633	Positive

Note : 6.0-5.15 – Strongly Agree (Very Positive), 5.14 – 4.32 Agree (Positive), 4.31 – 3.49 Agree Slightly (Slightly Positive), 3.48-2.66 Disagree Slightly (Slightly Negative), 2.65-1.83 Disagree (Negative), 1.82-1.0 Strongly Disagree (Very Negative)

Table 5 provides the descriptive analysis of the data. It revealed that the mean value of 4.504 with a standard deviation of 0.633 is interpreted as 'positive'. This means that the respondents favour the use of English language in different social dimensions – school, home and community. Moreover, this positive attitude of the respondents towards English is likely held by most of the respondents as suggested by the low standard deviation. This result confirms the claim of Tupas (2015) that there exists a prevalence of attitude that favours English.

Further analysis of the data revealed the top most rated items on the AEng questionnaire – presented in Table 5.1

Table 5.1

Top Most rated items on the AEng questionnaire

	Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
9	I will study more about English to be able to speak fluently	5.20	0.848	Very Positive
5	I appreciate listening to songs in English	5.13	0.919	Positive

11	I have great interest in learning to speak fluently in English	5.12	0.923	Positive
32	I want my learners to learn English fluently	5.09	0.869	Positive
36	I choose to speak to family members and relatives in English	5.04	0.939	Positive
14	I feel proud when I study or learn about English	5.02	0.869	Positive

Note : 6.0-5.15 – Strongly Agree (Very Positive), 5.14 – 4.32 Agree (Positive), 4.31 – 3.49 Agree Slightly (Slightly Positive), 3.48-2.66 Disagree Slightly (Slightly Negative), 2.65-1.83 Disagree (Negative), 1.82-1.0 Strongly Disagree (Very Negative)

Table 5.1 reveals the top most rated items on the AEng questionnaire by the respondents. From a total of thirty six (36) items, six (6) items garnered a mean score of five flat above. Addedly, from the 6 items, only one item is rated 'very positive'. Further analysis of the data shows that the top statements come from two dimensions only – the affective (items 14, 32, and 5) and conative (items 11, 9, and 36). Interesting to note is the fact that none from the most rated statements come from the cognitive dimension of language attitude. It is speculated that the preference for the English language is mainly drawn on conative and affective dimensions rather than the cognitive aspect. This further means that English is appreciated by the respondents as evidenced by their desire that their pupils to learn the said language, the sense of pride felt whenever they learn English, and liking of listening to music in English.

In addition, behaviour of the respondents is geared towards learning and gaining greater competencies in the language in question. It can noted that the items 11 '*I have great interest in learning to speak fluently in English*' and 36 '*I choose to speak to family members and relatives in English*' are both related to item 9 '*I will study more about English to be able to speak fluently*'. It is contended that the reason for this is that English is seen as a language of economic importance (Burton, 2013).

3.2 Dimensions of the LA of the respondents

Table 6

Dimensions of the Respondents' Attitude towards English

Variables	Cognitive		Affectiive		Conative	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Attitude towards English	**4.100**	0.662	**4.692**	0.614	**4.411**	0.646

Note : 6.0-5.15 – Strongly Agree (Very Positive), 5.14 – 4.32 Agree (Positive), 4.31 – 3.49 Agree Slightly (Slightly Positive), 3.48-2.66 Disagree Slightly (Slightly Negative), 2.65-1.83 Disagree (Negative), 1.82-1.0 Strongly Disagree (Very Negative)

Table 6 presents the dimensions of the LA of the respondents. The descriptive statistics reveal that aspect with the highest mean score is the affective dimension followed by the conative dimension and coming in last is the cognitive dimension. Similar to what was previously explained; the English language is indeed preferred and positively accepted because it is a language emotionally favoured by the respondents.

This result is intriguing as most of studies on attitude towards English exposed that the same language is preferred because learning English is beneficial (Tupas, 2015). It means that learning it provides the greatest return of investment as it is the language sought in jobs, needed in career advancement, and valued in both worlds of education and work. This reason relates to the valuation of the language according to benefits it could provide, and is under the cognitive dimension of the construct of attitude.

However, although the study provides a seemingly contrary report as compared to those made by researchers mentioned, it is argued that the result remains to be supportive of previous claims of authors. It is because the 'liking' of the English language is influenced by cognitive evaluation of the nature and importance of the language. Therefore, English is not liked and preferred by the respondents simply because it is 'plainly appreciated'; instead, the appreciation afforded results from the benefits and importance of it.

3.3. Correlation among dimensions of attitude towards English

To draw a possible significant relationship among the aspects of LA towards English, the data collected, coded and analyzed was first subjected to normality test. After finding out that the scores are normally distributed, the same data was subjected to statistical treatment to test relationship for parametric data – the Pearson r. Table 7 provides the analysis and interpretation.

Table 7

Correlation Matrix among the dimensions of language attitude

Variables	p-value	r-value	Interpretation
Conative and Affective	0.000*	0.858	Significant/ High Correlation
Conative and Cognitive	0.000*	0.807	Significant / High Correlation

Cognitive and Affective	0.000*	0.789	Significant / High Correlation

**Significant at alpha = 0.01*

Table 7 provides the significant relationship among the aspects of attitude towards English of the pre-service teachers. For the conative and affective dimensions of the attitude of the respondents' towards English, the analysis of the data revealed that there exists a significant relationship as the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.001. Moreover, the relationship is characterized as 'high correlation' as determined through the r-value (0.085). This means that the respondents who rated high in the conative aspect of attitude towards English are the very same respondents who have rated high in the affective aspect of attitude. Conversely, those respondents who rated low in the conative aspect of attitude towards English are the very same respondents who rated also low the affective dimension of attitude towards English. This means that the conative aspect impacts the affective aspect of the attitude of the respondents towards English. Moreover, it also implies that those who are possessing positive feeling towards English are the same people who are likely to appreciate speaking the language and listening to it.

For the case of the conative and cognitive dimensions of attitude towards English of the respondents, the data showed that the p-value of 0.000 which less than the alpha value of 0.001 which means that there is a significant relationship between the variables. In addition, as provided by the r-value which equals to 0.807 suggests that there is a 'high correlation' between the variables. This implies that those who hold positive cognition or belief about English are the ones who are most likely to act 'positively'. It means that the respondents who believe that English learning is beneficial are the very same people intending to learning the language, and working towards becoming competent in it.

In the case of the cognitive and affective aspects, the p-value of 0.000 is less than alpha = 0.001 which means that the relationship between the variables is significant. Moreover, there is high correlation between the cognitive and affective dimensions as given by the r-value = 0.789. This means that the cognitive aspect relates to the affective aspect. It further means that those respondents with 'positive' belief towards English are the very same respondents who afford 'positive' emotional attachment towards English. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship among the aspects of attitude towards English is rejected.

4. Conclusions

Given the results yielded in the study and determined through the analysis of the data, the following conclusions are made:

On the account of the respondents' overall attitude towards English, it is concluded that the respondents are exhibiting 'positive' attitude toward the attitudinal object. Moreover, the respondents were found to be 'very positive' towards studying more the language to be fluent in it. In addition, among the three aspects of attitude towards the English language, the English language was most 'favoured' affectively by the respondents. Furthermore, it was found that there is a significant correlation among the aspects and that the relationship is 'high'.

5. Pedagogical Implications

The pre-service teachers are determined to have favoured the English language. It was even found that the language teachers prefer to teach in the English language and that they want their learners to learn English fluently. There are many reasons seen to explain this preference and positive stance towards English. One is that English has been promoted so well in schools that the respondents could clearly see its importance; however, the same does not hold true for local languages. Moreover, this information relating to would-be teachers favouring English be taught inside the classroom must signal and provide essential understanding on the next steps to effectively influence pre-service teachers attitude towards local languages.

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The Challenges of Teacher-Students in Developing ESP Teaching Materials

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Abstract

ESP teaching materials tend to be regarded as different from English general materials. This may due to the prominence of content and the unfamiliarity content to many teachers. This study is an attempt to explore the challenges of teacher-student in developing ESP materials. The method employed in this study is content analysis based on language curriculum design (Nation & Macalister, 2010), language learning principles (Tomlinson & Ellis 2011, 2014), conceptualizing content and organization of content and activities (Graves, 1999). There are two ESP materials discussed: Culinary English for Vocational Students(CEV) and English for Migrant Workers (EWM). The result is that both CEV and EWM have strengths in topic selection, provision of written and spoken text, needs analysis, specific vocabulary, content, language components, and syllabus format. CEV is more comprehensive in implementing curriculum design, aspects of principles and procedures of materials development, aspects of conceptualizing content and aspects of organizing content.

Keyword: challenges, teacher-student, ESP teaching materials

Introduction

To develop ESP teaching materials is said to be challenging due to the lack of availability of resources and materials compared to General English. To meet the needs of the students concerning their ESP materials, teachers make an effort by searching for materials on the internet or searching ESP books in bookshops yet it still does not meet the needs of the students. One of the proposed solutions is developing own ESP materials which are not easy and it needs ample time for production. The classical reason for teachers is usually the high load of not only teaching but also doing teaching preparation and other administrative tasks.

On one side they have no enough time for developing materials in another side they have many resources for developing materials because they know their students' capability, have experience in making lesson plans and have experience in teaching. Ideally, it is in the teachers' hands the creation of appropriate materials is born. However, some teachers feel that developing materials is a teacher's concern because in many cases the materials they prepare for the students are indeed in need. As Graves (1999) argues, teachers have experience in planning, teaching the course, modifying, ongoing assessment and reteaching the course. Planning and teaching lessons are parts of the process of developing materials. So teachers have experiences in developing courses, the problem is whether there is a willingness for teachers to do since there are no exact procedures but there are guidelines, principles, and procedures that the teachers can follow.

Most English Departments where the teacher students are studying provide ESP in the bachelor program and materials development in the master program, however, the credit semester ranges only from two (2) to four (4) credits (Kurikulum Universitas Negeri Malang, 2010, Kurikulum Universitas Islam Malang, 2011). There is an assignment for the master program to develop EGP or ESP teaching materials. This paper aims at exploring what the teacher students' challenges in developing ESP teaching materials from the point of views of 1) language curriculum design, 2) language learning principles, 3) conceptualizing content and 4) organizing content and activities.

Materials Development and The Availability of ESP Teaching Materials

The availability of ESP teaching materials are scarce in the market. The scarcity is due to the very specific needs that sometimes can not be fulfilled by the ESP writer. This situation makes the ESP teachers find themselves in a condition where they are hoped to create a program that exactly meets the needs of a group of learners with a very limited preparation time (John, 1990). Since the ESP curriculum is dynamic it is the instructor who is in the best position to ensure that all students have got equal language provisions (Gatehouse, 2001). One of the ways is by familiarizing ESP textbooks in the market it is because the majority of ESP teachers are not experts in the target field, so more experiences are needed. However, when there are not subject-specific materials or the available ones do not match with the learners' language instructors have no choice to develop the materials (Lesiak, 2015).

There is a problem with the absence of a vocational qualification certificate which does not attach the importance of ESP so this makes one of the reasons of the lack of teacher's willingness in developing materials (Yan, He, & Zhang, 2016).

Designing an ESP Course

Designing ESP courses covers some steps that should be taken into consideration: needs analysis; suitable teaching theory; suitable teaching materials which are conducted based on the modification of authentic text (Bielosouva, 2017). This has to be completed by self-access study, project work, cooperative learning and the involvement of the learners in the process of the materials content choice and methodology to maximize participants' motivation(Javid, 2015). Another study reveals that developing ESP courses involves a needs analysis, syllabus, materials, teaching, and evaluation(Rasyimah, Ahyar & Kumalasari, 2018).

Other requirements in designing ESP courses concerning contents are a difficulty should be close to the degree of the learners' standard courses; great exposure to content and language; content should guide the language; methods appeal to content teachers; great exposure and considering meaningful information is the center. Therefore course developers should possess a content syllabus, a language syllabus, and a learning syllabus (Lowe, 2009), and the course content which is tailor-made suits the needs and wants of the learners of a non-native English speaking background (Kaur,n.d)

Principles and Procedures in Materials Development

What has to be considered in language curriculum design covers the environment, needs, principles, goals, content, and sequence. It also covers environment, principles, goals, content, sequencing, format, presenting materials, monitoring and assessing, and evaluation (Nation & Macalister, 2010**).** In the curriculum design the language skills are usually divided according to the type of the communicative process into receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) and the purpose is actually to integrate them not to use it separately (Klimova, 2014). The skill of listening, speaking, reading and writing is all integrated into the area of linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, intercultural and strategic competence.

The knowledge concerning spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, word formation, the grammatical structure in the area of linguistic competence (Uso & Martinez, 2006).

To develop materials that have a noticeable effect on the learners' materials developers have to take consideration of the learners’ curiosity, interest, and attention. This can be achieved through novelty, variety, attractive presentation, appealing content which is something new, universal themes and local references (Tomlinson, 1998). Concerning the principles, materials contain a lot of spoken and written text; materials the language learners use emphasizes how authentic language is used; materials input is contextualized and materials have enough samples of authentic use (Tomlinson n.d). Another thing is about text framework they are text-driven and task-driven. The first is suitable for coursebooks supplementary classroom materials, and the later is suitable for localizing, personalizing and learning autonomously (Tomlinson, 2007)

Conceptualizing and Organizing Content

The next step in materials development is conceptualizing content in which the course developers have to decide the aspects of language and language learning which covers what to learn, who the students are, their needs and purpose of the course, what to include, what to emphasize and what to drop (Graves, 1999). While McKimm (2003) states that content should incorporate and consider a choice of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes applicable and assessed by the occupation, subject specialists and by the broad society. Content and activities could be arranged in three different approaches: building, it moves from simple to complex, recycling it moves from a new skill area, different type activity, and matrix which follows consistent sequence (Pardo & Tellez, 2009). Content requires some kind of organization or format. The linear format starts from the easy to difficult ones; the modular format is arranged based on the themes selected and determined by the needs of the students;the cyclical format is based on the level of difficulty and complexity of the language needs of students; the matrix format based on themes, and the last is the storyline format which is based on the period of study (Dubin & Olshtain, 1996).

A Glance at Culinary English for Vocational Student(CEV) and English for Indonesian Women Migrant(EWM)

CEV and EWM are students teachers’ assignment samples of materials development course of graduate students of English Education in the academic year of 2018/2019 of Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA). The students have got the topics of approaches to language learning (behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism) curriculum and kinds of syllabus, needs analysis, goals and objectives, materials evaluation and adaptation, TEFL approach in relation with materials development, conceptualizing content, textbook evaluation, book map, acknowledgement, introduction, preface, index, glossary, and copyright. At the end of the course, one of the teacher students'duty is developing materials based on their interest (Syllabus of Materials Development of UNISMA, 2018).

CEV consists of 5 units: Unit I Kitchen and Utensils, Unit II Fruit and Vegetables, Unit III, Meat, Unit IV Appetizer, Unit V Main Course and Dessert, in which every unit is arranged in the following: Look at the pictures, Let's find out, Let's Practice, Reflection.

EWM consists of 4 chapters, Chapter I: Indonesian Labors, Chapter II: English Alphabet, Number and Time, Chapter III: Parts of Speech and Expression, Chapter IV :Housekeeping, baby Sitting, Room, Telephone Communication and Cooking , Chapter V: In the Market , Reading Activity, Question Word and Vocabulary.

The selection of CEV and EWM as the data has some reasons. Culinary practice in Indonesia is very popular. People make culinary businesses from street vendors which are very popular to five-star hotels. The second reason is that the revenue of food products in Malang reaches the highest position of more than 1000 business venues (Analisa Pajak Daerah Kota Malang, 2014). In the case of EWM, in which women workers are a part of Indonesian Labor Force contributed US$2.2 billion state's stock exchange in 2017 which is quite high amount of money (Agustiyanti, 2018).

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Method

The researcher uses descriptive method. The teacher students' assignments entitled *Culinary English for Vocational School (CEV) and English for Indonesian Women Migrant (EWM)* are used as the data. From these two assignment materials the researcher analyses the curriculum design, the conceptualization content, content organization, and the syllabus format.

To meet the goals of the study the researcher adopted Krippendorf (2004)methodology of content analysis in collecting the data with the following procedures :

a. Selecting the ESP assigned materials of the teacher students of English Education of Universitas Islam Malang in the academic year of 2018
b. The selection is based on the completeness of minimum requirements of materials development
c. The selected assignment materials are *Culinary English and English for Indonesian*

Women Migrant

d. Analyzing the curriculum design

e. Analyzing the conceptualization of the content

f. Analyzing the organization of the content

g. Analyzing the syllabus format

h. Drawing conclusions and recommendation based on the result of the study

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to students of English Education of Universitas Islam Malang who joined the Materials Development course in the academic year of 2018. Therefore, the conception of the results of the study is implementable to similar populations only.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Aspects of Curriculum Design

Aspects	Culinary English for Vocational School (CEV)		Notes	English for Indonesian Women Migrant (EWM)		Notes
	Yes	No		Yes	No	
Considering the environment	x		The writer considers the level of students, proficiency	x		The writer considers the level of students'proficiency
Discovering needs	x		The materials is appropriate with topics, the interest of the learners	x		The materials is appropriate with topics, the interest of the learners
Following principles	x		The activities are well designed in accordance with appropriate instructional methodologies		x	The activities are not well designed in accordance with appropriate instructional methodologies

Goals		x	The objectives are not mentioned in the introduction and instructional assessment		x	The objectives are not mentioned in the introduction and instructional assessment
Monitoring and Assessing	x		In every unit, there are opportunities for assessment		x	In every unit, there are no opportunities for assessment

Table1 shows that the materials developer (MD) of CEV and EWM consider the environment and needs the first is for vocational students and the latter is for Indonesian women workers but it has the difference in principles, goals, monitoring and assessing. In CEV there are opportunities for the students to have assessments while in EWM are not. So does the objectives of CEV are mentioned although it is not complete in EWL there is no objective at all. Concerning the learning outcome, there is no goals or objective in chapter 1 in CEV, and there are no objectives at all for EWM. Therefore a good start for the beginner of ESP curriculum developers is making an inventory of ESL publishers which are available off and online, and browsing publishers' sites online take only a few minutes (John, 1990).

Ideally, the MD has also considered course outline, content, language skills, language components, teaching approach, objectives, media and illustration (Aniroh, 2014). Needs are conducted in the first phase and based on one of the findings of the research and trends of ESP in Indonesia MDs write needs analysis most as their starting point of developing materials (Aniroh, 2017).

Table 2 Aspects of Principles and Procedures of Materials Development

Aspects	**Culinary English for Vocational School (CEV)**		**Notes**	**English for Indonesian Women Labor(EWM)**		**Notes**
	Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**	
	x		-Spoken text is available		x	-Spoken text is too little

Materials contains spoken and written text		-Written text is available			-Written text is not available
Materials represent how the language is used	**x**	-Speaking exercise activity is available -Listening exercise is available, but there is only one in the last unit		**x**	-Speaking exercise is little - No listening
Materials contain contextualized language input	**x**	Many exercise activities are using culinary expression and integrated with speaking and reading		**x**	-Many exercises are on translating and making sentences -Lack of real communicative value
Materials have samples of language in authentic use	**x**	-The number of specific language samples is enough	**x**		-There are the number of the specific language samples but not enough
Language Components	**x**	-Pronunciation exercise is available -Grammar exercise is integrated into the speaking exercise	**x**		-Grammar is not integrated with the reading -There is no pronunciation notes/exercise

Table 2 shows the imbalance of written text and spoken text in EWL which is too little. This is due to the high percentage of translating and making sentences. Real communication and the samples of a specific language is not adequate. The MDs of EWL separates clearly the language components which is written in Chapter II (*English, Alphabet, Number and Time*), Chapter III(*Part of Speech and Daily Expression*) and in Chapter IV there is a subtopic of *Housekeeping*, *Babysitting*, *Setting up Room*, *Telephone Conversation and Cooking*, and Chapter I is reading text of *The Indonesian Women Labor*.

From principles and procedures, there is no balance of the skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing)and as already mentioned in table 1 there is no objective in the introduction and every chapter. This has the relation with the syllabus that there is no clear syllabus approach in the sense that whether the MD wants to apply the grammatical, skill, notional functional syllabus, task-based, situational or the integrated one which has the emphasis on one of the syllabuses (Krahnke, 1987).

Table 3 Aspects of Conceptualizing Content

Aspects	Culinary English for Vocational School (CEV)		Notes	English for Indonesian Women Migrant(EWM)		Notes
	Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**	
Specific vocabulary	x		There is enough specific vocabulary and is relevant	**x**		There is specific vocabulary but in some units are too general
The content reflects the job		x	No specific jobs are explained	**x**		There is a specific job is explained
The content relates to learning outcomes	x		There is learning outcome except chapter I		**x**	There is no learning outcome
Content balance of theory and practice	x		The activities are theories there is an activity for demonstration	**x**		The activities are theories no activity for demonstration
The content reflects the local preference		**x**	The materials has no topics of local culinary	**x**		The materials has the topics of illustration of

						Indonesian women migrant

Table 3 shows that concerning the content CEV has the specific vocabulary, there is also learning outcome except in chapter I, there is an activity for the practice (making an order and giving a suggestion, practicing the dialog on frying, roasting, grilling) however there is no topic for local culinary. Compared to EWM the number of specific vocabulary is not adequate, no learning outcome, no activities for practice, but there is specific job explained (baby sitter, housekeeper, room attendant, and cooking).

Based on the findings there are still some requirements that should be met in the development process since in the ESP, it requires developed materials to reflect an association with the students professional and reflects the ease of learning, and reinforcement learning characteristics, paying attention to reflect the ESP's characteristics. The MDs have to contact, learn and collaborate with professionals to be good at creating adaptability, compatibility, and usability of the materials (Yan, He & Zhang, 2016). Another point is that the content is ideally related to the hot issue. The research finding shows that the theme-based or topic-based that have been implemented at Senior High School and Colleges integrated with the hot issues of the related topic makes the students have a high interest (Aniroh, 2018)

What should be remembered is that as the ESP materials developer he/she is an active collaborator and a teacher who assist the students to constitute the distinctive uniqueness. Both the teacher and the student are positioned as co-collaborator who can construct, continue and preserve collaborations in jointly creating, enacting, and evaluating curriculum materials in the language classroom field (Widodo, 2017).

Table 4: Aspects of Organizing Content

Aspects	**Culinary English for Vocational School (CEV)**		**Notes**	**English for Indonesian Women Migrant(EWM)**		**Notes**
	Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**	
Linear format		**x**			**x**	
Modular format	**x**		The format is arranged based needs of the	**x**		The format is arranged based needs of the

			vocational students which are in line with the vocational syllabus			woman labor but the arrangement of the topic is inconsistent
Cyclical format		**x**			**x**	
Matrix format	**x**		The matrix format is combined with the modular format by mentioning topics	**x**		The matrix format is combined with the modular format but there is inconsistency in the choice of language components and labor topics
Story-line format	**x**			**x**		The topic is arranged based on the need for a short period of activity

Table 4 shows that format has a relation with the needs analysis of the students. Both CEV and EWM use modular format meaning that both of them choose the topics and are written in the title topic in the unit. Only for EWM, it is not consistent in chapter II consisting *of English Alphabet, Number and Time*, and chapter III consisting *of Parts of Speech and Expression.* The input materials are determined by the students'need, therefore, the materials design depends on the cooperation between the teacher and the students (Medrea & Dana, 2012) The needs analysis models emphasize on the specific needs of the learners. The main elements of language needs analysis such as TSA (Target Situation Analysis), LSA (Learning Situation Analysis), PSA (Present Situation Analysis), MA (Means Analysis) should be formulated ed and implemented in any ESP needs assessment. Means analysis connects knowledge of the local situation (e.g., the teachers, teaching methods, management, students facilities, etc) to see how a language course may be conducted (Rahman, 2015).

Both CEV and EWM conducted needs analysis however since the assignment for this MD is only for 4 months while attending lectures and doing other tasks the needs analysis has not been fully done. One sample student is teaching at vocational school and another student who made EWM is an English instructor working at the migrant worker office.

English teachers at Junior High School and Senior High School so far has no obligation to do needs analysis because the curriculum and syllabus are already prepared by the government (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia nomor 35 tahun 2018). So what the teachers do is implementing both of them. The case is different when they have to teach at elementary schools, universities, Islamic boarding schools and other institution which is not under the Department of Education and Culture. Teachers have to make their materials, and if they find some from the market they have to modify the materials so that it meets the students' needs.

What about teachers who teach at the Junior High School and Senior High School under the government supervision in which they have got a curriculum and syllabus? To my observation teachers have still to learn needs analysis. Teachers will have benefits. First, they know how to overcome the students' weaknesses by creating supplementary materials. Second, they can evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and adjusting the materials based on the local condition. Third, they will accustom to learn and cooperate with other specialists teachers so that they can learn more than General English has to be completed with the specific content in which in the millennial era has a high dynamics.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings both CEV and EWM have strengths in the selection of the topic due to those topics are needed in the scope of regional and national in Indonesia. Those two provide with the written text and spoken text, needs analysis, specific vocabulary, content, and language components. They also consider syllabus format in combination between matrix and modular only they did not do it comprehensively. CEV is better arranged in designing the topics and the activities and is more complete and comprehensive in implementing curriculum design, aspects of principles and procedures of materials development, aspects of conceptualizing content and aspects of organizing content.

Developing materials is a long process of learning and in between the process, there is always an opportunity for materials developers to revise the product of the materials. The students' teacher materials of CEV and EWM are their efforts to develop the materials product, and this takes a long process of learning and practicing, therefore, it has to be given the high appreciation. I recommend that materials developers are hopefully consistent in implementing the course outline of the syllabus, what contents, language skills language components and the approaches/methods of the teaching-learning process that will be implemented and how those aspects are well developed and integrated. This is important to guide the readers to grasp the idea of the purpose of the materials.

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ESP Proficiency of Saudi Engineering Students: A Longitudinal Study

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Abstract

English for specific purposes (ESP) professionals have regularly proposed new curricula in different domains of ESP in various universities in Saudi Arabia. This study assesses the ESP proficiency of engineering students at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, in order to determine whether the English curriculum used in the preparatory year program (PYP) and in the first year of the undergraduate engineering program is suitable for English for engineering purposes (EEP). Sixty engineering students in their first year (in the 2018/19 session) were chosen for this study, which compares the TEFL scores of engineering students in the PYP (pre-test) to their ESP scores in their first year in the university (post-test). A paired *t*-test was run to test the difference between the two datasets. The results reveal a marked improvement in the post-test scores (mean = 85.12) of engineering students compared to their pre-test scores (mean = 41.28). The paired sample *t*-test shows a significant difference between the two datasets ($p < 0.00001$). This result indicates that the ESP curriculum used in the PYP and the first year of the undergraduate engineering program have a positive impact on English language proficiency. These improved ESP scores could carry implications for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) at large. In line with the Saudization policy, the KSA is working to grow the contribution of local manpower to its economy. The improved English-language proficiency indicated by these improved test scores could help to overcome one of the factors impeding the enlargement of the indigenous Saudi engineering workforce.

Keywords: ESP, Saudi Arabia TEFL, Engineering students, Saudization

1.0 Introduction

1.1 ESP Curriculum

Every country in the Arab world has its own history of ELT. In the case of engineering students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the teaching and learning a foreign language is essentially related to English for specific purposes (ESP). As a result of its importance, ESP is taught widely in universities, community colleges, and other institutes as a compulsory course. The idea behind ESP programs is to empower students in their respective fields of study. Experts have suggested new curricula in different domains of ESP, from engineering to medical sciences, in various universities in the KSA (Alqurashi, 2016; Alfehaid, 2011). The common aim of these improved curricula is to prepare Saudi youth to compete in the job market on an equal footing with graduates of other nationalities. A lack of technical English language skills hampers the productivity of recent graduates in their professional fields, as workers without these skills lack the communicative abilities necessary for intercultural communication (Al-Nasser, 2015). While curriculum improvement has been useful in many contexts, the test scores of engineering students in ESP programs has historically not been high (EFSET, 2015).

1.2 Assessment of ESP Test Scores of Saudi Engineering Students

The poor performance of Saudi engineering students in the ESP course does not justify the time spent teaching the English language nor the amount being spent on it by the kingdom. Fouad and Bashir (2017) report that a mere 37% of engineering students in the ESP course were confident of their English proficiency. Other studies have also reported the low ESP proficiency of Saudi-Arabian students (Hamouda, 2012; Unruh and Obeidat, 2015). While many studies have been conducted from teachers' and learners' perspectives, few have assessed students' performance in the classroom. While assessing students' performance , the underlying variables must be considered in order to interpret the results. Collection of evidence across a longitudinal frame is particularly important, and assessments must use the same constructs over time, without undermining decisions based on teachers' perceptions. Moreover, it is important to note that students may work with multiple teachers during their English language studies. While Saudi students must pass standardized entrance exams to enrol in an engineering program, the improvement of ESP has largely been disregarded. The only requirements for admission into any of the Saudi universities are passing the high-school examination and the Saudi National Examination (GEYAS). Candidates intending to pursue engineering degrees do not take a standardized English language test to determine their proficiency. Once enrolled in an engineering college, they are merely required to fine-tune their English language skills. Students often realize too late what an important role ESP can play both in terms of improving their professionalism and enhancing their productivity. It is, therefore, imperative that policy makers seek a better interrelation between the Faculty of Languages and Translation and the Faculty of Engineering.

To bridge this gap, a Preparatory Year Program (PYP) was designed at KSU (as well as some other universities)to help students acquire the basic knowledge required within their prospective fields. One of the aims of the PYP for candidates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is to brush up students' proficiency in English for general purposes (EGP) and introduce them to the rudiments of ESP (Mahmoud et al., 2016). Instructors often lament the initial ESP test scores of preparatory-year students (Yushau and Omar, 2015). In particular, Arellano-Tamayo (2019) has observed that the English-language proficiency of freshmen university students is low, despite their high school preparation. Abdulhaleem (2017) divides the PYP into four quarters; the characteristics and needs he identifies for the first and last quarters of the program are shown in Figure 1.

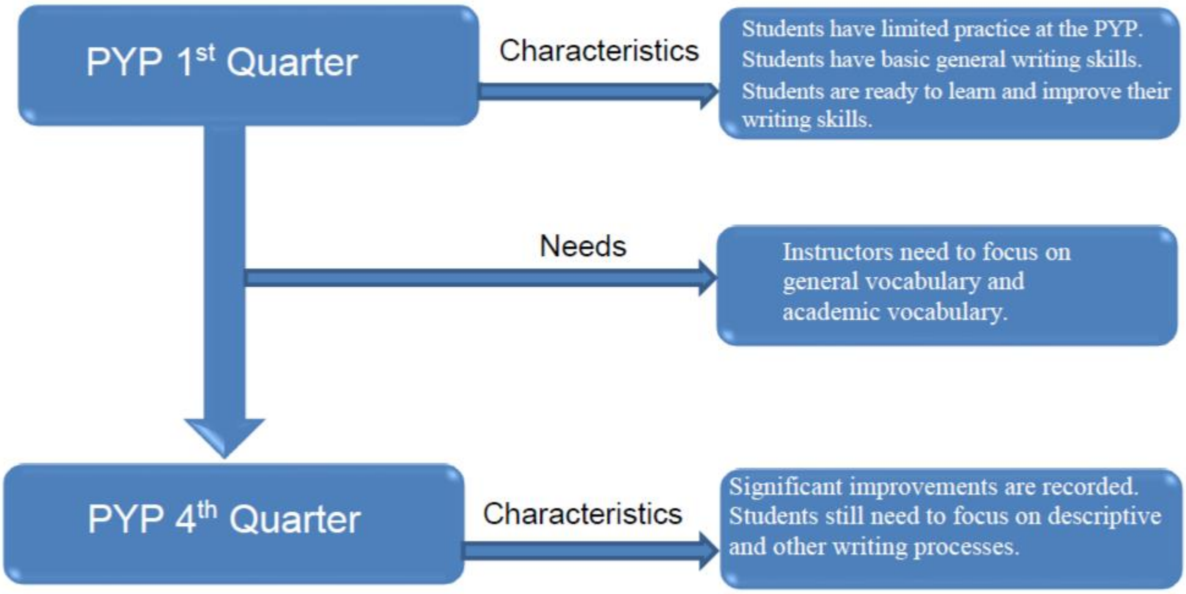

Figure 1: Characteristics and Needs of Students in the Preparatory Year Program

The acquisition of strong ESP skills helps students not only in their academics but also in their professional lives, in terms of both quality of work and productivity. In order for the desired results to be achieved, curriculum designers must incorporate a regular needs-analysis approach.

1.3 Needs Analysis

Needs Analysis in language teaching and language program design, refers to a systematic process that can help teachers to collect information and get an accurate and complete picture of their students' needs and preferences. It has long been considered a crucial component of any ESP curriculum. Because of its crucial role, a substantial number of needs analysis studies within the ESP field have been carried out. S. Ab.Rahim (2008) conducted a needs analysis study to investigate the English language communication skills that practising engineers need in the workplace. Her findings suggest that more time should be devoted to oral and written communication to help engineering undergraduates meet the requirements of the workplace. Practising engineers need language skills adequate for group meetings and public speaking, so according to this study practice with real-life verbal situations is important preparation. In another study investigating the English language needs of engineering students, Salehi (2010) concludes that students need more speaking tasks and translation exercises in the curriculum. A needs survey by Venkatraman and Prema (2007) of English language skills for engineering students reports that speaking skills ranked highest, followed by speaking skills, reading skills, and professional writing skills. A study by Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2010) investigated the English language needs of petroleum engineering students at Hadhramout University of Science and Technology. Their findings suggest that students need many English language sub-skills to perform effectively in the target situation and that students in the sample did not have adequate abilities in English. Sattar and Zahid (2011) conducted a case study of the linguistic needs of textile engineering students at National Textile University in Pakistan, focusing on 74 students and 4 English language teachers. The study, which was based on Munby's Communicative Needs Processor, revealed a mismatch between teachers' favourite teaching methods (grammar and translation) and student's learning preferences (communication strategies) and favourite skills (listening and speaking skills).

Needs analysis requires the perfect articulation of expected outcomes before students commence the use of a curriculum. The clarification of learners' needs can help both educators and curriculum designers address specific situations. Students' needs should be reflected by a curriculum and not the other way round. While we have not seen, of late, much breakthroughs in the domain of needs analysis, its implementation needs refining. In the Saudi context, in order to make improvements in the present curricula, research is needed which uses Munby's model to measure the needs of students and compare them to what the curriculum offers.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Engineering students at King Saud University (KSU) must pass the PYP before they begin an undergraduate program in a particular field of study. The PYP enhances their skills through intensive English language courses (ENG 140 and ENG 150) and other courses aimed at improving their communication and computer skills. For engineering students, this English language curriculum had been extended into the first year of university by means of the courses E 107 and E 108. Beginning in the last session (2018-2019), E 107 and E 108 have been replaced by two new courses, E 109 and E 110. These new courses reinforce the much needed speaking and presentation skills aimed at enhancing engineering students soft skills. The present longitudinal study assesses the ESP proficiency of engineering students at KSU after a complete ESP curriculum, with the aim of determining whether the current ESP curriculum is suitable for delivering English for engineering purposes (EEP).

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Participants and Data

This study tracks the performance of undergraduate engineering students after their completion of an ESP curriculum. The ESP scores of engineering students in their first year of university (in ESP 108 – Communication Skills for Engineers) are compared to their ESP scores in the PYP (ESP 140 – English Language 1). Sixty first-year engineering students (2018/19 session) were chosen for this study.

2.2 Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using SPSS version 20.0. PYP and first year scores from the same sample of participants were tested using standardized test scores (pre-test and post-test). A paired *t*-test was run to test the difference between the two datasets. The *t*-test value and *p*-value were calculated to determine the significance level of the difference between the pre- and post-test scores; a p-value lower than 0.05 is considered to be significant.

3.0 Results

3.1 Pre- and Post-test Scores of Engineering Students at KSU

Tables 1 and 2 show the ESP scores of engineering students in the PYP (2017/18 session) and in the first year of engineering (2018/19 session), respectively. The pre- and post-test scores of the students are presented in intervals.

Overall, the majority of engineering students (35 students; 58.33%) performed at average levels (41–60) in the ESP course in the PYP, while 15 (25%) achieved low grades (21–40) and 6 (10%) achieved very low grades (0–20). The remaining 4 students (6.67%) scored high (61–80) in the ESP course. None of the students achieved a very high score (81–100).

Table 1: ESP Scores of Engineering Students in the PYP

		Frequency	Percentage
0–20	Very low	6	10%
21–40	Low	15	25%
41–60	Average	35	58.33%
61–80	High	4	6.67%
81–100	Very high	0	0.0%

On the post-test, the majority of the engineering students (48 students; 80%) achieved very high scores (81–100). A lower percentage (11; 18.3%) scored high (61–80), and only 1 (1.67%) student achieved an average score (41–60). None scored low (21–40) or very low (0–20).

Table 2: ESP Scores of Engineering Students in their First Year of University

		Frequency	Percentage
0–20	Very low	0	0.0%
21–40	Low	0	0.0%
41–60	Average	1	1.67%
61–80	High	11	18.33%
81–100	Very high	48	80.0%

In contrast to the low performance of engineering students on the pre-test, the post-test scores indicate excellent performance by the majority of the students in their first year of university. A marked improvement was observed in the post-test scores of students compared to the pre-test scores. The significance of this difference was tested using the paired sample *t*-test.

3.2 Paired Sample t-test for Mean of the Pre- and Post-test Scores

Table 3 shows the mean of the pre- and post-test scores. A mean score on the pre-test of 41.28 was recorded, while the mean post-test score was 85.12. The pre- and post-test scores showed a standard deviation of 14.34 and 9.54, respectively.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Pre- and Post-test Scores

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-test	41.28	14.34
Post-test	85.12	9.54

Table 4 shows the results of the paired sample *t*-test, with $t = 19.44$. In addition, a *p*-value lower than 0.00001 was computed in this study (a *p*-value lower than 0.05 was considered significant). Hence, the result of the paired sample *t*-test ($p < 0.00001$) is considered to be significant. Further, a significant improvement was observed in engineering students' post-test scores in ESP courses compared to their pre-test scores, indicating that the ESP curriculum has a positive impact on engineering students' English language proficiency.

Table 4: Paired Sample *t*-test for Mean of the Pre- and Post-test Scores

	Paired Differences				
	Mean	Std. Deviation	*t*	Df	Sig, (2-tailed)
Pre-test–Post-test	43.83	17.46	19.44	59	< 0.00001

4.0 Discussion

The study results showed an improvement in the ESP proficiency of engineering students at KSU following the completion of the ESP curriculum. Improved ESP scores following the implementation of an ESP curriculum were also reported by Chien and Hsu (2010). This study does not corroborate the findings of studies that have reported the inadequacy of ESP courses (Truong et al., 2017; Zafarghadi et al., 2017). This longitudinal study does not, however, detail the underlying variables, such as the reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, of engineering students.

Other studies have reported that ESP courses in universities limit their focus to vocabulary and sentence structure and that they ignore students' personal interests and the requirements of their prospective jobs (Lin, 2018). Teachers usually attribute students' low proficiency in English language to lack of motivation. Lachica (2019) finds that students' lack of motivation and lack of interest could result from anxiety; the study recommends that teachers learn to categorize students according to their needs in order to help them succeed. Additionally, students' lack of proficiency should, according to some, become a basis for language curriculum enhancement (Arellano-Tamayo, 2019). With respect to EEP, Vavelyuk (2015) focuses on the importance of ESP for students' future careers. Similar studies point out engineering students' lack of ESP proficiency appropriate to their proposed engineering career (Fouad and Bashir, 2017). Fouad and Bashir (2017) compare the needs of engineering students in universities in Saudi Arabia to the realities of engineers working in top engineering firms (Saudi Aramco and SABEC). They report that engineering students must improve their ESP skills to compete effectively at a global level. Other studies have also reported a lack of competence among engineering students in English as a Second Language (Unruh & Obeidat, 2015), which results in their insufficient ability to use the English language in a professional work environment. Engineers need to read a wide variety of texts in English and so require effective English language skills to achieve their aims.

4.1 Inferences for an Improved ESP Test Score in the KSA

Although the students in this sample were still in their first year of university at the time of the post-test, their improved ESP scores have many potential benefits for them as engineering students and for the engineering community in the KSA at large. The improved ESP scores indicate that these students have attained a certain level of proficiency in the English language, which will strengthen their communication and research skills in their prospective field. English is essential for research in the engineering field, as it is the language in which many texts in this field are written. Most importantly, it is the language of instruction in the field throughout the university course. Beyond the undergraduate curriculum, the English language plays a crucial role in the domain of professional engineering in the KSA.

The achievement of strong test scores, however, does not necessarily reflect knowledge and soft skills sought by the future employers. Given that Saudi Arabia continually strives to grow its local manpower, these high scores demonstrate the potential for a viable engineering community in the kingdom. These improved scores, which indicate an improved English language proficiency, suggest that one of the factors impeding the increase of the indigenous Saudi engineering workforce has been overcome.

Saudization (a term for indigenous empowerment used in Saudi Arabia to refer to the process of giving preference to Saudi nationals in jobs) is continuously being pursued to encourage Saudi nationals to contribute to their own economy. One important aspect of this policy is bringing about improvements in technical and industrial fields (*Saudi Gazette*, 28 May 2016). Saudization is not a totally new concept. As long ago as 1936, a school was opened in Makkah to teach Saudi nationals who intended to travel abroad. One of the missions of this school was to expose Saudi nationals to the world. The program of English language and culture in the school was the first of its kind in the KSA. Currently, in terms of human resources, the kingdom is working toward employing its own nationals to empower its workforce (Al-Ghamdi & Al-Saadat, 2002). The KSA has historically relied on a huge number of foreign nationals to support its workforce. In the engineering community, 85% of engineers are expatriates (Saudi Gazette, 12 Nov. 2015). This trend applies, as well, in other professions with practical applications, such as medicine (Almalki et al., 2011).

One of the reasons the English language is important is its perceived value, economically and globally. English is now widely used as the medium of training in companies in Saudi Arabia, including top engineering firms such as Saudi Airlines, Saudi Aramco, Saudi Telecommunication Company and SABIC. As defined by the Ministry of Education (2002), “the aim of teaching English … is to have the public attain a standard which will permit it to make ready use of desired materials in English and which will enable it to communicate satisfactorily, according to its needs, in both spoken and written forms”. ARAMCO (formerly US-owned and now owned solely by the kingdom) still has a large population of expatriate engineers. Oil and gas companies are known for setting strict requirements regarding English language competency for acceptance into certain positions in engineering firms (Al-Faisal 2006; Elyas 2008; Al-Essa 2009). Given this trend in core technical and industrial fields, both business leaders and academic professionals feel concerned about the ability of Saudis to work in a competitive global field (Al-Hajailan 2003; Al-Seghayer 2005).

It would be an immense achievement for the kingdom if the number of expatriate engineers could be reduced. However, this goal can only be achieved over time and by following specific processes. Saudi nationals must show the competency required to fill the positions of foreign expatriates, including demonstrating sufficient skills in communication in English.

Although the English language is encouraged in many sectors, it also has its detractors. Many critics point out that the predominance of English undermines the Arabic culture. They believe it to be a conveyor of corruption for youth, along with being a conveyor of knowledge. They cite the slogan *“more English, less Islam”*, which was initiated during the Saudi era to combat the infiltration of English culture into the kingdom. Many have since realized that the English language is here to stay, particularly because it is required for work in many professions in the kingdom (Al-Braik 2007; Looney 2004).

5.0 Conclusion

The results of this study indicate a significant improvement in engineering students’ ESP scores in their first year of university compared to their scores in the PYP. This improvement suggests the suitability of the ESP curriculum currently used in the PYP and in the first year of undergraduate education in KSU. The improved ESP test scores demonstrate a high level of English language proficiency in prospective engineers; this in turn indicates that the kingdom is succeeding in training its local manpower (in the English language context) to improve upon the achievements of its current expatriate workforce. With the Saudization policy taking shape, it would be a source of pride to have a higher percentage of Saudi nationals contribute to the Saudi Arabian engineering workforce. Universities and training institutes play the critical role of supplying key skills that will add individuals to the engineering workforce. Engineering colleges in Saudi Arabia sometimes face criticism that their curricula do not match the needs of the industry, and that, as a result, their graduates are not job-ready. This study refines upon this view by suggesting that while premier institutions like King Saud University maintain a high quality of education, lower-tier institutions have relatively lower quality level. It is important to understand, as well, that educational institutions alone cannot fully address the skills gaps. Both higher education and school-level education in the kingdom will benefit from working closely together to train and develop better human resources.

Responding to the negative feedback from the engineering industry a few years ago regarding the English language capabilities of graduates, institutions like King Saud University have introduced courses (such as E 109 and E 110) focusing on soft skills of English communication, which are achieving significant improvements.

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Vietnamese Learners' Perspectives of Corrective Feedbacks on English Pronunciation

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Abstract

Though learners' views are claimed to be of critical importance in ensuring the success of any pedagogical process, learners' voices have not been paid with due attention in many aspects of Vietnamese ELT. Notably, in the field of pronunciation pedagogy, learners' voices are rarely heard. To shed some light on this much neglected field, the current study investigates learners' views of corrective feedback that they received on their pronunciation. The study draws on the data collected from survey questionnaires which were delivered to 87 non-English major students and four focus groups conducted among 14 of the surveyed students. The findings show that students were quite satisfied with the amount of CF they were provided with. The efficacy of CF on learners' pronunciation development was also evaluated positive. Among techniques of CF giving, recasts and peer correction were highly appreciated. Basing on the findings, recommendations for pronunciation pedagogy for the context of this study and similar ones are also discussed.

Introduction

Pronunciation has been proved to be critical in ensuring the intelligibility of speech, thus, the success of communication (T. M. Derwing & Munro, 2005). Similar to the learning of any other aspects of English, the learning of pronunciation cannot be gained without corrective feedback (CF), and thus, CF has attracted an increasing amount of research attention. Saito and Lyster (2012) among some other researchers investigate the roles of CF on learners' pronunciation development and indicate positive results. Even with recast, the CF type which is reported to result in little effect in learners' development in other aspects of a foreign or second language (L2), is found to significantly improve learners' L2 pronunciation (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001; Ellis & Sheen, 2006; R Lyster & Saito, 2010). Given the importance of CF, R Lyster and Saito (2010) suggest teachers use a wide variety of CF types to assist learners' L2 learning.

Despite the strong empirical evidence that confirms the acquisitional values of CF for learners' L2 pronunciation development, there has been limited research attention that directs at how learners perceive the CF on pronunciation that they are provided. There is even less research of this line in Asia ELT, where pronunciation pedagogy seems to lag far behind other domains of English teaching and seems to have more hurdles to overcome in comparison with pronunciation pedagogy in ESL contexts. The exploration of learners' perspectives of CF on pronunciation, however, is of critical importance to inform pronunciation teachers about what learners need to get feedback on and how they want those feedback to be given.

In Vietnamese ELT, learners' voices rarely have the chance to be heard due to several institutional and socio-cultural constraints (Dat, 2007; Ngan, 2011; Tomlinson & Dat, 2004; Tran, 2013). The situation is even more daunting regarding learners' views of pronunciation teaching in general (Author, in press) and CF on pronunciation in particular. In such a situation, ELT research in Vietnam does not seem to assist to improve the situation to any extent. The fact that learners' views of CF on pronunciation being under-researched has worsen the status of being uninformed of EFL teachers in the country, who are reluctant and unconfident enough whenever pronunciation teaching is taken for granted (Author, in press). The literature has indicated an urgent need for more research attention to what Vietnamese learners perceive of the feedbacks on pronunciation that they receive.

Literature Review

In the field of SLA, there exists a concern that corrective feedback may serve as a source of anxiety and nervousness for learners, and to interfere with the process of information transforming (Krashen, 1985; Terrell, 1977). Meanwhile, many scholars argue that CF not only assists learners to avoid mistakes but also prevents mistakes from being fossilised (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). The effectiveness of CF has been researched intensively and several positive findings have been achieved. Hattie (2009) while conducting the meta-analysis of 800 studies in the field of learners' achievement comments that CF is "one of the most powerful influences on learning" (p.178). In the field of pronunciation pedagogy, CF has been found to contribute greatly to the development of learners' L2 pronunciation (Lee, Jang, & Plonsky, 2014; Saito & Lyster, 2012). However, the evaluation of the effectiveness of CF is, commonly based on the rate of learners' successful uptakes (learners' correcting their own output thanks to CF) and rarely viewed from the perspectives of learners and teachers. For that reason, Hattie (2009) also claims that CF "needs to be more fully researched by qualitatively investigating how feedback works in the classroom and learning process" (p.178). This comment serves as an excellent springboard for the investigation into learners' perception of and response to CF.

In response to the call, the past decade has witnessed some initial research into learners' views of CF. For instance, while exploring learners' perceptions of CF on their writing, Hajri and Al-Mahrooqui (2013) and Weaver (2006) find that students highly appreciate the values of teachers' CF on their writing development. In the field of pronunciation, though little research emerges from the perceptions of learners regarding CF, some glimpses of the issue have been caught. The research by Huang and Jia (2016) into the perspectives of both teachers and learners at a university in Beijing regarding CF on pronunciation indicates that CF is highly evaluated by students. In contrast with the concern of several teachers, as reported elsewhere, that learners may not warmly welcome feedback, the findings of Huang and Jia's study confirm that students' eagerness can be much stronger than their concern of self-respect and that the amount of feedback teachers provide does not seem to meet their demand. The limitation of Huang and Jia's research lies in its focus only on advanced learners because one may argue that these students can have stronger desire for assistance to develop their pronunciation than those of lower levels due to better awareness of the benefits that good pronunciation may bring about. An additional argument can be that teachers' practice of CF provision tend to vary in accordance with students' English proficiency, which may have an impact on the attitudes towards CF hold by students at different levels of English proficiency. For example, in the study by Sifakis and Sougari (2005), teachers tend to frequently give feedback on pronunciation to upper students but rarely to lower-level students. Furthermore, learners' specific needs and ability at different stages of their L2 development may also contribute to the distinctive views they may have towards CF on their pronunciation. The discussion hereby highlights the importance of taking the views of students at different English levels regarding feedback on pronunciation into account.

In Vietnamese ELT in particular, learners' needs are reported to be poorly addressed due to a lack of feedback and also to teachers being constrained as to what they can do by their low place in the institutional hierarchy of the education system (Tomlinson & Dat, 2004). In pronunciation pedagogy, given that pronunciation is often the neglected aspect of both English pedagogy in Vietnamese EFL classrooms and Vietnamese ELT research, little is known about how learners think about and respond to the corrective feedback on pronunciation that they receive from their teachers, if any. In the first study which specifically looks at pronunciation teaching and learning in Vietnam to date to my knowledge, Vu (2016) reveals several aspects of teachers and learners' perceptions, which, unfortunately, do not include those of corrective feedback.

In the new stage of development in Vietnam, the Vietnamese government has identified English competence of the youth in communication as the strategic goal of the biggest-ever foreign language teaching project – ***Project 2020***, in the country (Vietnamese-Government, 2008). In such a scenario, learners' fluence in English pronunciation is clearly of critical importance given the role of clear pronunciation in successful communication (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, & Griner, 2010). Therefore, CF on pronunciation is essential, so is the knowledge of how CF is perceived given that no learning can be gained without proper feedback.

In response to the call for more research into learners' perception of CF, and also to bridge the gap in Vietnamese ELT research regarding CF on pronunciation, this study takes Vietnamese learners' accounts of CF on their pronunciation into consideration with two following research questions:

1) How do students perceive the frequency of corrective feedback provided on pronunciation?
2) How do students perceive the effectiveness of corrective feedback on their pronunciation?

Methodology

The current study is based at a private university in Vietnam. Seventy-eight non-English major students participated in this research by completing a questionnaire. Fourteen of those participants were then invited to join focus group interviews on the basis of their volunteer. The 14 students were assigned into four focus groups in accordance with their English proficiency as it may be easier for the students to express their thoughts more freely with peers who are of the same English levels and thus may share their needs and difficulties regarding pronunciation learning and CF on their pronunciation. Focus-group interviews were conducted in Vietnamese which enable learners to express their thoughts thoroughly and discuss issues in depth without being limited by language barriers. Focus groups were audio recorded adding up to almost five-hour recordings. The interview data was transcribed by the researcher and analysed thematically.

Findings and discussion

Frequency of CF provided on learners' pronunciation

A prominent theme that emerges from the focus-group data is a high frequency at which feedback was provided in the context of this study.

Table 1. Learners' views of the frequency of feedback provision

	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
3	My teachers give me feedback (positive or negative) on my pronunciation	39% (34)	42.5% (37)	15% (13)	3.4% (3)	0%

Notes: 1(Strongly agree), **2** (Agree),**3**(Unsure), **4** (Disagree), or **5** (Strongly Disagree)

Table 1 shows that the vast majority of surveyed students (81.5%) indicated that their teachers gave them feedback, either negative or positive, or both, on their pronunciation.

However, a minority of three percent claimed not to receive feedback and 15% said they were unsure if any feedback was provided.

Survey data above is well resonant with the data collected from focus group interviews with students. In response to my question "how is pronunciation often taught in your class?", the most frequently mentioned teaching technique is feedback and correction. One representative student said:

> "… When someone speaks English in activities that teachers organize in the classes, if there are any mistakes then teachers will correct them… Our teachers will not say "this word is wrong" or "that word is wrong", but she will say "this word should be pronounced as…" and then we repeat the word after her. If the teacher thinks our pronunciation is not correct yet, she continues to help us with the correction. (Tung, Focus 1)

To learners' observation, it is clear that pronunciation teaching overlaps with giving feedbacks on pronunciation in most of the cases. On one hand, this data indicates the importance which was placed on CF in pronunciation pedagogy in the context of this study. On the other hand, it suggests the heavy reliance of teachers on CF in providing pronunciation instruction. To further clarify this point, another student added:

> Normally pronunciation is not taught. When we speak in class, teachers only help to develop our speaking skills. As for pronunciation teaching, it is mainly via teachers' correction if we pronounce something incorrectly when working in pairs or groups or do presentation in front of the class. (Quynh, interview 1)

Clearly, according to the student's comment, CF is the only teaching that learners were given regarding their pronunciation. Though no teaching is real teaching without feedback and no learning can be gained without FC either, the intensive dependence on FC may hereby indicate the limited extent to which teachers in the context of this study were able to afford to teach pronunciation. Given the challenging nature of pronunciation teaching for EL teachers worldwide, especially for teachers in such EFL contexts as Vietnam, who have widely reported to have more hurdles to face than those in ESL contexts (T. M Derwing, 2018; Phuong, 2018), teachers' reliance on ad hoc correction and feedback is understandable.

Types of feedback

The second theme that emerges from the data collected is the combination of three different ways of CF giving with the dominant role attributed to recast.

Table 2. Learners' report of feedback types in use

How often do your teachers:					
- point out your pronunciation mistakes?	30.2% (26/86)	37.9% (33/86)	30.2% (26/86)	1.2% (1/86)	0%
- say the correct forms, and you repeat the right forms to correct them?	48.2% (42/87)	43.6% (38/87)	6.9% (6/87)	1.1% (1/87)	***0%***
- let you work in pairs or groups to figure out and correct each other's mistakes?	40.7% (35/86)	36% (31/86)	16.3% (14/86)	16.3% (14/86)	***0%***

As can be seen in Table 2, feedbacks were provided in all three listed ways in the survey including teachers pointing out the mistakes made by students (reported by 68.1% of students), recasting (reported by almost 93% of survey students) and peer correction (73.3%). As such, the most popular techniques of giving feedbacks in general education were also employed to assist students in the context of this study with their pronunciation learning. Also, the survey data illustrated in Table 2 resonating well with the information collected from focus groups highlights the domination of recast. For instance, in the comment of Tung as previously quoted, it is not CF in general but it is recast in particular which is the main way, or even the only way, in which pronunciation teaching was often conducted.

Another point that should be commented is that though recast has been reported to have relatively limited effect on learners' improvement in many different aspects of English language (Ellis et al., 2001; R. Lyster & Ranta, 1997), it does facilitate learners' pronunciation development (Saito & Lyster, 2012). In the current study, teachers were clearly relying significantly on this technique to deliver feedback on their learners' pronunciation. According to students' comments at the interviews, students seems to appreciate teachers recasting to help them recognize and correct their mistakes. One representative comment is:

> I don't think it is necessary that my teacher has to point out our mistakes directly all the time. Normally, she only needs to repeat the correct words or the correct form of the sounds we have just made wrongly, so we repeat after her and we can correct our mistakes. (Trang, *Focus 3*)

Seemingly, recasts of mistakes in other language aspects such as grammar can be ambiguous and go unnoticed as students may perceive them as alternative ways of saying the same way (Saito & Lyster, 2012). Recasts of pronunciation mistakes hereby appear to be effective in drawing students' attention to and help them to correct their pronunciation mistakes. Despite the reported views of teachers elsewhere that recasts are not effective in improving learners' pronunciation (see, for example, Baker & Burri, 2016), students in this study seems to be favourably welcome recast and evaluate its efficacy positively.

Students also disclosed that pronunciation mistakes are often corrected after each of students' performance (Linh, Hieu, Trang, *Focus 3*) and students showed their preference of such instant feedback:

> After we complete our speaking, our teachers often correct our mistakes immediately … I like the way my mistakes to be corrected immediately like that (Vinh, interview 2)

Another student, Hieu, clarified that if teachers noted all the mistakes students of groups of students make and wait until the end of each activities to give feedback, then "we may not remember what are the mistakes we made ourselves to focus on" (Focus 3). Some students including Trang (Focus 3) also disclosed that they preferred the provision of feedback on individual student 's mistakes after his/her speaking performance rather than feedback on common mistakes made by the whole class because "many of the corrected mistakes are not mine and I will have the feeling like these are others' mistakes and I will not pay attention to". One of the main reasons that teachers often feel reluctant giving CF on individual learners' mistakes is the fear that this action may hurt learners' self-esteem and serve as a source of anxiety and discouragement for learners (Krashen, 1985; Terrell, 1977). Learners' preference of receiving CF on their own pronunciation mistakes in front of the whole class reported hereby can usefully inform teachers in the context of this study about how to give feedbacks on their students' pronunciation.

Students' perception of the effectiveness of feedback and correction

Table 3

	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
	I think my teachers' feedback on my pronunciation is useful	52.9% (45)	42.4% (36)	1.2% (1)	2.4 % (2)	1.1% (1)

As can be seen in Table 3 above, the vast majority of students were profoundly aware of the effectiveness of teachers' feedback on the development of their pronunciation with 95.3% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement. Only 3.5% of the survey students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that teachers' feedback on their pronunciation is useful. In addition, only one student (1.2%) was unsure if feedback is useful or not. This finding is consistent with that of the study conducted by Huang and Jia (2016) in the EFL context of China, which indicates that Chinese students not only warmly welcome CF but also highly appreciated the value of the corrective feedback they received from their teachers.

Data collected from focus-group interviews also strongly complements the survey data discussed above. In response to my question if students find the corrective feedback that teachers provide useful in the development of their pronunciation, the responses were quite homogenous regardless of students' English proficiency. Students with low English level seem to highly appreciate teachers' efforts correcting their mistakes. One said:

> Yes, of course. It helps us to get familiar to and remember correct pronunciation. (Son, Focus 1)

Another added:

> Normally, after each of us is required to read or speak something in English, our teacher often corrects our mistakes if there are any and asks us to repeat the correct forms. I think it is a good way to teach pronunciation, basing on teacher's correction we know what we are wrong about and can correct out own mistakes when we self-study outside class. (Hieu, Focus 4)

> I think teacher's correction is quite effective because whenever there is a word that we cannot pronounce properly, teachers often guide us about how to open our mouth or where to put our tongue to pronounce correctly difficult sounds that make the word. As all the difficult sounds or words are corrected and guided that way, I think it is more effective than we just read after the teacher once and move on to a new one. (Dat, Focus 4)

As reported hereby, students in the current study got a lot of useful information thanks to the CF they received. They know where they were in English pronunciation, what they needed to correct and how to do so as well.

For some students, teachers' correction and feedback provided after each of their speaking performance serves as a source of support that make them feel more self-confident to go forwards with their speaking:

> … when I have to speak in front of the class, I do not worry much about if my pronunciation is correct or not, I speak as I can because after my presentation, if there are any mistakes, teachers will help me to correct.

In contrast with the concern some teachers may hold towards the negative impacts of CF on learners' self-esteem, it seems that CF may have uplifting effects on learners if provided with a suitable method. The finding thus is encouraging for teachers who might be somewhat reluctant giving feedbacks and also evokes thoughts about how to provide CF in the optimal way to assist and encourage pronunciation learning at the same time.

Students in focus-group interviews also report positive evaluation of peer correction:

> *Interviewer:* When you speak in front of the class in pair or groups, do teachers often correct your pronunciation mistakes?
>
> *Sang:* Yes, but she also often asks other students in the class to find and correct our mistakes as well.
>
> *Interviewer:* When your teacher requires you to do so, do you often listen to what your classmates present attentively to find out their mistakes to correct.
>
> *Son:* Of course, we try to find as many mistakes as possible (all the three students laugh mischievously)
>
> *Sang:* And normally we never make the same mistakes that we discover in our friends' speaking.

It appears that peer correction and feedback brought to students in the current study much of fun beside efficacy. CF seems to be a kind of interactive learning that cultivates learners' activeness and generates enjoyment. The finding suggests that peer CF should be one form of feedback giving that deserve due attention.

Conclusion

Overall, this study indicates a high level of learners' satisfaction regarding the frequency of CF on pronunciation in their English classes. CF is reported to be delivered both explicitly and implicitly using both teachers' and peer CF. Among the techniques of CF in use, recast was the most popularly used and highly evaluated by students with regards to its efficacy. Peer CF was also evaluated by many students as not only effective but also a stimulating learning activity.

Beside confirming the high frequency at which CF was provided, learners also perceived of CF as a powerful tool which effectively assists their pronunciation learning. Regardless of the methods in which CF on pronunciation was delivered, CF on pronunciation was claimed to be impactful. Moreover, in contrast with the common concern, CF does not seem to go against learners' self-esteem or motivation; instead, CF even plays a significant role in stimulating learning and reinforce learners' confidence. Learners especially favour immediate CF and CF on their own pronunciation mistakes.

Pedagogical implications

Immediately expanding from the findings of this study, the recommendation is that teachers should combine different types of CF which can supplement one another to further the efficacy of CF in enhancing learners' pronunciation development. Focusing on peer correction and feedback should be also paid with more attention. This strategy of feedback giving is not only evaluated by students as effective but also cultivate learners' interactive roles and autonomy in learning pronunciation. Last but not least, though the teachers in the context of this study was reported to frequently provide feedback on their students' pronunciation, if any of the teachers in the context who are still more or less reluctant giving feedbacks due to the fear of discouraging their students should think otherwise and turn CF into a useful tool for their classroom pedagogy given the strongly welcome of learners to feedback giving.

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Correct Me If I'm Wrong: Exploring the Attitudes and Preferences of ESL Learners on Oral Corrective Feedback in A Multicultural Milieu

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Abstract

Many studies have delved into corrective feedback. However, the literature is scarce on the students' attitudes and preferences toward corrective feedback in a multicultural classroom. Hence, this study addresses the gap in meager studies on corrective feedback involving students coming from differing sub-cultures. Employing the sequential explanatory approach in a mixed-method research design, this study explored the attitudes and preferences of English as Second Language (ESL) learners in terms of the oral corrective feedback they receive from their instructors. The quantitative data were elicited through a five-part questionnaire administered to the students from seven ethnic groups in Northern Luzon, Philippines. Qualitative data, on the other hand, were gathered through focus group discussion. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were employed in analyzing the data, respectively. Anchored on Intercultural Communication, this study suggests that in a multicultural classroom, students differ in attitudes in receiving oral corrective feedback. However, their preferences are almost similar. Moreover, students prefer their errors to be corrected *"very often"* even if most of them feel embarrassed when they are corrected. ESL learners in a multicultural setting possess negative attitude on being interrupted when they are still verbalizing their thoughts. This paper also suggests that most students in a multicultural classroom prefer teachers correcting them through nonverbal behavior.

Keywords: oral corrective feedback, spoken errors, ESL learners' attitudes and preferences, multicultural education, language teaching, intercultural communication

Introduction

Committing errors in language classes or within the course of learning is but a natural part of the process (Hendrickson, 1978). If errors in a language class exist, teachers tend to correct them. In the parlance of language acquisition and language learning, the concept of error correction is commonly branded as corrective feedback. Ellis (2006) defined corrective feedback as 'responses to learner utterances containing an error.' Corrective feedback is not only a simple concept in language acquisition. According to Chaudron (1988), it is rather a "complex phenomenon with several functions."

One evidence of this complexity is the continuing debates and differing positions of researchers along this field. Researchers like Brown (2007), Larsen-Freeman (2000), and Richards and Rodgers (2001) posited that student errors be corrected immediately. In contrast, Krashen (1978) claimed that giving corrective feedback in language teaching is pointless and may even become detrimental to language learning. However, Truscott (1996) stressed his idea that if teachers tolerate linguistic errors inside the classroom, the accuracy of students' linguistic skills may not advance. Subsequently, students would tend to repeat the same mistakes throughout learning.

Resulting in this debatable issue on corrective feedback are studies sprouted in the field of second language acquisition. Prominent researchers along this field include Ammar and Spada (2006), Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006), Ellis and Sheen (2006), Lyster and Mori (2006), Lyster and Ranta (1997), Yang and Lyster (2010), and Yoshida (2010). All their studies were anchored on the cognitive facets of correcting errors among students and eventually on the effects of corrective feedback toward the students' proficiency level, critical thinking, and metacognitive strategies.

Because of the seemingly contradicting ideas of the researchers, Ammar and Spada (2006) contended that corrective feedback to learners might be done through oral and written manners. Many researchers have delved into written corrective feedback (Smith, 2000; Salteh and Sadeghi, 2015; Ye Han, 2017; Jiang and Zhang, 2017; Daneshvar and Rahimi, 2014; Ferris, Lui and Senna, 2013; Fazilatfar, Fallah, Hamavandi and Rostamian, 2014). Most of these researchers focused on the effects of written corrective feedback on the writing outputs of the students and in their learning of grammatical lessons in English classes.

As regards oral corrective feedback, Schulz (2001) listed a few studies that were conducted on giving corrective feedback to ESL students. Most of these studies were anchored on the preference and attitude of the students in accepting corrections from their teachers (Roothooft and Breeze, 2016; Salteh, Alizadeh, and Karim, 2015; Haifaa, 2015; Al Hajri & Al-

Mahrooqi, 2013; Smith and Hillary, 2010). Tomczyk (2013) also agreed that there are a dearth number of studies that have investigated students' perceptions and attitudes regarding error correction.

On the other hand, Faqeih (2015) argued that the attitude of the learners on corrective feedback plays a vital role in second language acquisition. By citing the research of Gardner (1985), Faqeih (2015) believed that corrective feedback could assist or hinder the processing and developing of learning a language depending on learners' and teachers' attitude towards error correction and the type of corrective feedback. The study of Ancker (2000) also revealed that students' confidence, attitude, and motivation on speaking English properly might be affected negatively if correction on students is not done according to their preferences. However, all of such researchers focused their studies on participants coming from one culture or one country of origin.

In this case, Papangkorn (2015) and Tomczyk (2013) investigated to contribute to the body of knowledge by examining EFL classes with students coming from various countries. However, their studies focused only on the matching of students' and teachers' preferences on oral corrective feedback. Although dealing with EFL classes with students coming from various countries, Schulz (2001) studied the effect of oral corrective feedback to students with major cultural differences (Arabic, Japanese, German, French, and Italian). Included in the list of researchers that focused on cultural differences and attitudes of students on oral corrective feedback was that of Katayama (2006) on Japanese students. Katayama's study (2007) revealed that the students freely accept the corrections of the teachers inside the classroom. Contrastingly, Papitchaya (2016) reported that Thai students freely accept those corrections which are related to serious grammatical problems only. Katayama (2007) also added that there are students who yield high positive attitudes on corrective feedbacks if such were given by their peers and not by their teachers.

Katayama (2007) then recommended that a study on the students' attitude on accepting corrective feedback be done to students coming from various sub-cultures. The controversy is that students' attitudes toward corrective feedback might either vary or remain if they come from different sub-cultures, probably coming from one country or state. This idea means that although many have been studied on the preferences and attitudes of the students as regards accepting corrective feedback, contrasting findings on their preferences still exist. Researchers yield contradicting findings, too, in the preference of the students if they are orally corrected.

Most of the studies along this vein were conducted outside the Philippines (Roothooft and Breeze, 2016; Salteh, Alizadeh, & Karim, 2015; Haifaa, 2015; Smith & Hillary, 2010). In the Philippine context, however, there are a dearth number of studies conducted along this line. Calsiyao's study (2015) is perhaps one of the few investigations on oral corrective feedback. However, her focus was on the preference of the students as regards the technique of the teacher in correcting their errors. Calsiyao (2015) found out that students mostly favored recast, explicit, and explanation method for pronunciation errors. Considering that the Philippine classroom is a melting pot of students with diverse cultures and backgrounds, researchers need to delve into the preferences and attitudes of Filipino students as regards oral corrective feedback. The Philippine context then is a rich setting where students' attitudes toward oral corrective feedback can be studied because English classes are conjunction of variegated sub-cultures.

This study, therefore, addresses the gap in studying students' preferences and attitudes toward accepting oral corrective feedback in classes with students coming from sub-cultures. It likewise aims to contribute to the body of knowledge as regards students' attitudes and preferences on spoken corrective feedback, thus, adding to the scarce literature on the Philippine context. Further, it aims to find out if a multicultural classroom would still have a common set of preferences and attitudes toward oral corrective feedback. Information gathered from this research may be useful in dealing with classroom errors effectively in ESL classes consisting of students from sub-cultures.

Research Questions

This study posited the following questions:

1. What is the preference of the ESL students on correction of spoken errors in terms of:
    a. the frequency of correction;
    b. the manner of oral correction; and
    c. teachers' techniques used for oral correction
2. What is the attitude of the participants on the correction of spoken errors?

Methodology

Design

This study made use of the Sequential Explanatory Design (Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L. and Hanson, W. E., 2003; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003), which uses qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a quantitative study. Creswell (2014) opined that using this approach would require the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data and then compare the results to see if the finding confirm or disconfirm each other.

In this study, to confirm or to disconfirm was not just the main purpose of mixing, rather, to better understand the occurrence of the attitudes and the preferences of students on oral corrective feedback (Kerigan, 2014). Hence, there were two different data gathering tools, but the same databases were elicited. Mixing qualitative and quantitative designs enhances the quality of the research data and strengthens the validity and reliability of the conclusions derived from the research (Ecevit, Yalaki, & Kingir, 2018).

Specifically, the descriptive survey design was employed as the quantitative approach in this study. Kelly et al. (2003) have pointed out that descriptive research is aptly used to gather information at a single phenomenon. Moreover, it is used to explain factors during that situation by eliciting socio-demographic profiles, attitudes, levels of perception, preferences, beliefs, habits, knowledge, and to some extent, behaviors. In this study, the descriptive survey was employed to answer the quantitative research questions. As a qualitative approach, the basic qualitative technique was employed.

Participants and Study Site

Students enrolled in English 51 (Structure of the English Language) during the first semester of academic year 2017-2018 at a certain state university in Luzon were the participants of the study. Based on the university registrar's records, there were 97 students enrolled in the class.

A non-probability sampling technique, specifically quota sampling, was used to determine the sample size of the population. Since the ethnicity of the participants was the focus of the study, samples from each ethnic group were chosen to participate. For the interview, 7 participants who represented each ethnic group were involved. The assembled sample has the same proportions of individuals as the entire population concerning their known characteristics, traits or focused phenomenon. This sampling method allows the researcher to study the traits and characteristics that are noted for each subgroup.

Table 1 shows the number of participants in this study.

Table 1. *ESL students understudy.*

	Frequency	Percentage
Yogad	5	16.67
Ilokano	4	13.33
Kankanaey	4	13.33
Itawis	4	13.33
Ibanag	4	13.33
Bisaya	4	13.33
Ifugao	5	16.67
Total	**30**	**100**

Materials and Procedure

The quantitative data were gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire adapted from the studies of Zhao (2010), Renko (2012), Fidan (2015), and Ozmen, K. S., & Aydın, H. Ü (2015). To guarantee the validity of the questionnaire, several specialists assessed it. The reliability of the questionnaire was measured by administering the questionnaires to 30 students who were chosen from outside the participants of the study. To assure data consistency, the questionnaire was administered twice. Likewise, Pearson correlation was used to compute the result of the Test-Retest strategy (Stability index), which resulted in 0.85. The internal consistency coefficient was also computed using Cronbach's Alpha, which revealed acceptable reliability (0.83) of the questionnaire to collect the needed data.

As for the questionnaire, each item was rated by the students using the scale below:

Table 2. *Scale used in rating the questionnaire.*

Scale	Range	Descriptive Rating
5	4.50—5.00	Always/ Very Good/ Strongly Agree
4	3.50—4.49	Very Often/ Good/ Agree
3	2.50—3.49	Sometimes/ Barely Acceptable/ Undecided
2	1.50—2.49	Rarely/ Poor/ Disagree
1	1.00—1.49	Never/ Very Poor/ Strongly Disagree

Furthermore, to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a quantitative study, focus group interview (Salteh, Maghsoud Alizadeh and Sadeghi, Karim, 2015; Sepehrinia, Sajjad & Mehdizadeh, Mostafa, 2016; Mahdi, D., & Saadany, N. E.; 2013) where face-to-face and verbal interchange with the participants under study was conducted. The main tool used during the interview was a voice recorder to capture the responses of the participants. Interview guides with key questions were used. The interview questions were developed using an aide memoir or a priori coding.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected were computer-processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) where weighted mean was used to describe the preference of the ESL students on correction of spoken errors in terms of frequency of correction, type of error corrected and teachers' techniques used for correction; and the attitude of the participants on correction of spoken errors.

This study also employed phenomenological reduction by using repertory grid. It followed the cool and warm analysis technique used by De Guzman and Tan (2007). By repetitive and critical reading of the transcribed statements, the researchers employed the cool analysis, a process to identify the very significant statements from the transcripts. Then, the warm analysis was employed, leading to the identification of categories and themes. After the themes have emerged, the findings were subjected to member checking. The correspondence technique postulated by Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Patton (1990) was employed. Every participant was individually approached to verify the consistency of the transcription and interpretation. The researchers adopted such a technique to assure not only the trustworthiness but also the truthfulness of the data reported (Tandoc, 2013).

As intended to be done in the study, the findings of the qualitative data were confirmed, cross-validated, and corroborated with the results of the quantitative data. This process aims to offset the weaknesses inherent within one method with the strengths of the other method (Creswell et al., 2003).

Ethical Consideration

At the initial phase, request letters were addressed to the head of the campus and the participants. Upon the receipt of their permission and willingness to participate, the researcher conducted the interview based on the participants' availability. In eliciting more natural responses to the problem, all the participants were interviewed in locations of their own choice, on the assumption that they would be more comfortable in a familiar environment. Participants were guaranteed anonymity, were told that they could refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time, and that participation is exclusively voluntary (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Before conducting the interviews, the purpose and design of the study were presented to assure that everyone will receive consistent orientation.

Results and Discussion

Students' Preference on Frequency of Oral Correction

Participants wanted their errors to be corrected "Very Often" as revealed in Table 2 (M=3.59). Similarly, grammar, pronunciation, accent and intonation, words or phrase usage, and organization of discourse were rated "Very Often" with means of 3.37, 3.53, 3.73, and 3.67, respectively, but only "Sometimes" for Inappropriate Expressions (M=3.30). The results indicate that oral errors of the participants should be corrected regularly by the teacher which corroborates with the findings of Harmon (cited by Lightbown, 1990); Truscott (1999), Allwright, Fanselow, Hendrickson, DeKeyser, Lyster and Spada (1999), who found that most students like immediate and often correction of their errors. Likewise, Sisilia (2008) mentioned that students believe that it is important to respond to surface-level errors (grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary choice, and expressions that do not sound English) and that correction of grammar errors is more important than correction of other surface-level errors.

Table 3. *The Frequency of Oral Correction*

Linguistic Areas	Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
1. Grammar	3.73	Very Often
2. Pronunciation, accent, and intonation	3.53	Very Often
3. words or phrase usage	3.73	Very Often
4. Inappropriate expressions	3.30	Sometimes
5. organization of discourse	3.67	Very Often
Over All Mean	3.59	Very Often

The results gleaned from the table were supported by the responses of the participants in the interview. Generally, the participants want the correction of their spoken errors to be corrected "very often" except for grammatical errors. Students believe that pronunciation errors should be the most often corrected error.

The strong desire for correction of grammatical errors is predictable among students now because of the changes that occurred in the methodology and contents of teaching English from the elementary to the tertiary level. It can be seen in the English books for elementary and high school today that grammar is only incidental. At the tertiary level, the Communication

Arts subjects are changed to Purposive Communication (CHED Memorandum Order 20, 2013).

This study contends that many students express their concern to learn correct pronunciation, accent, and intonation. It should be noted that the phonology of the Filipino language is very much different from that of the English language; hence, Filipino students would naturally experience difficulty acquiring correct pronunciation. Subsequently, very few Filipino teachers of English can imitate the pronunciation, accent, and intonation of native speakers. So, whatever is taught to the learners from the elementary is carried over to the tertiary level. This explains why students are desirous of receiving feedback "often" in terms of their pronunciation, accent, and intonation.

Moreover, this frequency of oral correction, particularly pronunciation, corroborates the study of Papangkorn (2015), which believes that both males and females wanted their spoken errors to be corrected. Similarly, in Katayama's (2006) study, 92.8% of the participants have positive attitudes toward receiving error correction, and 82 % of 819 Korean EFL learners in Jang's (2003) study. ESL and EFL learners also had strongly positive attitudes toward receiving error correction in the studies conducted by Cathcart and Olsen (1976), Chenoweth et al. (1983), McCargar (1993), Oladejo (1993), Bang (1999), and Schulz (2001).

According to the focus group discussion, interviewees gave a reason for this positive attitude toward the necessity of error correction by stating that: *"I strongly agree because we can use the advice to speak more accurately in the future."* (Stud1). This idea is similar to the main reason for positive attitude of the learners in Katayama's (2007) study that learners wanted to improve their accuracy in English.

In the other elements of English, the students expressed their "very often" desire for correction. It means that they are interested in improving their present proficiency. Students must be prepared to take professional board examinations and Civil Service examinations. These examinations are given in the English language; therefore, the students are expected to have a wide range of vocabulary. Practically students merely memorize word meanings; consequently, they find difficulty in using words to fit contexts. It is also the researchers' observation that students do not practice speaking the language in school even if there are orders for them to speak English when transacting business in offices within the campus because they lack confidence.

This finding coincides with that of Sanavi and Mirsaeedi (2008). They found that the Iranian language learners desire to be usually corrected with their spoken errors in English.

Another study revealing the same finding is that of Park (2010). He found that students expect teachers to correct their errors more frequently.

Nonetheless, the finding that this practice of correcting “very often” and “always” is debunked by the recommendation of Otavio (2010); Kavaliauskienė, Anusienė, Kaminskienė, (2009); and Firwana (2010). According to them, it is better to postpone corrective feedback until the end of the exchange or interaction so that the flow of thought of the students will not be distracted and to avoid placing them in an embarrassing situation.

Students’ Preference for Manner of Oral Correction

Based on the solicited responses from the participants, they “Strongly Agree” that they want their teachers to correct their errors in speaking English, and teachers should only correct errors that interfere with communication. But they were undecided on the statement “Teachers should correct errors in the middle of a conversation” (M=2.93). It implies that the students are desirous of having all their spoken errors in the classroom corrected by the teacher. They also have a positive attitude toward peer correction and self-correction. As to the type of errors to be corrected, they are certain of having errors that hamper the communication process corrected; however, they are uncertain as to the process where the teacher corrects their errors in the middle of the conversation.

The result aligns with the studies of Kavaliauskienė, Anusienė, Kaminskienė (2009) and Otavio (2010) which stressed that during communication activities, teachers should not interrupt students just to give error correction because interruption may raise stress levels and hinder communication. These researchers recommend that “mistakes” should be later dealt with after the activity has ended. Furthermore, as explained by Hendrickson (1978), learners do not like to be corrected for each minor error they make. This practice ruins their confidence to use the target language. Hence, postponing corrective feedback may also encourage language learners to self-correct which in effect is more reliable than just pointing out the error and it was difficult to produce coherent L2 speech while being interrupted.

Confirming the answers from the questionnaire are the responses gathered through the focus group discussion with varying participants from the questionnaires. The responses in the focus group discussion indicate that students consider correction in private, individual correction, low-tone correction and giving hints as positive ways of correcting their errors.

This finding is in harmony with the finding of Tomczyk (2013) which claimed that teachers very often used explicit forms of indicating that there was an error in the utterance; for instance, they used rising intonation or they showed it by means of gestures or mimes. In other words, the learners' preference for being corrected immediately gives a clear response to Hendrickson's (1977) second question concerning when learner errors should be corrected.

The students' responses to be corrected individually address not only the perceived affective impact of corrective feedback but also the question of frequency. Individual error correction carries the possibility of more frequent and specific corrective feedback than correction of groups.

It is noted that the students had previously mentioned that they agree with self-correction when teachers give them hints. Under the techniques involving grammatical errors, they now consider it as a method barely acceptable. The researcher included some of the possible options to deal with the noticed errors, which might be undertaken after the previous decisions have been made, namely whether to correct or not, who should provide the correction, when the corrective should take place.

Table 4. *The Manner of Oral Correction*

Statements	**Mean**	**Qualitative Description**
1. I want teachers to correct my errors in speaking English.	4.67	Strongly Agree
2. Teachers should correct all errors that learners make in speaking English.	4.17	Agree
3. Teachers should correct only the errors that interfere with communication.	5.00	Strongly Agree
4. Teachers should correct errors in the middle of a conversation.	2.93	Undecided
5. I feel bad or angry when teachers correct my errors.	3.93	Agree
6. I want my classmates to correct my oral errors in group work.	3.60	Agree
7. I want to do my own correction by asking hint from the teacher.	3.50	Agree

This implies that humiliation in class while being corrected may occur if teachers frequently publicize their errors, especially when teachers use high-tone and sarcasm. This implication corroborates the claims of some advocates of giving prompts and hints (Lyster, 1998, 2004; Fadilah, 2018; Lyster & Ranta) as more effective techniques. Radecki and Swales (1988), support the viewpoints of students in this study and the stance adopted by Amrhein and Nassaji (2010), who believe that if teachers do not correct all errors whether they are mechanical, surface level errors, or major ones, the students might lose their faith in their teachers.

Students' Preference on Teachers' Techniques in Error Correction

The participants strongly yearned non-verbal clues to be a "very good" teachers' technique in error correction. Recast, Explicit, Repetition, Clarification Request, Metalinguistic Clues, Elicitation, Indicating the Error and Explanation, on the other hand, resulted in "good". On the contrary, "No Correction" ensued "Poor" (M=2.17). This further revealed that students wanted to be corrected if they commit errors and do not really prefer if the teacher will just ignore their error.

The result implies that the students mostly prefer that their teachers indicate that an error occurred through nonverbal behavior, such as gesture and facial expressions but they do not prefer if the teacher ignores the error they committed which conforms to the result of the studies of Hillary (2010) and Haifaa (2015), which indicated that most students reported a neutral or positive emotional reaction to being corrected, and actually preferred being corrected over not being corrected. Likewise, Yasemin Kirgoz, Reyhan Agcam (2015), in their study, revealed that no participants believe that spoken errors of EFL learners should be entirely ignored.

Table 5. *Teachers' Techniques in Error Correction*

Teachers' Techniques	Mean	Qualitative Interpretation
1. No Correction	2.17	Poor
2. Recast	3.87	Good
3. Explicit	4.45	Good
4. Non-verbal Clues	4.67	Very Good
5. Repetition	3.70	Good
6. Clarification Request	4.36	Good
7.Metalinguistic Clues	3.82	Good
8. Elicitation	3.95	Good
9. Indicating the Error	4.32	Good
10. Explanation	4.09	Good

Along with this vein, the study of Elżbieta (2013), Rassaei, Ehsan & Moinzadeh, Ahmad & Youhanaee, Manijeh (2012) specified that the most common technique used by the teachers is indicating an error of students is by means of gestures which is in agreement with the result of the present study. Also, Haghani (2012) who probed into the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback found that among the implicit corrective feedback, elicitation proved to be the most effective. Lyster and Ranta (1997), Liu Li (2004), Bob Nsimba Fungula (2013), Mohamed Elsaghayer (2014) proved further that recast is the most common form; however, it is also the least effective.

During the focus group discussion, on the other hand, students were asked about the manner how teachers correct their oral errors. Findings show that most of the time students' errors are corrected by interruption, repetition and delayed feedback. The methods strongly yearned by the participants for their spoken errors are technically termed as recast, explanation why the error is incorrect, and explicit correction. In a more in-depth interview, they said that for the grammar errors they favor repetition, clarification requests, indicating the errors and elicitation. The students are consistent with their response that they are desirous of corrective feedback on classroom oral errors.

These findings are in harmony with the findings of Pawlak (2002); Baleghizadesh & Dadashi (2011); Kavaliauskienė, Anusienė, Kaminskienė (2009); Firwana (2010); Yoshida (2010); and Katayama (2007). These studies found that language learners observe different techniques of corrective feedback. Jenkins and Larson (1978), on the other hand, found that any method of corrective feedback is superior to no correction. This may be the reason why the students under study do not like it when the teacher does not make any corrective feedback on their classroom oral errors.

Moreover, it can be deduced that teachers indeed use a variety of methods in various timeframes. Due to the observations in the classroom, it is claimed that both immediate and delayed corrections were the two most used types of remedial treatment in the multicultural language classrooms. As regards delayed correction, the students divulged that teachers made notes of the students' performances and then provided them with the corrective feedback. The other correction that appeared was an immediate correction, which was particularly used to correct pronunciation errors, which was later claimed to be "very good." Nonetheless, some of them believed that they forgot what they wanted to convey because of the interruption technique used by the teachers.

In this regard, they are not fully comfortable with the interruption technique of teachers in correcting oral errors because the interruption may disrupt the spontaneity of the learners' ideas.

Students' Attitudes in Receiving Corrections from their Teachers

As revealed in the table below, among the 30 participants who are representatives of the 7 ethnic groups, 10 of them feel embarrassed, 8 were fine, 5 were reassured, 4 were confused and 3 were annoyed. Data indicate that the students' attitudes vary depending on how they accept the correction. Although the participants have differing views, most of the participants preferred that the correction of their teacher be done only when the mistake is important, and none of them preferred that their error is ignored.

Table 6. *Students' Attitude in Receiving Corrections from their Teachers.*

Statements	Frequency	Rank
How do you feel when the teacher corrects your spoken mistakes?		
embarrassed	10	1
annoyed	3	5
confused	4	4
reassured	5	3
fine	8	2
You prefer the correction of your teacher…		
every time you make a mistake	13	2
only when the mistake is important	17	1
never	0	
You prefer the correction of your teacher…		
every time you make a mistake	7	2
only when the mistake is important	23	1
never	0	
You prefer the correction of your teacher…		
in private	18	1
in class	12	2
You prefer the correction of your teacher…		
immediately	21	1
after class	9	2
You prefer the correction of your teacher…		
individually	22	1
as a group	8	2

Additionally, in terms of correcting the oral errors of the participants, they preferred that they are corrected privately (18), immediately (21), and individually (22). Thus, corrective feedback may either create negative or positive emotional experiences for the students. Their preferences differ from the claim of Smith (2010) that CF does not generally create a negative emotional experience for students and that students preferred to be corrected in class.

The studies of Asghar Salimi, Nahid Delju, Hassan Asadollahfam (2011), Ellis, R., Loewen, S., & Erlam, R. (2006), Dilek Fidan (2015) are in accord with the result of this study. These researchers found out that most of the students wanted their errors to be corrected privately because they feel ashamed when they were corrected in class.

Furthermore, the results of the focus group discussion confirm previous findings that students' attitudes on receiving correction indeed vary. As in the research by Jean and Simard (2011) and Schulz (2001), many students in this study indicated that they wished to be corrected but still felt humiliated and embarrassed by the manner on how the correction is provided to them. Also, this study uncovers that a relation to the method of correction and emotional state of the students or learners exists.

Regarding the best way of providing oral corrective feedback, it appears that students would like a more positive and encouraging way of oral correction (i.e., explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback) than outright (interruption technique) and sarcastic correction. Methodologists, such as Harmer (2006, p.108), also advise teachers not to interrupt students when they are engaged in so-called fluency-oriented tasks, unless 'gentle correction' is used. By 'gentle correction,' Harmer appears to be referring to the recast, which is generally considered to be the most implicit type of corrective feedback. However, research on corrective feedback effectiveness comparing more explicit types of corrective feedback to more implicit types has often found larger effects for more explicit types (e.g., Lyster, 2004; Sheen, 2007; Yilmaz, 2012).

The themes that surfaced from the focus group discussion are somewhat relative to the result of the administered questionnaires. For those who answered the questionnaires, the majority also said that they are quite embarrassed about the teachers' way of orally correcting them; however, they feel that it is still "very good" that teachers are correcting them, especially their pronunciation errors. Even with this feeling of humiliation and embarrassment, they still wish to be orally corrected immediately and individually.

On the other vein, Truscott (1999) warns about the potential damage oral corrective feedback can cause to students' self-esteem and motivation. Hence, students in a multicultural setting would prefer being corrected positively, with the teachers' low tone, clear gestures, and subtle facial expressions. Still, some learners stated that they usually feel happy and grateful. Although these are merely students' responses to belief statements that may not correspond to their actual feelings, these results nonetheless suggest that teachers should not feel so reluctant to interrupt their students during communicative activities or to make use of more explicit types of oral corrective feedback.

This is not only because students appear to ask for corrective feedback, but also because research on form-focused instruction (e.g., Williams, 2005 and Sakai, 2011) and immediate oral corrective feedback (Lyster et al., 2013) shows that providing immediate correction during meaning-focused activities is helpful and not necessarily intrusive.

This study also suggests that teachers might want to consider employing a variety of methodologies in orally correcting students' errors. Interruption, repetition and delayed feedback techniques of teachers' correction are evident in the study. However, students in a multicultural setting would prefer repetition, request for clarification, and elicitation. With these results at hand, it is then essential for teachers to consider the preferences and attitudes of the students on oral corrective feedback before or during the course. By doing so, teachers will be able to offer the most appropriate technique to suit the students' needs and eventually achieve the best teaching and learning results. Since students mostly prefer that the teacher corrects them through non-verbal cues and clues, repetition, request for clarification, and elicitation, teachers, schools and universities should provide access to information for language teachers' in-service training for the proper and best way to use these techniques.

Conclusion

This study found out that in a multicultural classroom, students have different attitudes in terms of oral corrective feedback. Moreover, even though they were representatives of different ethnic groups, in terms of their preferences in oral corrective feedback, it all yielded to almost similar responses.

In this multicultural context, students prefer their errors to be corrected very often even if most of them feel embarrassed and experience negative emotional impact when they are corrected. They mostly preferred to be corrected in private than in class, and important errors should only be corrected rather than interrupting them when they are still voicing out their thoughts.

One limitation of this study is its low generalizability. Hence, in the context of this research, it could be surmised that students yearn for the correction of pronunciation, accent, and intonation but not so much on their grammatical errors. Improving their English proficiency is their main reason for wanting to be corrected orally. Teachers' techniques used in oral correction revealed further that participants wanted to be corrected if they commit errors and do not prefer if the teacher will ignore their errors.

In a multicultural setting like in this study, students mostly prefer that their teachers indicate that an error occurred through nonverbal behavior, such as gestures and facial expressions, but they do not prefer if the teacher uses high-tone and sarcasm. Also, publicizing their errors could trigger humiliation and embarrassment among them. They are more at ease when these students are corrected in a low-tone, highly encouraging, and positive way using explicit and metalinguistic techniques.

This study is limited only in one university with students from varying cultures. To make the findings more conclusive, other researchers might want to consider comparing multicultural classrooms in various higher education institutions.

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Learning styles and English receptive skills among Filipino college students

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Abstract

Anchored on Sperry's (1977) Split-Brain model of Intelligence, learning styles in terms of brain hemisphericity are generally linked to language performance. This study determined the relationship between the learning styles and the scores in the receptive skills among college students of a state university in Southern Philippines. To pursue with this end, the study employed the Descriptive- Correlational Design in the context of the randomly selected one hundred sixty (160) first to fourth year college students of the university under study. For the data gathering, it used three instruments: the validated Hemispheric Dominance Test (HDT) adapted from Brown (2000), the Listening Comprehension Test (LCT) adapted from the standardized Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (Sulivan & Zhong, 1990) and the Reading Comprehension Test (RCT)adopted from Sicat (1992). Using Pearson r as the main statistical tool, the study revealed a significant relationship between learning styles and score in listening test when respondents were grouped by age. The study recommends, among others, that the English Department include a test of receptive skills in its English Proficiency Test for incoming first year and hold a yearly English festival with a plethora of language activities to develop students' right-brain.

Keywords: *learning styles, receptive skills, brain hemisphericity, language skills, descriptive- correlation design*

Introduction

English is very important in Philippine colleges and universities. As reviewed by Mendoza (2019), this "English language is based on American English that is of Germanic language family descent" which has "existed in the Philippine educational system since the 1900s" (p.366). Mendoza's review continued that English was first implemented as medium of instruction in compliance to US President McKinley's letter of instruction to the Philippine Commission on April 1, 1900. Although there has been reduction in the domains of use of the English language since the implementation of Bilingual Education Policy (BEP) in 1974, English continues to be the medium of instruction for mathematics, science and technology as well as for social sciences and humanities, as stipulated in the BEP of the country (Department of Education, 1987). Moreover, the world of knowledge in these fields is available in English. So, college and university students are expected to have the facility in the English language particularly in the receptive skills of listening and reading for them to succeed in their tertiary education especially that these two skills are the foundation of understanding English inputs.

Brown (2007) stated that listening is not a one-way street; it is not merely the processes of a unidirectional receiving of audible symbols. He continued that one facet-the first step-of listening comprehension is the psychomotor process of receiving sound waves through the ear and transmitting nerve impulses to the brain. Moreover, Tyagi (2013, p. 1) as cited by Afriani (2017) expressed that listening skill is a key to receiving messages effectively. Likewise, according to Nuttal (2000:2) in Novianto (2012), reading means a result of interaction between the writer's mind and the reader's mind. He said that it is the way how the reader tries to get the message or the intended meaning from the writer. He continued saying that reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Moreover, Grabe & Stoller (2001) as cited by Wu (2008) emphatically said that of the four skills, reading can be regarded as especially important because it is assumed to be the central means for learning new information; however, the process is complex. According to Sellers (2000) as cited by Wu (2008) the reading process is cognitively demanding because learners need to coordinate attention, perception, memory, and comprehension. In short, these receptive skills of listening and reading are really important for students to be equipped with as both are basic means of decoding and learning new information. However, it does not necessarily happen in reality.

There have been no local studies conducted on students' listening skill, but there were a few conducted in the tertiary level on reading. One of these was conducted by Sicat (1992) which revealed that college students in a public university in Southern Philippines obtained low scores in the reading comprehension test. Another studies by Malbago (1995) and Olaer

(1998) showed that college students obtained low rating in the inferential/interpretative level of reading skill. This low reading proficiency level could be improved by working on some possible correlates. In this study, learning styles are classified as left brain dominant (deductive learners) versus right brain dominant (inductive learners) which (Brown, 2000) posited to be a possible correlate.

Munsakorn (2012, p.234) as cited by Afriani (2017) said that each student will use a different style of learning to gain the most benefit from a course in English for the workplace. The success of each student comes from the ability to provide a variety of learning styles. Moreover, Vaishnav & Chirayu (2013); Gokalp (2013) and Abidin, Rezaee, Abdullah & Sigh (2011) revealed that there was a significant relationship between learning styles and academic performance.

Although the receptive skill of reading was covered in some local studies of (Sicat, 1992), (Malbago, 1995) and (Olaer, 1998), the other receptive skill of listening and the variables of age, gender and area of specialization were never included. So, the conduct of this study was necessary to fill in that gap.

This study primarily aimed to establish any significant relationship between the respondents' learning styles and their scores in the listening and reading tests. Specifically, it attempted to answer the following questions: a) What type of learners are the college students in terms of brain hemisphericity? b) What is the students' proficiency level in the receptive skills? c) Is there a significant relationship between students' learning style and their proficiency level in the receptive skills? d) Is there a significant relationship between the two main variables when data are grouped according to age, gender and area of specialization?

This study may contribute to the pool of knowledge in the disciplines of Psycholinguistics, Language Teaching, ESL and EFL. In addition, it may encourage the concerned language department to conduct consistently a yearly English festival with a plethora of language activities to develop students' right-brain and language skills. It may also encourage English teachers to review their syllabi and integrate the teaching of listening and reading strategies especially listening which has seemingly been neglected in the language classroom context.

This was done in order to recommend some strategies in balancing students' learning styles and enhancing their receptive skills.

Theoretical Framework

On anchor theories of the current study

This study was anchored on Sperry's (1977) Split-Brain Model of Intelligence (de Tagle, 1992). In this model, Sperry viewed learning styles in terms of brain hemisphericity as an individual's preference in processing information. He said that when a person uses his left-brain hemisphere in processing information, he is called a left-brained individual who is good in language, mathematical formulae, logic, numbers, sequence, linearity, analysis and can easily memorize words of a song. On the other hand, if one uses his right-brain hemisphere, he is considered a right-brained individual who is good in forms and patterns, spatial manipulation, rhythm and musical appreciation, images/pictures, imagination, dimension and can easily get the tune of a song (Brown, 2000).

This study was also based on Oller's (1979) Divisibility Hypothesis cited by Tabacug (1990) which stated that language skills can be divided into components, and that each can be tested discretely. Thus, the receptive skills of listening and reading were separately tested in this study.

On the relationship between learning styles and receptive skills

Regarding the relationship between learning styles and the receptive skills of listening and reading, at least two studies revealed a significant relationship, and another two studies showed no significant relationship between the two variables under study. Naning & Hayati (2011) and Jowkar (2015) revealed that learning styles were significantly related with listening comprehension. On the other hand, the study conducted by Pratiwi and Novita (2012) revealed that there was no significant correlation between learning style and students' reading comprehension among the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program of FKIP UNTAN Pontianak in academic year 2011-2012. Consistently, the other study by Afriani (2017) revealed that there was no significant relationship between the learning style and listening comprehension ($r=.087$ at $> p.05$) among the 86 twelfth grade students of SMA Pusri Palembang.

It can be noted that the two studies of Naning & Hayati (2011) and Jowkar (2015) correlated learning styles with listening comprehension while the other two by Pratiwi and Novita (2012) and Afriani (2017) correlated learning styles with reading comprehension. No study has been done to show any relationship between learning styles and both receptive skills of listening and reading comprehension with moderating variables of area of specialization, gender and age. So again, the conduct of this study was imperative to fill in the gap.

Methods

This study employed the descriptive - correlation design involving a sample of 160 respondents chosen randomly from the 4,000 first year - fourth year students of the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Engineering and Technology at Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City in southern Philippines. The distribution of respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents by area of specialization, age and gender

Area of Specialization	Age				Gender		Total
	16 & below	17-18	19-20	21 & above	Male	Female	
Liberal Arts	11	29	37	3	11	69	80
Engineering	11	33	30	6	57	23	80
TOTAL	22	62	67	9	68	92	160

There were three instruments used in the study. The validated Hemispheric Dominance Test (HDT), an adaptation from the Left- Brain Dominance Test by Brown (2000) was used to determine the respondents' learning styles whether a respondent was left- brained, right-brained or whole brained. The Listening Comprehension Test, a 35- item tape-recorded one adopted from the standardized Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was used to measure the respondents' ability to understand spoken English (Sulivan & Zhong, 1990). Since the TOEFL tape was not available, it was locally produced and reliability-tested. Using the Kuder- Richardson Formula 21, the recorded instrument was reliable (83%) at $p<.05$. The last test, the validated Reading Comprehension Test (RCT) adopted from Sicat (1992) was used to measure the respondents' ability to understand written English.

The data gathering procedure consisted of three stages: the preliminary stage, the actual data gathering, and the post data collection. The *preliminary stage* included the production of the research instruments, securing permission from the concerned deans to administer the three instruments and orienting the concerned teachers about the research activity. Then, *the stage of actual data gathering* followed. Three tests per session were administered observing the following sequence: a) the Hemispheric Dominance Test, b) the Listening Comprehension Test, and c) the Reading Comprehension Test. There were eight (8) sessions in all based on the students' area of specialization (engineering and liberal arts) and year level (first to fourth year); that is, four (4) sessions were allotted for the engineering students and four (4) sessions, for the liberal arts. Lastly, *in the post data collection stage*, the following tasks were done: retrieval of the three sets of answer sheets, the checking of test papers, and summarizing the raw data in tabular form for the statistical treatment.

For the data analysis, the study used descriptive statistics to answer Research Question 1 about what learning style in terms of hemispericity the students do belong. To answer Research Question 2 about the overall proficiency level of the students in the receptive skills of listening and reading, the university's grading system shown in Table 2 below was used. Lastly, to answer Research Question 3 about whether or not there is a significant correlation between learning styles and receptive skills, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was used.

Table 2

The 35-item transmutation table (WMSU Code, 2015)

35 as Highest Score	Equivalent Grade	Description
34 – 35	1.0	
32 – 33	1.25	Excellent
30 – 31	1.5	
28 – 29	1.75	Very Good
27	2.0	
25 – 26	2.25	Good
23 – 24	2.5	
21 – 22	2.75	Fair
20	3.0	Passing
19 – below	3.25 - 5.0	Failing

Results

Learning Styles

As shown in Figure 1, majority (75 %) of the respondents were left-brain dominant, 37 (23.12%) were right-brain dominant and only 3 (1.88%) were whole-brain dominant.

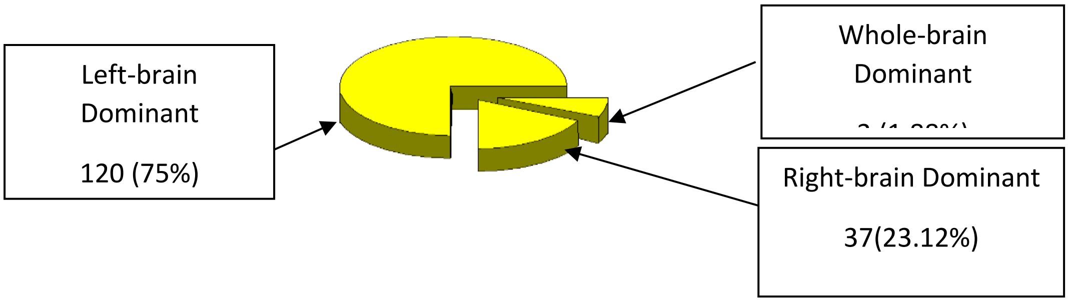

Figure 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Learning Styles.

English proficiency levels in the receptive skills

On the students' English proficiency scores in the receptive skills, the data (Table 3) revealed that the students' mean score in the Listening Comprehension Test was 21.22 which had an equivalent grade of 2.5 with a qualitative interpretation of being "fair". Their mean performance in the Reading Comprehension Test was 17.37 which had an equivalent grade of 3.0 which was considered "passing".

Table 3

English proficiency levels in the receptive skills

Receptive Skills	n	HPS	Mean	SD	Grade	Interpretation
○ Listening	160	35	21.22	5.07	2.5	Fair
○ Reading	160	35	17.37	4.95	3.0	Passing

Legend: 1.0-1.25 = Excellent; 1.5-1.75 = Very Good; 2.0 – 2.25 = Good
2.5-2.75 = Fair; 3.0 = Passing; 5.0= Failure

Correlation results between learning styles and receptive skills

When respondents' learning styles were correlated with scores in the two receptive skills of listening and reading, Pearson r correlation analysis (Table 4) revealed that students' learning style was negatively correlated with their listening skill and positively correlated with their reading skill; however, both were not significant as shown by their computed values which were lesser than the critical value of r of 0.164. Even if the degree of the correlation was not statistically significant at $p<0.05$, the results indicated that students with left-brain dominance would likely get higher score in the listening test while those with right-brain or whole-brain dominance would likely get lower in the same listening test. In contrast, students with right-brain or whole-brain dominance would likely get higher score in the reading test while those with left-brain dominance would likely get lower score in the same reading test.

Table 4

Correlation results between learning styles and receptive skills

Macro Skill	N	DF	Computed Value of r	Critical value of r at 0.05	Interpretation
Listening	160	158	-0.1057	0.164	Not Significant
Reading	160	158	0.0496	0.164	Not Significant

Learning Styles and Receptive Skills by Age Group

Learning Styles and Listening Skill by Age Group. As shown in Table 5, the correlation results between students' learning style and listening skill in terms of their ages revealed a significant correlation only among the "19 and 20 years old" students; their learning style was negatively and significantly related with their listening skill. This was evidenced by their computed value of r of -0.1647 which is greater than the critical value of r of 0.164. This implies that students aged 19 and 20 years old with left-brain dominance tended to be better listeners than the whole or right-brained students.

Learning Styles and Reading Skill by Age Group**.** The correlation analysis employed between learning style and reading skill when data were categorized according to age revealed no significant relationship in all of the 4 age groups (See Table 5).

Table 5

Correlation results between learning styles and receptive skills by age group

Age Group	Computed Value of r		Critical Value of r at 0.05 level	Interpretation
	Listening	Reading		
16 Years old & Below	-0.1827	-0.0047	0.317	All Not Sig.
17 & 18 Years old	-0.1827	0.1751	0.64	All Not Sig.
19 & 20 Years old	0.1647*	0.0797	0.164	*Significant
21 Years old & Above	0.0098	0.0558	0.4	All Not Sig.

Learning styles and receptive skills by gender

When students' learning styles were correlated with listening and reading skills by gender, it was found out that the learning styles of both male and female students were not significantly correlated with their listening and reading skills. It implies that students’ being male or female has nothing to do with their performance in the listening and reading tests; they may get high or low in the two receptive skill tests regardless of their gender (See Table 6).

Table 6

Correlation results between learning styles and receptive skills by gender

Gender	N	Computed Value of r		Critical Value of r at 0.05 level	Interpretation
		Listening	Reading		
Male	68	-0.0867	0.0413	0.164	All Not Sig.
Female	92	-0.1162	0.0594	0.164	All Not Sig.

Learning styles and receptive skills by area of specialization

As presented in Table 6, the Pearson r result revealed that students' learning styles had no significant relationship with their listening and reading proficiency by area of specialization. This means that students’ learning styles had nothing to do with their listening and reading skills although the data tended to show that the right-brained or whole-brained students from the two colleges involved were likely to get higher scores in the Reading Comprehension Test; whereas the left-brained, lower scores in the same test (Table 6).

Table 6

Correlation results between learning styles and receptive skills by area of specialization

Area of Specialization	n	Computed Value of r		Critical Value of r at 0.05 level	Interpretation
		Listening	Reading		
Liberal Arts	80	-0.0515	0.0413	0.183	All Not Sig.
Engineering	80	-0.1073	0.0594	0.183	All not Sig.

Conclusion and discussion

The study concluded that most of the respondents of the study were left-brained (75%). This implies that the two colleges at the Philippine university under study have succeeded in developing the left-brain hemisphere of the students while the right-brain hemisphere seemed neglected. The study recommends that teachers help develop both hemispheres of the brain through diversified teaching activities and experiences.

The study also revealed that the respondents had generally *average* to *low* proficiency level in the receptive skill tests, listening (2.5) and reading (3.0) based on 1.0 as the highest value. This finding has been somehow in congruence with Mendoza’s (2019) study which revealed, among others, that fourth year secondary students of Sulu got an *average* English proficiency level in both speaking and writing skills with mean values of 56.57 and 54.87, respectively. Although these are productive skills, they are considered the counterparts of the receptive skills under study.

The students’ getting generally low proficiency level in the receptive skills happened because per observation these skills have not been given equal importance with other skills in the classroom language teaching context. Hence, students have not been given enough opportunity to practice the skills. This claim is supported by Rintaningrum (2016) who revealed that lack of practice and listening strategies are among the reasons why students who learn English at TPB class 20 found listening in English difficult. Rintaningrum continued that, as a result, the students are not familiar with what the speakers are talking, and that they are not able to answer the questions in listening due to the lack of the respondents' knowledge in grammar, and vocabulary. With this, the study forwards two recommendations: a) that English professors include in their respective language subjects the teaching of listening strategies and several opportunities for students to practice the skills to help them enhance their listening and reading comprehension skills as these are the key to understanding all other information written in English, and b) that future researchers may conduct a study on the reasons why students in the university under study get low in the tests of receptive skills.

Moreover, the study showed that respondents' learning styles were not significantly related with their listening skill (r=-0.1057) and reading skill (r= 0.0496) at $p<0.05$. This implies that the left-brained, right-brained or whole-brained students may get high or low in the two receptive skills of listening and reading. This finding is supported by at least two studies: one study conducted by Afriani (2017) revealed that there was no significant relationship between the learning style and listening comprehension (r=.087 at > p.05) among the 86 twelfth grade students of SMA Pusri Palembang; the other study by Pratiwi and Novita (2012) revealed that there was no significant correlation between learning style and students' reading comprehension on the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program of FKIP UNTAN Pontianak in academic year 2011-2012. However, the same finding has contradicted the studies of Jowkar (2015) and Naning & Hayati (2011) which revealed that learning styles were significantly related with listening comprehension.

On the contrary, the two variables were significantly related when data were grouped according to age specifically among the "19 and 20 years old" students whose learning style had a negative and significant relationship with their listening skill (r = -0.1647). It implies that as the left-brained learners grow older, they tend to become better listeners while the right-brained and whole-brained counterparts tend to become poorer listeners.

On the whole, the current finding has not supported Sperry's (1977) Split-Brain Model of Intelligence which posits that language is the function of the left brain hemisphere since the study revealed no significant relationship between learning styles (left-, right- and whole-brain dominant) and language skills (listening and reading).

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An Exploration of Graffiti Tags in Saudi Arabia Context: A Sociolinguistic Account

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Abstract

The present study approaches the graffiti from a semiotic and sociolinguistic perspective as a voice inscription of the local community of Dammam city youth in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (how they picture their voices in their landscape). The study used qualitative – textual-thematic analysis and descriptive research design. There were 80 graffiti pictures collected from the streets of Dammam City, mostly suburb areas and 15 graffiti writers were interviewed. The themes of the graffiti writers pertain to personal feelings of love, religion, humor, sport, social /anti-social and national graffiti. Graffiti is not only the sound of the marginalized or neglected youth who renegotiate existing power relations of life, love, rights, concerns, and duties, but also can be an expression of the challenges, concerns, attitudes and dominant semiotics of today's youth. The classification of the corpus of the study is data-driven, based on the semantic content of the graffiti. Interestingly, the study concludes that graffiti writing is a show of declaring the graffiti writers’ concept of “we own this place” or a claim of ownership of a public place. They see the street as a public place and their mindset is that they also own the best place.

Keywords: graffiti, sociolinguistics, graffiti writers, Dammam City

Introduction

Everyone believes that communication is an imperative and fundamental human need. People use verbal and non-verbal cues to ventilate their thoughts and feelings. It is for this reason that graffiti is a form of communication and a language by itself (Bangayan-Manera, 2019). Graffiti writing is commonly used on any surfaces. For some people, graffiti is an art, while others view it as visual noise. Whatever listening to these graffiti, writer's voice is much better than to judge them as a menace to society.

Graffiti pertains to a greater definition of artistic work that presents in a visual or textual account. It may be a well-planned artwork that signifies new meanings to the reader as well as to the graffiti writers.'

Categorizing graffiti is an essential concern in this study as this is part of the objectives of the present investigation. The researcher claims that these categorizations are very helpful as it can further help the researcher unravel the meanings that are conveyed in the graffiti writings. They also offer reasons or motives why people most especially the youth are involved in the graffiti culture. These concerns are vital in this study as it investigates the concepts revealed by graffiti writings and the motives behind doing it.

Graffiti bloggers, in the Dammam context, are Dhim, Graffiti Dammam, Mad Jokers, Scat, Demo, and their nicknames indicate a foreign influence except Dhim 'spoiling name derived from the local famous name Abdulrahman'. Graffiti writers ,in the Arab world in general and Saudi Arabia in particular, have a vast community platform where millions of photos are authenticated with their signature, spread and shared to the public to appraise their street art by their followers.

Understanding the profile of people who perform graffiti writings is relevant to the present study. Graffiti artists are encouraged by the government, under the umbrella of the governmental municipality in specific popular streets in Dammam Cities, and basically in the form of graphs with no voices. Graffiti artists in Saudi Arabia are struggling to gain acceptance in society due to the general view that graffiti is a public nuisance and not a form of renegade art (Almansouri, 2014). Saudi Arabia witnesses reforms in its economic and social spheres through sweeping reforms in line with the 2030 vision, part of which is targeting advancement in the Saudi cultural and artistic scene. Considering that graffiti writings are considered a unique form of culture, a characterization of those who are involved in it is relevant in this study. This is aside from the fact that a major concern in this study is to determine the voice of those who are into this kind of culture through interviewing some graffiti writers. Graffiti writers are involved in constructing a discourse per the social milieu (Mangeya, 2014). Graffiti cannot be separated from the wide array of power struggles characterizing socio-economic as well as political institutions. The act of scribbling has to be therefore contextualized within the framework of how discourse is discursively employed in doing ideological work. Discourse is central in the social construction and perpetuation of ideology. Therefore, it is crucial in the structuring, maintenance as well as resisting of power relations in any given social milieu (Mangeya, 2014).

The results of the study would be a vehicle for the local government of Dammam, Saudi Arabia to understand the graffiti writers in light of a medium ground of free speech zones. Knowing this valuable data could be used as a basis for developing effective local interventions or perhaps in the development of Local Graffiti Management. Moreover, the results of the study could help the government to think of a more doable means of ensuring maximum participation of the people in decision making or in crafting activities that affect them in society.

The present study is the first attempt to investigate graffiti in the Eastern Province city of Dammam/ Saudi context concerning public street graffiti from a sociolinguistic perspective. The fundamental purpose of it is to interpret or analyze the meanings conveyed in public graffiti tags and the reasons why people scribble. Such is done to listen to the inner voice of the ordinary people who want to be heard through their writings. The one who scribbles liked to instill something to the mind of the readers. And let the reader contemplate with the graffiti artistss' writings.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the themes of graffiti writings in Dammam Saudi Arabia?
2. What are the social messages expressed in the graffiti writings as revealed in a sociolinguistic account?
3. What are the social lived-experiences of the graffiti artistss as revealed in the study?

Research Limitations

Limitations of this study compromise an extensive data collection of which only a small sample (14 graffities) are representive of the corpus. Another limitation concerning conceivable inaccuracies in some answers of the graffiti writers. Moreover, Only verbal graffities are subject to analysis, visual ones are beyond the scope of the present study.

Literature Review

Most of the literature conducted about is graffiti is in the western context, yet graffiti, as stated by Arnoldi in Grigori & Sitaru (2015, p.17), is "neither a new nor a solely Western phenomenon"

A wide array of literature and studies suggests that the performance of graffiti writings is just a normal occurrence of being a kid. The result of the study may be detrimental to others but seeing the sign at the unsnarling the meaning conveyed in the graffiti is another greater idea of this study.

Notable researchers propound that a lot of people involved in graffiti writings are teenagers and Middle Ages. They reveal that the teenagers and their friends know that they do it. They also say that doing vandalism or graffiti is a way to get noticed among teenagers. Some teens might just be looking for acceptance and this may be their way to be "in" with their group. A case project in Australia titled, "Mid-City Vandalism Project", those who perform vandalism or graffiti writings are young males. This identifies that the majority of "taggers" are males between 12 and 21 years old. It further points out that all taggers identified within a two-mile area were male, and 72% were 16 or younger. Approximately 15% only of vandalism vandals are young females. This corroborates with the study that surveyed law enforcement agencies in 23 cities in America. This revealed that it is not unusual for a "crew" of vandals to include women. In this study, specific mention is given to the fact that while not all youth are heavily involved, indications show that this trend is on the rise. It also points out that children in elementary school, as well as older adults, have also been caught doing vandalism or graffiti writings.

Another characteristic of people conducting vandalism is that they come from a suburban place. This is also revealed by the San Diego Police Department study. It specifically highlights that while much of vandalism is found in inner cities, vandalism has become an increasingly suburban occurrence. This finding affirms the report of the Long Island Rail Road Police Department Vandalism Team which reveals that the arrest data from 17 major cities shows that 50 to 70% of all street-level vandalism is created by suburban adolescents, predominately male teenagers. Another characteristic of people who do vandalism is that they are by themselves, community members. The San Diego Police Department Study asserts this finding as it reveals that most vandalism is done by members of the community. It says that “because the primary objective of vandalism vandals is to achieve maximum recognition among their peers, they generally will tag property where it is most likely to be seen by those who know them”, Brighenti, (2010,p.20). It nonetheless reports too, that gang vandalism, however, may come from gang members outside the city.

The aforementioned studies substantiate the current concerns of this study. By determining the extent of damages that are committed by the respondents in this study, it may as well offer an understanding of the issue regarding school damage which is brought by vandalism, (Brighenti ,2010). It has to be noted that vandalism is costing a lot of money from school administrators in restoring the damages made to school properties. This is also the fundamental reason why this act is hated by law authorities and why it is declared as an act of misbehavior or even crimes, Lannert (2015,p.13).

Explaining the motives for performing vandalism in school setting igniting its academic implications to the graffiti writers is one way of determining the real essence of the study. In this connection, Maguddayao and Medriano (2019) claimed that academic institutions are concerned with intercultural endeavor because it embraced the fact that though the home is the first learning arena, most people spend more of their time in school. This points out that since students spend more time in school than in their homes, they are exposed to different types of people with different kinds of beliefs and conviction even principles. The challenge is how well they communicate to achieve understanding and acceptance. This posits the idea that some just scribbles because they want to be understood and be accepted in graffiti culture. Hence, the graffiti writes the primary motivations are fame and recognition. A tagger's objective is to paint his tag or that of his crew in as many places as possible because a tagger's recognition depends on how much he is "up".

As espoused by Bangayan- Manera (2019) in her study in the Philippines, doodlers believe that they must "get up" more than everyone else on walls, overpasses, and any private and public property. The more writings made, the better are their feelings as their motive is to do more irrespective of whether they are of quality or not. Doodle writers use form or avenue to show frustration or even disgust with society. Yet, most do not believe that graffiti or doodle writing warrants punitive action.

Sheivandi,Taghinezhad, Alishavandi and Ranibar (2015) investigated the linguistic features of a fast Iranian graffiti . They conclude that among all graffiti entailing linguistic features, dialogues were the most frequent linguistic feature used. Peculiarity involved in graffiti writing is punning on re-division of words and implication of questions with no legitimate answers are the least frequent ones.

The genre of political graffiti in Cairo is traced by Zakareviciute (2014) in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period in Egypt where she stressed the need to investigate these graffiti to the motives that are meant to influence social behavior and opinion of people during that period. Fairclough (1998) adopted by El- Nasha and Nayef (2016) post-structuralist model of discourse analysis to the linguistic analysis of Egyptian graffiti. They concluded that religious expressions constitute more than half the data and that positive graffiti pertains to the self or car and negative ones to the other.

In the Libyan context, Abdul-Aziz (2015) analyses the informative and symbolic functions of some writings that were painted in the streets as well as public and private buildings in Tripoli, the capital of Libya. This study affirmed in the report that there exist a multilingual graffiti combining Arabic with Berber or those including English graffiti, prior and post Ghadi era.

The impact of Saudis' attitudes towards graffiti is Investigated by Alqarni and Alqarni (2019) in the domain of toilet graffiti writings concerning mixed-gender contexts in Saudi Arabia and concluded that gender differences in language are mitigated in the mixed -gendered context.

The graffiti is exposed in the suburb areas of Dammam which are inhabited by middle and lower-income populace. Moreover, the Municipality of Dammam steadily erases graffiti especially in the main streets and promotes additional non- verbal graffiti, artistic drawings on the walls. Yet this seems not to stop the graffiti writers. There are no fines, no legal punishments, merely dispersing awareness of "no graffiti on walls", even contractors post their service announcements on walls though limited in main streets squares, yet visible in the community areas.

This study also agrees that doing graffiti writings is a way of getting the attention of those who have seen the writings. This means that the graffiti writers wanted to insinuate something to his or her readers.

Methodology

Respondents of the Study

The 15 respondents who were involved in the study are local Saudi citizens, age ranging from 15/25 years old. There were 139 pictures collected. Purposive sampling and snowball techniques were used. 14 Graffities were investigated in the current study. The study used an interview guide as the primary data gathering instrument. The first part determined the profile of the respondents. The second part would focus on the meaning/message in the graffiti.

Pictures were also made as a way of documenting the graffiti in all the surfaces in the streets of Dammam Saudi Arabia.

The locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the city of Dammam and all the suburbs of the Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia, specifically in the walls and surfaces in which pictures of graffiti tags were taken. Dammam is the largest heterogenous city located at Arabian Gulf, the capital of the Eastern Province of SA, the center of Saudi oil production. The city compromises cities of Alkhobar, Dhahran and many suburbs cities. The city is formed by one of the largest tribes in the Arabian Peninsula, Aldawasir tribe.

Study Design

The study used qualitative - textual - thematic analysis and descriptive research design. The textual analysis is a systematic analysis of the content rather than the structure of the communication to determine the objectives or meaning of the communication, (Bangayan-Manera, 2019). The author also used the thematic way of interpreting the data together with the 15 respondents graffiti writers views or interpretations of the theme of ' Why s/he tagged it in this particular way, what impact it might have ?'.

Data Collection Procedure

The graffiti writings were taken from the different places in the street or public places in Dammam, Saudi Arabia through pictures. A corpus of 139 graffiti was collected over one month starting from the 6th of July, 2019 to the 6th of August, 2019. The data were reduced in size via a snowball sample of the huge data collected from different areas of Dammam city. Well-known graffiti writers in Dammam were contacted via social media as they have a vast platform of followers and almost 15 graffiti writers were interviewed in person.

Analysis of Data

Using textual analysis in interpreting this visual data is very useful in any researches especially in the field of humanities, language use. When doing textual analysis on a text, the researcher relies on the physical context, the wider cultural context and the interpretations provided by the graffiti writers. In doing textual analysis in this study, a few steps were considered. Specifically, the following procedures were done, (a) translating the text, (b) paying attention to the context, (c) interpreting the content and, (d) making conclusions.

Summarizing the text depends on how well known the researcher is familiar with the text. The researcher had to determine whether everything in the text is clear (including words, symbols, and drawings). With a sound understanding of the text, one could provide a summary of it. In paying attention to context, the research bore in mind that the text (vandalism) often exists as part of an ongoing conversation or as a response to particular events. The researcher had to ask the vandals' purpose and audience for the text. Similarly, the researcher had to think about how those implicit conversations or events had influenced the graffiti writers' decisions about the text or how they influenced the way the intended audience felt about his message. And finally, locating the analysis into its wider sociolinguistic context, the researcher unsnarls the study and collected data, as this convene to look into its societal significance.

Discussion and Results

The sample of this study consists of fourteen graffities. The data are interpreted in light of the thematic ,communicative content, the graffiti writers interpretation and the wider Saudi cultural landscape. The grouping of graffities in the analysis section is data-driven. The corpus imposes the semantic content categorization of the graffities into personal feelings of love, religion, humor, sport, social /anti-social and national graffiti.

Love or Affection Graffiti

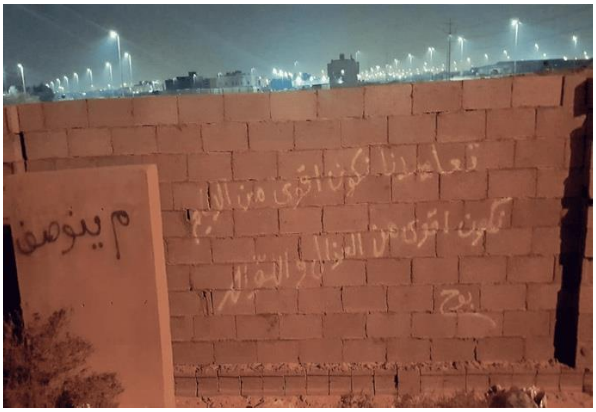

Figure (1) Translation: W**e promised each other to be stronger than days,**
To be stronger than Blamers and rebukes

In the above graffiti writings, love commitment is in the air. The graffiti writer is emphasizing and reminding his lover of their collective commitments to the vows of love, to be stronger and survive the harsh criticism, and blames of the society, family.. etc. The spontaneous expression of love is very visible in this graffiti tags. No one can ever hinder their love for each other. As it goes, love can move mountains. Those who write about love are so emotional that doing graffiti writings becomes their avenue to express their affection. Primarily, personal expressions of love prevail the street walls of Dammam. These types of graffiti writings are stimulated by the desire of the graffiti writer to express his/her feelings. Interestingly, the intended audience is the people who pass by. The anonymity of authorship of the graffiti writer may also be an alternative way of expressing his/her love for this cannot be done personally to the girl/boy concerned in a conservative society like Saudi Arabia , or it might be an expression of love in the air. An interviewed graffiti writer states that these two lines are quotes from famous male lyrics, the celebrity is Abdulmajeed Abdullah. The researcher verified the song which is entitled (We dated), a romantic sweet love song , of which these two lines stand out as the most sympathetic.

Figure (2)Translation: Translation "Never fall in love because whoever falls get broken eventually" Sharqawi

This graffiti is stated in an imperative speech act that plays with the metonymic (Fall /break) metaphorically and humorously, literally whatever falls breaks, including falling in love " this universal theme is articulated humorously. Broken-hearted people eventually tell this kind of discourse because they are hurt, disappointed and dismayed. The graffiti writer was in love but came into a point that he/she broke into pieces and that he/she resorted to scribble his feelings of dismay and give this command. The graffiti writer Sharqawi, a local graffiti writer name, indicated that he borrowed this graffiti from an Egyptian graffiti writer who has it on his Twitter account https://curiouscat.me/jiiiidar

Anti-social Graffiti

Figure (3)Translation: ***Death is no more dreadful, Life is a horror movie*** **. Signed by " the Joker"**

The embedded negative attitude towards life concerns is compared to death. The pessimistic spirit of " the joker" as per signature indicates the state of loss and bereavement, what can be worse than death? It is a life full of horrors. The effect of foregrounding death is to draw attention to the background that life is more dreadful. The Joker admitted that double-masked and pretenders are the targets of his graffiti. The impact this graffiti has is of huge, gloomy influence on the audience.

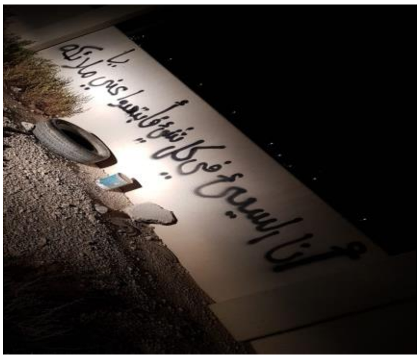

Figure (4) Translation: ***I am the bad guy in everything, stay away from me you angels***

This graffiti writing has many implications. It may insinuate those good people must avoid the one who writes the graffiti. It may be a way of giving warnings to other people. Moreover, the graffiti writer may have a bad experience to his fellowmen, and as a way of retaliating, he or she wrote his feelings on the wall addressing those who are always the angels and the good guys ironically. This graffiti desire for recognition is the only avenue to express his inner voice.

The tags in the study show that they are not only the externalization of the graffiti writer’s identity, Pietrosanti (2010, p 36): signified that :

> The tag is not only the externalization of the writer's identity, but in addition the only expression of their identity that is presentable in the graffiti world. Being someone in graffiti language is 'making a name'. Without the tag, the writer does not exist.

Saudi graffiti writers adapt themselves to universal identities or local ones. The signature of " the Joker "can be read literally or in connection to the central character of the movie of (The Joker)displayed in Dammam Vox cinema . Likewise, local identity can be traced in "Saudi & Proud " Proud to be Saudi "Vision 2030". These signatures entail graffiti writers adaptation to national and universal stands.

Figure(5) Translation: ***Wasstah, Vitamin W O' boy***

(The term Wasstah means agency, a corrupted mediator who replace one person for another)

The graffiti writer in graphs and letters skillfully condemned this awful social practice of authoritative personal who mediates between individuals and enforce those whom they know or who paid for them in cash or service. It seems the graffiti writer is severely criticizing this social rottenness. In the Saudi context, this immoral action is referred to as Vitamin W, though sarcastically there is no such vitamin label in medical practice. This is due to the corrupted displacement of things. Corrupters twist things as the graffiti writer draws a line that is neither vertical, horizontal nor diagonal as the rules of the game of Noughts and Crosses apply.

Religious Graffiti

Figure (6) Translation: ***Happiness without attending to prayers never occur***

There can be no substitute for happiness and at this point the graffiti writer wants to direct others to its source 'establishing daily prayers'. As interviewed by one of the graffiti writers, the researcher asked why the graffiti writer wrote the idea, and he openly admitted that "maybe the graffiti writer was feeling down "at that time when he wrote it and the only dose is to pray. Maybe he is experiencing discomfort and he recognized the importance of prayers. The prescribed five times daily prayers are an Islamic ritual in the Arab countries. It is also noticed that the graffiti writings were placed on walls so as to be read by all .

As propounded by El Nashar and Nayef (2016), the affirmation of the faith was apparently visible in the graffiti writings as it asserts the essence of prayer and religion. Religious thoughts and expressions encompass mainly prayer phrases, supplications and preaching which make reference to Allah and Prophet Muhammad. Dammam, like all the rest of the Saudi cities , is a Muslim city. The religious theme functions to raise people's remembrance of God and asking Him for mercy, blessings, and relief where there is no single street or corner without these themes. Actually, religious graffities are tolerable and acceptable in street walls, boards and signs like " Thanks to Allah", "Peace and Blessings of God be upon Muhammad", "and there is no God except Allah ". Islamic culture promotes reminding others and remembering God and His prophet "Peace be Upon him" at all times to get His reward and blessings .

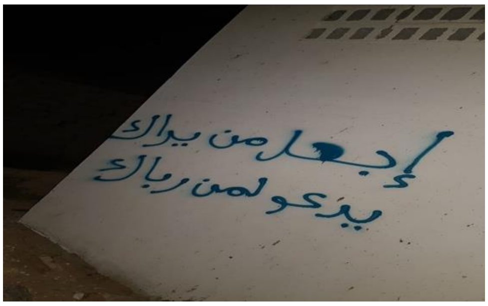

Figure (7)Translation: ***Make those who see you, pray for those who raised you***

The parallel structure of the graffiti is of Indirect speech act of promoting good deeds in character and conduct "be a model and people will eventually pray for your good parents". Such indirectness suits the impact the graffiti writer wants to spread as it is a human nature to hate getting direct advice.

The graffiti expresses the real essence of religiosity. The prolific graffiti writer demands recognition of his faith as a human being. His fame and power also claimed in this study. The graffiti writer wanted to have a visible effect on his reader and also recognized the one who raised or nurtured him all through his life and in this way he is forever indebted to his guardian. A sense of humility resides in the faith of the graffiti writer as he recognized the effort and sacrifices of the one who raised him.

Humorous Graffiti

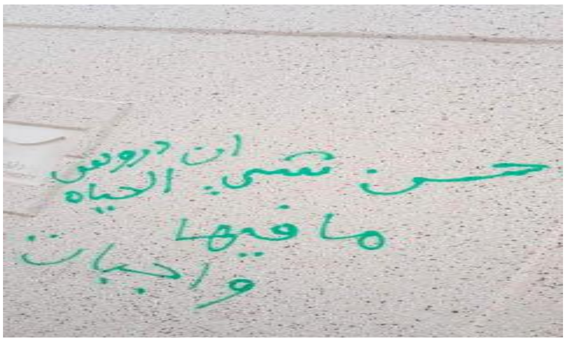

Figure (8) Translation: ***The best part in life' lessons is that there is no homework***

The graffiti writer of this account maybe is a student who hates making homework or assignments. It may be an enjoyable day when his teacher doesn't give homework to his or her students. Moreover, the dislike of their school authorities may suggest that they are challenging their teachers' authority. It is their way of expressing their voice of anger and dissatisfaction. The voice of the students is seldom heard in matters of policy development and implementation. Through their writing, they can convey what they feel to their teachers and school principal. Such dissenting remarks may also imply that they have reached a certain level of threshold to tolerate what their teachers are doing. The pent emotions have been released and graffiti was the avenue to do so.

Figure (9) Translation: ***I am not alone, my mobile phone is with me***

The above graffiti writing is humorous. The graffiti writer is a loner, but according to the graffiti writer, he is not alone because he has his smart phone as a company. It may be humor but it has psychological implications. Everyone in this world nowadays has a mobile phone, that is could be the reason why the graffiti writer brings with him his phone often and that depicts that he is not alone.

Social and National Graffiti

Figure (10) Translation :*ALNasr (football club) is international. Internationality is tough, hard for you.*

The graffiti writer is humorously acknowledging ALNasr "local eastern football club" with the nickname 'The International club’ as the club once obtained it, but it seems that this season of FIFA Club World Cup is a tough competition. A respondent of the interviewed graffiti writers asserts that the tag could be written by an opponent of AlNasr club, from one of Al- Hilal's fans.

Figure (11) Translation: ***Addawasir are Sultanate***

Appreciating one of the local Bedouin tribes, especially the Addawasir tribe as sultanates can denote two layers of reference to the "sultanate'. One to their chief social identity "status" as they are the central inhabitants of the area. Addawasir is described as being sultanate of music because this local community is well known throughout the Arabian Peninsula for their musical talents as drummers and traditional dancing styles. Dosari Bedouin enjoys this rich culture which frames them as a sultanate.

Figure (12) Translation: ***High Above the Sky*** **/ Hamoud**

Figure (13) Translation: ***Jabal Tuwaiq, Saudi and Proud ,2030***

Both graffities of Figure 12 and 13 thematically express the tagger " who sign with the name Hamoud" being proud of his Saudi country communicated metaphorically as being above all countries .while in Figure 13, the graffiti writer quotes the Crown prince Muhammad ibn Salman who linked" formidable Mount Tuwaiq to Saudi strength" , in a press release . The central mountain is a symbol of Saudi strength and endurance extending in a vast desert all over the Saudi Kingdom. The theme of proudness for being a Saudi is connected to the graffiti writer signature of 2030 which invites positive views of the future vision that will mark drastic transformations for Saudi Arabia in economic and social sectors.

Conflicting Thoughts About Graffiti

As everyone believed, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. This cliché holds even in the discourse regarding graffiti. Such is the case considering that some of the 15 respondents of the present study regard it to be a positive form of self- expression while others perceive it to be a menace of society. Others would perceive it as a crime while others look at it as a social issue. In this section, a discussion of the conflicting thoughts about the vandalism is explained. Providing this concept may guide the reader as to what are the contradictory points for the perpetuation or abhorrence of vandalism.

In this part of the paper, two conflicting views are discussed; namely the positive and the negative views of the interviewed graffiti writers. Discussing these conflicting views may serve to provide perspectives that may help the reader grasp the beauty and the ugliness of vandalism or graffiti writing.

Positive Views

When the public argues that graffiti is a form of self-expression, their arguments may use some terms that might help such as *beautiful, expressive, thought-provoking*. As expressed earlier, the most popular optimistic view about graffiti is that it is a point of view of a self - expression.

Malana (2018) articulates that graffiti is a unique and creative form of expression and students even use their dialects or their first language in expressing their aspirations through writings. Similarly, in a living testimony of Saquing (2018) students in their intercultural communicative competence tend to be very vocal when using their first language as it is attested in the writings of the graffiti. In this study, it's pretty obvious that the graffiti writers responded that graffiti is their first language.

For the proponents of vandalism or graffiti, they say that the placements of vandalism can be more fabulous than other places. In other words, it can look better than what it covers up. Similarly, most people who see graffiti are made to laugh at some point and this is beneficial or therapeutic for them. Some clichés are humorous and it is seen by those who could interpret it as humorous as it is. On the other hand, politically motivated graffiti writers look at their scribes as an imperative social outlets and as a belief which must be upheld by authorities. This is especially held to be a right in democratic countries. Lombard (2012) states that the growth and development of democracy are put into life when people can express their thoughts, sentiments, and oppositions to a political issue especially when these people are not given the proper avenues to participate in governance.

Negative Views

People who see graffiti as an act of communication may use various arguments against it. This is clearly expressed when one argues that graffiti writing is a form of vandalism and those words associated with their arguments are *ugly, trashy,* an *eyesore, intrusive, destructive,* and *costly.* Negative views about vandalism stance it as something unacceptable at every level. They posit that graffiti writing costs too much and often looks like a threat and even detrimental to people.

From a sociological perspective, others put forth the argument that vandalism or graffiti writing sends the insignia that no one cares of the graffiti writers and as a resort, they do writing in the streets. They also present that any form of written self- expression on other people's property (private or public), which is done without permission, is a crime by itself and thus a criminal offense. Others lay the argument that (a) vandalism increases instances of crime and delinquency in a given area; (b) heightens fear of crime; (c) makes schools, neighborhoods look trashy and unwelcoming.

The aforementioned studies about the conflicting views on graffiti are very essential in this study in many ways. First, it points out the goodness (advantages) and badness (disadvantages) of graffiti writings. Second, it makes clear the current debate about the issue. Third, it captures whether graffiti writings can be categorized as a criminal act or just a social issue.

Social Lived- Experiences of the Graffiti writers

Graffiti writing plays numerous roles in the life of the graffiti writers. Primarily, it is a way of connecting with people. This idea was a recurrent theme during the interviews with the respondents. As a way of connection, it provides a link between the graffiti writers with their friends and gangsters. As a linking mechanism, it establishes belongingness with the group and this sense of identity with the group enhances their self-esteem. Graffiti writing is for them asserting one's concept of territoriality. They see the streets as a public place and as such they believe that they own the place. Writing something in a public place makes them assert their ownership of the place as many others claim ownership of the same space.

Moreover, the study elucidated that the respondents experience adrenaline rush to express themselves in vandalism especially when they are with their friends or gangsters. Although they know that vandalism is unacceptable behavior, they persist to do this because once they are in the company of their friends, they believe they can do anything and they feel the support of everyone in such a kind of endeavor. In this case, they value expressivity much when they are with their friends who become primary drivers in this act.

While numerous graffiti writers in the study acknowledge the personal benefits of their acts, they also make some realizations regarding their actions. They revealed that they do not like scribbling because it does help in school cleanliness. Seeing their craft makes them reflect that they are wasting the schools' resources. In a way, they also acknowledge the lack of practical value in their place.

The aftermath of performing graffiti writing is diverse to the respondents. Some observed that few friends started not to connect with them for fear that they will also be tagged as graffiti writers. This was particularly experienced during the initial stage of discovering that they performed vandalism or graffiti writings in the streets. They distanced themselves for a while but when things have been resolved they do the reconnection. Few others have experienced parents restricting them to join the company of their friends because they are labelled as a bad influence. Such have been felt when parents refused to allow their children to join them for some occasions and activities they used to attend and do together.

The negative effects of graffiti writings are rather more devastating for the respondents in the private schools than the public schools. Students in private schools suffered criticisms and ridicule from classmates and schoolmates. Avoidance was felt and the trust and confidence of their teachers and parents dwindled. Everyone seems to eye on them and they are suspicious of their behaviour and actions. Sometimes they feel that eyes are all centered on them and they do not feel the liberty to do the things they want to do in the streets.

Becoming a graffiti writer is believed not to last forever. It is a temporary act of expressing oneself. As this is the case that some of the respondents take pictures of their craft as a way of remembering them and share them with others as they believe that this thing will soon be gone.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In light of the 139 graffiti writings which compromise only small sample of the huge data which is on display in different areas of Dammam city, the cleaning up efforts of the municipality of Dammam seem ineffective . As a preventive strategy of graffiti prevalence, occasionally, the municipality of Dammam open the landscape for graffiti writers. This took place in the recent graffiti project in one of the neighborhoods of Alkhobar city under the title *'Art is Eastern'* in 2018, which *Arab News* described as " the first graffiti project in the Kingdom',(Alsharif, 2018). Such a move is perceived as an alternative measure to open the landscape of the sea fronts for silent, nonverbal graffiti in specific hotspots only. Yet still, graffiti writers document their art through social media channels and community social platforms which enjoy wide celebrity among the youth. In fact, street expressions creep here and there as the data shows covering social, religious, personal, anti-social, sport and variety of themes in various linguistic styles and attitudes.

Graffiti writing plays numerous roles in the life of the graffiti writers. Primarily, it is a way of connecting with people. This idea was a recurrent theme during the interviews with the respondents. As a way of connection, it provides a link between the graffiti writers with their friends and gangsters. As a linking mechanism, it establishes belongingness with the group and this sense of identity with the group enhances their self-esteem. Graffiti writing is for them asserting one's concept of territoriality. They see the streets as a public place and as such their mindset is that they also own the place. Writing something in public place makes them assert their ownership of the place as many others claim ownership of the same space. As seen in the themes presented, the feeling of affection, hatred or anti-social, religious and humorous are openly visible and that graffiti writers by nature wanted connections to their readers.

Interestingly, the study concludes that graffiti writing is a show of declaring the graffiti writers' concept of "we own this place" or a claim of ownership of a public place. They see the street as a public place and their mindset is that they also own the best place. The tags are not only the externalization of the graffiti writer's identity but also the only expression of their identity. Saudi graffiti writers adapt themselves to universal identities or local ones. The signature of "the *Joker* ", “Saudi & Proud ", and " Proud to be Saudi" and positive adaptation to the "*Vision 2030*", these signatures entail graffiti writers attachment more often to national stands than universal ones. With this study, it will be very interesting in future to study its psychological implications and to come up with positive programs for the graffiti writers to vent their nonverbal visibility in canvas-like walls.

Language variation is a key characteristic of Saudi graffiti. The Graffities are a mixture of both standard Arabic (i.e. Fusha) as in Figures(1,7,13) and vernacular Arabic (i.e. the language used for everyday conversations), a mixture of both Arabic, English, and Arabization (i.e. Figures 2,3), and a combination of happy and sad faces , diagrams as in graffities of Figures (3 & 14).

Further studies on Institutional graffiti writings, School graffiti writings, toilet graffiti, and e -bloggers graffiti need to be investigated thematically, linguistically or contrastively in two areas of Saudi Arabia to trace changing representations.

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Reading Habits, Reading Comprehension and Academic Performance of Grade V Pupils

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Abstract

Given the dearth of published research in correlating the three essential ESL variables: reading habit, reading comprehension and academic performance in the Philippine primary pedagogical context, the present study attempted to determine the 150 Grade V pupils' levels of reading habit, reading comprehension and academic performance and the association of these variables employing a quantitative research design. The young participants were selected via a systematic random sampling. This study was drawn from Ajzen's (1991) *theory of planned behavior* and Neal, Wood, Labrecque and Lally's (2012) *psychological disposition* assumption that allows the learners the proclivity to reiterate previous actions necessary to account for the pupils' detrimental or incremental performance in reading or in academic tasks in general. It was hypothesized that the students' reading habit would correlate with reading comprehension and academic performance. It was also predicted that their reading comprehension would also correspond to their academic performance. Data showed that pupils utilized both printed and electronic sources as part of their reading habits. Their reading comprehension level was average while their academic performance was satisfactory. Consistent with the hypothesis, the pupils' reading habits positively correlated with their reading comprehension and academic performance. Additionally, the students' reading comprehension was highly correlated with their academic performance.

Key words: reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance

Introduction

Reading is one of the macro skills in English which is very vital to be developed among the pupils. It is a fundamental function in today's society and an important requirement needed for learning. It is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct meaning and gain comprehension (Bashir and Mattoo, 2012)

The constant repetitive practice of reading both at home and in school helps in developing good reading habits. Studying merely helps develop one's reading habits. Moreover, making it a constant act for personal will and desire yields positive outcome (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012).

Reading comprehension is defined by Sheldon (1962) in Mazurkiewics (1968) as cited by Corteza (2006) as the ability to interpret what is read. This means that the child is able to understand the text read.

Gaining rightful amount of knowledge about the different concepts discussed and learnt leads to a pupil's good academic performance. It is frequently defined in terms of examination performance. In the K-12 grading system, performance has a great weight in the computation of the pupils' grades. Hence, academic performance is vital as it allows the pupils to exhibit his/her knowledge and understanding about the lesson's concepts through oral and written performances.

It made the researcher realize the need of this study to have a basis with regard to the reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance of Grade V pupils. As an elementary teacher, the researcher observed that pupils of today's generation, specifically the K-12 pupils are readers of different behaviors. Hence, their academic performances in the classroom vary for certain reasons. Thus, this study may contribute to the institution for it determines the reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance of Grade V pupils.

Literature Review

Reading is one of the three R's with which a child starts his education. As a matter of fact, the success and failure of the child's academic life depends to a large extent upon his reading ability. Reading may be regarded as a basic skill to be acquired by every learner and hence every effort should be directed towards its development in children from early life. There are many benefits to picking up such reading habits, especially when it comes to matters that pertain to the child's mental growth. Without a reading habit, a child can grow up with some difficulties, especially if in a line of work that requires reading at any level (Chettri, 2013). Reyhene (1998) observed that when children read for pleasure, they involuntarily and unconsciously improve their language skills. Bignold (2003) indicated that the habit of reading improved children's reading skills. Hence, the issue of reading whether it is for learning or leisure is important since it helps broaden young people's experience and knowledge (Green, 2002)

Moreover, a habit is a characteristic behavioral pattern that is learnt and reinforced in a manner realized in every case automatically (Blaha & Bennett, 1993). The habit of reading is the act of reading being carried out throughout life in a constant, regular and critical manner as a result of it being perceived by the individual as a need and source of pleasure (Yilmaz, 1993). The habit of reading is the basis of lifelong learning. For the purpose of the individual being someone that learns throughout his/her life, it is necessary for the act of reading to be conducted regularly throughout life (Odabas, Odabas & Polat, 2008). Reading habits are the manner in which an individual organizes his reading. Reading habits are acquired at an early age, between kindergarten and elementary school. Acquisition of reading habit is a gradual process of learning letters, words, sentences, paragraphs and complete texts (Parlete, 2010). Researcher notes that for reading to become a habit, reading must be encouraged.

Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) reported that reading volume both inside and outside the school has a significant impact on the development of reading speed and fluency, vocabulary, general knowledge, overall verbal ability and academic achievements.

With regard to Reading Comprehension, the main purpose of reading is to get comprehension. Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a text. Reading comprehension is the process of understanding written text or information presented by the author and affected by many factors. Those are factors within the readers, factor within the written message, and the factors within the reading environment (Pearson Johnson, in Gipe (1991:156).

Comprehension is the essence of reading and the active process of constructing meaning from text (Durkin, 1993). Reading comprehension is a complex interaction among automatic and strategic cognitive processes that enables the reader to create a mental representation of the text (van den Brock & Espin, 2012). Comprehension depends not only on characteristics of the reader, such as a prior knowledge and working memory, but also on language processes, such as basic reading skills, decoding, vocabulary, sensitivity to text structure, inferencing and motivation. Comprehension also requires effective use of strategic processes such as metacognition and comprehension monitoring. As readers mature in their comprehension skills, they are able to progress efficiently from the stage of learning to read to the ultimate goal of reading to learn (Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo & Tindal, 2005).

Reading is often described as an interactive process, where comprehension is a result of joint efforts from the author and the reader (Braten & Stromso, 2007). The author has to formulate the content so that it is interpretable, whereas the reader must mobilize the skills and knowledge needed to comprehend the text—a joint venture. However, the reader is one of the most likely to spoil the process; fail to understand, give in and stop reading. Hence the reader is considered to be the one most responsible for gaining comprehension (Hansen, 2016).

Recent research has shown that while positive attitudes towards reading incline in early school years, it begins a downturn around middle school. Once students begin to hit adolescence there is a shift in attitudes toward reading (Howard, 2011). While it is possible for some overlap to exist between the in school and out of school reading, research shows that most students have two very separate attitudes in regard to each. Basically, reading strategies and learning strategies are tightly intertwined, and what is considered vital in learning processes is further applicable in reading comprehension (Roe, 2014).

Nowadays, many students face several years of higher education, and good reading strategies are essential (Roe, 2014). To be able to read with fluency and accuracy and to understand what is read is essential in all learning aspects (Hansen, 2016).

Furthermore, academic Performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. In educational institutions, success is measured by academic performance or how well the student meets standards set out by the local government and the institution itself (Belle, 2000) as cited by Galvez, (2010).

The elementary schools have since time immemorial been giving out the best instruction to our school children. Teachers aim to better academic performance of their students because low performance is blamed directly on the school, their teachers and the instructional programs and methods being used. Thus, they continually search for ways and means to make their teaching suitable to the needs of the learner (Galvez, 2010).

However, Steven (2001) argues that reading comprehension is what allows the reader to interact with the text in meaningful way. It is the bridge from passive reading to active reading, from letters to words to character and context.

In addition, Onkoba (2014) confirmed that reading comprehension practices have an influence on academic performance and therefore there is a significant correlation between reading comprehension practices and academic performance.

Definition of Terms

To facilitate better understanding of the terms used in this study, they are operationally defined for clarification under this section.

Reading habits. It refers to the set of behaviors relating to one's own reading style as well as reading tastes and habits. It also accounts for the frequency of reading along with various topics forms of written material.

Reading comprehension. It refers to the ability, expertise and competence of the pupils to understand what they read.

Academic performance. It refers to the general percentile average (GPA) of the pupils' final rating in their English subject for first and second grading period.

Gender. This term refers to the respondents' biological classification and general characteristics of being male and female.

Socioeconomic Status. This term refers to an individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure. Socioeconomic status depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence. In this study, it is broken into three categories: High socioeconomic status, moderate socioeconomic status and low socioeconomic status. (According to PSA/Philippine Statistics Authority 2017)

High socioeconomic status. This means monthly income ranging from Php 37, 000 and above.

Moderate socioeconomic status. This means monthly income ranging from Php 11, 000 to Php 36,999.

Low socioeconomic status. This means monthly income ranging from Php 10, 000 and below.

Problem Statement

This study aimed to determine the reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance of Grade V pupils.

Particularly, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the overall reading habit of Grade V pupils?
2. What is the reading comprehension of Grade V pupils?
3. What is the overall academic performance of Grade V pupils?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the pupils' reading habits and reading comprehension?
5. Is there a significant relationship between pupils' reading habits and academic performance?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the pupils' reading comprehension and academic performance?
7. Is there a significant difference in the pupils' reading habits when the data are categorized according to gender and socioeconomic status?
8. Is there a significant difference in the pupils' reading comprehension when the data are categorized according to gender and socioeconomic status?

9. Is there a significant difference in the pupils' academic performance when the data are categorized according to gender and socioeconomic status?

The present study

This study focused on determining the reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance of Grade V pupils. The respondents of this study were the Grade V pupils of school 126177 and 1261164 who are enrolled during the Academic Year of 2018-2019.

Systematic Random sampling procedure was used. The desired sample size is 150 from the total population of 319. The computed interval is 2.12 or 2. Then, the researcher has to list all the elements comprising the population in arbitrary order. Every n^{th} unit is chosen as respondents and the process is repeated until the desired sample size is obtained.

It also included gender and socioeconomic status as variables of this study. This study was limited only to those who are not repeaters and are not SPED pupils. A self-made survey checklist was used to determine respondents' reading habits. A reading comprehension test adapted from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory tool (2018) was administered to determine respondents' reading comprehension level. The general point average (GPA) of the respondents for first and second quarter in English was used to determine their academic performance.

Conceptual Framework

In this study, the first moderating variable to influence the reading habits, reading comprehension, and academic performance of the respondents was gender. The reason for the inclusion of this variable is based on the assumption that variable gender affects the dependent variables.

Ramos (2002) explained several factors that have impact on success in learning a second language. One of them is sex. It is undeniable that individual differences exist among second language learners. Brown (1994), as cited in Madrazo (2005), states that sex affects both production and reception of language.

In Martinez (2002), as cited in Corteza (2003), concluded based from her study that gender or sex as variable proved to contribute significantly in the language proficiency of students.

On the other hand, some studies yielded different conclusions. Genoso (2005) concluded that sex did not influence the level of achievement in the post test of pupils exposed to two types of learning approaches. Covarubias (2005) study yielded the findings that sex or gender did not significantly influence the students' proficiency level in reading comprehension when subjects were taken individually.

However, in the study of Aluja and Blanch (2004), females obtained higher academic achievement scores than males. The difference could be explained by the fact that females showed more socialized personality pattern and better study habits.

The researcher stated that gender was assumed to affect the respondents' reading habits for each respondent has their own reading styles and how often they do readings. The researcher believed that male differs from females in terms of the manner and pattern in doing their tasks in school. This may also affect their reading comprehension for who is exposed to reading different materials are more likely to comprehend texts. As to their academic performance, the researcher believed that the respondents who could comprehend texts are the ones who perform well in the class which led to earning a high grade. Thus, each respondent is believed to be different from each other. The likes of one may not be the likes of the others and therefore gender is assumed to affect reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance.

Socioeconomic status was the second moderating variable to influence reading habits, reading comprehension, and academic performance. It was assumed that students whose parents have high socioeconomic status would perform better, while students whose parents have low socioeconomic status would perform least. The researcher believed that having a high socioeconomic status means the needs of the students are well-sustained. Whereas, the basic needs are fully given. They are well fed, and opportunity to have technological devices, gadgets and other resources are all possible. Students whose parents' socioeconomic status falls in this classification are assumed to have a conditioned and focused mind in terms of reading.

On the other hand, the researcher believed that students whose parents have low socioeconomic status tend to have less opportunity to enjoy good food, less exposure to technological devices and even the possession of books such as encyclopedias, almanacs, and the likes. This leads them to be less-focused in school tasks. It is assumed that students who are not well fed are prone to absences and are sometimes inattentive in class. With this reasons, students performed the least in school.

Chiu (2007) stated the findings that disadvantageous situations such as low income and low education level in the family, negative relations with the neighbors have negative effect on students' academic performance.

Also, Coleman (1997) proposes that family influences can be separated into components such as economic, human and social capital. *Economic capital* refers to the financial resources and assets available to families, whereas *human capital* provides parents with the knowledge resources necessary to create supportive learning environments for their children. In contrast, family *social capital* is defined by the relationship that develops between family members. It is through these relationships that children gain access to the economic, human, and cultural resources of their families.

However, Rothman (2003) claims that the children from low socio-economic status do not have a study condition at home which would affect their academic achievement at school. However, Davis-Kean (2005) argued that socio-economic status of the family has an indirect rather than direct effect on academic achievement of the students.

Research Paradigm

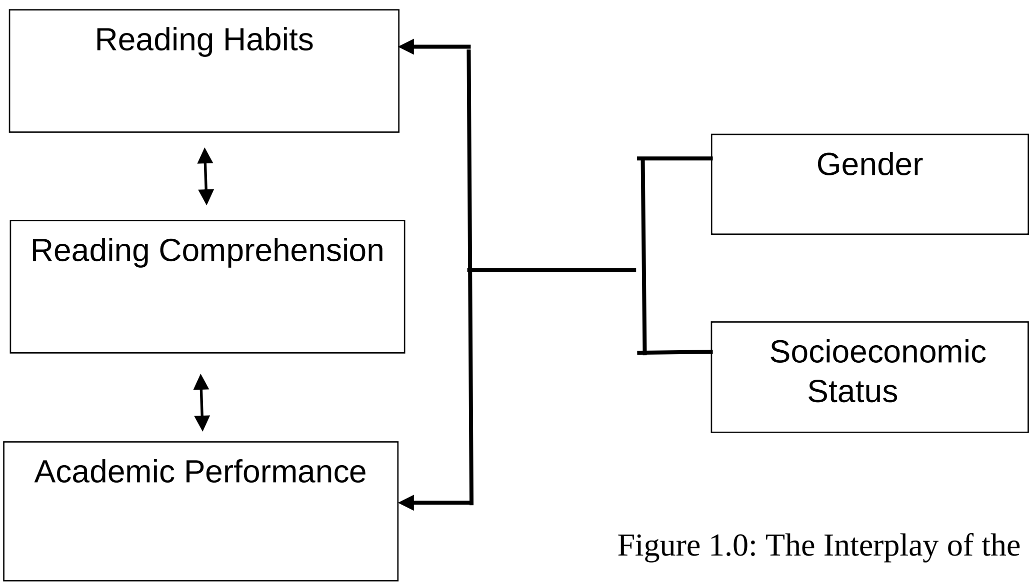

Figure 1.0: The Interplay of the Variables

The interplay of variables shows the relationship of the variables in this study. There are five boxes; the first three boxes on the left are reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance which may function as dependent variable at the same time independent variable for they may affect each other. The two boxes on the right are gender and socioeconomic status functions as moderating variable. The double-headed arrow means correlation. Single-head arrow means the difference, and the line means connection of the variables.

Research Hypotheses

This section presented the following research hypotheses of this study:

1. There is a significant relationship between the pupils' reading habits and reading comprehension.
2. There is a significant relationship between pupils' reading habits and academic performance.
3. There is a significant relationship between pupils' reading comprehension and academic performance.
4. There is a significant difference in pupils' reading habits when data are categorized according to gender and socioeconomic status.
5. There is a significant difference in pupils' reading comprehension when data are categorized according to gender and socioeconomic status.
6. There is a significant difference in pupils' academic performance when data are categorized according to gender and socioeconomic status.

Method

This chapter describes the methodology used to gather and analyze data for this study. It addresses the following aspects of the study: Research Design, Population and Sampling, Research Instrument, Data Gathering, Data Analysis Procedure and Statistical Treatment.

Research Design

This study used descriptive quantitative-correlational research that aimed to seek the relationship between reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance of Grade V pupils. The moderating variables of this study were gender and socioeconomic status which were assumed to affect the other variables in the study.

Population and Sampling Procedure

From the total population, 150 pupils were chosen as respondents of this study through systematic random sampling.

School ID	Number of Respondents
126177	75
126164	75
TOTAL	150

Figure 3. **Profile of the Respondents**

Research Instruments

A survey checklist was used to investigate Grade 5 pupils' reading habits using the Likert scale ratings one to five—*never, rarely, sometimes, frequently, always*. The survey checklist was a self-made test patterned to that of Donaldson (2013).

A reading comprehension test was used to test pupils' reading comprehension. The reading comprehension test was taken from the Grade 5 passage of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI, 2018). The researcher was given the opportunity to use the passage as instrument for the conduct of the study.

To determine the academic performance of the respondents, their grade point average (GPA) in English for the first and second quarter of the present school year was utilized. This was taken from the students' school record.

Validity and Reliability

The self-made survey checklist used underwent validation and pilot testing. The pilot testing result yielded a reliability alpha of .818 which was considered high reliability values. Hence, all items were retained. The reading comprehension test was a standardized test in reading assessment. Hence, it is not to be subjected to validity and reliability tests.

Data Gathering Procedure

After preparing the instrument, the researcher applied for Ethics Clearance. Upon the release of the clearance for implementation, the researcher sought permission from the school principal of School ID 126177 and 126164 relative to the administration of the research instrument to the respondents of the study. After the approval of the request, the principal wrote a letter to the concerned teachers to allow the identified respondents to be part of the study.

Then, the researcher gave the identified respondents a consent form for them to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. This also gave them the assurance that the results would remain confidential. Since the respondents are below 18, assent forms were given to them to seek parents' approval in letting their children be the respondents of the study. Afterwards, the researcher administered the survey checklist for reading habits. They were given 10 minutes to answer the checklist. Then, the respondents answered the 20-item reading comprehension test. They were given 30 minutes to answer the test. Finally, the tests were checked by the researcher and results were subjected for statistical treatment.

Data Analysis Procedure

This section showed the procedure in scoring the data collected for pupils' reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance.

Scoring Procedure for the Respondents' Reading Habits

Scale	**Descriptor**	**Description**
4.21-5.0	Always	Reads printed and electronic articles/texts 100%
3.41-4.2	Frequently	Reads printed and electronic articles/texts 75%
2.61-3.4	Sometimes	Reads printed and electronic articles/texts 50%
1.81-2.6	Rarely	Reads printed and electronic articles/texts 25%
1.0-1.8	Never	Doesn't read printed and electronic articles/texts

Figure 4. **Scale of Measurement for Rating the Respondents' Reading Habits**

Scoring procedure for the respondents' reading comprehension

The following rating scale was used in reading comprehension:

Mean Score	Interpretation	Description
17-20	Outstanding	Has high comprehension level
13-16	Very Good	Has above average comprehension level
9-12	Average	Has mid comprehension level
5-8	Fair	Has low comprehension level
0-4	Poor	Has very low comprehension level

Figure 5. **Reading Comprehension Rating Scale**

Scoring procedure for the respondents' academic performance

The academic performance of the respondents in English was based on the GPA they obtained in English subject during the first and second grading period of school year 2018-2019.

Grading Scale	Descriptors	Description
90-100%	Outstanding	Demonstrates excellent understanding and application of concepts and skills.
85-89%	Very Satisfactory	Demonstrates very good understanding and application of concepts and skills.
80-84%	Satisfactory	Demonstrates good understanding and

		application of concepts and skills.
75-79%	Fair	Demonstrates basic understanding and application of concepts and skills.

Figure 6. **Academic Performance Grading Scale**

Statistical Treatment

The raw data generated from the reading habits, and reading comprehension instrument; and academic performance were tabulated, organized, and analyzed using the following statistical tools:

1. To answer research questions numbers 1, 2, and 3, Mean, and Standard deviation were used to determine the reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance of the pupils.

2. To answer research question number 4, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' reading habits and reading comprehension.

3. To answer research question number 5, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' reading habits and academic performance.

4. To answer research question number 6, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' reading comprehension and academic performance.

5. To answer research question number 7, T-Test for Independent Samples was used to determine if there is a significant difference in the respondents' reading habits when data are grouped according to gender; and analysis of variance was used to determine if the respondents vary or differ in their reading habits when data are grouped according socioeconomic status.

6. To answer research question number 8, T-Test for Independent Samples was used to determine if there is a significant difference in the respondents' reading comprehension when data are grouped according to gender; and Analysis of Variance was used to determine if the respondents vary or differ in their reading comprehension when data are grouped according to socioeconomic status.

7. To answer research question number 9, T-Test for Independent Samples was used to determine if there is a significant difference in the respondents' academic performance when data are grouped according to gender and Analysis of Variance was used to determine the significant difference in their academic performance when data are grouped according to socioeconomic status.

Results and Discussion

The overall reading habits of Grade V pupils

Table 1.0 presents the overall reading habits of Grade V pupils. It shows that the pupils *sometimes* read printed and electronic texts as evidenced by the mean of 3.0250 and its standard deviation of .44188 which is statistically considered a small value. It means that pupils are homogeneously grouped in terms of their reading habits.

The finding of this study bears similarity to that of Parlete (2010) that reading habits are acquired at an early age, between kinder and elementary school. Thus, acquisition of reading habits is a gradual process of learning from letters to words up to understanding a complete text. Since the pupils are homogeneously classified at this level, it implies that they share commonalities in terms of the frequency of the things that they are doing when reading.

Moreover, Tan & Majid (2007) found out that a majority of the participating students were motivated to read for academically-related reasons, such as to improve language skill and to obtain better grades in examination.

On the other hand, the study of Tveit (2012) claimed that the survey indicates different patterns in reading frequency.

Thus, the development of a good reading habit to a child is basically essential.

Table 1.0 The Respondents' Overall Reading Habits

N=150

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptor
Reading Habit	3.0250	.44188	Sometimes reads printed & electronic texts

5.0- 4.21 Always reads printed & electronic texts; 4.20-3.41 Frequently reads printed & electronic texts; 3.40-2.61 Sometimes reads printed & electronic texts; 2.60-1.81 Rarely reads printed & electronic texts; 1.80-1.0 Never reads printed & electronic texts.

The reading comprehension of Grade V pupils

Table 2.0 presents the reading comprehension of Grade V pupils. As shown in this table, pupils perform at an *average* level on reading comprehension test as evidenced by the mean of 9.2800 and its standard deviation of 2.86876 which is considered statistically big value. It means that pupils are heterogeneously grouped in terms of their reading comprehension in English.

The result of this study bears similar findings to that of Corteza (2005) which states that the pupils in Tetuan Central School have average proficiency level in reading comprehension in English.

However, the findings of this study contradict with the study of Aguana (2015) that revealed majority of the pupils in Zamboanga City Division are in the frustration level wherein these pupils can only recognize and decode words without comprehension.

This further implies that the Grade V pupils of the two schools have the same level of understanding literary text which is basically average.

Table 2.0 The Respondents' Reading Comprehension

N=150

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptor
Reading Comprehension	9.2800	2.86876	Average

20-17 Outstanding; 16-13 Very Good ; 12- 9 Average; 8-5 Fair ; 4- 0 Poor

The overall academic performance of Grade V pupils?

Table 3.0 presents the overall academic performance of Grade V pupils. It shows that the pupils performed *satisfactorily* in their overall academic performance with the mean of 80.7967 and standard deviation of 5.15566 which is considered a small value. It means that the pupils are homogeneously grouped in terms of their academic standing in the classroom.

This finding supports the study of Kingco (2015) that revealed the academic performance of the respondents as *good.* He further state that the result means the respondents are performing well in their academics.

Another similar finding was shown in the study of Dev (2016) which concluded that the persistent academic achievement of elementary school pupils are fairly good.

The result further implies that the Grade V pupils perform averagely. Thus, they were able to meet the standards set for the class.

Table 3.0 The Respondents' Overall Academic Performance

N=150

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptor
Academic Performance	80.7967	5.15566	Satisfactory

100-90 Outstanding; 89-85 Very Satisfactory; 84-80 Satisfactory; 79- 75 Fair

Correlation: the pupils' reading habits and reading comprehension

Table 4.0 presents the correlation between the pupils' reading habits and their reading comprehension. A closer look at this table, it reveals that the pupils' reading habits moderately correlate with their reading comprehension level (r value= .540, $p < .001$). Thus, it can be inferred that reading habits can influence their reading comprehension.

Similarly, the study conducted by Muawanah (2014) concluded that there is a strong relationship between students' reading habits and their reading comprehension.

In support to this, the study of Wulandari (2016) found out that there is a positive significant correlation between students' reading habits in English and their reading comprehension ability.

According to Ajzen (1991) in line with the Theory of Planned Behavior, it has been found that the intention to perform a particular behavior is the strongest predictor of its actual performance. This implies that pupils who intended to read printed or electronic materials tend to understand well what they read.

Table 4.0 Correlation: The Respondents' Reading Habits and their Reading Comprehension

N=150

Variables		Reading Comprehension	Interpretation
Reading Habit	Pearson r	.540**	Moderate Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).; Low Correlation= .3 and below; Moderate Correlation = .4 to .7 ; High Correlation=. 8 and above (Downie & Heath, 1984).

Correlation: pupils' reading habits and academic performance

Table 5.0 presents the correlation between the pupils' reading habits and academic performance. It shows that the students' reading habit moderately correlate to their academic performance ($r=.454$, $p < .001$). Hence, it implies that reading habits influence their academic performance.

This finding bears similarity to that of Owusu-Acheaw (2014) that affirmed that there is a relationship between reading habit and academic performance. Thus, reading habit has influence on academic performance.

On a similar view, Oriogu, Subair, Oriogu-Ogbuiyi and Ogbuiyi (2017) uncovered in their examination that reading habits have huge impact on understudies' scholastic execution.

The result of this study affirms the claim of Rumelhart (1980) on Schema Theory which states that a schema is a theory about how knowledge is represented and about how that representation facilitates the use of knowledge in particular ways. This implies that pupils rely on their prior knowledge and experience when they comprehend text read. Whereas, they can use their schema to relate what they already know about a topic.

Table 5.0 Correlation: Respondents' Reading Habits and Academic Performance

Variable		Academic Performance	Interpretation
Reading Habit	Pearson r	$.454^{**}$	Moderate Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).; Low Correlation= .3 and below;

Moderate Correlation = .4 to .7 ; High Correlation=. 8 and above (Downie & Heath, 1984).

RESEARCH PROBLEM 6: *Is there a significant relationship between the pupils' reading comprehension and academic performance?*

Table 6.0 presents the correlation between the pupils' reading comprehension and academic performance. As shown in the table below, the pupils' reading comprehension is highly correlated with their academic performance ($r=.810$, $p < .001$). Thus, it can be inferred that reading comprehension determines the students' academic performance.

This study supports the claim of Onkoba (2014) which confirmed that reading comprehension practices have an impact on scholarly execution and along these lines there is a critical relationship between perusing understanding practices and scholastic execution.

Also, Chege (2012) concluded in her study that reading comprehension is related to academic performance of the subjects considered, and therefore a factor to consider in seeking to elevate the academic performance of pupils.

In addition to these findings, Bruner's Constructivism learning Theory can also be associated. This theory is a philosophy which enhances students' logical and conceptual growth. This further implies that learning is an active process where learners construct new ideas about their past knowledge. This is termed as assimilating the new experiences into the old one. It is imperative to say that pupils' average reading comprehension level affects their level of academic performance.

Table 6.0 Correlation: Respondents' Reading Comprehension and their Academic Performance

N=150

Variables		Academic Performance	Interpretation
Reading Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	.810**	High Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).; Low Correlation= .3 and below;

Moderate Correlation = .4 to .7 ; High Correlation=. 8 and above (Downie & Heath, 1984).

Difference in the pupils' reading habits based on gender and socioeconomic status

Table 7.1 presents difference in the pupils' reading habits when the data are categorized according to gender. It shows that males do not differ with females in reading habits (t = –1.561, p= .121) not significant at alpha .05. Hence, it implies that gender is not a factor that determines difference or lack of difference thereof in their reading habit.

In support to this, Ashcroft (2017) concluded that the pupils interest in reading was generally good and reading was seen as non-gender specific.

However, the finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Uusen & Muursep (2012) which showed that there are differences between boys and girls in many aspects of reading habits and preferences where boys named themselves mostly as average or poor readers.

Table 7.1 Difference: Respondents' Reading Habits based on Gender

N=150, Male=72; Female=78

Variables	Gender	Mean	Df	Mean Difference	T	Sig	Interpretation
Reading Habit	Male	2.9667	148	-.11218	-1.561	.121	Not Significant
	Female	3.0788	145.278				

* Significant at alpha .05

Table 7.2 presents difference in the pupils' reading habits when the data are categorized according to socio-economic status (SES). A closer look at this table, it reveals that students differ in their reading habit when grouped according to SES (F=8.975, p < .001). In other words, SES is factor that can influence the students' reading habits.

To determine between what income group exactly the variance lies, post hoc analysis was run through Scheffe test found on the 7.2.1.

Similarly, in the study of Barbosa, Ramos, Araujo & Almeida (2006), it was observed that the relation socioeconomic of the researched students does not influence in the students' reading habits.

The finding has shown that socio economic status influenced the Grade V pupils' reading habits. This is relative to the belief of Snow, Burns, & Griffins (1998) that states low socioeconomic status put students in elevated risk for early difficulties. Thus, the differences in socio economic status are associated with differences in access to a variety of resources that support reading development especially developing a good reading habit.

Table 7.2 Difference: Respondents' Reading Habits based on
Socioeconomic Status

N=150; Low=92; Moderate=42; High 16

Variables	Sources of Statistical Information	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Interpretation
Reading Habit	Between Groups	3.166	2	1.583	8.975	.000	Significant
	Within Groups	25.928	147	.176			
	Total	29.094	149				

* Significant at alpha .05

Table 7.2.1 presents the post hoc analysis on the difference of pupils' reading habits based on socioeconomic status (SES). It shows that moderate income group of students elicited a slightly frequent reading habits tendency as evidenced by the mean difference of -.25481 (negative value indicates that the subtrahend, the moderate income group is greater than the minuend, the low income group). The result here validates the assumption earlier that SES influences the students' reading habit.

The finding is a validation that socioeconomic status influence pupils' reading habits whereas moderate income group shown a slightly frequent reading habit tendency compared to those in the low income group.

Table 7.2.1 Post Hoc Analysis (Scheffe Test): Difference of the Respondents' Reading Habits based on Socioeconomic Status

N=150; Low=92; Moderate=42; High 16

Dependent Variable	(I) SES	(J) SES	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Interpretation
Reading Habit	Low	Moderate	-.25481*	.07821	.006	Significant
		High	-.38071*	.11376	.005	Significant

* Significant at alpha .05

Difference in the pupils' reading comprehension based on gender and socioeconomic status

Table 8.1 presents the difference in the pupils' reading comprehension when the data are categorized according to gender. As shown in the table below, the males do differ in their reading comprehension level compared to females, in favor of the female group (t=-2.806, p= 006). Thus, it implies that gender influences the students' reading comprehension.

A similar finding of this study is the one conducted by Carino (2011) which discovered that there was a significant difference in oral reading comprehension of pupils with reading enrichment when data are categorized according to sex, thus, females perform better than male.

On the other hand, Carino (2011) also found out that there was a significant difference in the silent reading comprehension of pupils with reading enrichment when data were categorized according to sex, thus, males perform better than females.

However, the finding opposed to that of Volkel, Seabi, Cockcroft, & Goldschagg (2016) which concluded that there is no statistical difference between males and females on reading comprehension.

From the result stated, females have better reading comprehension compared to males. Perhaps, the result further implies that females are more focused and serious in reading literary texts than males.

Table 8.1 Difference: Respondents' Reading Comprehension based on Gender

N=150, Male=72; Female=78

Variables	Gender	Mean	df	Mean Difference	T	Sig	Interpretation
Reading Comprehension	Male	8.6111	148	-1.28632	-2.806	.006	Significant
	Female	9.8974	132.543	-1.28632			

Table 8.2 presents the difference in the pupils' reading comprehension when the data are categorized according to SES. A closer look at this table, it reveals that students do differ in their reading comprehension based on SES (F=9.275, p< .001). Therefore, it can be inferred that SES is a factor that can influence the students' reading comprehension skills.

This result bears similarity to that of Cheng & Wu (2017) as they concluded that socioeconomic status contributes to reading comprehension across language.

The implication of this finding is, pupils whose socioeconomic status is low has limited level of reading comprehension perhaps for the reason of having limited means and resources. The family cannot afford to attain reading materials for follow up at home. Meanwhile, those pupils who can afford to have reading resources tend to have performed better in terms of reading comprehension.

To determine exactly the variance between income groups, a post hoc analysis was run using Scheffe test found on Table 8.2.1.

Table 8.2 Difference: Respondents' Reading Comprehension based on Socioeconomic Status

N=150; Low=92; Moderate=42; High 16

Variables	Sources of Statistical Information	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Interpretation
Reading Comprehension	Between Groups	137.405	2	68.702	9.275	.000	Significant
	Within Groups	1088.835	147	7.407			
	Total	1226.240	149				

Table 8.2.1 presents the post hoc analysis using Scheffe test to identify the difference in the pupils' reading comprehension based on SES. It shows that the middle income group manifests better reading performance than the low income group as evidenced by the mean difference of -1.67081 (negative value indicates that the subtrahend, middle income group is greater than the minuend, the low income group). Also, the high income group has improved reading comprehension than low income group with the mean difference of -2.51902 (negative value indicates that the subtrahend, the high income group is greater than the minuend, the low income group). Clearly, SES influences the students' reading comprehension ability.

However, the finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Volkel, Seabi, Cockcroft, & Goldschagg (2016). It revealed that learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds perform significantly better than those from a high socioeconomic background.

The result further implies that pupils with low socioeconomic status perhaps have limited resources to reading materials that it affects their reading comprehension level compared to the pupils with moderate and high socioeconomic status.

Table 8.2.1 Post Hoc Analysis (Scheffe Test): Difference of the Respondents' Reading Comprehension based on Socioeconomic Status

N=150; Low=92; Moderate=42; High 16

Dependent Variable	(I) SES	(J) SES	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Interpretation

Reading Comprehension	Low	Moderate	-1.67081*	.50682	.005	Significant
		High	-2.51902*	.73719	.004	Significant

* Significant at alpha .05

Difference in the pupils' academic performance based on gender and socioeconomic status

Table 9.1 presents the difference in the pupils' academic performance when the data are categorized according to gender. As can be seen in the table below, females elicited better academic performance compared to males (t=-4.742, p= <.001). Hence, it implies that gender is a factor that influences the students' academic performance.

The study further supports that of Habibullah & Ashraf (2013) that female gender was significantly associated with better academic performance.

Moreover, the finding bears similarity to the study of Pomerantz, Altermatt & Saxon (2002) which concluded that girls outperformed boys across all 4 subjects.

It is clearly stated that in terms of academic performance, females performed better compared to males. The implication of this is that, perhaps, girls are pretty serious and are more focused with the things that they do in class compared to boys.

Table 9.1 Difference: Respondents' Academic Performance based on Gender

N=150, Male=72; Female=78

Variables	Gender	Mean	Df	Mean Difference	T	Sig	Interpretation
Academic Performance	Male	78.8542	148	-3.73558	-4.742	.000	Significant
	Female	82.5897	134.441				

Table 9.2 presents the difference in the pupils' academic performance when the data are categorized according to SES. A closer look at this table, it reveals that students differ in their academic performance based on SES (F= 9.055, p < .001). Thus, it be inferred that SES determines the students' academic performance.

To determine exactly between what particular groups the difference lies post hoc analysis was run employing Scheffe test found on Table 9.2.1.

Table 9.2 Difference: Respondents' Academic Performance based on Socioeconomic Status

N=150; Low=92; Moderate=42; High 16

Variables	Sources of Statistical Information	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Interpretation
Academic Performance	Between Groups	434.411	2	217.206	9.055	.000	Significant
	Within Groups	3526.137	147	23.987			
	Total	3960.548	149				

Table 9.2.1 presents the post hoc analysis through Scheffe test on the difference of students' academic performance based on SES. It shows that moderate income group manifests better academic performance compared to low income group, as evidenced by the mean difference of -2.64053 (negative value indicates that the subtrahend, moderate income group is greater than the minuend, the low income group). Further, high income group elicits an improved academic performance than low income group with the mean difference of -4.86821 (negative value indicates that the subtrahend, the high income group is greater than the minuend, the low income group). Hence, it can be inferred that SES can influence the students' academic performance in general.

The result of this study bears similar finding to the study of Singh & Choudhary (2015). It revealed that academic achievement was influenced by socioeconomic status and those who belonged to high and middle socioeconomic status have shown better performance.

An additional support was the conclusions made by Asiegbu & Ezeukbor (2018) that the students from high socioeconomic class perform better academically than their counterparts in low socioeconomic background.

Table 9.2.1 Post Hoc Analysis (Scheffe Test): Difference of the Respondents' Academic Performance based on Socioeconomic Status

N=150; Low=92; Moderate=42; High 16

Dependent Variable	(I) SES	(J) SES	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Interpretation
Academic	Low	Moderate	-2.64053*	.91206	.017	Significant
Performance		High	-4.86821*	1.32663	.002	

* Significant at alpha .05

Conclusion

Based on the results, it is safe to conclude that reading habits play a vital role in the pupils' reading skills and academic performance in general. The positive correlations between these variables proved this assumption. The English teachers of this school should revisit the curriculum on the females' dominance compared to males in reading ability that gender sensitivity should be observed. The moderate/high income group's edge compared to low income group in reading habits, reading comprehension and academic performance. Perhaps, the English teachers could redesign the teaching and learning framework that can address gender and SES strengths and weaknesses to democratize learning for all pupils. At times, educators nowadays, are just overwhelmed by ESL teaching and learning innovations through the use of information technology. But, these variables are overlooked on the process.

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Gendered Discourse in the College Students' Argumentative Essay

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Abstract

The data analyzed was based on the argumentative essay as a product to the think-aloud process-writing-protocol administered to the college students in C. Madrazo (2019) that probed into the novice-writers' composing strategies while they processed the writing of L2 English argumentative text. The main purpose was to examine the argumentative text whether the composers vary in their level of authorial stance (Chang, 2012) when classified according to gender types*: cisgender (formerly straight) male* and cisgender *female* (ISEAN, 2015) , *lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender* (LGBT) (Lee & Carpenter, 2014). This study was anchored on Chang's (2012) framework of authorial stance in four levels of analysis: *high argumentative*; *non-argumentative*; *moderately argumentative*; and *tentative* relative to Hyland's (2010) *boosters (e.g. must, should) and hedges (e.g. could, would, might)*. Recently, Chavez and Madrazo (2019) found that gays and bisexuals were highly argumentative while cisgender males and females were tentative in advancing their points of argument about issues confronting heteronormativity. The present study employed 20 novice-writers. There were 7 cisgender females, 5 cisgender males, 2 lesbians, 4 gays, and 2 bisexuals based on a self-reported survey. It was hypothesized in this study that these gender groups would vary in their levels of authorial stance. Consistent with the findings of Chavez and Madrazo (2019), lesbians, gays and bisexuals were highly argumentative while the cisgender males and females were tentative on their argumentative discourse. The results on the lesbians, gays and bisexuals, being highly argumentative could indicate that the issues such as stereotyping of the LGBT may have triggered episodes that were highly personal in nature. In addition, the tentativeness of cisgender males and cisgender females were indicative of their expression of sympathy towards the LGBT community in the Philippine educational context.

Key words: Gendered discourse, argumentative essay, authorial stance, gender orientation, heteronormativity

Introduction

ESL writing research has evolved from the analysis of linguistic competence such as grammatical or syntactic features —mostly centered on the product, to the merging of semantics and pragmatics via a discourse component of investigating a written text, thereby entering the realm of the process approach in dealing with how actually a writer goes about producing the text. These levels of textual analysis involved novice and expert-writers of the English language.

In the comprehensive reviews conducted by Castro (2004), Manchon (2011, 2018) , Manchon, de Larios and Murphy (2007), and Sasaki (2000) on L2 writing processes, it was generally synthesized that research on composing strategies include scholarly perspectives on linguistic , discoursal and cognitive processing. Of note, there are various approaches in problematizing writing processes. These varied approaches are classified into general and specific categories of writing strategies. The general conceptual category refers to the random action or protocol performed in the act of writing while the specific conceptual characterization of strategies entails the definite observable writing manifestations. Taking into account the cognitive dimensions of bilingual, trilingual and multilingual writers, the composing process and product were theorized as psycholinguistics variables (Madrazo & Bernardo, 2012, 2018; Manchon, 2013, 2014; Olson & Land, 2007; Ong, 2014; Ong & Zhang, 2010; Robinson, 2011; Roca de Larios, 2013; Van Gelderen, Oostdam, & Van Shooten, 2011).

In theorizing composing behaviors, the writer should be the focal point of discussion There are two schools of thought regarding process writing: the expressivists' view and the cognitivists' position. Teachers practicing the expressivists' view are non-authoritative. Writing instruction is more facilitative in nature framed to emphasized writing accuracy and control over the composing behaviors. Discovering the self, journaling significant events and narrating personal episodes are competencies included in textbooks so students can write unrestrictedly (Faigley, 1986; Johns, 1993). In contrast, cognitivists view writing as a problem solving task which took interest among ESL teachers and researchers. Two concepts generated in cognitivism: thinking and process. The former refers to higher order thinking skills such as problem- solving (Flower, 1986. 1989; Johns, 1993; Matsuda, 2003).

Further, interactive approaches view the writer as an individual taking part of the communication with the reader. The social constructionist view postulates the other role of the writer in a social context. The writer being part of the discourse community is considered an interactant who communicates with the reader (Johns, 1993). The ability to write is not only about mastering the automatic competence in orthography, but it is also considered a complex cognitive and social associations involved in various pragmatic circumstances. It can be used for a higher cognitive processing at a discourse level to negotiate, persuade, and to argue with the reader (Listyani, 2018; Tribble, 2012).

The link between reading and writing has already been established in the literature as showing a positive correlation. Students who process reading text well also do perform satisfactorily in writing task (Eisterhold, 1993 Grainger, 2004; Listyani, 2018; Olson & Land, 2007). The present study deems it essential to theorize on the L2 process-product writing as it can provide measures to students struggling in language proficiency as shown in the Filipino students' poor English proficiency based on past results of National Secondary Achievement Test reported in the 2009 Asian Development Bank (De Los Reyes, 2018). In a current research conducted by Government-Academe-Industry Network (GAIN) Incorporated disclosed in Business World (2018) , out of 10,000 Filipino university graduates, the respondents achieved only a Common European Framework of Reference of Language (CEFR) rating of B1. This B1 grade is lower than CEFR B2 proficiency of Thailand and Vietnam high school graduates. The CEFR B1 grade for Filipino university graduates has an equivalent competence level of Grade 5 and 6 pupils in native English speaking countries like the UK and USA.

Hence, there is clearly a declining performance of Filipino graduates as regards their English language proficiency. This study could help provide language learning strategies underscoring the writing component in both process and product, to help improve the Filipino learners' English language proficiency. The most appropriate pedagogical step to help students improve their language proficiency is to develop their writing skills as writing has proven to be closely associated with critical reading skills.

L2 writing process to product

Some notable L2 writing scholarship theorized on the beneficial influence of writing strategies to novice and expert -writers' composition (De Silva, 2015; Johns, 1993; Leki, 1995, Bosher, 1998; Castro, 2004; Leki, 2011; Maartor & Murat, 2013; Manchon, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018; Manchon, Roca de Larios & Murphy, 2007; Manchon & Williams, 2016; Matsuda, 2003; Zhang, 2013). Process writing is connected with the setting or context and the composer's previous episodes. The expected interactive tasks in writing are reviewing, evaluating, revising, planning, drafting or editing. Thus, process writing incorporates several cognitive activities that happen in the actual process of writing. Perhaps, this can be gleaned by the interactive collaboration of sub-processes involved (Hyland , 2002; Listyani, 2018).

Focusing on the process alone and excluding the product may have left the theorizing in the past suggestive rather than conclusive. Addressing this limitation, studies using a more holistic approach probed into the correspondence between writing strategies and writing proficiency and found significant interaction between these variables (Cumming, 1989; Raoofi, Binandeh, & Rahmani,2017; Roca de Larios,, Coyle & Nicolas-Conesa, 2016; Saasaki, 2000). In this current study, the association of process and product was established in order to provide more holistic descriptions of novice-writers' manifestations during the actual composing of an argumentation.

Gendered discourse in ESL writing

Most research in the field of ESL writing are by far heteronormative. People who have high heteronormativity level view gender as primarily "straight" male and female only excluding the other gender orientations specifically, the LGBTI (Lee & Carpenter, 2014). So, comparative writing analysis has been focused more on the distinction between males and females (Abbas and Sheena, 2012; Aziz, Jin & Nordin, 2016; Dana, 2008; Franchis 2000; Franchis et al. 2001; Kanaris, 1999; Nasri, Biri & Karimi, 2018).

Abbas and Sheena (2012) found that out of the lexical features analyzed, females composed less aggressively or forcefully and less contentiously compared to males taking a more ambiguous stance. Aziz et al. (2016) showed that the use of metadiscourse interactional resources between males and females did not vary quantitatively but could display variation qualitatively in terms of how both gender groups advance their points and agree within the reader-writer interaction. In a study involving primary school learners, Kanaris (1999) reported that girls wrote lengthier and complicated sentences utilizing several verbs and adjectives centering on elaboration and description while boys were more inclined to compose an event oriented episodes and seemed to be more self-centered or individualistic.

On the other hand, Dana (2008) compared a more matured writers in an ESL writing classes. The comparative analysis was centered on syntactic features, citation of information and presentation of persuasive arguments. Data showed that women used complex syntactic structures, paraphrased properly the cited information and presented clearer and convincing arguments than comparable men writers. Investigating male and female EFL writers on the use of stance and engagement resources, Nasri et al. (2018) claimed that variance between males and females with the latter using more engagement markers through the use of questions.

Both gender groups adhere to similar features of stance-positioning with the exception of the employment of hedges and boosters.

A current paper by Chavez and Madrazo (2019) investigated the levels of argumentative discourse. Authorial stance in writing an essay was measured using Chang's (2012) framework to determine its influence to the participants' level of heteronormativity. It was hypothesized that religiosity and authorial stance would predict their level of heteronormativity. Consistent with the hypothesis, both religiosity (i.e. practice component) and authorial stance (i.e. high argumentative) predicted the college preservice teachers' level of heteronormativity.

Madrazo and Pulido (2019) in their study on college students' use of authorial stance, found that the novice- writers were *non-argumentative* 33 (32.67%), *high argumentative* 30 (29.70%), *moderately argumentative* 22 (21.78%) and *tentative* 16 (15.84%). First in rank was their being non-argumentative which was followed by their being high argumentative which was closely similar with the first. The data would suggest that college students—in general, without gender as a variable, tended to be non-argumentative but they could also be highly argumentative in writing their thesis. Compared to the pre-service teachers in Chavez and Madrazo (2019), both groups were graduating students of universities in the Philippines. But, the difference can be seen in the genre or text-type analyzed with the gender orientations included as variables. Chavez and Madrazo (2019) found that the essay the pre-service teachers wrote would be categorized as highly argumentative because it was an emotionally-charged essay from a very sensitive issue pertaining to stereotypes against the LGBTI community. The essay questions could have personally affected the novice writers.

In this current study, the writing prompt used to elicit the participants' responses during the think-aloud protocol was about the benefits and drawbacks on watching television. This issue can have a varying influence on the writers depending on their episodes with this technology being utilized on a daily basis. Hence, the participants' argumentative discourse was activated quite substantially but perhaps not as emotionally charged as the previous studies.

ISEAN (2015) delineated the following gender orientations: cisgender male, cisgender female, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Cisgender means that one views and prefers his/her biological sex: male or female. Lesbian is a female who is romantically or sexually attracted to female and who possesses the attributes of a female. Gay is a male who is romantically or sexually attracted to a male. Bisexual is a person who is romantically or sexually attracted to both male and female. Transgender may be a lesbian or a gay who explicitly displays one's preferred gender identity (male or female). A transgender may explicitly project a physical appearance (dress, voice, hair, make-up) of one's preferred gender identity. There are also other gender orientations that are now accepted in publication but only five gender orientations came out to be the participants' preference in the present study: cisgender male, cisgender female, lesbian, gay, and bisexual.

The present study

Problem statement

The study examined the gendered discourse evident in the college students' argumentative essay. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions: (1) What are the levels of argumentative discourse elicited in the novice-writers' argumentative essay?; (2) Do the novice-writers' levels of argumentative discourse vary when classified according to gender orientations: cisgender males, cisgender females, lesbians, gays and bisexuals?

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that the college students would differ in their levels of argumentative discourse when grouped according to gender orientations: high argumentative, non-argumentative, moderately argumentative and tentative.

Significance

This paper is an extended study of C. Madrazo (2019) utilizing a writing process-product approach. The composing strategies in the college students' writing of an argumentative text via think- aloud protocol were analyzed. It was reported that their writing strategies statistically correlated with some of the writing proficiency components. Employing the same novice-writers, this current study, analyzed the product domain of ESL college writing which is the argumentative written text. Given that there is a dearth in theorizing gender orientations in relation to ESL writing, particularly, on writing an academic argumentative essay, this paper may contribute along this line of inquiry. In matters concerning how novice-writers process argumentative text, its connection to their writing proficiency and their levels of argumentative discourse based on gender orientations, this study may provide evidence that could be part of the pool of knowledge theorizing ESL writing scholarship.

Method

Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative-quantitative exploratory design. The product, herewith the argumentative essay, was taken from C. Madrazo's (2019) study that probed into the process composing behaviors of college students. Only the argumentative essay as the qualitative was analyzed using Chang's (2012) framework of authorial stance. Then, a quantitative non-parametric tool was used to analyzed whether there was variance on the college students levels' of argumentative discourse based on gender orientations.

Participants

The target participants were the 20 Chabacano first year college students of Western Mindanao State University coming from various colleges such as College of Education, College of Nursing, College of Liberal Arts and College of Engineering and Technology. The mean age was ***M*=** 16.4 (*SD*= .60) years old. There were 5 (20%) males, 7 (35%) females, 4 (20%) gays, 2 (10%) lesbians and 2 (10%) bisexuals.

Instruments

Descriptive background survey. Prior to the administration of the think –aloud protocol (C. Madrazo, 2019), descriptive information were taken from the participants such as their course, age and gender orientations: cisgender male and cisgender female, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). In a previous study conducted by Chavez and Madrazo (2019), employing similar attributes as the participants in the current study, it was found that none of the participants selected "intersex"; hence, only LGBT was considered in this study.

Think-aloud protocol. The argumentative essay analyzed in this study was based on C. Madrazo (2019). Only the product, the argumentative text was analyzed to determine the levels of authorial stance of the novice writers and the possible variance evident in the college students' argumentative discourse classified according to gender orientations. The process verbalized composing strategies were excluded in this study as these were already reported in C. Madrazo (2019).

Data collection and analysis

The argumentative essay analyzed in the present study was taken from C. Madrazo's (2019) study. The 20 essays were coded according to *T-units* composed of a main clause and its subordinate elements (Hunt, 1970; Castro, 2004). All in all, there were 853 T-units generated in their actual written output written in handwritten form on a yellow pad paper provided by the researcher. Then, each essay with the coded T-units was categorized according to Chang's (2012) level of argumentative discourse: high argumentative, non-argumentative, moderately argumentative and tentative.

This study followed strict ethical standards. Before administering the think-aloud writing task, the participants were required to sign a consent letter. The researcher also asked permission from the Dean of College of Teacher Education where the data gathering was conducted. It was made clear that their identity will remain confidential and if during the process of writing, they will opt out of this research, they are free to do so without any intimidation or condition from the instructor-researcher. Free snacks and drinks were provided. The three rooms were well-ventilated and conducive for writing. After the signature of consent letter, the researcher provided an overview of ESL writing research in relation to traditional gender and current gender -identity-framework. The purpose was clearly explained. Questions were entertained to clarify any doubts considering that gender orientation is a serious and personal matter to deal with in the pedagogical context.

Statistics

To answer problem 1 on the levels of argumentative discourse of the college students, frequency, percentage, and mean rank were used. Answering problem 2, Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test was utilized to determine if the college students' argumentative discourse levels would vary when classified according to gender orientations.

Results and Discussion

Levels of argumentative discourse

High argumentative

High argumentative statements are considered assertives. These are aggressive ways of taking stance. For Chang (2012), it is used to assert and to proclaim one's perspective. Hyland (2010) termed assertives as boosters. As shown in Table 1, out of 1, 251 levels of argumentative discourse, high frequency of occurrence of high argumentative was obtained by lesbians 195 (15.59%), gays 205 (16.39%), and bisexuals 180 (14.39%). Being tentative was frequent among cisgender males 198 (15.83%) and cisgender females 203 (16.23%). Additionally, low frequency was observed for both non-argumentative and moderately argumentative for all gender orientations. A sample transcripts from P3-T74 and P5-T83 can best exemplify high argumentative in a text:

All people *on earth watch TV which is definitely very useful in their day to day activities and that we* ***must be grateful*** *to the inventor of this technology.* (P3-T74)

Being a designer and beauty pageant enthusiast, I **firmly believe** that I will not survive without TV which actually feeds me **greatly** of the latest trends in fashion. (P5-T83).

Table 1 *The Frequency and Percentage of the Novice-Writers' Argumentative Discourse Based on Gender Orientations*

Gender	High Argumentative		Non Argumentative		Moderately Argumentative		Tentative	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**
Lesbians	**195**	**15.59**	13	1.04	15	1.20	5	0.40
Gays	**205**	**16.39**	15	1.20	16	1.28	3	0.24
Bisexuals	**180**	**14.39**	20	1.60	19	1.52	7	0.56
S. Males	30	2.40	25	2.00	23	1.84	**198**	**15.83**
S. Females	28	2.24	24	1.92	27	2.16	**203**	**16.23**
Sub-total	638	51.00	97	7.75	100	7.99	416	33.25
Total	**1251**							

Non-argumentative

Non-argumentative statements are basically description of events or reporting of information. Basically, Chang (2012) defines it as stating of factual information. As illustrated in Table 1, very few occurrences of non-argumentatives were found in the texts for all gender groups. The following are relevant sample transcripts of non-argumentative features from P11-T902 and P14- 981:

Television was invented with the advent of technology era where people seek answers to booming information questions. (P11-T902)

According to the newspaper I read, TV helps shape people's perception about current issues. (P14-981).

Madrazo and Pulido (2019) reported that college students were inclined to utilize non-argumentative features in writing academic research paper. The novice-writers in their study were observed to report ideas and information from sources rather than critique or evaluate the sources they read. However, compared to the data in this present study, the lack of use of non-argumentatives may have attributed to the type of text analyzed. Though both were academic writing texts, the latter was not a research paper where they were required to search for relevant sources. The argumentative essay in this present study was limited in scope with limited time to accomplish.

Moderately argumentative

Chang (2012) categorize moderately argumentative as assertive statements with hedging devices used within a sentence such as *often, appear, seem quite often* suggesting likelihood or tendency. It could also include adjectives like *slowly, several* to diffuse the degree of assertive certainty. Instead of stating *rapidly* (high argumentative), *slowly* can in a way lower the degree of assertiveness and can still push forward an argument, for instance, *China is slowly encroaching the Philippine territory*. The use of *several* can also lower the degree of certainty for example, one may claim the *exact year* (high argumentative) when the West Philippine seas became the Philippine territory . The use of *several* may lower one's certainty. China can refute by advancing their own precise history. The sample transcripts from P1-T9 and P2-T45 below best exemplify moderately argumentative:

*The benefits of TV **seem** to far outweigh its hazards to people.* (P1-T9)

***Slowly,** TV can affect significantly our children's values.* (P2-T45)

Tentative

There is a thin line that distinguishes tentative from moderately argumentative statements . Chang (2012) in fact specifies these two features as using hedges like appear, would, could. and the like. The difference lies on level of certainty. When the writer is least certain, one is being tentative. Table 1.1 above illustrates that males and females appear to be tentative in taking their stance. The sample transcripts from P15-1001 and P17-T1091 below show these features:

*I **think** the Japanese people **could** have been the inventor of TV which is worth emulating because Japanese are really intelligent.* (P15-1001)

*I **would** say that **perhaps** without TV we wouldn't know exactly what to value.* (P17-T1091)

Variation: The novice-writers' stance based on gender orientation

As illustrated in Table 2, the variation in high argumentative component is significant based on gender orientations: cisgender male and female, lesbians, gays, bisexuals [$X^{2=}$ = 15.275, *p*= .0040]. This statistical evidence validates Table 1 showing that lesbians, gays and bisexuals are frequently *high argumentative*. On the other hand, cisgender males and females are *tentative* [$X^{2=}$ = 15.164, p= 15.164] that validates Table 1 in terms of frequency.

Table 2 *Difference: The Novice-Writers Levels of Argumentative Discourse based on Gender Orientations*

	High Argumentative	Non Argumentative	Moderately Argumentative	Tentative
Chi-Square	15.275	8.244	9.633	15.164
df	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	0.004	0.083	0.074	0.004

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender

The data here are in congruence with the findings of Chavez and Madrazo (2019) that lesbians, gays and bisexuals were highly argumentative in their essay writing while the cisgender males and females were tentative. The results were interpreted as possibly caused by the highly emotionally charged issue prompted which was about the stereotyping of LGBT community. Compared to the issue presented in this current study, the effects of television may not necessarily trigger personally emotional episodes. But, the college novice-writers still manifested similar authorial stance. Perhaps, it was possible that the lesbians, gays and bisexuals were "showing off" their being argumentative. Given that the present study recognizes their gender orientations, maybe they took this research as a platform to express that they can assert their views pertaining to any academic issues.

As regards the cisgender females being less assertive by their resourceful use of hedges, the data here are substantiated by Nasri et al. (2018); Abbas & Sheena (2012). However, previous studies on cisgender males do not seem to agree with the results on males in this present study. Cisgender males were found to be more aggressively than females (Abbas and Sheena, 2012). It is possible that the small number of participants here may have affected the authorial stance on the average.

Conclusion

On the findings that there is significant variance in the college students' levels of authorial stance based on gender orientations, it is safe to suggest that college ESL writing has to consider gender in dealing with novice-writers. Being argumentative in one's composition matters in ESL teaching and learning because logical thinking has always been connected to how our students articulate their position. The highest skill to be taught in an English language class is writing. Not only that it is intimidating to teach, but because there are several components needed to be valorized first such as lexical, semantic, and syntactic elements that make it very difficult to impart on our novice-writers.

Recognizing our students' gender orientations welcomes students' voices in a more compassionate, dynamic and engaging way. Allowing them to express their ideas and perceptions according to their gender preferences democratizes the learning of ESL writing with more freedom. As we can observe, a high heteronormative environment in fact dictates and restricts our students' actions and thoughts to what the traditional norm requires. Creating a *low- risk* environment can lead to a more spontaneous and free-flowing ESL writing process to product pedagogical approach.

If the purpose is to improve the declining proficiency of Filipinos in English across age levels, then teach writing in a way that we engage students to process writing using various composing strategies, thereby allowing them to enjoy the step by step process: from idea generation like brainstorming, listing, clustering, webbing, classifying to drafting by identifying the central thesis, and outlining of supporting details to proceeding to full draft following the guided scaffolding structure to the stating of constructive feedback-comments that make sense to the learners and motivates them to revise their essay paper in a progressive manner, not digressive . This way, frustration can be prevented and ascertain good progress in our students *writing culture* in class. We, writing teachers should established a *writing culture* that our students could carry with them even if they are already prompted with the distractions like the internet in general and social media in particular.

Future research investigation along with this line of inquiry can expand the textual genre to be analyzed not merely limited to argumentative essay. Since the study is an exploratory study, the findings here may be considered just suggestive. The next paper has to involve bigger samples with equal distribution of gender orientations and to employ a parametric inferential statistics in order to approximate conclusiveness.

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Appendix A

Participants	Gender	HA	NA	MA	T
1	1	4	3	3	33
2	2	5	4	5	35
3	3	101	8	7	2
4	2	5	6	7	42
5	4	41	3	4	1
6	1	2	7	6	18
7	4	59	4	3	1
8	2	5	2	4	30
9	1	6	2	3	39
10	2	5	3	2	40
11	4	48	2	6	0
12	1	8	6	4	58
13	2	2	4	3	26
14	4	57	4	3	1
15	1	10	9	7	50
16	2	3	3	3	10
17	5	97	12	10	3
18	2	3	2	3	20
19	5	83	8	9	4
20	3	94	5	8	3
		638	**97**	**100**	**416**

Legend: HA- High Argumentative; NA- Non-Argumentative; MA- Moderately Argumentative;

T-Tentative

Appendix C

(From C. Madrazo, 2019)

Think-Aloud Argumentative Essay

Since its invention, television has had a great impact on people's lives. It fostered the growth and development of a global community and made worldwide communication possible. However, television has also been blamed for the spread of wrong moral values.

Using examples by which television has improved or damaged modern society, write an essay that discusses these two positions. Explain whether television has had more positive or more negative influences and give reasons for your position.

You have 30 minutes to write the essay. You may use as little or as much of that time as you need. Verbalize your thoughts. You can use Chabacano language while you are writing the essay in English. Pwede conversa na lenguaje Chabacano. So don't worry about whether what you are saying is relevant or polite or smart; JUST SAY IT, so do what you normally do when you write an essay. If you make a mistake, just cross it out. You may use the dictionary provided if you wish.

Note: The essay was revised to its final output written in English by the novice-writers. The final product was used for the present study.