The Asian EFL Journal

January 2020

Volume 24 Issue 1

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL
The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Published by the English Language Education Publishing

Asian EFL Journal
A Division of TESOL Asia Group
Part of SITE Ltd Australia

http://www.asian-efl-journal.com

Publisher: Dr. Paul Robertson
Chief Editor: Dr. John Adamson
Guest and Production Editor: Dr. I-Chin Nonie Chiang

ISSN1738-1460

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL
The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Table of Contents

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL
The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Forward by Copy Editor

Welcome to the January edition of the Asian EFL Journal in 2020. This inspiring edition contains six articles and two book reviews of quality. In the first article, *Pragmatic Competence in the Target Language: A Study of Iranian Learners of English*, Reza Taghizadeh investigated two important aspects of pragmatics in addition to examining the Iranian English learners' understanding of conversational implicatures and presuppositions. With Discourse Completion Tasks and questionnaires, Taghizadeh concluded that Iranian English learners still need to improve their understanding of conversational implicatures and presuppositions; teachers need to incorporate the pragmatic aspects of the TL into a grammatical syllabus to bridge the grammar and the real world. Next, Miguel Lorenzo B. Garcia, in *Formal Features of Filipino ESL Research Papers*, carefully looked into the formal and non-formal features of academic writing by Filipino teachers and pointed out that ESL academic writers still find using the appropriate academic style problematic. However, with the use of informal features, the research papers seem less rigid and stiff. Then, in *Using Corpus Analysis in a Needs Analysis of Key English Vocabulary for Petroleum Engineers in Vietnam*, Lan Phuong Le, Margaret Kettle and Hitendra Pillay conducted a study in a new field of ESP, the petroleum industry. The authors used the corpus analytic RANGE program to investigate the vocabulary features in two petroleum companies in Vietnam. Types of words that the engineers need in their daily communication were composed, and the authors suggested that this corpus-analytic vocabulary approach could contribute to ESP course development in other industries and professions. To understand how partial dictation can be effective in enhancing learners' segmentation ability, Dukhayel Alduhayel in his *Enhancing L2 Listener's Lexical Segmentation through Partial Dictation: A Bottom-up Approach* reported a five-week quasi-experimental study with a total of 37 participants using partial dictation to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching bottom-up second language listening approach on lexical segmentation. Posttest results showed significant improvement in the experimental groups' segmentation ability and the participants' satisfaction with the procedure and content. In the following paper, *The Impact of Global English: Perceptions of English Promotion, English Education and the ELT Industry in Taiwan*, Han-Yi Lin described in detail about the impact of global English in Taiwan with a special focus on English promotion, English education, and the ELT industry and their interrelationships. Her results suggested the interwoven nature of the National English policy, the state English education and the ELT industry. Then, Alexander Nanni and Kerry Pusey after carrying out a well-designed PBL project reported a positive effect in improving participants' digital literacy skills in a Thai university. Participants reported that the project stimulated their knowledge of and interest in current events. Additionally, the authors argue that developed digital literacy skills can be expanded to various activities regardless of the context. The penultimate paper is the first book review. Waheeb Albiladi's review on *Exploring English language teaching: Language in action (2nd Edition, 2018)* is a strong recommendation. It is a book that provides both theoretical framework and practical guidelines with the exploration of the new trends in ELT from an applied linguistics perspective. Anyone works in the related field ought to benefit from the reading. Finally, Xiaolei Ruan's insightful review of *Agency at Work: An Agentic*

Perspective on Professional Learning and Development (2017) detailed the first eight chapters regarding the conceptualization of agency at work from perspectives. Then, the following chapters concerned with empirical studies and methodological findings from a wide range of disciplines. The author recommended the book for researchers interested in agency, workplace learning and career development.

Dr. I-Chin Nonie Chiang
Production Editor of AEJ January 2020
National Open University

Reza Taghizadeh

University of Salford, UK

Dr. Reza Taghizadeh has a PhD in Linguistics from the University of Salford, UK. He has also obtained a Master's degree in TESOL Studies from Aston University, UK and a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from Qaemshahr Azad University, Iran. He has taught Phonetics and Phonology, Neurolinguistics, Bilingualism and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at tertiary level in recent years. His main research interests are pragmatic competence, as well as phonetics and phonology in bilingualism. **Email**: rezataghizadeh791@googlemail.com

Abstract

This study focuses on two important aspects of pragmatics and examines the Iranian English learners' understanding of conversational implicatures and presuppositions. Data was collected through a questionnaire developed in this study and 50 Iranian students who had been newly admitted by UK universities took part in this research. The findings demonstrated that Iranian English learners need to improve their understanding of conversational implicatures and presuppositions in order to have a smooth conversation with English native speakers. It is hoped that the findings of this study could add to the existing body of knowledge in pragmatics studies and improve our understanding of Iranian English learners' perception and understanding of conversational implicatures and presupposition in particular.

Key words: Pragmatics, Pragmatic Competence, Second Language Teaching

University of Salford, Maxwell Building, 43 Crescent, Salford M5 4WT, UK

Introduction

Despite the growing body of research on the importance of pragmatic competence in the target language, the existing studies mainly focus on speech acts, a narrow area of pragmatics, when assessing the pragmatic competence of foreign or second language learners. On the contrary, there have been very few studies that have concentrated on other aspects of pragmatics. Moreover, nearly all the previous studies which have targeted the knowledge of pragmatics of Iranian English learners have chosen speech acts as their subject. This study explores the knowledge of conversational implicatures and presuppositions of Iranian learners of English who have recently admitted by the universities in the UK.

Pragmatic competence is "the ability to use language appropriately in a social context" which involves both innate and learned capacities and develops naturally through a socialisation process (Taguchi, 2009, p. 1). According to Mey (2006), intercultural contacts always carry the risk of misunderstandings arising between users with different social and cultural backgrounds. Also, research into the pragmatic competence of L2 learners has demonstrated that, linguistic development does not guarantee a corresponding level of pragmatic development (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998) and that even advanced learners may fail to comprehend or to convey the intended intentions and politeness values. Moreover, previous studies which have examined the Iranian learners' pragmatic knowledge (Azarmi & Behnam, 2012; Allami & Naeimi, 2010; Jalilifar, 2009; Pishghadam & Sharafadini, 2011) have all reported that Iranian English learners' understanding of speech acts were different to those by native speakers and it is an area which should be improved whether through classroom instructions or awareness raising activities.

The importance of Pragmatic Competence

Until the mid-1960s, linguistic competence was only defined in terms of the grammatical knowledge of an idealised native speaker introduced by Chomsky (1965). According to Chomsky (1965), in a completely homogeneous speech community, an idealised native speaker is someone who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance. Nevertheless, a group of linguists introduced the notion of pragmatic/communicative competence which led to revolutionary changes in learning theories and teaching methodologies of the TL.

Hymes was one of the first scholars who used the term 'communicative competence' (1972; 1974). Hymes' (1972) introduction of communicative competence widely acknowledged that teaching and learning languages involves far more than targeting grammatical or lexical systems. He defined communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence, but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations. Therefore, Hymes (1972; 1974) brought the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence. For Hymes, the ability to speak competently not only involves the grammatical knowledge of a language, but also knowing what and how to utter something in any circumstances. Hymes (1972, p. 45) states that "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless".

To become effective communicators, it is necessary for language learners to acquire true communicative competence. Communicative competence, according to Hymes (1967), includes not only knowledge of linguistic forms but also knowledge of when, how and for whom it is appropriate to use these forms. Likewise, Ellis (1994, p. 696) states that, communicative competence "entails both linguistic competence and pragmatic competence". Watts (2003) proposed that pragmatic competence includes both the conversational maxims proposed by Grice (e.g., 1975) and rules of politeness; so, when trying to understand pragmatic competence, we should consider both speakers and listeners in conversational interaction in order to obtain an accurate view of the tension that is missing while researchers mostly focus only on either the speaker or the listener alone. One important aspect of pragmatic competence in a second language is the ability to draw correct inferences. Much of the information conveyed by a text, a single sentence or uttered in a conversation is not conveyed directly as the literal meaning of that text, sentence or utterance, but is rather conveyed only indirectly, as inferences which are to be drawn from them. The process of comprehending a text, sentence or an utterance then, is at least partially the process of drawing correct inferences. Therefore, if second language learners are expected to acquire pragmatic competence in the target language (TL), they are required to be able to draw correct references, especially when dealing with native speakers.

Why Conversational Implicatures and Presuppositions?

As stated by Levinson (1983), among all the issues related to the theory of language use, speech acts theory has probably attracted the most interest. This has also been reflected in the studies being carried out by researchers investigating the notion of pragmatic competence. Roever (2006, p. 231) states that, “due to the difficulty of researching a comprehensive construct like pragmatic competence, certain aspects of it have received particular attention in ILP research”. According to Kasper (2000), the most commonly investigated speech acts are requests and apologies, followed by refusals, complaints, and compliments.

On the other hand, while once implicature and presupposition were regarded as unruly and suspiciously non-logical (Horn 1996, p. 299), they have recently occupied a prominent place in pragmatics and are now among the most trusted and widely explored sources of insight into how language and context interact, the role of social cognition in shaping linguistic behaviour, and the nature of linguistic meaning itself (Potts, 2014, p. 2). However, this growing interest in implicature and presupposition is not extended to the field of pragmatic competence, and recent studies in this area still use the DCTs developed by Beebe et al. (1990) or the modified versions of them which can only target the knowledge of speech acts. Considering the lack of effort to use other aspects of pragmatics when evaluating the pragmatic knowledge of non-native speakers in the TL, using a new questionnaire developed in this study, the knowledge of conversational implicatures and presuppositions in English of a group of native speakers of Farsi were measured. It should be stressed that almost all previous studies who have explored the notion of pragmatic competence among Iranian EFL/ESL learners have used speech acts as the subject of their research and this is one of the first attempts to investigate other areas of pragmatics (CI and presupposition) among native speakers of Farsi.

The choice of conversational implicatures has also been due to the decisive role of this notion in understanding the intended meaning, affecting the success or failure of conversations between native and non-native speakers. As argued by Levinson (1983, p. 97), “the notion of conversational implicature is one of the most important ideas in pragmatics”. While Grice is associated with the introduction of the notion of implicature, he did not actually present a general definition of the term (Gauker, 2001,

p. 165; Saul, 2002, p. 239). Nevertheless, his indication that it is related to the terms 'imply', 'suggest' and 'mean' (Grice, 1989, p. 24), laid the basis for the definitions presented by most Gricean and neo-Griceans. For example, Horn (2006, p. 3) also defined this concept as "a component of speaker meaning that constitutes an aspect of what is meant in a speaker's utterance without being part of what is said".

Grice distinguished between kinds of conversational implicature: generalised and particularised. In Grice's terms, generalised conversational implicatures (GCI) arise without any particular context or special scenario being necessary whereas, particularised conversational implicatures (PCI) require such specific contexts. Levinson (1983, p. 126) uses the following examples to illustrate this distinction:

(1) I walked into a house.

GCI: The house was not my house.

There seems to be a generalised implicature conveyed by the use of the indefinite article "a" (house), which implicates that the house is not closely related to the speaker.

(2) A: What has happened to the roast beef?

B: The dog is looking very happy.

PCI: Perhaps the dog has eaten the roast beef (based on the fact that the dog is looking very happy).

Thus, particularised implicatures are generated by saying something in virtue of some particular features of the context. Levinson (1983) adds that most of the floutings or exploitations of the conversational maxims are particularised, and that irony, for instance, requires particular background assumptions to rule out the literal interpretations.

The main studies about the comprehension of conversational implicature have been carried out by Bouton (1988; 1992; 1994) and Taguchi (2005; 2007; 2008; 2009; 2011; 2013). While Bouton only focused on some aspects of conversational implicature like the Maxim of Relevance and irony, Taguchi has considered many variables in this acquisitional process other than simply comprehension accuracy, including comprehension speed, comprehension load, lexical access speed, L2 proficiency level, and learning environment with a view to evaluate those underlying assumptions about pragmatic theories in Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1976), Grice's Maxims (1975) and the Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995).

Taguchi's (2013) latest study involved 160 Japanese English learners at an American university and their TOEFL score which ranged from 330 to 590 was used to evaluate their linguistic proficiency. She used a computerised listening test consisting of 40 multiple-choice items to measure the respondents' ability to comprehend implicature. She included 16 conventional implicature items 16 non-conventional implicature items and 8 literal-meaning items. The conventional implicature items included two indirect speech acts of request and refusal where she used fixed syntactic forms like "I was wondering if you could", "Do you mind if I", etc. Moreover, indirect refusals were based on giving an excuse for a refusal. On the other hand, for non-conventional implicature items, she used expressions to convey opinions indirectly without involving the conventional features. According to the results of her study, Taguchi stated that "conventional implicatures (indirect refusals and requests) were found easier by Japanese English learners and they took less time to comprehend and answer than non-conventional implicatures" (Taguchi, 2013, p. 30).

Since its introduction, presupposition has triggered lots of attention in both philosophy and linguistics. Levinson (1983, p. 167) argues that "there is more literature on presupposition than any other pragmatic aspect (except speech act), but much of it is very technical and complex, and a great deal is also obsolete and sterile". Nevertheless, despite the existing literature, the notion of presupposition has not attracted lots of interest among researchers investigating the pragmatic competence of L2 learners. Presupposition acts as a sort of precondition for the appropriate use of an utterance and can be defined as the pieces of information that the speaker assumes in order for his/her utterance to be meaningful in the context. It is a kind of pragmatic inference which can be generated using some lexical items and linguistic constructions called presupposition triggers. Huang (2007, p. 65) states that "presupposition is an inference or proposition whose truth is taken for granted in the utterance of a sentence". So far, researchers have explored certain words in English which are associated with the notion of presupposition and my questionnaire will use a number of them to assess the knowledge of presupposition.

In addition to the conversational implicature and presuppositions, a number of conventional implicatures have also been included in this study. As argued by Potts (2014), while conversational and conventional implicatures share the same 'implicature' designation, the latter has more in common with presupposition than conversational implicature. Like lexical presuppositions, conventional implicatures are related to certain lexical items which convey additional meanings when used in utterances or sentences. According to Huang (2007, p. 54), “a conventional implicature is a non-truth conditional inference which is not deductive in any general, natural way from the saying of what is said, but arises solely because of the conventional features attached to particular lexical items and/or linguistic constructions”. Huang (2007, p. 55) lists a number of lexical items that are considered to engender conventional implicatures as “actually, also, anyway, barely, besides, even, however, manage to, moreover, on the other hand, only, still, so, though, but, too and yet” which a number of them were employed in this study.

The existence of this notion has also been debated and as argued by Levinson (1983, p. 128), there have been many attempts to reduce the notion of conventional implicature to matters of entailment, conversational implicature or presupposition. Therefore, since there is not a general agreement among researchers about the existence of conventional implicatures and whether they should be grouped separately or not, and due to the similarities that they share with presupposition, they have been grouped and studied under presupposition in this research. Moreover, lexical presupposition triggers that were used in this study were ‘who (structural presupposition), no (domain presupposition), stop (change of state verb), regret (factive predicate), return (iterative verb), realise (factive verb), too (comparative particle).

Data Collection

Instrument

Since Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) as the dominant tools to collect data in cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics can only target the knowledge of speech acts, a questionnaire consisted of twenty-four questions was developed and used in this study, while equal numbers were allocated to each category (twelve questions were about the conversational implicatures and twelve questions were about the conventional implicatures and presuppositions). Answering a questionnaire is not a simple task, but rather a series of processes which involves judgments based on several cognitive decisions by the respondent. To simplify this process and to reduce the involvement of the respondents' linguistic knowledge in this study, and to ensure that the responses truly reflect the participants' pragmatic knowledge, the Likert Scale was preferred to open-ended questions or multiple-choice questions.

Participants

Fifty native speakers of Farsi who were admitted by reputable UK universities in September 2015 to study non-English courses at undergraduate level, and their length of stay in the UK varied from one to three months participated in this study. Also, the group consisted of thirty five males and fifteen females and their overall IELTS score ranged from 6.5 to 7.

Procedure

Prior to administering the questionnaire developed in this research on the study group, twenty non-native speakers of English who were attending a pre-sessional EAP course at a British university, and had similar IELTS scores to those of the study group, completed the questionnaire as the pilot group. Besides, fifteen native speakers of English who were undergraduate students of a reputable university in the UK and were studying History, took part in this study as the control group. Data collection from all three groups took place in classrooms observed and monitored by the researcher.

Data Analysis and Results

Analysis of Questions about Conversational Implicature

Table 1 presents the answers to twelve questions about Conversational Implicature (CI) by the study group.

As it can be seen from the table 1, out of twelve questions targeting the knowledge of CI, only one question (question 22) led to 100% correct answer. On the other hand, question 12 had the least correct response (19 out of 50) among all questions about CI.

Table 1 Presentation of responses to questions about Conversational Implicatures

Question	Type of Question	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)	Neutral	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Correct Answer	Total Correct Answers	Percentage of correct Answer
1	CI	4	0	2	31	13	D/SD	44	88%
3	CI	6	40	3	1	0	A/SA	46	92%
5	CI	8	2	0	28	12	D/SD	40	80%
7	CI	8	34	2	5	1	A/SA	42	84%
10	CI	22	18	2	4	4	A/SA	40	80%
12	CI	12	18	1	11	8	D/SD	19	38%
15	CI	38	11	0	1	0	A/SA	49	98%
17	CI	2	0	1	8	39	D/SD	47	94%
18	CI	4	1	2	32	11	D/SD	43	86%
19	CI	15	24	1	4	6	A/SA	39	78%
21	CI	2	0	0	9	39	D/SD	48	96%
22	CI	9	41	0	0	0	A/SA	50	100%

These two questions have been discussed below:

Question 22
After Janet has withdrawn money from a cash machine, her friend Mike approaches her.
Mike: Janet, I need some cash.
Janet: Your debit card also works on this machine.

Based on Janet's utterance, you are likely to believe that Janet has no intention of lending money to Mike.

Based on Grice's Maxim of Manner, people involved in a conversation should avoid ambiguity; however, a speaker might intentionally violate a maxim by avoiding being clear in a conversation to convey more than what he or she had actually uttered. In this question, Janet uses an ambiguous response to Mike's statement as she is pretending not to understand Mike's real intention of requesting money from her.

This was the only question about CI that was answered correctly by all respondents. 41 respondents chose 'Strongly Agree' and the rest selected 'Agree' as their choice.

Question 12
Joseph and Arthur are professors at a university. They are talking about the essay of a student called Jessie.
Joseph: How did you find Jessie's term essay on thermodynamics?
Arthur: It was well-typed.

According to Arthur, Jessie's term paper was good.

In order to answer Joseph's question, Arthur is trying to be relevant and contribute to this conversation; although, his utterance conveys a meaning beyond what he has actually being uttered. Joseph's question is about a student's paper on thermodynamics and to respond to his colleague's question, Arthur only refers to the presentation quality of the paper rather than the contents. This can be interpreted as the only positive point worth referring to by Arthur. Nevertheless, this question led to the fewest correct answers among all twelve questions about CI as only 19 respondents (38%) replied correctly to this question. There was 1 neutral answer, while the rest of the responses (30) were incorrect. This question had generated similar results in the pilot study and only 33% answered correctly to this answer. To avoid any misunderstanding of this question and in order to stress the importance of the contents rather than the presentation, the word 'thermodynamics' was chosen; however, the majority of respondents found a positive correlation between the essay being well-typed and being a good essay shows that they could not use the inferential bridges to understand Arthur's utterance.

Bridging Implicature and Flouting Implicature

A number of non-conventional implicatures that are used in this study operate at two levels: bridging and flouting (Grice, 1975; Levinson, 1983). Bridging implicature observes the maxim; however, it requires the listener to employ some inferential bridges in order to provide a relevant utterance. On the other hand, flouting implicature is a deviation from the maxim which occurs when the utterance is generated; therefore, it needs more extensive inferencing. The table below presents an example of each type of these non-conventional implicatures used in this study.

Table 2 Sample CI items: bridging and flouting

Flouting implicature	Bridging implicature
Question 21; mean score: 96%	Question 22; mean score: 100%
Sally and Liam, who are roommates, are in the university café. Sally starts talking about their other roommate, Lisa. *Sally: Lisa can be such a cow sometimes.* *Liam: Have you heard about the university's new developments?*	*After Janet has withdrawn money from a cash machine, her friend Mike approaches her.* *Mike: Jill, I need some cash.* *Janet: Your debit card also works on this machine.*
If you hear this conversation, you are likely to believe that Liam is interested to continue this conversation about Lisa.	*Based on Janet's utterance, you are likely to believe that Janet has no intention of lending money to Mike.*

The following two tables provide a comparison of the answers to questions targeting bridging and flouting. As shown below, there is a difference between the answers to these two kinds of questions. While the average correct response to bridging implicature is 90.66%, the average correct response to flouting implicature is 78.16%. Moreover, while the question which led to the least correct response among all questions about CI (question 12 with 38% of correct responses) was about flouting implicatures, the only question which generated 100% of correct responses belongs to bridging implicature. Therefore, respondents found bridging implicatures easier to comprehend and answer than flouting implicatures. To comprehend the underlying meaning in flouting implicatures, listener has to go through an extensive inferencing process as they present drastic deviations from the maxim at the surface level. So, it requires further attempt by the listeners to derive the meaning.

Table 3 Questions about bridging implicature

Questions targeting Bridging	Total number of Correct Responses	Percentage of Correct Response
Question 3	46	92%
Question 5	40	80%
Question 22	50	100%

Table 4 Questions about flouting implicature

Questions targeting Flouting	Total number of Correct Responses	Percentage of Correct Response
Question 1	44	88%
Question 7	42	84%
Question 10	40	80%
Question 12	19	38%
Question 18	43	86%
Question 21	48	96%

Analysis of Questions about Presupposition

Table 5 illustrates how respondents replied to questions about presupposition.

Table 5 Presentation of responses to questions about Presuppositions

**Q #	Type	A	SA	Neu.	D	SD	CA	Total	% of CA
2	P	8	37	2	3	0	A/SA	45	90%
4	P	27	9	6	7	1	D/SD	8	16%
6	P	9	1	4	29	7	A/SA	10	20%
8	P	11	33	4	2	0	A/SA	44	88%
9	P	10	2	6	24	8	D/SD	32	64%
11	P	22	14	2	9	3	A/SA	36	72%
13	P	16	11	3	15	5	A/SA	27	54%
14	P	8	9	4	18	11	D/SD	29	58%
16	P	6	1	1	14	28	D/SD	42	84%

20	P	16	9	4	15	6	D/SD	21	42%
23	P	2	45	0	3	0	A/SA	47	94%
24	P	9	4	1	8	28	D/SD	36	72%

** Q#: Question number; Type: Type of question; A: Agree; SA: Strongly agree; Neu.: Neutral; D: Disagree; SD: Strongly disagree; CA: Correct Answer; Total: Total correct answers; % of CA: Percentage of correct answer

The study group's low mean score (62.83%) on the other half of the questions which were about presuppositions and conventional implicatures indicates that the respondents were not aware of the extra layer of meaning that is associated with certain English words used in this study. To identify the presuppositions or the implicatures that are conventionally linked with these words, learners must know more than the literal meaning of them. Unfortunately, Iranian English learners who have only been taught about the literal meaning of vocabularies and were unaware of the hidden meaning of the lexical triggers were unable to identify them. To highlight the study group's failure to respond to questions about presupposition, I refer to two questions that generated very low scores in this study.

Question 4
Jack who participated in a marathon race for a charity is talking to her mum, Margaret.
Margaret: Did you finish the race, Jack?
Jack: I had almost finished the race that felt a sharp pain in my left knee, and hardly managed to do it.

According to this conversation, Jack didn't finish the race because of a pain in his left knee.

Among twelve questions about presuppositions and conventional implicatures, question number four led to the least number of correct responses among all twenty four questions. Only eight respondents answered correctly to this question which was about the lexical item of 'managed to' and the mean score was 18%. The term 'managed to' which is considered as a presupposition trigger as argued by Kartunnen (1971b) or a lexical item for a conventional implicature as stated by Huang (2007), conveys the meaning that despite a difficulty, something has been fulfilled; nevertheless, only a few respondents were familiar with this associated meaning.

Question 6
John is talking to his brother, Josh, about their neighbour who is a wealthy man.
Josh: I saw our neighbour in his new Rolls Royce yesterday.
John: He is rich, but he is not a happy man.

On the basis of John's utterance, you are likely to conclude that rich people are usually happy as well.

Another question with a very low mean score (20%) was question number six which was about the conventional meaning that is associated with the word 'but'. As argued by Huang (2007, p. 56), the term 'but' contains the conventional implicature of contrast. Therefore, the sentence above implies that rich people are happy too.

With the mean score of 84.50% for questions about CI, and 62.83% for questions about presupposition, there is almost 22% difference between two aspects of pragmatics which was not predicted prior to conducting this study. This indicates that, although both aspects are categorised as pragmatics, there must be a significant difference between them that language learners with similar linguistic knowledge responded differently to them. To explore the understanding of CI, it is worth referring to the existing theories about CI comprehension.

Conversational implicature refers to the universal ability to recognise the speaker's underlying intention over and above the compositional semantic meaning of the utterance. Grice claims that human beings communicate with each other in a logical and rational way, and cooperation is embedded into people's conversations. Furthermore he argues, this habit will never be lost, because it has been acquired during their childhood. Some researchers claim that Grice's Cooperative Principle and its maxims are universal. For example, Green (1996) argues that rationality and cooperativeness are characteristics common to all the speakers in the world; therefore, non-cooperative conversations should be regarded as cooperative considering more global themes including listener and speaker (p. 98). Cappella (1995) also mentions that rejecting the cooperative principle as a norm may lead to inefficient and unfinished interactions.

On the other hand, there are several scholars who do not agree with Gricean Maxims. Thomas (1998a) criticises Grice's theory for three misinterpretations which are as follows: viewing human nature optimistically, proposing a series of rules for effective conversation and believing that his suggested maxims would always be taken into consideration. Thomas (1998a; 1998b) claims that although Grice's theory is not satisfactory and suffers from a lot of holes, nothing better has been found to replace it. Also, Taillard (2004) attacks Grice's claim that people normally cooperate and follow the maxims, and mentions that "Human communication rests on a tension between the goals of communicators and audiences" Taillard (2004, p. 247). In fact he believes that, we as communicators, interact to fulfil our benefit and interest, but it does not mean that we always tell the truth. Another scholar who disputed Grice's Cooperative Principle initially is Keenan (1976) who argues that cooperative conversation, as with most social behaviour, is culturally determined, and therefore the Gricean Maxims and the Cooperative Principle cannot be universally applied due to intercultural differences.

In conversational implicatures, the speaker expresses attitudes and feelings using indirect utterances that must be inferred by the hearer (Grice, 1975; Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Comprehension of conversational implicatures involves the integration of information from a wide range of linguistic sources (i.e., phonetic, syntactic, and semantic) to comprehend a contextually appropriate utterance that reveals a speaker's intentions and attitude.

While this study does not aim at confirming or rejecting the universality of conversational implicature, research respondents' better performance in answering the questions about CI can suggest that, second language learners' existing knowledge assisted them in dealing with questions about CI rather than presupposition.

The results of this study also confirmed the findings of similar studies which looked at Iranian English language learners' knowledge of pragmatics. However, while previous studies had only focused on speech acts, the research is unique as it has included two different and important aspects of pragmatics, conversational implicatures and presuppositions.

Since many aspects of pragmatics are context-dependent and associated closely with the TL environment, it seems illogical to expect foreign language learners to demonstrate a reasonable level of pragmatic competence without experiencing any sort of stay in that setting. Therefore, Iranian English language learners should be given the opportunity to spend a semester in an English-speaking country to familiarise themselves with those rules and conventions of appropriate use of language, helping them to improve their knowledge of pragmatics.

Teaching Implications

The results of this study revealed that Iranian EFL learners' current pragmatic knowledge on CI and presuppositions is far from mastery. This has also been supported by previous studies exploring the notion of pragmatic competence including gratitude

(Pishghadam & Zarei, 2011), apology (Afghari, 2007), compliments (Karimnia & Afghari, 2011), request (Jalilifar, 2009), condolence (Lotfollahi & Eslami-Rasekh, 2011), disagreement (Parvaresh & Eslami-Rasekh, 2009), reprimands (Ahmadian & Dastjerdi, 2010), refusal (Allami & Naeimi, 2010) and complaints (Eslami-Rasekh, 2004); all focusing on different areas of the knowledge of speech acts. Therefore, it is essential to concentrate more on raising Iranian learners' pragmatic knowledge. While the whole area of pragmatics is not teachable, this study suggests a number of activities that are useful to develop some aspects of pragmatics and raise the foreign language learners' awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence in becoming a successful communicator with native speakers. The following procedures and techniques can be used not only to improve the Iranian learners' pragmatic competence, but also for other foreign language learners that may lack the required pragmatic knowledge in the TL.

Improving the Linguistic Knowledge

Thomas (1983) argues that the division of language competence into grammatical and pragmatic competence suggests a weak relationship between the two. This assumption is based on the fact that the branching of any area of human knowledge into various classes by means of categorisation is a way of emphasising essential differences. On some level, the division of language competence into grammatical competence and pragmatic competence highlights a recognition that the two rely upon essentially different learning processes: one based on form (grammatical), the other based on experience (pragmatic). Many definitions of pragmatic competence state that it goes beyond what grammatical competence can provide, suggesting a different kind of knowledge or awareness (Crozet, 2003). However, having made this assumption, a survey of the literature does not explicitly state that research evidence proves the two competences are completely independent. It is therefore a worthy area of investigation to test this assumption and examine the relationship between the two. If grammatical competence only focuses on form and the meaning is supplied by form, does this knowledge in any way contribute to pragmatic competence?

If the two are completely disassociated, is it reasonable to assume that EFL/ESL learners with differing levels of grammatical competence will not display corresponding differences in their levels of pragmatic competence? That is, if we compare two learners, one showing a high level of grammatical competence gained through formal instruction, and the other showing a low level of grammatical competence, the assumption is that if their exposure to real life interactions in English is similarly limited, then we should expect no appreciable difference in their levels of pragmatic competence. Clearly, drawing a line between grammatical competence and pragmatic competence not only does not seem reasonable, but also it does not contribute to improve the pragmatic competence among EFL learners.

Considering these discussions, separating pragmatic and linguistic classrooms for EFL learners should be avoided as learners will assume that these two notions have no common grounds and are totally separated. Instead, EFL teachers by incorporating the pragmatic aspects of the TL into a grammatical syllabus can find a way of bringing grammar and the real world together. In this way, learners will have the opportunity to learn both the linguistic device and the methods of using in real world settings.

In addition, a number of previous studies (Cook & Liddicoat, 2002) have reported a positive correlation between the level of linguistic knowledge of research participants and their pragmatic competence, meaning advanced English learners performed better than intermediate English learners when were exposed to questions targeting their performance in using language appropriately. This indicates that improving grammatical proficiency can contribute to acquire a higher level of pragmatic competence in the TL. This was also confirmed by Hoffman-Hicks (1992) who argued that linguistic competence is a prerequisite to pragmatic competence. Consequently, developing foreign language learners' linguistic knowledge can have a positive impact on their ability to use language appropriately as well.

Awareness Raising Activities

Raising non-native speakers' awareness of pragmatic competence and its important role in having successful interactions with native speakers can have a significant impact on their pragmatic performance. Sixty-five non-native speakers of English including 50 participants from my study group and 15 participants from my pilot group took part in this study. While they were from different backgrounds including Iranian, Chinese, Japanese, Saudi Arabian, etc., what they all shared was that they had neither heard about the notion of pragmatic competence in EFL classrooms, nor experienced any similar questions that were about their English knowledge, without focusing on their linguistic knowledge. It should be noted again that both the study group and the pilot group had a good general English knowledge and were admitted by reputable UK Universities at undergraduate and postgraduate level respectively. Considering the fact that all of them had attended IELTS preparation courses and the majority of them had also participated in private English institutes in their countries to improve their general English before coming to the UK, it comes as a big surprise that there had been no mention of pragmatic competence in their EFL classrooms. Therefore, awareness raising activities will play a vital role in introducing this unfamiliar aspect of language to foreign or second language learners.

Awareness raising activities are activities designed to develop recognition of how language forms are used appropriately in context. As stated by Schmidt (1993), through awareness raising activities, students acquire information about pragmatic aspects of language. For example, what strategies are used for apologising in their first language and target language? What is considered an offence in their culture compared to the target culture? What are different degrees of offence for different situations in the two languages? And how the nature of the relationship between the participants affects the use of apologies? The aim is to expose learners to the pragmatic aspects of language (L1 and TL) and provide them with the analytical tools they need to arrive at their own generalisations concerning contextually appropriate language use. These activities are designed to make learners consciously aware of differences between the native and target language speech acts. The rationale for this approach is that such differences are often ignored by learners and go unnoticed unless they are directly addressed (Schmidt, 1993). Especially for Iranian learners who are not familiar much with pragmatic aspects of the TL and the difference that it makes when it comes to use the TL to communicate with a native speaker, these techniques are very beneficial. In order to raise the pragmatic awareness of students, several techniques can be used. The two major techniques commonly used are teacher presentation and discussion of research findings on different aspects of pragmatics, and a student-discovery procedure in which students obtain information through observations, questionnaires, and/or interviews (Kasper, 1997). One of the ways to raise this awareness is through classroom discussions on the importance of pragmatic competence in TL communications. Teachers can use presentation/discussion techniques to relay information drawn from research on pragmatic issues to students. This can be done inductively (from data to rules) or deductively (from rules to data). To show the importance of contextual variables in the use of different language forms, teachers need to provide detailed information on the participants, their status, the situations, and the speech events that are occurring. The information provided to students in awareness raising activities will help learners build awareness of pragmatic features in both L1 and TL. For instance, teachers can present a conversation between a NS and a NNS talking about a topic, while NNS's inappropriate answer has led to a misunderstanding by the NS. Then, they may ask the learners to identify the inappropriate response and replace it with a more appropriate one. Meanwhile, he/she can focus on the contextual factors to help students to provide more appropriate responses.

Raising Motivation

Motivation is assumed to play a crucial role in the acquisition of the TL pragmatics because it determines learners' level of attention to the pragmatic information to be acquired, leading to more noticing or awareness of the target language features and this awareness is necessary for converting input into intake (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Schmidt, 1993). According to Rose (1999), in pragmatics lessons, learners should be motivated, their interest gained, and their attention focused on the activities to follow. Schmidt (1993) refers to the following two reasons behind the role of motivation in pragmatic competence in TL: Firstly, learners with a desire to establish a relationship with L2 community tend to pay more attention to the pragmatic language features in the input compared with those less motivated (p. 36). Secondly, motivated learners' efforts and persistence to understand these language features may also help to achieve a higher level of awareness and lead to more achievements (Schmidt, 2001). One of the researchers who has carried out several studies to examine the relationship between motivation and pragmatic competence is Takahashi (2005; 2012; 2013). Takahashi (2005) investigated Japanese EFL learners' awareness of the TL pragmalinguistic features and found that intrinsic motivation was more correlated with learners' allocation of attention to pragmatic input. Takahashi (2012) studied the relationship again using structural equation modelling with different subscales of motivation: class enjoyment, communicative interaction, confidence, and competitiveness. She (2012) found a direct relationship between awareness and class-oriented motivation that emphasised classroom activities. Takahashi (2013) re-examined the influence of motivation as a part of her study on the effects of Japanese EFL learners' awareness on their learning of bi-clausal request forms and internal modifiers. The study identified two motivation factors, class enjoyment and communicative interaction, which directly and indirectly influenced awareness respectively.

A Functional-Lexical Syllabus

In comparison to conversational implicature, questions about presupposition generated fewer correct responses in this study. Out of the twelve questions about presupposition, the majority of them are either lexical triggers that presuppose a condition or words that conventionally implicate something but have been studied under presupposition in this research. These words are *but, even, managed to, realise, regret, return, still, too,* and *who.* Clearly, most of them are simple words that can be used in different contexts and respondents who took part in this study with an IELTS score between 6 and 7 must have been aware of the literal meaning of them. But, these lexical triggers convey an extra layer of meaning that is not related to the literal meaning of a word which is neither presented in any dictionary for learners to grasp nor has been focused on by teachers or textbooks to be covered in EFL classrooms so far. Moreover, knowing the literal meaning of these lexical triggers also does not seem to contribute to identifying what has been presupposed.

Based on the findings of this study, it is crucial to include English materials that are designed specifically to improve those teachable aspects of pragmatics in the TL. One of the ways to extend the EFL learners' knowledge of the lexical triggers and the presupposition they carry is to incorporate them into a lexical syllabus with activities set by teachers involving real language use. Therefore, creating a functional-lexical syllabus can be very beneficial to teach those vocabularies that are associated with presupposition and conventional implicatures; not only helping learners to become familiar with those lexical triggers, but also to have the opportunity to learn how to use these words in different contexts. The main difference of such an approach for teaching lexical triggers to a normal lexical syllabus is that, here the focus is not on the literal meaning, but on the information that has been presupposed in the context that these words have been used. These vocabularies can be introduced either deductively or inductively; although, an inductive teaching methodology of these words may provide better understanding opportunities as learners will be exposed to examples first, and then they need to work out the presupposition that is associated with that particular vocabulary. Providing examples from real language use of these words by native speakers will create an opportunity for EFL learners not only to practice using these words in a sentence, but to compare their sentences with those by native speakers in order to identify the possible differences. I have used the following example to clarify this point:

We suppose that a teacher is going to introduce the presupposition that is associated with verbs of judging like *accuse* and *criticise*. As stated by Levinson (1983), judging verbs carry a presupposition as when we criticise/accuse somebody for doing something, it presupposes that something has already happened. The teacher can use these words in different sentences and ask the learners of the information whose truth is taken for granted by the speaker's utterance.

Here, the teacher can write the following sentence on the board and simply ask the learners to write down any information that they think might have been taken for granted by Joe before uttering his utterance.

(4) Joe criticised Mary for being late for the lecture.

Next, he/she can highlight the judging verb of criticise to draw the learners' attention. Comparing the learners' responses and agreeing on the final answer could be followed.

Finally, he/she will write the correct presupposition on the board.

(5) >> Mary was late for the lecture.

The inclusion of such simple activities will provide an excellent opportunity for EFL learners to become familiar with lexical triggers and that extra layer of meaning that they contain which is hidden behind their literal meaning, but is crucial in having a smooth interaction with native speakers.

References

Afghari, A. (2007). A Sociopragmatic Study of Apology Speech Act Realization Patterns in Persian. *Speech Communication*, *49*, 177-185.

Ahmadian, M. J. & Vahid Dastjerdi, H. (2010). A comparative study of perception of politeness of American reprimands by Iranian EFL learners and Americans. *The Social Sciences*, *5*(4), 359-363.

Allami, H., & Naeimi, A. (2010). A cross-linguistic study of refusals: An analysis of pragmatic competence development in Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(1), 385-406.

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words.* London: Oxford University Press.

Azarmi, A., & Behnam, B. (2012). The pragmatic knowledge of Iranian EFL learners in using face keeping strategies in reaction to complaints at two different levels. *English Language Teaching*, *5*, 78-92.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Do language learners recognize pragmatic violations? Pragmatic versus grammatical awareness in instructed L2 learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, *32*, 233-262.

Bouton, L.F. (1988). A cross-cultural study of ability to interpret implicatures in English. *World Englishes*, *17*(2), 183-96.

Bouton, L. F. (1992). The interpretation of implicature in English by NNS: Does it come automatically without being explicitly taught? In L. F. Bouton & Y. Kachru (Eds.), *Pragmatics and language learning, 3 (*pp. 53-65*)*. Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois, Division of English as an International Language.

Bouton, L. F. (1994). Conversational implicature in the second language: Learned slowly when not deliberately taught. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *22*, 157-67.

Bouton, L. F. (1999). Developing non-native speaker skills in interpreting conversational Implicatures in English: Explicit teaching can ease the process. In Hinkel, E. (Ed.), *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning.* Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

Cappella, J. N. (1995). An evolutionary psychology of Gricean cooperation. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *14*, 167-181.

Chomsky, N. (1965.) *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cook, M. & Liddicoat, A. J. (2002). The development of comprehension in interlanguage pragmatics: The case of request strategies in English. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, *25*, 19-39.

Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2004). Face keeping strategies in reaction to complaints: English and Persian. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, *14*(1), 181-198.

Green, G. M. (1996). *Pragmatics and Natural Language Understanding.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.*), Syntax and semantics*, *3*, (pp. 41-58). London: Academic Press.

Hoffman-Hicks, S. (1992). Linguistic and pragmatic competence: Their relationship in the overall competence of the language learner. *Pragmatics and Language Learning*, *3*, 66-80.

Horn, L. R. (2006) The border wars: a neo-Gricean perspective. In K. von Heusinger & K. Turner (Eds.) *Where Semantics Meets Pragmatics: The Michigan Papers*, Oxford: Elsevier.

Huang, Y. (2007). *Pragmatics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269-93), Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Jalilifar, A. (2009). Request strategies: Cross- sectional study of Iranian EFL learners and Australian native speakers. *English Language Teaching, 2*(1), 46-61.

Karimnia, A. and Afghari, A. (2011).Compliments in English and Persian interaction: A cross-cultural perspective. *Linguistics: Portal of Scientific Journal of Croatia, 12*(1), 27-50.

Kasper, G., & Schmidt, R. (1996). Developmental issues in Interlanguage Pragmatics. *Studies of Second Language Acquisition*, *18*, 149-169.

Keenan, E. O. (1976). The universality of conversational implicatures. *Language in Society*, *5*, 67- 80.

Lotfollahi, B. & Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2011). Speech act of condolence in Persian and English: A cross-cultural study. *Journal of Studies in Literature and Language*, *3* (3), 139-145.

Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mey, J. (2006). Pragmatic Acts. In Brown & Keith (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics (2nd* ed.). Elsevier, Oxford.

Parvaresh, V. & Eslami Rasekh, A. (2009). Speech Act Disagreement among Young Women in Iran. *Comparative Literature and Culture, 11*(4), 2-8.

Pishghadam, R., & Sharafadini, M. (2011). A contrastive study into the realization of suggestion speech act: Persian vs. English. *Canadian Social Science 7*(4), 230-239.

Pishghadam, R., & Zarei, S. (2011). Expression of gratitude: a case of EFL learners. *Review 0f European Studies, 3(*2), 140-149.

Potts, C. (2014). Presupposition & Implicature. *Oxford Handbook of Computational Linguistics*, (2nd edition).

Roever, C. (2006). Validation of a web-based test of ESL pragmalinguistics. *Language Testing, 23*(2), 229-256.

Rose, K. R. (1999). Teachers and students learning about requests in Hong Kong. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 21-42). New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3-32). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Searle, J. F. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society, 5*, 1-23.

Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1995). *Postface to the second edition of Relevance: Communication and Cognition.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Taguchi, N. (2002). An application of relevance theory to the analysis of L2 interpretation processes: The comprehension of indirect replies. *International Review of Applied Linguistics, 40,* 151-176.

Taguchi, N. (2005). Comprehension of implied meaning in English as a second language. *Modern Language Journal*, *89,* 543-562.

Taguchi, N. (2007). Development of speed and accuracy in pragmatic comprehension in English as a foreign language. *TESOL Quarterly, 41,* 313-338.

Taguchi, N. (2008). The role of learning environment in the development of pragmatic comprehension: A comparison of gains between EFL and ESL learners. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *30*, 423-452.

Taguchi, N. (Ed.) (2009). *Pragmatic competence in Japanese as a second/foreign language.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Taguchi, N. (2010). Longitudinal studies in interlanguage pragmatics. In A. Trosborg (Ed.), *Handbook of pragmatics: Pragmatics across languages and cultures* (pp.333- 361). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Taguchi, N. (2011). Teaching pragmatics: Trends and issues. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *31*, 289-310.

Taguchi, N. (2013). Comprehension of conversational implicature: What response times tell us. In N. Taguchi & J. M. Sykes (Eds.), *Technology in interlanguage pragmatics research and teaching* (pp. 19-41). USA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Takahashi, S. (2005). Noticing in task performance and learning outcomes: A qualitative analysis of instructional effects in interlanguage pragmatics. *System, 33*(3), 437-461.

Takahashi, S. (2012). Individual differences and pragmalinguistic awareness: A structural equation modelling approach. *Language, Culture, and Communication, 4*, 103-125.

Takahashi, S. (2013). Awareness and learning in second language pragmatics. *Language, Culture, and Communication, 5,* 53-76.

Thomas, J. (1998a). Conversational maxims. In J. L. Mey (Ed.), *Concise Encyclopaedia of Pragmatics* (pp. 171-175). Exeter: Elseview.

Thomas, J. (1998b). Cooperative Principle. In J. L. Mey (Ed.), *Concise Encyclopaedia of Pragmatics* (pp. 176-179). Exeter: Elseview.

Watts, R. J. (2003). *Politeness.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix
(Research questionnaire)

1) Holly and Nick are having lunch at the university café.
Nick: 'One Direction' is coming to Manchester this weekend.
Holly: I have two term papers due this Monday.
On the basis of Holly's response, Nick is likely to conclude that Holly will attend the concert.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

2) Being asked 'Who left the door open?' would lead you to believe that someone left the door open.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

3) Susan is talking to her friend, Amy, about her graduation ceremony.
Amy: Have you invited Isabella and Julie to your graduation ceremony?
Susan: I've invited Julie.
On the basis of Susan's utterance, Amy is likely to conclude that Isabella is not invited to Susan's graduation ceremony.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

4) Jack who participated in a marathon race for a charity is talking to her mum, Margaret.
Margaret: Did you finish the race, Jack?
Jack: I had almost finished the race that felt a sharp pain in my left knee, and hardly managed to do it.
According to this conversation, Jack didn't finish the race because of a pain in his left knee.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

5) Joe and Kate are colleagues.
Joe: Would you like a cup of coffee?
Kate: We have run out of sugar and I like mine sweet.
According to Kate's response, Joe is likely to conclude that she will have a cup of coffee.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

6) John is talking to his brother, Josh, about their neighbour who is a wealthy man.
Josh: I saw our neighbour in his new Rolls Royce yesterday.
John: He is rich, but he is not a happy man.
On the basis of John's utterance, you are likely to conclude that rich people are usually happy as well.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

7) Katie and George are jogging together.
George: Can we slow down a bit as I am out of breath?
Katie: I am glad that I don’t smoke.
If you hear this conversation, you are likely to believe that George smokes.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

8) Leanne is talking to her friend, Julia.
Leanne: I saw Sally’s husband in a new car yesterday.
If you hear this utterance, you are likely to believe that Sally is married.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

9) If you hear the sentence 'No horses in the farm have been vaccinated', you are likely to believe that there are not any horses in the farm.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

10) John and Thomas are trying the new buffet restaurant in town. John is eating something but Thomas can’t decide what to have next.
Thomas: “How do you like what you’re having?”
John: The cutlery set is new.
Based on John’s utterance, Thomas is likely to conclude that John does not like his food.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

11) Amy and Lucy are housemates. Amy expects a parcel from her family via post.
Amy: Has my parcel arrived?
Lucy: Your parcel still has not arrived.
If you overhear this utterance, you are likely to conclude that Amy’s parcel was expected to have arrived by now.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

12) Joseph and Arthur are professors at a university. They are talking about the essay of a student called Jessie.
Joseph: How did you find Jessie’s term essay on thermodynamics?
Arthur: It was well-typed.
According to Arthur, Jessie’s term paper was good.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

13) Joe and Allen are Friends.
Joe: How is your neighbour now?
Allen: He stopped ignoring my morning greetings.
According to Allen, his neighbour didn’t use to greet him in the morning.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

14) The sentence, 'Sally regrets telling Bob the truth' would lead you to believe that the truth hasn't been told to Bob yet.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

15) Nigel has a meeting with his mortgage advisor to apply for a mortgage on a house he has seen.
Mortgage Advisor: To be eligible for the loan, you must have 10% deposit which is £15,000. Do you have this amount, sir?
Nigel: Yes, I do.
According to the Nigel's response, he has £15,000 deposit, maybe more.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

16) Ryan and Leighton are talking about their friend, Alex.
Ryan: Do you know where Alex has planned to go this summer?
Leighton: He will either return to France or will go to Spain for his holidays.
Based on Leighton's utterance, you are likely to conclude that Alex has been not in France before.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

17) Adam and Sarah bought an apartment in New York.
The sentence above sentence is likely to lead you that Adam and Sarah bought separate apartments in New York.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

18) Julie and Janet are friends. Janet goes to bed early when she is tired.
Julie: Shall we go to the cinema tonight?
Janet: I've had a long day.
Based on Janet's response, Julie is likely to conclude that Janet is interested to go to cinema tonight.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

19) I went to our local pub last night. I had two pints.
If you hear this utterance, you are likely to conclude that the speaker went to the pub first and then had two pints there.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

20) The utterance, 'Susan didn't realise that Pam had left early' would lead you to believe that Pam had not left early.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

21) Sally and Liam who are roommates, are in the university café. Sally starts talking about their other roommate Lisa.
Sally: Lisa can be such a cow sometimes.
Liam: Have you heard about the university's new developments?
If you hear this conversation, you are likely to believe that Liam is interested to continue this conversation about Lisa.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

22) After Janet has withdrawn money from a cash machine, her friend Mike approaches her.
Mike: Jill, I need some cash.
Janet: Your debit card also works on this machine.
Based on Janet's utterance, you are likely to believe that Janet has no intention of lending money to Mike.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

23) Overhearing the sentence 'Peter is in the room too' would lead you to believe that someone else is in the room.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

24) Julia and Samantha are talking about Leah's Wedding Ceremony.
Julia: Are you invited to Leah's Wedding Ceremony?
Samantha: Of course, I am. Even Lucy's mum is invited.
If you listen to this conversation, you are likely to conclude that Lucy's mum was among the first people to be invited.
a) Strongly disagree b) Disagree c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Agree e) Strongly agree

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL
The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Formal Features of Filipino ESL Research Papers

Miguel Lorenzo B. Garcia

AMA University, the Philippines

Bioprofile

Miguel Lorenzo B. Garcia earned his Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English and Master's in English from the University of Santo Tomas in 2009 and 2016. He is currently a student in the Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics program of De La Salle University. He has taught both secondary and tertiary students. Furthermore, he has participated in various trainings, seminars, symposia, and conferences either as a trainer or participant. **Email**: garcia.miguellorenzo@gmail.com

Abstract:

This paper investigated the formal and non-formal features of academic writing in 15 research papers (RP) written by Filipino teachers who consider English as an ESL. The framework used is that of Swales and Feak's (2004) features of academic writing. The frequency and percentage of these features were then obtained by dividing the frequency of informal features by the number of RPs. Some deviations were found in the different sections of the RPs namely Introduction, Method, Results & Discussion and Conclusion. The sections with the most deviations in descending order are the Results and Discussion, Introduction, Method and Conclusion sections. Based on the findings, implications for teaching academic writing were presented in the conclusion.

Key words: English for Academic Purposes, Genre Analysis, Filipino ESL writers

AMA University, Proj. 8, Quezon City, the Philippines
Philippine Normal University, Taft Avenue, Manila, Philippines
University of Santo Tomas, España Boulevard, Manila, the Philippines
De La Salle University, Taft Avenue, Manila, the Philippines

Introduction

In the life of a student and a professor, writing academic texts such as research papers, reviews, business letters, and other formal writing is an activity one cannot escape. Informal writing would be easier since the writer need not follow strictly conventions. On the other hand, academic discourses are quite difficult to accomplish since each one has a particular text structure. The sentences in these discourses would require greater complexity, a different vocabulary, and a greater formality.

To further complicate the dilemma of the academic writer, the second language (L2) writer, in particular, is supposed to master the nuances of the style of a language which is quite different from his mother tongue (Bailey, 2011). Furthermore, the L2 user must deal with the culture, thinking, and notions in a language which, most often, is different from that of the L1 of the writer (Silva, 1992). Hence, writing in English as a second language (ESL) is much more onerous (Silva, 1992) and academic writing in an L2 would be even more complicated.

In teaching academic writing, some authors believe that strictly prescribing conventions of writing, however, is counterproductive and believe teachers of ESL students must be flexible in imposing the nuances of writing (Spack, 1988). Xu agrees with the said belief, stating that "the teaching of academic English writing skills should be no longer focused on the forms and rules. Instead, the analysis on culture and thinking patterns should be introduced" (2012, p. 57). This is in line with critical pragmatism in EAP as proposed by Harwood and Hadley (2004) in which advisers tell student-researchers to strike a balance between adapting to the norms of academic writing and diverging from it; what budding researchers should do is to use the corpora in the field to help shape their writing.

With the adoption of a non-prescriptive paradigm, the genre of academic writing constantly evolves to suit the changing needs of the members of the discourse community (Ramanathan & Kaplan, 2000). For instance, the use of first person pronoun "I" is now acceptable since it does not necessarily subjectivize the claims of writers, and may be used to teach writers to support their claims in order that they would be objective (Graff

& Berkenstein, 2010). No instances of the plural first person pronoun use which includes the reader, however, have gained acceptance in the field of academic writing.

The field of academic writing has also experienced a shift from discourse to a wider scope - metadiscourse. An investigation of new researchers' knowledge of metadiscoursal features (Bogdanovic & Mirovic, 2018) reveals that the scholars value the use of these devices, which they learned through analyzing research articles they read, because they are required in the register and they facilitate the discourse.

A paucity of literature on formal and non-formal features of academic texts exists, particularly concerning research papers. One such research which focuses on formal features of academic texts resulted in the discovery of 570 word families that are said to belong to academic writing in general which the researcher called the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000). In a reaction to this study, Hyland and Tse (2007) have investigated the meanings of these word families in different disciplines and found that the word families held different meanings in different fields of study. In each discipline, similarly, particular features of language and norms for constructing arguments in academic texts seem to exist (Hyland & Tse, 2009).

One of the few studies on features of academic text was conducted by Hinkel who compared the academic texts produced by “native speakers” and ESL students; the study revealed that the words and sentences of ESL students were simplistic as compared to those of students who consider English as their L1 (2003). Similarly, in 2018, Chanyoo analyzed a corpus of Thai academic papers in English to determine the use of cohesive devices vis-a-vis the academic writing quality. The findings indicate that: (1) the most common cohesive devices employed in descending order were reiteration, reference and conjunction; and (2) there is a correlation between the use of cohesive devices and writing quality.

Other researchers focused on differences between writing cultures. In an intercultural rhetoric study of academic papers in English written by English, Spanish, and Chinese researchers, Carrio-Pastor (2016) discovered that the writers that used hedges the most were the Spanish, followed by the Chinese and English academicians. Using a similar approach, Akbas and Hardman (2018) distinguished the use of hedging and boosting devices by English L1 (EL1) writers, Turkish L1 writers, and Turkish users of English (EL2) in an intercultural rhetoric study; the findings reveal that Turkish L1 writers used more boosters than the EL2 and EL1 writers, and the Turkish English writers (EL2) used the most hedges, followed by the English writers (EL1).

The studies mentioned, however, only cover limited aspects of academic texts. So far, from the gathering of the literature for this research, only few studies have been conducted on formal features of academic text in L2 encompassing different categories, and even fewer on formal features of published research paper. Much has yet to be investigated in order to characterize formal features of academic texts produced by ESL or Outer Circle users, which are of great importance since the countries included in this sphere are considered norm-developing by Kachru (1992, in Bolton, 2006).

This dearth of information on formal features of ESL research papers prompted me to investigate the formal features of academic texts in English by L2 writers. This paper would particularly aim to elucidate the following question: What formal and non-formal features of academic writing found in Swales and Feak's (2004) manual on academic writing can be found in the research papers of Filipino writers in English?

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the features of academic writing by Swales and Feak (2004, pages 18–24). Although many features of academic writing were discussed in the manual, only ten were considered for this study since these were the features included in the main discussion of formal language. The categories of academic features are given below with the first example as non-formal and the second one as formal.

1. Use more formal, one word verbs.

   e.g.: The number of students *shot up* in the last year.

   The number of students *increased* in the last year

2. Use formal nouns.

   e.g.: People seldom return *this thing* to strangers

People seldom *return compliments* to strangers.

3. Avoid using contractions.

   e.g.: These findings *don't support* the previous studies.

   These findings *do not support* the previous studies.

4. Use more formal negative forms.

   e.g.: *Not much* information exists about features of academic writing.

   Little information exists about features of academic writing.

5. Avoid "run-on" expressions.

   e.g.: Other options of the students were code-switching, using gestures, circumlocution, *etc*.

   Other options of the students were code-switching, using gestures, circumlocution, and *other compensatory strategies*.

6. Avoid addressing the reader as "you."

   e.g.: *You* have to consider the best options.

   One has to consider the best options.

7. Avoid direct questions.

   e.g.: What are the factors that contribute to noun bias?

   One needs to determine *what factors contribute to noun bias*.

8. Place adverbs in mid-position.

   e.g.: Students who use compensatory strategies *often* became proficient.

   Students who use *often* compensatory strategies became proficient.

9. Consider whether to split infinitives.

   e.g.: Editors use interviews *to substantively reinforce* their arguments

   Editors use interviews to *reinforce substantively* their arguments.

10. Aim for an efficient use of words.

    e.g.: The government *is looking into the many reasons why the population has increased.*

    The government is investigating the causes of population increase.

I added some categories to Swales and Feak's (2004) categories because they were discovered in the analysis of the data. These categories were included merely because they deviate from formal writing.

11. Inappropriate use of conjunction

    e.g.: "... about writing and learning, *and as well as* determining if these beliefs were related to self-regulated behaviors in writing" (RP8).

12. 1st person plural pronoun inclusive of the reader

    e.g.: "Hu (1994) reminds *us* that a Chinese speaker chooses..." (RP8)

13. Pluralization

    e.g.: "...presents the data and their analysis" (RP4).

    *The different data sources were analyzed in different ways.

14. Faulty use of preposition

    e.g.: "Their study delved *on* the effectiveness of..." (RP8).

    *Instead of using into, the writers used on.

15. Use of appropriate determiners

    e.g.: "... and *another 2* items were rejected from the time management phase" (RP8).

    *The determiner should be "2 other items" instead of "another 2 items."

16. Faulty derivation

    e.g.: "... to observe the intercorrelation of all eight factors " (RP8).

    *The word should either be correlation or interrelation.

17. Use of formal adverb

    e.g.: "... so this is *sort of like* the result of intrinsic interest" (RP10).

18. Pronoun-antecedent agreement

    e.g.: "Another (study) still is that of Norris (2004) who explored the survival and..." (RP14)

Method

Corpus of Data

A total of fifteen (n=15) research papers (henceforth, RPs) from the field of applied linguistics, language teaching and English studies were collected for this study. These papers follow the IMRD format of the research.

Data Gathering

To inform the study of the trends in academic writing in the past decade, the publications' date of the papers reviewed was from 2003 to 2013 and was gathered in 2013.

Profiles of Writers

These papers are authored by Filipino writers who consider English as a second language. All these papers are written in English and are published in refereed or peer-reviewed journals. Furthermore, the writers teach English, so their specialization is English, English language studies, or applied linguistics.

Research Design

The study is mainly qualitative. The academic and non-academic features of the text of the RPs were investigated in this paper. In particular, the research ascertained the formal and non-formal features found in the different RPs. The sentences were analyzed with regard to their grammaticality and ungrammaticality.

Data Analysis

The RPs were checked using Swales and Feak's (2004) formal grammar style and vocabulary. Since these papers were peer reviewed and edited, any "informal" feature discovered in the RPs may either be considered a feature of academic writing in the field in which they were classified or may have escaped the eyes of the reviewers and editors.

Each RP was checked against each item in the list of Swales and Feak (2004). The percentage and frequency of occurrence were calculated per section of each RP. The RPs were divided into Introduction (I), Method (M), Results and Discussion (R & D) and

Conclusion (C). If the RPs had no conclusion section, then no tally of frequency was made.

If the percentage was greater than or equal to 20, then the item was considered a feature of current academic writing in that section; if the item, on the other hand, was found in less than 20% of the section of the RPs, then it was deemed as insignificant, i.e., it was merely coincidental or a "non-feature" of current academic writing.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 summarizes the number of occurrence of each feature and "non-feature" of academic text written in English by L2 speakers.

Table 1 Frequency of Features and Non-features of Academic Texts in English

Features	Introduction	Method	Results and Discussion	Conclusion
	Formal/Non-formal			
1. Use of more formal verbs	14/8	2/3	14/11	4/2
2. Formal nouns	12/0	2/0	9/1	7/1
3. Contractions	8/0	2/0	24/0	5/0
4. Negative forms	3/0	1/0	9/4	0/0
5. "Run-on" expressions	0/1	0/0	0/1	0/0
6. 2nd person pron.				
7. Direct questions	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
8. Adverb positioning	5/1	3/0	4/4	5/0
9. Split infinitives	26/11	8/5	56/45	9/3
10. Word efficiency	1/1	1/2	1/6	1/0
*Inappropriate conjunction	0/0	0/0	0/2	0/0
*1st person inclusive pron. "us"	0/3	0/2	0/4	1/1
*pluralization	0/1	0/0	0/3	0/1
*use of preposition				
*use of determiners	1/8	0/4	1/15	1/3

*faulty derivation	1/2	0/2	0/1	0/0
*Formal adverb	0/0	0/3	0/8	0/0
*Pronoun-antecedent	0/0	0/1	0/1	0/0
agreement	0/1	0/0	0/1	0/0
	0/3	0/0	0/0	0/0

As can be seen, the most common feature is the placement of the adverb in mid-position in the *I*, *M*, *R & D*, as well as the *C* sections. The second most common is the use of formal verbs, and the third most common is the use of formal nouns in the *I* and *R & D* sections. In the *M* section, the next most common feature is the use of direct questions. In the *C* section, the second most frequent feature is the use of formal nouns, followed by contractions and the use of indirect questions which have the same frequency. These results are expected since the texts are academic in nature, informing us that the papers are products of laborious work and have undergone the process of revising, editing, and proofreading.

On the other hand, as shown in the Table, the most frequent “non-feature” of academic writing is ironically also the placement of adverbs in the *I*, *M*, *R & D*, and *C* sections of the RPs; this might suggest that the Filipino writer is still confused about where the adverb should really be placed and that forming plurals might still pose some challenge to Filipino L2 academic writers.

The next most frequent “non-feature” of academic text is the use of the “informal” verb and the pluralization of nouns in the *I* and *R & D* sections. Hence, it seems that the L2 academic writers in English are not yet accustomed to using the more formal number and verbs in the academic register. In the *R & D* section, the third most common is the faulty use of determiners, suggesting that the concept might not have been mastered by the writer, or that this might be a feature of the variety.

In the M section, as seen in the data, the pluralization is the second most frequent “non-feature,” striking a similarity to the *I* and *R & D* sections; it is followed by the faulty use of determiners which has the same frequency as that of the use of informal verbs. One can infer then that, like many Filipinos, pluralization as well as the proper use of determiners is still a perennial problem of Filipino academic writer.

In the *C* section, the "informal" feature faulty pluralization is as common as the wrong placement of adverbs, and it is followed by the use of informal verb which is seen twice in the conclusions, implying that the pluralizing poses a similar difficulty in making conclusions and that formal verbs are found to be difficult to master. However, one cannot say that these features are already characteristic of academic writing by the mere frequency. One must set it against the bigger picture. Hence, the percentage of occurrence must be taken and examined as well. Table 2 below shows the percentage of the features and 'non-features' of academic writing in each section of the RP.

Table 2 Percentage of Formal and Non-formal Features of Academic Texts
(Significant percentages are in bold face)

Features	Introduction	Method	Results and Discussion	Conclusion
	Formal/Non-formal			
1. Use of more formal verbs	93.3/**53.3**	13.3/**20**	93.3/**73.3**	40/**20**
2. Formal nouns	80/0	13.3/0	60/6.7	70/10
3. Contractions	53.3/0	13.3/0	160/0	50/0
4. Negative forms	20/0	6.7/0	60/**26.7**	0/0
5. "Run-on" expressions	0/6.7	0/0	0/6.7	0/0
6. 2nd person pron.				
7. Direct questions	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
8. Adverb positioning	33.3/1	20/0	26.7/**26.7**	50/0
9. Split infinitives	173.3/**73.3**	53.3/**33.3**	373.3/**300**	90/**30**
10. Word efficiency	6.7/6.7	6.7/13.3	6.7/**40**	10/0
*Inappropriate conjunction	0/0	0/0	0/13.3	0/0
*1st person inclusive pron. "us"	0/**20**	0/13.3	0/**26.7**	10/10
*pluralization	0/6.7	0/0	0/**20**	0/10
*use of preposition				

*use of determiners	6.7/**53.3**	0/**26.7**	6.7/**100**	10/**30**
*faulty derivation	6.7/13.3	0/13.3	0/6.7	0/0
*Formal adverb	0/0	0/**20**	0/**53.3**	0/0
*Pronoun-antecedent	0/0	0/6.7	0/6.7	0/0
agreement	0/6.7	0/0	0/6.7	0/0
	0/**20**	0/0	0/0	0/0

Significant features of academic texts would not be highlighted here since those are obviously expected to be usual in academic writing. What would be highlighted are those that deviate from the standard formal features. As shown in the table, the positioning of the adverb is clearly a very significant "non-formal" feature in the *I, M, R & D,* and the *C* sections of the RPs, all being greater than or equal to 30%, informing us that it is probably no longer a "non-formal" feature but already a feature of academic ESL texts. Furthermore, as presented in the table, there seems to be a preponderance of the use of informal verbs in all the sections of the RPs. This finding suggests that ESL academic writers find using the appropriate academic style problematic. On the other hand, following a more liberal thought pattern, it might also suggest that informal verbs are seeping into academic texts and that they might be using this feature for a reason.

Pluralization also seems to be a consistent "non-feature" of academic text in all sections. This leads us to conclude that it might already be a characteristic or convention of ESL academic text especially because these were authored by highly educated ESL teachers.

In the *I* section, as shown in the table, the use of inappropriate conjunctions and faulty pronoun-antecedent agreement seems to figure. They are found in one-fifth of the RPs examined, informing us that it is possibly characteristic of modern academic ESL text.

In the *M* and *R & D* sections, as presented in the table, the faulty use of determiners appears significantly, occurring in one-fifth of all *M* sections and occurring a little way over half of the *R & D* sections. These findings may be explained by the absence of plural determiners in Filipino, which may cause confusion on the part of the writer.

Another interesting finding of the study can be gleaned from the *R & D* section. Significant "non-features" of *R & D* academic texts are the following: the use of split infinitives which appear in two-fifths of the papers, the use of direct question which appear a little over one-fourth of the papers, the use of the "informal" negative forms which also appear a little over one-fourth of the papers, and the use of the inclusive first person plural 'we' or 'us' which appear in one-fifth of all the *R & D* sections. The finding on split infinitives suggests that in applied linguistics, splitting infinitives is allowed, as far as the *R & D* section is concerned. These observations further suggest that the *R & D* section has now become the most personal and the least stringent in following the nuances of L1 academic texts. This might be caused by the absorption of the researcher in discussing the findings or results, omitting the conventions of academic writing in the mind. Another probable explanation for this would be the nature of the *R & D* section – it is where the writer is allowed to make significance of his study and where the discussion of the opinion of the writer is acceptable. Hence, the writer in this section makes the discussion his (or her) own by removing the rigidity of tone which is characteristic of very formal language.

The *C* section appears to have the least 'non-features' or deviations from the nuances of academic writing. This could be explained as well by the nature of the section. Conclusions are more theoretical, hence the need for more formality than in the *R & D* section. The amount of deviation could also perhaps be attributed to the length of the section.

It can be observed that as one progresses in the writing, the *I* has many deviations, the *M* fewer, the *R & D* the most, and the *C* the fewest. These deviations are perhaps related to the length of each section, but this still has to be confirmed by evidence or statistical tools such as correlation.

Conclusion and pedagogical implications

It was discovered in this paper that many RPs do not "adhere" to specific conventions of academic writing. Across all sections, these features are the positioning of adverbs, the use of formal verbs, and pluralization. In the *I* section, the appropriate use of conjunction and the pronoun-antecedent agreement were "violated." In the *M* section, the use of appropriate determiners was not followed. In the *R & D* section, the writers employ 'informal' negatives, direct questions; use split infinitives, "inappropriate" conjunctions, "inappropriate" determiners; and refer to the readers using the first person plural pronoun 'we' or 'us.'

The "non-conformance" to pluralization and the use of determiners are supported by the observation of Bautista (2009) that Filipinos find difficulty in using articles (which are a type of determiner) and plurals.

On the other hand, the use of the 'we' or 'us' is stylistic in nature – which allows a personal connection between the reader and the writer. It allows the writer to be connected with the reader and may be an appeal to the positive face (Yule, 1996), thus creating a friendlier, more conversational, and more inclusive tone.

The majority of the "non-features" have a positive effect on the tone of the RPs, particularly the positioning of the adverb and the use of informal verbs; they allow the text to be reader-friendly, thus making the texts easy to comprehend. Were it not for these, the RPs would sound too rigid and stiff. Hence, the use of "informal features" may not be useless at all but may have been purposeful.

Since these features are from English teachers who are highly educated and are highly proficient in English, then these can be considered as features of academic writing in Philippine English or features of academic L2 writing in English. This is supported by the view of Llamzon (1969) that "Filipino English," or Philippine English as it is now called, is the kind that educated Filipinos use. These are not anymore errors because they are systematic and are rampant as seen in the texts (Groves, 2010).

These findings have many implications to the field of English language teaching. This paper informs us ESL teachers that we should not be too rigid in enforcing the conventions of academic writing on students. Even highly accomplished academic writers do not always conform to the nuances outlined in books. Particular leeway might be given on the features which are outlined here. Academic writing in general, on the other hand, may give more room for deviations and should be less prescriptive since there would always be non-conforming writers. It must be noted that prescriptivism would be counterproductive in academic writing (Spack, 1988). What is important is that students are able to produce scholarly works which would contribute to the current state of knowledge and develop further their chosen fields of expertise, not the adherence to the conventions of academic writing. Curriculum developers might want to include these new features in academic writing programs, particularly on the graduate level as these might demystify the myth that academic writing is not for all students. It would give students who think that writing research is an impossible feat some confidence in their writing proficiency since they would be able to identify themselves with others who share the same characteristics.

Although the corpus is small, the findings are very rich and informative. Future research on L1 English academic writing should be conducted to ascertain whether the current context still conforms to the standards of academic writing. Furthermore, a contrastive rhetoric analysis could investigate the differences between L1 English writers, ESL writers, and EFL writers as to their adherence to the conventions of academic writing. Future research could also be conducted with a larger sample and with more types of academic texts, such as concept papers, journal and book reviews, and discussions. This might provide a bigger picture of the current environment of ESL academic writing as a whole.

Acknowledgement

I am eternally grateful for the guidance and the comments of Prof. Leonisa A. Mojica, Ph.D. of the University of Santo Tomas Graduate School. Her insights, tips, and critiques were instrumental in the conduct of this research.

References

Akbas, E., & Hardman, J. (2018). Strengthening or weakening claims in academic knowledge construction: A comparative study of hedges and boosters in postgraduate academic writing. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, *18*(4), 831-859.

Bailey, S. (2011). *Academic writing: A handbook for international students* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Bautista, M.L.S. (2009) Investigating the grammatical features of Philippine English. In M.L.S. Bautista & K. Bolton (Eds.). *Philippine English: Linguistic and literary perspectives* (pp. 201-218). Pasig City, the Philippines: Anvil Publishing, Inc.

Bogdanović, V., & Mirović, I. (2018). Young researchers writing in ESL and the use of metadiscourse: Learning the ropes. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 18*(4), 813-830.

Bolton, K. (2006). World Englishes today. In B. Kachru, Y. Kachru, & C. Nelson (Eds.), *The handbook of World Englishes* (pp. 240 – 270). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Chanyoo, N. (2018). Cohesive devices and academic writing quality of Thai undergraduate students. *Journal of Language Teaching & Research*, *9*(5), 994-1001.

Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*(2), 213-238.

Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2010). *They say/I say: Moves that matter in academic writing* (2nd ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Groves, J. (2010). Error or feature? *HKBU Papers in Applied Language Studies, 14*, 108-129.

Harwood, N., & Hadley, G. (2004). Demystifying institutional practices: Critical pragmatism and the teaching of academic writing. *English for Specific Purposes, 23* (4), 355-377.

Hinkel, E. (2003). Simplicity without elegance: Features of sentences in L1 and L2 academic texts. *TESOL Quarterly, 37*(2), 275-301.

Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2007). Is there an "academic vocabulary"? *TESOL Quarterly, 41*(2), 235-253.

Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2009). Academic lexis and disciplinary practice: Corpus evidence for specificity. *International Journal of English Studies, 9*(2), 111-129.

Llamzon, T. (1969). *Standard Filipino English*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Pastor, M. L. C. (2016). A contrastive study of the hedges used by English, Spanish and Chinese researchers in academic papers. In F. A. Almeida, I. O. Barrera, E. Q.

Toledo, & M. E. S. Cuervo (Eds.), *Input a word, analyze the world: Selected approaches to corpus linguistic*s (pp. 477-492). Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Ramanathan, V., & Kaplan, R. (2000). Genres, authors, discourse communities: Theory and application for (L1 and) L2 writing instructors. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 9*(2), 171-191.

Silva, T. (1992). L1 vs. L2 writing: ESL graduate students' perceptions. *TESL Canada Journal, 10*(1), 27-48.

Spack, R. (1988). Initiating students into the academic ESL community: How far should we go?. *TESOL Quarterly*, *22*(1), 29-51.

Swales, J., & Feak, C. (2004). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills* (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Xu, Xiuyan. (2012). Cultural factors in EAP teaching – Influences of thought pattern on English academic writing. *Cross Cultural Communication, 8*(4), 53-57.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL
The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Using Corpus Analysis in a Needs Analysis of Key English Vocabulary for Petroleum Engineers in Vietnam

Lan Phuong Le

Ba Ria - Vung Tau University, Vietnam

Margaret Kettle

Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Hitendra Pillay

Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Bioprofile

Lan Phuong Le is Dean of the Faculty of English language at Ba Ria - Vung Tau University, Vung Tau, Viet Nam. She has extensive experience in the implementation of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programs, notably for the petroleum industry. **Email**: phuong213@gmail.com (Corresponding author)

Margaret Kettle teaches and researches in TESOL at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia. She has conducted ESP courses in Germany, Vietnam and Thailand, and been invited as a keynote presenter at several Vietnamese TESOL conferences. **Email**: m.kettle@qut.edu.au

Hitendra Pillay researches and consults in the area of global development at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia. He has worked with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Australian Aid, European Union and several private sector organisations. **Email**: h.pillay@qut.edu.au

Abstract

This paper presents a study using a freely-available corpus analysis program to identify the key vocabulary used in communication by engineers in the Vietnamese petroleum industry. The petroleum industry contributes significantly to Vietnam's program of modernisation and global integration, and involves multinational joint ventures with multilingual workforces that use English as the lingua franca (ELF). Despite the importance of the industry and the role of English, no research has been conducted on the features of vocabulary knowledge that engineers use to accomplish their

Ba Ria-Vung Tau University,
80 Truong Cong Dinh St, Ward 3,
Vung Tau, Vietnam.

Queensland University of Technology,
Faculty of Education,
Victoria Park Rd, Kelvin Grove. Q. 4059, Australia

communication tasks each day. The study presented here used the corpus analytic RANGE program (Chung & Nation, 2004) to investigate the vocabulary features of the English-language daily calls and emails of engineers working in two petroleum companies in Vietnam's southern area of the Mekong Delta. Vocabulary knowledge is foundational to communicative competence; indeed, a lack of appropriate vocabulary can result in the failure to communicate information effectively. In the study, a corpus of 32,000 words was assembled and analysed. The findings show that high frequency words and technical words account for about 79% of all vocabulary items. The remaining 21% of words are academic and low frequency. The results indicate the types of words that comprise petroleum engineers' daily communication in calls and emails; lists of the common words are provided. It is argued that these lists have pedagogical potential. They define the foundational vocabulary for participation in the petroleum industry and as such should be included in the curriculum for English for petroleum engineering courses. It is argued that the corpus-analytic vocabulary approach presented here can contribute to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course development in other industries and professions.

Key words: Corpus analysis, English for Specific Purposes, petroleum industry, Vietnam, vocabulary, word frequency counts, workplace communication.

Introduction

The petroleum industry in Vietnam is crucial to the country's ongoing program of industrialisation and development. The state-owned enterprise PetroVietnam (VPN) is the leading oil and gas producer which has overseen the expansion of oil as a key export product, adding considerably to Vietnam's export earnings and budget (PVN, 2013; 2016). In 2013, VPN generated earnings of 36 billion USD, accounting for 25% of Vietnam's GDP and contributing 30% to the state's revenues (PVN, 2011).

Among the various sectors of the petroleum industry, oil and gas exploration and production is the most important. Contracts for exploration and production are often awarded to joint-ventures with foreign partners from North America, Europe, Japan and others in the region. Indeed, collaborations with overseas partners are seen as having made a major contribution to the success of the petroleum industry (PVN, 2011). The multinational, multilingual workforce in the petroleum industry has led to English being used as the lingua franca (ELF) in workplace interactions and documents associated with engineering design, procurement, construction, and everyday operations.

The study reported here investigates the workplace communication needs of petroleum engineers at two joint venture operations in the southern area of the Mekong Delta. Company 1 is a joint venture between the Vietnamese government and companies from Asia and Europe; Company 2 is a joint venture between the Vietnamese government and a European company. Both companies employ workers from all over the world and use English for official workplace communication, including the all-important daily calls and emails. Daily calls occur between onshore engineers and those working on offshore rigs; the calls are used to discuss and report technical issues between the two sites. In Company 1 daily calls were conducted as teleconferences at 8.30 in the morning, while in Company 2, calls were held at 3.30 in the afternoon.

Vocabulary is considered crucial to the knowledge needed by professionals to communicate effectively in their workplaces (Huhta, Vogt, Johnson, & Tulkki, 2013). Indeed, vocabulary knowledge is seen as being at the heart of communicative competence (Amiryousefi & Ketabi, 2011; Barrow, Nakanishi, & Ishino, 1999). For these reasons, it is useful – for pedagogical and professional purposes – to identify the vocabulary items that constitute competent communication for petroleum engineers in their high-stakes daily calls and emails. To date, very little research has been undertaken on identifying the vocabulary demands of the petroleum industry: studies from Yemen (see Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2010) and Algeria (see Siradj, 2013) focus respectively on students' perceptions of their English language needs and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum design but not on vocabulary specifically. Moreover, no current research exists with a focus on the Vietnamese context, despite the importance of the industry to the nation's prosperity and regional integration. This study recognises the foundational role of vocabulary in communication and is designed to identify a corpus of authentic, specialised vocabulary as a core component of an ESP curriculum for petroleum engineers. While various lists of high frequency and academic words exist, no detailed analysis has been conducted to date on the frequently-occurring technical words that characterise English language communication in the petroleum industry.

This paper focuses on the vocabulary knowledge of petroleum engineers as evident in a corpus of daily call transcripts and emails, together with their views on the role of technical language in their work. It also presents the implications for corpus analysis as an approach to needs analyses and ESP curriculum design. To this end, the corpus analysis presented in this paper analysis was guided by the following questions:

1. What vocabulary knowledge is required in emails and morning/afternoon calls in the two joint venture petroleum companies in Vietnam?

2. How can this vocabulary knowledge be categorised as a step towards establishing a pedagogical framework for ESP curriculum specialising in the communication needs of petroleum engineers?

Literature review

Vocabulary in specific content areas

Vocabulary plays a key part in meaning production and comprehension. Research shows that a language user needs to know up to 98% of all words in a particular text to achieve comprehension without support (Hu & Nation, 2000). This means a word-family vocabulary of 8,000–9,000 for unassisted comprehension of the written word and 6,000–7,000 word families for comprehending the spoken word (Nation, 2006). In addition to this close relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading and listening skills, the language user's vocabulary knowledge is heavily involved in the other macro-skills of speaking and writing (Barrow, Nakanishi, & Ishino, 1999; Nation, 2013).

Research on second language vocabulary knowledge has been particularly interested in identifying keywords in academic works such as textbooks within particular disciplines. Examples from the early 2000s include Chung and Nation's (2003; 2004) studies of technical words in an anatomy textbook and Martinez, Beck and Panza's (2009) investigation of academic vocabulary in agriculture-related research articles. Another study of textbook vocabulary was conducted by Ward (2009) who established an English language word list from engineering textbooks for foundation engineers, with the rationale that many students in developing countries find themselves studying engineering with textbooks written in English. For Hirsh (2015), targeted vocabulary lists are useful for students with specific interests and provide good return on learning effort.

While textbook-based research has its particular benefits, it cannot be confused with the language used in authentic workplace contexts. Tangpijaikul (2014) argues that the language of textbooks and research articles "may be written for academic purposes rather than occupational or career-oriented purposes" (p. 52). This language could be inappropriate for an ESP course that is designed to meet "the specific, identifiable needs of ESP students in relation to their present or future careers" (Skulstad, 1999, p. 286). Tangpijaikul (2014) further argues that relying on academic sources alone may not provide ESP students with awareness of how the language is employed in reality. Arguing along a similar line, Wee (2008, p. 264) makes the point that "texts bearing little or no resemblance to actual communication are useless in preparing learners for real-world communication". He maintains that ESP students should be exposed to authentic language that is actually used in real communication contexts beyond the classroom. In an effort to develop a list of keywords for Thai learners of Business English, Tangpijaikul (2014) conducted a corpus- and intuition-based investigation of keywords in English language business news but conceded that it would have been better to include authentic workplace documents such as business letters and reports as additional sources of keywords.

Vocabulary knowledge

The vocabulary features of particular content areas include word types, frequency and keyness (Tangpijaikul, 2014); the immediate interest for curriculum designers is the alignment of key vocabulary with the learning needs of the students. The current study was interested in identifying the authentic word types used in the English-language workplace interactions between petroleum engineers in Vietnam. The rationale is that focusing on authentic communication will elicit the language most relevant to practice, and therefore of most benefit to students in the curriculum.

Investigating vocabulary knowledge involves both the number of words a language user knows (i.e., the breadth of vocabulary knowledge), and what the language user knows about these words, (i.e., the depth of vocabulary knowledge) (Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Nation, 2013). This two-part understanding is useful for researchers investigating vocabulary acquisition (Ishii & Schmitt, 2009; Webb & Sasao, 2013;

Yamamoto, 2014). Measuring the breadth of vocabulary knowledge involves examining how many words a learner knows. Depth of vocabulary knowledge, on the other hand, is multidimensional (Kaivanpanah & Zandi, 2009; Nation, 2013; Yamamoto, 2014). It involves knowledge of form (spoken form, written form and word parts), knowledge of meaning (form and meaning, concepts and referents, and associations), and knowledge of use (grammatical functions, collocations, and constraints on use) (Nation, 2013).

Nation (2013) maintains that the way we use words can be classified into four categories: high frequency, academic, technical, and low frequency words. The high frequency word group is estimated to contain 2,000 words and covers 80% of running words in a text. Running words are the total number of words in a given piece of text. For example, the previous sentence contains 14 running words. The majority of high frequency words are content words (e.g., *words, number*, *text*). The group also includes numerous function words (e.g., *for*, *the*, *of*) (Nation, 2013). High frequency words are considered general service vocabulary used for any purpose and best represented by the General Service List (GSL) (West, 1953). On the other hand, academic vocabulary covers about 10% of running words in academic texts (e.g., *achieve, focus*, *version*). This word group is listed in the Academic Word List (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000) with 570 word families and excluded in the GSL.

Technical vocabulary, which covers around 5% of the running words in specialised texts, occurs frequently in specific fields but rarely in other fields (e.g., *actuator*, *booster*, *valve*). Given its characterising function, technical vocabulary is often given special attention in ESP teaching and research (Chung & Nation, 2003; Csomay & Petrović, 2012; Gablasova, 2015; Yan & Yang, 2016). The remaining words in a piece of text are low frequency words, covering about 5% of the running words. Low frequency words are those often used in other specialised areas, proper names or words that are rarely applied in everyday language use (e.g., *berthing*, *hose*, *culprit*).

Nation's (2013) vocabulary classification was applied in this study in order to identify the word types being used by petroleum engineers in their emails and daily calls in the two companies. Identifying the words in the four classifications can provide an understanding of the breadth of vocabulary knowledge required by engineers. It also enables classification of the words for teaching purposes. While breadth is the main focus of the corpus analysis, it "can tell only part of the story" (Ishii & Schmitt, 2009, p. 6); investigation of depth also needs to be conducted. In this study, depth, or knowledge about vocabulary use, was investigated through the petroleum engineers' accounts of their English vocabulary use in daily workplace communication.

Methodology

Design

The collection of the corpus was part of a larger study examining the alignment between English language communication in the Vietnamese petroleum industry and an English for petroleum engineering (EPE) course at a university tasked with training students to work in the industry. The study involved qualitative data from the companies including audio-recordings of daily calls, the collection of written texts such as emails and reports, and interviews with eight petroleum engineers and four company employers. A corpus of 32,000 running words was developed from the daily call transcripts and emails that were collected in a six-month period from February to July in the two companies. In Company 1, many of the petroleum engineers were Vietnamese because of the company's policy of hiring local labour. In Company 2, the petroleum engineers were from Malaysia, Indonesia, South Africa, the Philippines, as well as Vietnam. As noted above, the lingua franca of both companies was English.

The emails from each company comprised 8,000 running words, that is, 16,000 running words in total. The daily calls were audio-recorded and transcribed by a professional transcriber, with the transcripts checked by a petroleum engineer with deep technical knowledge. The transcripts were compared and merged to ensure the highest rate of accuracy. Tables, numbers, proper nouns, non-English words, misspelled words, abbreviations, and equation symbols in the emails and calls were not included. The resulting corpus of 32,000 running words is considered reliable since a sample (corpus) with a total of 10,000 to 100,000 words is regarded as appropriate for this type of analysis (Bowker & Pearson, 2002). A consideration with the corpus size is that it includes emails which are necessarily brief with small word counts.

Corpus analysis

Corpus analysis deals with large samples of naturally-occurring language items that represent use in a particular domain; the purpose is to provide sound descriptions of the frequency and associations of words and word strings across communicative texts, or genres (Hyland, 2015). In the current study, spoken calls and emails are different genres in that they have different modes of delivery, organisational features, and communicative objectives. A feature of texts in corpus studies is that they are machine-readable; the reason is that the large scale of the data set makes it difficult to analyse the texts reliably and rapidly by eye or hand (McEnery & Hardie, 2012).

The corpus analysis in this study was conducted using the RANGE program (Chung & Nation, 2004) which is freely available online at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation. RANGE is a corpus analysis tool that can be installed with 14 lists of 1,000 word families from the British National Corpus (BNC) or 25 lists of 1,000 word families from the BNC and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Nation & Heatley, 2002). The program has baseword lists and includes high frequency and academic words within its classifications. It is designed to list the words in the research data set against the established baseword lists of frequently-occurring words including academic words in English. The study utilised RANGE to analyse the breadth of engineer vocabulary use, specifically the range and frequency of words in emails and the transcribed daily calls.

In order to identify the percentages of the four word types (high frequency, academic, technical and low frequency words), the 32,000 word corpus from the emails and daily calls in both companies was processed in RANGE and classified into four word lists: *one*, *two*, *three*, and *not in the lists*. Word list *one* contained high frequency function words; word list *two* contained high frequency content words; word list *three* consisted of academic words; and word list *not in the list* included technical and low frequency words.

The RANGE program has "a good overall rating and is reasonably consistent in identifying terms and non-terms" (Chung & Nation, 2004, p. 261). One recognised feature of the program is that it is based on baseword lists that are not inclusive of lists of technical terms; technical words that come from high frequency or academic word groups are not included (Chung & Nation, 2004). For example, *oil* is a technical word in the petroleum industry but classified as a high frequency word in the RANGE program. To address this issue, a technical dictionary for the petroleum industry named *Dictionary of Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Processing* (Bahadori, Nwaoha, & Clark,

2013) was employed. In other words, this dictionary was used as a means of checking the technical words and meanings in the word lists *one*, *two*, *three*, and *not in the lists* as classified by the RANGE program. Chung and Nation (2004) note that a good technical dictionary compiled by subject specialists is an effective way of identifying and defining technical words. These authors of the *Dictionary of Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Processing* compiled the dictionary entries from 72 sources associated with the industry, ensuring the inclusion of a full range of technical words from the field. After identifying the technical words in the word list *not in the list,* the remaining words in that list were low frequency words.

Word types rather than word families were units of analysis since sometimes not all members of a word family are technical words (e.g., *frequency* and *frequent*). A word family comprises a set of related word types. For example, the family word *watch* contains the word types *watch, watched*, *watches* and *watching* (Bauer & Nation, 1993). A word type, on the other hand, is a single word form, such as *watch* or *watches*. When counting word types, *watch* and *watches* are counted as different word types. Although the lists typically used in RANGE program are word families, the program can also produce a list of word types.

Results

The findings are presented in three sections: (i) word types in petroleum industry emails and daily calls; (ii) features of technical words in petroleum industry communication; and (iii) specialised vocabulary use as understood by petroleum engineers. The points cover the areas of breadth (i, ii) and depth (iii).

Word types in petroleum industry emails and daily calls

In Table 1, the email data indicate that despite the same number of 8,000 running words in the emails of each company, there is a slight difference in the percentage of words in the four word lists between the two companies. The percentage of high frequency words in Company 2's emails (50%) is slightly higher than that in Company 1's (47%). In contrast, the percentage of technical and low frequency words is a little higher in Company 1's emails (29% and 13% respectively) compared with 28% and 11% in Company 2. A commonality for both companies is that academic words comprise 11% of all the running words in emails. Moreover, high frequency words account for the highest percentage of vocabulary in the four word groups (47% in Company 1 and 50% in Company 2). The second highest percentage of vocabulary is technical words, with around 28% of text coverage in both companies.

Table 1 Percentages of vocabulary types in emails and daily calls in Company 1 and Company 2

Vocabulary level	Emails				Daily calls			
	Company 1 (types/%)		Company 2 (types/%)		Company 1 (types/%)		Company 2 (types/%)	
High-frequency words	646	47%	704	50%	527	52%	618	54%
Technical words	396	29%	395	28%	286	29%	272	24%
Low-frequency words	183	13%	176	12%	100	10%	130	12%
Academic words	157	11%	144	10%	89	9%	108	10%
Total types	1382	100%	1419	100%	1002	100%	1128	100%

The data in Table 1 show that academic words account for the smallest percentage of words in daily calls (9% in Company 1 and 10% in Company 2) while high frequency words constitute most of the words in daily calls in both companies (52% in Company 1 and 54% in Company 2). The percentages of high frequency, academic, and low frequency words in Company 2 (54%, 10% and 12% respectively) are slightly higher than those in Company 1 (52%, 9% and 10%). In Company 1, the group of technical words (286 words) account for 29% text coverage in daily calls, which is slightly higher than the total number of 272 word types covering 24% of running words in Company 2's calls.

In the interest of identifying the key words in the four word categories, the lists from both companies have been merged into the separate genres of emails and daily calls. Appendix One comprises the common high frequency function and content words, academic words, and technical and low frequency in emails across a six-month period in the two companies; Appendix Two includes similar lists for the daily calls in the same period for the two companies.

The results in Table 1 show that technical and high frequency words account for higher percentages of running words in emails and daily calls in both companies than academic and low frequency words. While technical words account for 24% to 29% of text coverage, high frequency words account for 47% to 54% of text coverage in emails and daily calls in the two companies. In these text types, low frequency and academic words account for only 10% and 9% of text coverage respectively. Almost one in every four words is a technical word and one in every two words is a high frequency word.

The frequencies are highlighted in an email excerpt written by a petroleum engineer in Company 2, presented in Figure 1. The technical words or multi-word phrases are underlined, academic words are in **bold,** low frequency words are in *italics,* and high frequency words are unmarked. In line 1, ‘during’ is a high frequency word and ‘campaign’ is a technical word. In keeping with the analysis above, most of the words are high frequency and technical.

> During this *SD* campaign, we found that all the vessels of glycol system were in good condition, excepting the glycol flash drum. So, we can say that the coasting of glycol flash drum was damaged due to the its coasting (not because of TEG glycol). After discussion, we have only one solution for this **issue,** that is “cleaning up the coating damage” so that it does not destroy the glycol system. After shutdown completed, will raise *MSR* for the painting & make **priority** to do in *anytime* when we have chance.
>
> We carried out *UTM* from inside, the thickness measurement technician entered into vessel & checked all the weak points. No any **issue** from that. We discovered that the nozzles were damaged due to the insulation failed, when it’s rain or the moisture from the ambient are contained by the insulation, that caused cosrossion the bottom of the nozzles.

Figure 1 Extract of an email in Company 2 highlighting the different word categories

Features of technical words in petroleum industry communication

The results in Table 2 show the types and frequency of technical words in the emails and daily calls within the everyday operations of the two petroleum companies. As noted above, some of the technical terms are borrowed from other fields and categories but collocated with other words to service the needs of petroleum-based communication. Two groups of technical words are distinguished: (i) oil-based technical words, and (ii) words borrowed from other fields and word categories.

Table 2 Technical words in emails and daily calls in Company 1 and Company 2

Vocabulary level	Emails		Daily calls	
	Company 1 (Word types/%)	Company 2 (Word types/%)	Company 1 (Word types/%)	Company 2 (Word types/%)
Technical words from high frequency words	174 (55%)	204 (51%)	168 (59%)	156 (57%)
Oil-based technical words	103 (33%)	142 (36%)	76 (27%)	78 (29%)
Technical words from academic words	38 (12%)	50 (13%)	42 (14%)	38 (14%)
Total	315 (100%)	396 (100%)	286 (100%)	272 (100%)

The results in Table 2 indicate that the number of technical words borrowed from high frequency and academic words is higher than the oil-based technical words across both text types (spoken calls and written emails) in both companies. In emails, oil-based technical words make up 33% and 36% in Company 1 and Company 2 respectively, and 27% and 29% in daily calls. More than 60% of the remaining technical words come from other fields and word categories. Interestingly, among the borrowed technical words, those from high frequency words account for the biggest percentage: 55% in Company 1’s emails and 51% in Company 2’s email; in daily calls, 59% in Company 1’s daily calls and 57% in Company 2’s daily calls. These results highlight the importance of high frequency vocabulary knowledge in the workplace communication and the need for this vocabulary to form an essential part of ESP programs.

Another finding from the corpus analysis is that technical vocabulary in the emails and daily calls in both companies can take the form of single words as well as complex noun phrases. The technical noun phrases present as combinations of two, three or even four words incorporating high frequency, academic, technical and low frequency words. For example, *air compressor* consists of two words which are *air* – high frequency word – and *compressor* – technical word. Another example, *dry crude oil inventory,* contains four words including the two high frequency words *dry* and *oil*, one technical word *crude,* and one low frequency word *inventory*. This finding aligns with other studies such as the one by Wasuntarasophit (2009) which found that technical terminologies in Thai electrical engineering textbooks at Khon Kaen University featured both single words and complex noun phrases.

Specialised vocabulary use as understood by petroleum engineers

The email in Figure 1 indicates occasional linguistic problems; for example, in the written form or spelling of a word (e.g., *cosrossion*) and grammatical construction such as the use of a preposition (e.g., make priority to do *in anytime*). The errors, however, do not interfere with meaning. Indeed, the engineers indicate high levels of confidence in their word knowledge and capacity to communicate specialised information about onshore and offshore oil and gas operations.

One petroleum engineer had the following to say about grammar and vocabulary use, and the importance of making meaning:

> *The activities in the petroleum industry are just about some certain issues, words or devices. Not good grammar or incorrect pronunciation. It is mostly ok to be understood. We have worked together for a long time ... In general, it is proximately easy to be understood in spite of bad pronunciation or grammar.*

Another petroleum engineer made the point that common understandings are critical to meaning and developed through practice:

> *For the newcomers, they may need more time to be able to understand and follow our conversation ... Maybe they lack technical vocabulary. Many of them said that our pronunciation is different from what they learnt at school. In fact, we never look up a dictionary to know how to pronounce a word. We have no time for that. We know each other ... (and) understand more easily.*

For the engineers, functional language that meets their communicative purposes for the workplace appeared to be a greater priority than linguistically accurate language forms.

Discussion

Technical vocabulary is a defining feature of specialised texts and was highly prevalent in the emails and daily calls of the two petroleum companies researched in the study. The findings show technical vocabulary comprising about 22% of both text types (emails and daily calls), much higher than the 5% proposed by Nation (2013). Technical vocabulary is associated with the specialised knowledge of particular domains and industries. The findings in this study show both technical and high frequency words contribute higher percentages than academic and low frequency words to the repertoire of words needed to function in the petroleum industry. High frequency words accounted for the highest percentage of all running words in the texts. Nation and Newton (1997) argue that words with high frequency should be concentrated on in teaching; the findings from this study confirm the need to focus on high frequency and technical words. This is not to exclude academic and low frequency words but the level of attention in curriculum and teaching needs to be more extensive. Often in ESP teaching, high frequency words are ignored in favour of more specialised, low frequency terms.

Moreover, the findings of the study point to the appearance of high frequency words as borrowings in technical words, often as parts of multi-word noun phrases. The word lists in the appendices provide a definitive starting point for selecting the key words that constitute specialist communication in the petroleum industry. In addition, the findings point to the importance of emails and daily calls. The two genres have different modes (written and spoken) and serve different communicative functions. Their differences are also evidenced in their vocabulary sets. The implications for teaching are that these highly valued genres need to be included in the ESP curriculum for petroleum industry students, along with key vocabulary.

A major contribution of this study is the provision of word lists of key words associated with emails and daily calls – see Appendix One and Appendix Two. These word lists can assist ESP teachers with the development of curricula and teaching materials. In addition, while this study focused on the petroleum industry, the corpus analysis approach and RANGE program can inform studies into other industries that are seeking to compile word lists of key vocabulary for the purposes of ESP teaching.

Conclusion

The study addressed the question of the vocabulary knowledge required to communicate within the English language environment of the petroleum industry in Vietnam. Through corpus analysis using the RANGE program, the key vocabulary features of petroleum engineers' communication were identified across four categories: high frequency words, academic words, technical words, and low frequency words. The resulting word lists provide an initial step towards developing a pedagogical framework for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching specialising in the communication needs of the petroleum industry.

References

Al-Tamimi, A., & Shuib, M. (2010). Investigating the English language needs of petroleum engineering students at Hadhramout University of Science and Technology. *The Asian ESP Journal*, *6*(1), 6–34.

Anderson, R. C., & Freebody, P. (1981). Vocabulary knowledge. In J. T. Guthrie (Ed.), *Comprehension and teaching: Research reviews* (pp. 77–117). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Bahadori, A., Nwaoha, C., & Clark, M. W. (2013). *Dictionary of oil, gas, and petrochemical processing*. Hoboken: CRC Press.

Barrow, J., Nakanishi, Y., & Ishino, H. (1999). Assessing Japanese college students' vocabulary knowledge with a self-checking familiarity survey. *System*, *27*, 223–247.

Bauer, L., & Nation, I. S. P. (1993). Word families. *International Journal of Lexicography*, *6*(4), 253–279.

Bowker, L., & Pearson, J. (2002). *Working with specialized language: A practical guide to using corpora*. London: Routledge.

Chung, T. M., & Nation, I. S. P. (2003). Technical vcabulary in specialised texts. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, *15*(2), 103–116.

Chung, T. M., & Nation, I. S. P. (2004). Identifying technical vocabulary. *System*, *32*(2), 251–263.

Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(2), 213–238.

Csomay, E., & Petrović, M. (2012). "Yes, your honor!": A corpus-based study of technical vocabulary in discipline-related movies and TV shows. *System*, *40*(2), 305–315.

Gablasova, D. (2015). Learning technical words through L1 and L2: Completeness and accuracy of word meanings. *English for Specific Purposes*, *39*, 62–74.

Hirsh, D. (2015). Researching vocabulary. In B. Paltridge & A. Phakiti (Eds.). *Resarch methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource.* (pp. 369-386). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Hu, M., & Nation, I. S. P. (2000). Vocabulary density and reading comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, *13*(1), 403–430.

Huhta, M., Vogt, K., Johnson, E., & Tulkki, H. (2013). *Needs analysis for language course design: A holistic approach to ESP*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2015). Resaerching writing. In B. Paltridge & A. Phakiti (Eds.). *Resarch methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource.* (pp. 335-348). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Ishii, T., & Schmitt, N. (2009). Developing an integrated diagnostic test of vocabulary size and depth. *RELC Journal*, *40*(1), 5–22.

Kaivanpanah, S., & Zandi, H. (2009). The role of depth of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension in EFL contexts. *Journal of Applied Sciences*, *9*(4), 698–706.

Luzon, M. J. (2005). Genre analysis in technical communication. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, 48*(3), 285-295.

Martinez, I. A., Beck, S. C., & Panza, C. B. (2009). Academic vocabulary in agriculture research articles: A corpus-based study. *English for Specific Purposes*, *28*, 183–198.

McEnery, T. & Hardie, A. (2012). *Corpus linguistics: Method, theory and practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *63*(1), 59–82.

Nation, I. S. P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, I. S. P., & Heatley, A. (2002). Range: A program for the analysis of vocabulary in Texts.

[software]. Downloadable from http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation/nation.aspx

Nation, I. S. P., & Newton, J. (1997). Teaching vocabulary. In J. Coady & T. Huckin (Eds.), *Second language vocabulary acquisition: A rationale for pedagogy* (pp. 238–254). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

PVN. (2011). *Partnership with Petrovietnam: Message from the President and CEO*. Retrieved from http://english.pvn.vn/invest/

PVN. (2013). *Annual report 2011*. Retrieved from http://www.pvn.com.vn/?portal=news&page=detail&category_id=126&id=3670

PVN. (2016). *Partnership with Petrovietnam*. Retrieved from http://222.255.252.36/invest/Project/Default.aspx?Mod=Overview&ProjectTypeID=2

Siradj, Z. (2013). *English for the oil industry: From the teaching ritual to the tailored teaching the case of petroelum geology program (1st year ma)* (Master dissertation). Kasdi Merbah University, Ouargla.

Skulstad, A. S. (1999). Genre awareness in ESP teaching: Issues and implications. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *9*(2), 285–298.

Tangpijaikul, M. (2014). Preparing business vocabulary for the ESP classroom. *RELC Journal*, *45*(1), 51–65.

Ward, J. (2009). A basic engineering English word list for less proficient foundation engineering undergraduates. *English for Specific Purposes*, *28*, 170–182.

Wasuntarasophit, S. (2009). *Technical and academic vocabulary in electrical engineering textbooks* (Doctoral dissertation). Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. Retrieved from http://sutir.sut.ac.th:8080/sutir/bitstream/123456789/3173/2/fulltext.pdf

Webb, S. A., & Sasao , Y. (2013). New directions in vocabulary testing. *RELC Journal*, *44*(3), 263–277.

Wee, L. (2008). The technologization of discourse and authenticity in English language teaching. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 18*(3), 256–273.

West, M. (1953). *A general service list of English words*. London: Longman.

Yamamoto, Y. (2014). Multidimensional vocabulary acquisition through deliberate vocabulary list learning. *System*, *42*, 232–243.

Yan, L., & Yang, Y. (2016). Examining business English majors' business vocabulary knowledge development. *The Asian ESP Journal, 12*(3), 40–69.

Appendix I: Common word types in emails in Company 1 and Company 2

High frequency words (364)

a	about	above	according	account
action	activities	actually	additional	advice
advise	advised	after	afternoon	again
all	almost	already	also	although
am	an	and	another	any
are	around	arrange	arrived	as
ask	at	august	avoid	back
bad	based	be	because	been
before	being	believe	below	besides
best	better	between	both	business
but	by	calculation	can	cannot
carry	chance	change	changed	checked
clear	close	collect	combined	come
coming	compared	complete	completed	concern
concerns	conditions	connect	consider	consideration
considered	continue	correct	could	currently
days	dear	details	did	different
discussed	discussion	do	does	doing
done	down	drops	due	each
earliest	efficient	efforts	empty	enough
ever	every	experienced	extra	failed
far	few	find	finish	first
follow	for	found	from	further
future	general	gentlemen	get	gets
getting	give	go	going	good
got	had	handle	has	have
having	he	health	help	here
hi	higher	highly	him	his
hope	hour	hours	how	however
I	idea	if	important	in
including	increase	inform	informed	instead
into	introduce	is	it	its
July	just	keep	kind	know
last	latest	learned	least	less
let	like	list	lists	little
longer	look	looking	machine	made
mail	makes	man	many	may
me	mentioned	minutes	Monday	months
more	morning	most	much	my
name	need	needed	next	nice
no	not	note	noted	now
of	off	office	on	once
one	only	onto	or	original
other	others	otherwise	our	out

over	painting	passing	per	planned
please	practice	prefer	preparation	preparations
prepare	prepared	preparing	problem	progress
propose	proposed	provide	provided	proving
put	question	quick	read	ready
really	reason	recent	refer	regarding
regards	related	relatively	remain	repair
replace	requested	result	results	review
room	runs	said	same	sampling
see	send	sent	shall	share
shortly	should	signed	since	situation
slightly	smooth	so	some	soon
spare	special	spend	square	start
started	stay	still	stop	study
successfully	such	suggest	suggested	suggestion
suitable	supported	supports	sure	suspicion
table	takes	taking	than	thank
thanks	that	the	their	them
then	there	these	they	thickness
think	this	three	through	throughout
tidy	times	to	today	tomorrow
tonight	too	took	tried	try
trying	two	until	up	upon
us	use	useful	using	very
visit	want	was	way	we
Wednesday	week	were	what	when
whether	which	while	will	wind
wish	with	within	without	worked
would	year	yes	yet	

Technical words (171)

actual	abnormal	ballast	barrier	bed
bit	board	boat	cable	capacity
case	check	checking	choke	clarification
clean	cleaning	collection	communication	composition
compressor	condition	confusion	contact	contract
control	cost	crane	crew	crude
cut	cutting	cycles	daily	damage
damper	detector	dirty	documents	double
downstream	drainage	drilling	drop	dry
emergency	end	engine	engineer	export
fans	field	filter	fire	fixed
flange	flash	flow	fluid	flushing
frequency	fuel	full	gas	grease
hard	header	heavy	high	inlet
inside	inspections	instrument	item	items

job	level	lift	lifting	light
line	liquid	log	logging	lot
lower	main	maintenance	management	manual
material	means	meter	nitrogen	nozzles
numbers	observation	offshore	oil	onshore
open	operating	operation	operator	order
outlet	particle	period	permanent	pipelines
platform	point	power	pressure	production
projects	protection	pump	rate	records
recycle	reference	replacement	reports	rig
run	safety	sample	schedule	screen
seat	separator	service	set	sheets
shutdown	side	skid	software	spool
stuck	surface	system	tag	tank
technical	temperature	test	testing	time
tool	train	trend	trip	tube
tubing	turn	type	unit	upgrade
value	valve	valves	vent	vessel
volume	water	weather	well	window
zone				

Academic words (72)

achieve	adjustment	analysis	analyzing	appreciated
approach	approximate	approximately	assist	assistance
attached	availability	available	clarify	comment
comments	component	conclude	conduct	confirmed
contribution	cooperation	couple	create	device
duration	ensure	equipment	error	estimated
file	files	final	flexible	function
input	inspect	investigate	isolated	issue
issues	maintain	maintained	maintaining	max
minimize	mode	normal	normally	option
options	outcome	previous	prior	procedure
recovered	reinforce	relevant	remove	removed
required	requirement	response	scenario	significant
site	status	task	team	temporarily
version	visual			

Low frequency words (54)

bellow	budget	calibrate	campaign	cancelled
capture	chopper	demobilize	deploy	depressurize
diaphragm	drain	email	engage	erect
familiarisation	feedback	flashsource	gents	hose
hospitality	install	inventory	lab	malfunction
manpower	mobilize	obstruct	off-shift	on-shift
optimize	optimizer	personnel	perusal	photo

profile	rectified	refurbish	reinstate	reinstatement
restart	roster	rotate	routine	server
silicon	spikes	start-up	strainer	technician
tentatively	transmitter	troubleshooting	update	

Appendix II: Common word types in daily calls in Company 1 and Company 2

High frequency words (320)

a	able	about	according	activities
activity	actually	add	advise	advised
after	afternoon	again	agree	agreed
all	almost	already	also	am
amount	an	and	another	any
anything	are	around	arrived	as
ask	at	back	be	because
been	before	being	believe	better
between	both	busy	but	by
call	can	cannot	carried	carry
cases	chance	change	checked	clear
close	come	coming	complete	concern
concerns	consider	considered	content	continue
could	course	did	different	difficult
directly	discussion	diver	do	does
doing	don	done	down	each
early	effort	enough	especially	evening
ever	every	everything	example	experience
far	few	find	fine	finish
first	follow	for	form	found
free	from	further	get	give
go	going	good	got	had
hand	has	have	he	help
here	higher	him	hope	hours
how	however	I	if	important
in	include	increase	informed	instead
into	is	it	just	keep
kept	kind	know	last	latest
least	less	let	like	little
long	machine	made	make	making
many	may	maybe	me	meeting
mentioned	minutes	moment	month	more
morning	most	move	must	my
need	needed	needs	never	new
next	no	not	now	October
of	off	office	on	one
only	opinion	or	original	other
otherwise	our	out	over	paper
parties	people	per	plan	planned
please	possible	prepare	prepared	prevent
problem	problems	produced	producing	progress
provide	provided	put	putting	question
questions	raise	read	ready	reason
receive	recommend	regarding	remain	remember

replace	rest	result	return	review
right	running	said	same	saw
say	see	send	sensitive	sent
should	simple	since	situation	small
so	some	soon	sounds	spare
spend	start	started	stay	still
stop	stopped	successfully	such	suggest
suggested	suggestion	sure	take	takes
tested	than	thanks	that	the
their	them	then	there	they
think	this	those	through	to
today	tonight	too	twice	two
understand	understanding	until	up	us
use	useful	using	valuable	very
visit	want	was	way	we
week	weeks	went	were	what
whatever	when	where	whether	which
while	who	why	will	willing
with	within	without	would	wrong
year	yes	yet	you	your

Technical words (103)

actuator	ahead	air	bit	bleed
board	boat	boiler	cargo	case
check	checking	cleaning	compressor	contact
contract	corrosion	crew	critical	cutter
daily	damage	day	decision	degree
delay	discharge	end	engine	filter
fixed	flange	flow	fuel	full
gas	gear	hazard	hose	hot
hydraulic	inch	injection	inlet	installation
items	lift	line	liner	liquid
liters	lot	low	main	maintenance
material	matter	mean	means	meter
meters	offshore	oil	onshore	operational
package	parameter	pin	place	point
port	pressure	production	pump	replacement
report	rope	rotating	run	safe
schedule	seat	set	shore	side
site	structure	supply	suspended	tanker
test	testing	tool	trip	tube
turn	type	unit	valve	valves
water	weather	well		

Academic words (30)

available	aware	comment	comments	communicate

conducted	confirm	confirmed	consistent	cooperate
couple	fluctuate	issue	maintain	maintained
modification	monitor	normal	normally	ongoing
procedure	proceed	remove	removed	required
requirement	shift	stable	status	team

Low frequency words (34)

backload	bye	certifies	chase	chopper
clearance	cylinder	decommissioning	drain	email
expedite	fabrication	feedback	guy	guys
haft	hopefully	inline	logistic	miracle
mobilization	onboard	online	pending	personnel
quay	recertification	resumed	rotate	routine
supervisor	swap	update	vendor	

Enhancing L2 Listeners' Lexical Segmentation through Partial Dictation: A Bottom-Up Approach

Dukhayel Aldukhayel

Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

Bioprofile

Dukhayel Aldukhayel is an assistant professor in the Department of English Language and Translation at Qassim University in Saudi Arabia. He earned an MA degree in TESL/TEFL from Colorado State University and a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from The University of Memphis. His research interests include L2 vocabulary, L2 listening, and CALL. **Email**: dmdkhiel@qu.edu.sa

Abstract

This article reports the findings of a quasi-experimental study conducted using partial dictation to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching bottom-up second-language (L2) listening approaches on lexical segmentation. This perceptual process has been argued to be the most important key to successful L2 decoding and listening comprehension in concatenated speech. Segmentation (the ability to identify where each word begins and ends) is difficult for L2 listeners because, unlike reading, there are no obvious cues to word boundaries. This study assigned 37 Arab EFL learners into two different groups: a control group (*n* = 17) and an experimental group (*n* = 20). The five-week experiment employed partial dictation integrated with listening to authentic recordings to determine if repeated practice in partial dictation, focusing on words that often yield segmentation problems, would improve L2 listeners' segmentation ability. Posttest results showed significant improvement in the experimental group's segmentation ability. Results of the questionnaire revealed that the majority of students (75%) viewed partial dictation as effective in enhancing their segmentation abilities. Also, the majority (59.4%) reported satisfaction with procedures and content.

Key words: L2 listening, lexical segmentation, word recognition, bottom-up, partial dictation

Qassim University, 51452, Qassim,
Saudi Arabia

Introduction

In second-language (L2) teaching, listening receives the least attention from teachers, instructional materials, and researchers, although this situation is slowly changing (Harding, Alderson, & Brunfaut, 2015; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012; Yeldham, 2017). Besides the difficulties of researching listening, several theorists (e.g., Renandya & Farrell, 2011) and many teachers believe that all that is really needed for L2 listeners to develop is regular or extensive listening practice. It has been widely believed that L2 listeners can only enhance listening skills if they spend hours listening to real-life speech, such as television shows and movies (Yeldham, 2017).

The second issue in L2 listening research and pedagogy is that, as Field (2008a) points out, most practitioners hold a top-down–approach view that perceives “context” as the key to success in listening, giving low priority to accurate decoding (or perceptual processing) because perceptual errors could be compensated for by using contextual evidence. This view, which puts a high priority only on top-down processing, has focused on factors such as schematic knowledge and familiarity with topic, text type and situation. Thus, many recent approaches and studies on teaching listening have emphasized building meaning from context, listening for gist, and employing listening strategies (Field, 2004; Long, 1989; 1990; Markham & Latham, 1987; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994).

Another line of research prioritizes adequate training in metacognitive strategies, which compensate for gaps in word recognition (e.g., Goh, 2000; O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 2003). Renandya and Farrell (2011), however, argue there is a lack of evidence of success with this approach to teaching lower proficiency L2 listeners and that strategy training places a heavy burden on teachers.

From the above, it is obvious that the kinds of perception problems that less-proficient L2 listeners face have been comparatively undervalued or overlooked, and approaches to enhancing decoding skills have also been neglected. Hence, many researchers have called for greater attention to the perceptual processes involved in L2 listening (e.g., Field, 2003; 2004; 2008a; Liu, 2003; Renandya & Farrell, 2011; Wilson, 2003). Renandya and Farrell (2011) maintain that “EFL students’ listening problems are related to perception problems; namely, they are not able to recognize words in speech and to process the text fast enough for them to attend to the higher level processes of comprehension and inference" (p. 54).

Therefore, there is a renewed interest in perceptual processing (bottom-up processing) and in the way perception contributes to the representations of meaning that L2 listeners build. This interest derives partly from dissatisfaction with the conventional comprehension-based approach to L2 teaching and the belief that top-down and bottom-up processing should be seen as mutually dependent and highly interconnected (Field, 2003; 2008a; Lynch, 2006).

Yeldham and Gruba (2014) state that fluent listening involves the automatic processing of information at both bottom-up and top-down levels and, in such effective listening, top-down and bottom-up processes operate in harmony. Students need to learn to match the aural form of a word in concatenated speech with the word in their mental lexicon. They can do this through developing both top-down skills, which enable them to use context and other compensatory strategies to guess the meaning of a word (e.g., Field, 2001; Goh, 2002; Vandergrift, 2003), and bottom-up skills, with which students learn the capability for rapid word recognition (e.g., Field, 2003; Hulstijn, 2003; Wilson, 2003). Thus, the study of how lexis is processed has recently attracted wide attention in L2 contexts (Field, 2008a).

Literature Review

Bottom-up approach. While top-down approaches can develop listeners' real-life listening skills, they are not enough to advance segmentation and word recognition skills. However, a more remedial bottom-up approach can develop these abilities (Vandergrift, 2004).

Studies using the bottom-up approach have investigated the effect of teaching English phonotactic constraints (illegal consonant clusters) to deal with the L1 (native language) influence on L2 segmentation (e.g., Al-jasser, 2008; McQueen, 1998; Weber & Cutler, 2006). For example, Al-jasser (2008), the most relevant to our study because his participants included L1 Arabic speakers, conducted an eight-week intervention teaching English phonotactic constraints to L1 Arabic speakers to investigate the effect on lexical segmentation. The study involved 52 native (assigned to the control group) and nonnative (assigned to either the control group or the experimental group) English speakers. Each group was pretested using a word-spotting task that investigated the extent to which illegal consonant clusters in English and Arabic supported the lexical segmentation of English. The study showed significant improvement in the experimental group's segmentation.

Field (2003), on the other hand, proposed dictation to deal with the problems of lack of between-word pauses, reduced forms, assimilation, and elision. With resyllabification and cliticization, he suggested raising learners' awareness that they exist and advised, "when you encounter them in a listening text, to play and replay the relevant section to see if learners can puzzle out for themselves the correct distribution of phonemes and/or syllables" (p. 332). Researchers who have conducted studies favoring dictation include Kiany and Shiramiry (2002), Rahimi (2008), and Kuo (2010).

Kiany and Shiramiry (2002) investigated the effects of dictation on the listening comprehension ability of 30 Iranian learners of elementary English as a foreign language (EFL), who received dictation 11 times during a term. The passages and conversations used for dictation were short, each consisting of about 100 words and taking approximately 10–15 minutes. The dictation materials were the native-recorded passages and conversations in the course textbook. Listening comprehension ability posttest results showed that the experimental group gained significantly higher scores compared to their 30 peers in the control group.

Rahimi (2008) conducted a semester-long experiment in which he administered 50 dictations to 34 Iranian university EFL students whose posttests showed more gains in grammar, vocabulary, reading, and listening comprehension compared to 31 peers did not receive the dictations. Each dictation exercise took about 10 minutes at the beginning of each session, and in each session the difficulty level and the length of the passage were increased. The lengths of passages ranged from 50 to 150 words, with each passage read three times: at normal speed the first and third times, but in chunks with pauses the second time.

Kuo (2010) reported pervasive problems decoding word segmentation in connected speech at normal speed among intermediate-level Taiwanese university EFL students. To resolve this serious listening problem, he administered 18 partial dictations (English courses at the university only met only once a week) to a group of

31 students in a semester-long experiment. Kuo integrated partial dictation with listening to an English-teaching radio program appropriate to students' English proficiency, designed by synthesizing findings and suggestions of various FL/EFL researchers (e.g., Field, 2003, 2008b; Goh, 2000; Rahimi, 2008). Kuo asserts partial dictation is preferable to full dictation, as full dictation is problematic for several reasons. One reason is that full dictation tests other aspects of the listening process; i.e., when learners are required to construct their own version of the entire text, it might include top-down processes such as the learner's comprehension and interpretation of the text. In addition, reliable scoring is difficult when full dictations are packed with errors (Hughes, 2003). To prevent learners from using grammatical knowledge to guess words and avoid listening to the stimulus, Kuo deleted several consecutive words and substituted blanks containing only the initial letter of each word. The paired sample *t*-test results suggest that partial dictation of the English-teaching radio program significantly improved students' listening comprehension.

Lexical segmentation. Among the four language skills, listening is the most implicit and least explicit, with reading in second place. For instance, readers have the advantage of pausing, thinking, and rereading a sentence if needed. In contrast, listeners have to instantly process speech at the same rate as it is produced by the speaker. In addition, readers can clearly see the word boundaries, as they are marked by white spaces between words. On the other hand, because words rarely occur in isolation, listeners are exposed to word boundaries that are often blurry; as such, potential word boundaries can even include the end of one word plus the beginning of the next (Broersma & Cutler, 2008; Hulstijn, 2003; Tabossi, Burani, & Scott, 1995).

Because words often differ markedly in connected speech from the standard forms they take when uttered in isolation, L2 listeners face a major problem to determine word boundaries in concatenated speech (Field, 2003). The perception of the L2 never becomes entirely identical to that of the L1 (Dehaene *et al.*, 1997; Pallier, Colome, & Sebastian, 2001), and what makes L2 listening particularly difficult is when the target language is not rhythmically similar to the L1 (Vandergrift, 2007). Unsurprisingly, research shows that L2 listeners, particularly those with lower proficiency, tend to segment on the basis of their L1 segmentation procedures (e.g., Al–jasser, 2008; Cutler, 2001; Goh, 2000; Graham, 2006; McQueen, 1998; Vandergrift, 2011; Weber & Cutler, 2006).

Lexical segmentation has thus been described as the most common perceptual cause of breakdown of understanding and the main problem for L2 listeners (Field, 2003). The difficulty presented by lexical segmentation is more serious for low-proficient L2 listeners; for instance, it occurs when they are unable to segment a word out of fast speech.

Three different causes of segmentation problems have been discussed in the literature. The first cause is the L1 influence on L2 speech segmentation, known as phonotactic constraints of L1. Researchers (e.g., Al–jasser, 2008; McQueen, 1998; Weber & Cutler, 2006) have found that some L2 listeners incorrectly apply their L1 phonotactic knowledge when listening to an L2.

The second cause is a phonemic issue, namely the lack of between-word pauses. Speakers naturally pause after around 12 syllables, suggesting that unlike readers, listeners lack regular indications of where words begin and end (Field, 2003). For instance, when hearing a phrase such as *what a strange act*, “there is temporary but discernible activation not only of the words which were actually spoken, but also of other words supported by the input, both within the actual words (stray, train, ray, range, etc.) and across them (is, jack, jacked)” (Broersma & Cutler, 2008, p. 24). Related to this point is speech rate, which can be defined as speed of articulation usually measured in words per minute. The general influence of speech rate is that when speech is fast, listeners cannot process words as fast as they hear them (Chang, 2018). Tauroza and Allison (1990) proposed guidelines for the average speech rate of different text categories by words per minute as follows: 125–160 for lectures, 150–170 for radio monologues, 160–210 for interviews, and 190–230 for conversations. Rates below the lower boundary or above the upper boundary can be considered slow or fast, respectively.

The third and equally important cause of lexical segmentation problems and L2 listeners’ breakdown of understanding can be attributed to the ways in which standard forms are systematically modified by native speakers in connected speech. These ways include well-known phenomena in English speech, such as reduction, assimilation, elision, resyllabification, and cliticization. Fortunately, some of the ways in which words vary in form are relatively systematic, and it is worth teaching these to students in English as a second language (ESL) classes (Field, 2008b). A brief description drawn from Field (2003; 2008b) for each of these phenomena is given below.

Reduction. Words and even entire phrases often appear in connected speech in a reduced form. One reason is that speakers economize on effort: for example, they avoid difficult consonant sequences by eliding sounds. Another reason is rhythmic; the patterns of English prosody dictate that certain closed-class words such as prepositions, pronouns, and conjunctions are rarely stressed, and some may appear in a weak form (usually featuring a schwa) in these unstressed contexts. Three main types of reduction give rise to segmentation problems: contractions (e.g., *we have* → *we've*), weak forms (e.g., *was* → [wəz]), and the chunking of formulaic phrases (e.g., *I don't know* → [dənəʊ]).

Words also become reduced in form when they are part of a larger group. One or more of their standard phonemes might be dropped, and syllables might be shortened or weakened. This often happens because a word is of low importance within the group. Alternatively, it is possible that a frequent and familiar group of words has been stored in the minds of speaker and listener as a single, simplified chunk. This happens with phrases like "piece of cake" [pi:səkei:k].

Assimilation. Assimilation is defined as adjusting the ends of words in expectation of the sound that follows. Although assimilation can be a factor in decoding failures, it is very systematic and usually anticipatory in English and thus can be reduced to a few basic rules. The type of assimilation most likely to cause problems for L2 listeners is limited to five word-final consonants ([n, t, d, s, z]). These consonants form many of the inflectional endings in English. Confusion caused by assimilation occurs when it produces a form that is identical to another existing word pair—for example, *light grey* → *like grey* or *white board* → *wipe board*.

Elision. Elision is much more frequent than is sometimes assumed but follows a less consistent pattern than assimilation. It most commonly affects instances of /t/ and /d/ at the ends of words (e.g., *didn't* → [dInt]). Other sounds that are sometimes elided include /v, ð, l, r, n, k/ (e.g., *five p.m.* → [*faipi?em*]).

Resyllabification and cliticization. Resyllabification occurs when a syllable-final consonant attaches itself to the following syllable (e.g., *went in* → when tin, *made out*

→ may doubt). Cliticization, on the other hand, refers to attaching two words for no reason other than a rhythmic one as natural English speech tends toward a regular stressed–unstressed pattern and English speakers prefer the basic SW (strong–weak) foot (e.g., *get excited* instead of ˈget ɪkˈsaɪtɪd → ˈgetɪk ˈsaɪtɪd).

Instructors need to teach L2 learners about these perceptual difficulties and practice them intensively because they prevent learners from recognizing familiar words when they occur in connected speech. Field (2003) confirms, "the value of a signal-based approach of the kind described is that it draws our attention to problems of both perception and comprehension that would otherwise pass unnoticed" (p. 332).

Research Objectives and Questions

For this classroom-based study, I assumed that training in perception and explicit teaching of the different sources of lexical segmentation difficulty (e.g., reduction, assimilation) are potentially helpful to EFL learners. More specifically, I investigated the feasibility of treatment in lexical segmentation with Arab EFL learners. As the sole instructor, I gave the participants partial dictation in which they listened to authentic recordings and had to provide the missing words that caused segmentation problems. The purpose of this study is to answer the following research questions:

1. Do Arab EFL learners have weak lexical segmentation abilities at different levels of listening proficiency (i.e., low, mid, or high)?
2. Can Arab EFL learners' lexical segmentation and word recognition skills be enhanced through partial dictation?
3. Would different speech rates affect Arab EFL learners' lexical segmentation?
4. Do Arab EFL learners perceive partial dictation as an effective activity in enhancing lexical segmentation, and were they satisfied with the procedures and contents used?

Significance of the Study

This study is important in three aspects. First, this study contributes to the current literature on bottom-up approaches to L2 teaching in general and to L2 listening teaching in particular. Second, Vandergrift (2011) indicates that empirical support for the different suggested training exercises in perception, including engaging students in dictation (Goh, 2002), is scarce. Therefore, this study is particularly important because it seeks to provide evidence for the effectiveness of partial dictation on lexical segmentation. Third, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, empirical research studies that have investigated the effectiveness of partial dictation are scant; this study is the first empirical study to examine the effectiveness of partial dictation in the L1–Arabic EFL context.

Methodology

Participants

The participants were 37 EFL university students from two intact listening/speaking classes. All participants were L1 Arabic-speaking males, aged 18–21 years, who had received formal English instruction for about seven years. The two classes were randomly assigned to either the control (n = 17) or experimental group (n = 20). To assure the homogeneity of the two classes in terms of their L2 listening proficiency, students completed a free online listening proficiency test. As shown in Table 1, the Mann-Whitney U test analysis (U = 126.00, p > .05, r = –.22) indicated no significant difference prior to treatment in listening comprehension ability between the control group and experimental group (the mean ranks were 21.59 and 16.80, respectively). Within the two classes, students' listening proficiency varied from elementary (A2), intermediate (B1), upper intermediate (B2), advanced (C1), and proficient (C2) in the Common European Framework. I reclassified participants into the following three proficiency levels: low proficiency (A2), mid proficiency (B1, B2), and high proficiency (C1, C2). The median scores on the listening test were 5.0 for the control group and 4.0 for the experimental group.

Table 1 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for the Listening Proficiency Test

Group	Listening Proficiency Levels						*N*	*Median**	*Mean rank*	Mann-Whitney U Test*
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2				
Control	0	0	3	5	7	2	17	5.0	21.59	z = –1.38
Experimental	0	4	4	6	2	4	20	4.0	16.80	p = .17

***** Medians, rather than means, were calculated, and a nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was performed rather than a parametric t-test because the proficiency level data were ordinal (not scale).

Research design

For this study, I adopted a quasi-experimental pretest-treatment–posttest design. Approximately five weeks separated the administration of the pre- and post-tests to reduce any effects of memory or practice on the experimental group's outcomes. It is worth mentioning that the primary researcher of this study was the sole teacher of the two groups, which helped to ensure that each group received the same teaching of the syllabus listening materials and only the experimental group received lexical segmentation treatment.

The listening proficiency test

To classify students' listening proficiency and to assign classes to one of the study's groups, participants took a listening proficiency test. The test is free to take and available online at https://www.examenglish.com/. This test contains 15 questions that should be completed within 20 minutes. Questions got easier or harder according to how well the test taker did. Test takers' listening proficiency was assessed according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) that includes six levels. These levels are A1 (beginner), A2 (elementary), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper intermediate), C1 (advanced), and C2 (proficient), which are equal to "novice" to "superior" at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines or 2–9 at the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

Listening Materials

The materials used as dependent measurements were extracts from authentic recordings available online. I carefully chose recordings with many instances of shortened forms or clusters of weak syllables or instances of lack of pauses between words. There were three tests, pretest, posttest 1, and posttest 2, but the task was the same for the pretest and posttest 1. The task in each test included 20 blanks for single words (e.g., *of*, *as*, *has*, and *but*) or word chunks (e.g., *ended up*, *not about*). I targeted words and word chunks that were likely to cause lexical segmentation problems because they had one or more of the features of spoken English (e.g., reduction, assimilation, resyllabification; Field, 2008b). For example, the word *of* (#8) in pretest/posttest 1 became [ə], an example of reduction. As emphasized by Yeldham

(2017), I ensured the missing words were well known to students to "avoid having [them] waste time trying to decipher these words at the expense of [typing] the words they do know as the object is to see whether they can identify words in running speech, not to test their vocabulary knowledge" (p. 16).

As the instructor, I directed students to write the missing targeted words/word chunks into the correct blanks. However, to prevent students from using their grammatical knowledge to simply guess what was missing—which would eliminate the need for listening—clusters of three consecutive words including the target word/word chunk were missing. I assumed that correct answers to the three consecutive blanks would be impossible to guess without listening to the stimulus.

Pretest/posttest 1. For the pretest and posttest 1, I used a 2.35-minute extract (419 words) from an authentic recording (see Appendix A). The original recording,

Table 2 Standard Forms, Modified Forms, and Kinds of Modification/Sources of Segmentation Difficulties for Missing Words in Pretest/Posttest 1

#	Standard Form	Modified Form	Kind(s) of Modification/ Source of Segmentation Difficulty	#	Standard Form	Modified Form	Kind(s) of Modification/ Source of Segmentation Difficulty
1	of	[əv]	Reduction (weak form)	11	printing	[ˈprɪnɪŋ]	Elision of /t/
2	we have →	we've	Reduction (contraction)	12	can't	[kæn]	Elision of /t/
3	was	[wəz]	Reduction (weak form)	13	can	[kən]	Reduction (weak form)
4	ended up→	ende dup	Resyllabification	14	at	[ət]	Reduction (weak form)
5	to	[tə]	Reduction (weak form)	15	has	[əz]	Reduction (weak form)
6	but	[bət]	Reduction (weak form)	16	has	[həz]	Reduction (weak form)
7	went by	[wɜmˈbaɪ]	Elision of *t* + assimilation: /n/→[m] before [b]	17	that	[ðət]	Reduction (weak form)
8	of	[ə]	Reduction (weak form)	18	while broadband	[waɪlbrɑnd]	lack of between-word pause
9	and	[ən]	Reduction (weak form)	19	won't provide	[wənmprəˈvaɪd]	Elision of *t* + assimilation: /n/→[m] before [p]
10	was	[wəz]	Reduction (weak form)	20	as	[əz]	Reduction (weak form)

approximately 22 minutes long, was a speech given by an American official at the Brookings Institute in Washington, DC. The speech was about the open Internet and improving broadband and mobile communications, delivered on 21 September 2009. The speaker's speed was measured at about 170 words per minute, which, according to Tauroza and Allison's (1990) guidelines, is fast. Table 2 includes the missing words in both standard and modified form (i.e., how they were uttered in the particular recording), as well as the kinds of modification/source of segmentation difficulty.

Posttest 2. An additional recording (posttest 2) was used to avoid topic bias, to get more reliable results, and to see whether lexical segmentation ability gained from the familiar podcast could be transferred to the unfamiliar podcast. A 2.22-minute extract (357 words) from an authentic recording was used for posttest 2 (see Appendix B). The original recording, approximately five minutes long, was a speech given by North Carolina Governor. The speech, delivered on 29 March 2016, was about signing North Carolina's Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act. The speaker's speed was approximately 150 words per minute, which, according to Tauroza and Allison's (1990) guidelines, is average. Table 3 shows the standard and modified forms of words (i.e., how they were uttered in the recording), as well as the kinds of modification/sources of segmentation difficulty for each missing word.

Table 3 Standard Forms, Modified Forms, and Kinds of Modification/Sources of Segmentation Difficulties for Missing Words in Posttest 2

#	Standard Form	Modified Form	Kind(s) of Modification/ Source of Segmentation Difficulty	#	Standard Form	Modified Form	Kind(s) of Modification/ Source of Segmentation Difficulty
1	can't	[kæn]	Elision of /t/	11	presented	[prɪzɜnd]	Elision of /t/
2	that	[ðət]	Reduction (weak form)	12	of	[ə]	Reduction (weak form)
3	and	[æn]	Elision of /d/	13	did not →	didn't	Reduction (contraction)
4	that	[ðət]	Reduction (weak form)	14	this year	[ðɪʃjiər]	Assimilation: /s/→[ʃ] before [j]
5	second	[sɜkən]	Elision of /d/	15	not about	[nɑəbaʊ]	Ellision of /t/
6	to	[tə]	Reduction (weak form)	16	will	[wəl]	Reduction (weak form)

7	as	[əz]	Reduction (weak form)	17	and	[æn]	Ellision of /d/
8	do not →	don't	Reduction (contraction)	18	we are →	we're	Reduction (contraction)
9	were	[wə]	Reduction (weak form)	19	our	[ɑr]	Reduction (weak form)
10	at	[ət]	Reduction (weak form)	20	values	[vajuz]	Elision of /l/

Administration

With regard to administering the pre- and post-tests, I used Google Forms because it suited the purposes of this study. First, Google Forms allowed me to create online fill-in-the-blank quizzes by transferring the scripts of the recordings from their original websites. Second, it provided an automatic grading feature, where answer keys could be filled out and points assigned for each answer. Third, although the automatic grading feature was activated, manual grading was still possible, allowing me to check answers that were possibly correct but had incorrect spelling or punctuation. Fourth, Google Forms eliminated the possibility of unanswered questions by making all questions required—meaning students could not submit the test without answering all questions. Finally, it calculated each student's total points and provided automatic summaries of all quiz responses, including graphs of correct answers and the average, median, and range of scores.

The procedure was as follows: at the data collection session, a web link to the test was sent to students and they opened the link on their phones. Students then had about five minutes to read the script (the test) and see the locations of missing words. Adhering to the tradition of playing a text at least twice (Field, 2008b), the first time I played the text in its entirety to familiarize the learners with its content (Buck, 2001; Yeldham, 2017), and I advised students not to answer at this stage. One minute after the first listening was finished, the text was played once more, segment by segment, for the learners to type in the missing sections, allowing enough time at each stoppage for the learners to finish typing in the words. Students had five additional minutes after the end of the second listening to check their answers before they had to submit their tests. Students received confirmation messages that their answers were saved.

The flexibility of partial dictation allowed this system to serve as an assessment tool (pretest and posttests) and as a teaching method (treatment).

Treatment

Following the pretest, only the experimental group received lexical segmentation treatment. Treatment in perception and lexical segmentation can take many forms, as Vandergrift (2011) asserted. However, partial dictation, integrated with listening to authentic recordings, was adopted in this study because it was hypothesized to potentially help learners with lexical segmentation; authentic recordings allow the teacher to present words susceptible to segmentation problems in context. Syntactic context is often necessary, especially for reduced forms, which need context to distinguish them from each other (e.g., Field, 2008b; Hulstijn, 2003). /ə/, for example, could be a short form of a, are, of, or her. Also, partial dictation can be an effective teaching method if it is accompanied by raising awareness and explanations, as is the case in this study (Field, 2003; Kuo, 2010; Rahimi, 2008). The listening/speaking class met for three sessions a week for 1.40 hrs. each. Standard instruction comprised the integrative listening model that adopts pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening, and preparing for listening, monitoring, and evaluation. In each class, teachers had approximately 20 minutes to give students exercises from outside the designated textbook. Thus, over five weeks, each session included a 20-minute dictation (3 x 5 = 15 treatment sessions) in addition to standard instruction. In contrast, the control class received other exercises such as word stress practice, pronunciation, intonation, and so forth.

The partial dictation tasks for the experimental group were similar in length, type, and speech rate to those of the pre- and post-tests. Exercises included extracts from authentic texts in different genres available online including politics, science, sports, and academic lectures. I carefully chose texts that had many instances of LS problems, for example, shortened forms, clusters of weak syllables, assimilation, and elision. The procedure for treatment exercises was also the same as the pre- and post-tests, except that a feature in Google Forms was activated that allowed students to see correct and incorrect responses as well as answer keys for wrong answers after submitting their test. Therefore, students were able to see their scores and how many errors they had. Unlike in the test procedure, the teacher played the recording for a third time so students could listen while the word or word chunks were presented and notice the utterances. As a crucial part of treatment suggested by Field (2003), the teacher pointed out problems to raise students' awareness, provided explanations and details of the phenomena (e.g., assimilation, elision) that occurred in the recording, and discussed them with students. The treatment ceased after week 5 and then posttesting of subjects in both groups started immediately.

Validity of Measures

The validity of the dictation measures (i.e., the pretest and posttest 2) was checked by correlating students' scores on these tests to their scores (levels) on the listening proficiency test. For example, students with the highest listening proficiency levels (e.g., C1 or C2) should have had the highest scores in the two dictation measures and vice versa. To investigate if there was a statistically significant association between students' scores on the pretest and posttest 2 and their listening proficiency levels, I computed the correlation. The nonparametric Spearman rho statistic showed that the two measures significantly correlated with the listening proficiency test. The correlations were significant for the pretest, r (35) = .73, $p < .000$, and for posttest 2, r (35) = .69, $p < .000$. The direction of the correlation was positive, which means that a student who had a high listening proficiency level tended to have a high score on the tests and vice versa. The effect size was larger than typical for the pretest, whereas it was typical to larger than typical for posttest 2.

Reliability of Measures

Reliability of the pretest and posttest 1. I assessed test–retest reliability of the two measures by calculating the correlation coefficient. Test–retest reliability means consistency of responses on the same assessment administered to the same group of respondents on two different occasions (Bardhoshi & Erford, 2017). Because the two variables were approximately normally distributed and the assumption of linearity was not markedly violated, I computed the parametric Pearson correlation. The pretest and posttest 1 were significantly correlated, r (37) = .81, $p < .000$. The strong correlation was positive, which means that students who had relatively high scores on the pretest were very likely to have high scores on posttest 1 and vice versa. The effect size of .81 is larger than typical.

Reliability of posttest 2. To assess the reliability of posttest 2, I estimated alternate forms reliability by calculating the correlation coefficient between posttest 2 and the pretest. Alternate forms reliability refers to the consistency of examinees' responses on two versions of a given assessment, with a different but equivalent version used in each administration period (Bardhoshi & Erford, 2017). The two variables were approximately normally distributed and the assumption of linearity was not markedly violated, so I computed the Pearson correlation. Posttest 2 and the pretest were significantly correlated, r (37) = .72, p < .000. The strong correlation was positive, which means that students who had relatively high scores on posttest 2 were very likely to have high scores on the pretest and vice versa. The effect size of .72 is larger than typical.

Marking and Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier, I implemented automatic grading and filled out answer keys (the correct answers plus all possible correct answers but with mistakes in spelling or punctuation, e.g., *whil* for *while, did'nt* for *didn't*, etc.). Thus, spelling and punctuation mistakes did not affect test scores. I analyzed incorrect responses (e.g., *in* for *and*, *is* for *his*/*as*). Also, I manually graded all tests to check for possible correct answers. Whereas other studies treated nonresponses as errors, this situation was not possible in this study because, as discussed earlier, students could not submit their tests if they left one or more questions unanswered.

Data were analyzed on SPSS 23 software. To determine which statistical technique should be used, the collected data were tested for normality of the dependent variables with the Shapiro-Wilk normality test (p > .05). According to the test results, the scores obtained from the three tests' scales presented a normal distribution, and I decided to use independent sample t-tests and paired sample t-tests, which are parametric hypothesis tests.

Questionnaire and Group-Based Discussion

I created an 18-item Likert-scale survey (see Appendix C). The first nine items gathered the experimental participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of partial dictation activities and whether they served the proposed role in improving lexical segmentation ability. The other nine items explored participants' satisfaction with the procedures and content. The scale for the items ranged from 1–5 (i.e., Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5). A focus group–based discussion was conducted to discuss the questionnaire items in detail and invite participants to contribute more information and opinions. For about 1.5 hours, five students participated in the semi-structured discussion facilitated by the researcher. I first posed open-ended questions such as *What was interesting and helpful about partial dictation? How did partial dictation sessions influence their segmentation?* Then additional questions centered mainly on the items asked on the questionnaire.

Results and Findings

The proficiency levels

To answer the first research question (Do Arab EFL learners of three different listening proficiency levels have weak lexical segmentation abilities?), I computed a one-way ANOVA to identify significant differences between the three proficiency levels on the pretest, posttest 1, and posttest 2. An ANOVA was necessary to compare the three groups in a single analysis. Table 4 summarizes the results of these three measures, including descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, maximum and minimum scores), while Table 5 summarizes the inferential statistics (degrees of freedom [*df*], sum of squares [*SS*], mean square [*MS*], *F* value, and probability level [*p*]).

The ANOVA in Table 5 shows significant differences among the three proficiency levels on the pretest, F (2, 34) = 15.31, p = .000, on posttest 1, F (2, 34) = 8.24, p = .001, and on posttest 2, F (2, 34) = 9.50, p = .001. The mean score in the pretest is 2.75 for the low-proficiency students, 6.28 for the mid-proficiency students, and 10.40 for the high-proficiency students. Post hoc Tukey HSD indicates statistically significant mean differences on the pretest between each pair of proficiency levels (p < .05). On posttest 1, the mean difference was statistically significant only between the high- and low-proficiency students (p < .05). On posttest 2, the mean differences were statistically significant between the high- and low-proficiency students (p < .05) and between the high- and mid-proficiency students (p < .05).

Table 4 Means, Standard Deviations, Maximum and Minimum Scores Comparing the Three Proficiency Levels

Proficiency Levels	Pretest					Posttest 1				Posttest 2			
	N	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
Low-Proficiency	4	2.75	2.06	1.00	5.00	3.75	1.26	2.00	5.00	9.00	2.94	5.00	12.00
Mid-Proficiency	18	6.28	2.87	2.00	13.00	7.39	3.47	2.00	15.00	11.33	3.55	5.00	17.00
High-Proficiency	15	10.40	2.90	5.00	17.00	11.13	4.12	2.00	17.00	14.88	1.73	12.00	18.00

Table 5 One-Way ANOVA Summary Table Comparing the Three Proficiency Levels by Pretest, Posttest 1, and Posttest 2

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
Pretest					
Between groups	2	243.12	121.56	15.31	.000
Within groups	34	269.96	7.94		
Total	36	513.08			
Posttest 1					
Between groups	2	216.48	108.24	8.24	.001
Within groups	34	446.76	13.14		
Total	36	663.24			
Posttest 2					
Between groups	2	157.51	78.76	9.50	.001
Within groups	34	281.73	8.29		
Total	36	439.24			

Treatment v.s. nontreatment

To provide answers to the second research question (Can Arab EFL learners' lexical segmentation and word recognition skills be enhanced through partial dictation?), independent sample *t*-tests were computed to identify significant differences between the control and experimental groups on the pretest, posttest 1, and posttest 2. The independent sample *t*-test can be used to investigate the difference between two independent groups on approximately normal dependent variables. Table 6 summarizes the results of these three measures including descriptive statistics (*M* and *SD*) as well as inferential statistics (the *t*-test value *t*, degrees of freedom *df*, probability level *p*, and effect size *d*).

Pretest. The *t*-test showed no significant difference between the two groups on the pretest and that they performed similarly, *t* (35) = –1.137, *p* = .26, *d* = .11. The average score for the control group (*M* = 7.35) is not significantly different from the experimental group (*M* = 7.75).

Posttest 1. As mentioned earlier, the posttest 1 was the same as the pretest. The *t*-test shows a significant difference between the two groups on posttest 1, *t* (35) = –2.08, *p* = .04, *d* =.70. Inspection of the two group means indicates that the average score for control students (*M* = 7.65) is significantly lower than the score for the experimental students (*M* = 10.50). The difference between the means is 2.85 on a 20-point test. The effect size *d* is approximately .7, which is typical to larger than typical according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines.

Posttest 2. Posttest 2 included 20 missing words. The *t*-test shows no significant difference between the two groups on posttest 2, *t* (35) = .025, *p* = .98, *d* = .00. Inspection of the two groups' means indicates that the average score for control students (*M* = 12.53) is not significantly different from the score for the experimental students (*M* = 12.50).

Table 6 Comparison of the Control Group and Experimental Group by the Pretest, Posttest 1, and Posttest 2

Variable		*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*	*d*
Pretest				–1.137	35	.26	.11
	Control	7.35	3.51				
	Experimental	7.75	4.06				
Posttest 1				–2.08	35	.04	.7
	Control	7.65	4.00				
	Experimental	10.50	4.27				
Posttest 2				.025	35	.98	.00
	Control	12.53	3.48				
	Experimental	12.50	3.59				

Within groups. To provide more insight into the second research question, two paired sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare each group's posttest 1 to their pretest to examine any changes over time. The paired sample *t*-test can be used if the same assessment is used as the pretest (before the intervention) and as the posttest (after the intervention). Table 7 summarizes the results of these comparisons, including descriptive as well as inferential statistics.

The control group. The paired sample *t*-test shows that the control group's posttest 1 was not significantly different when compared to their pretest, *t* (16) = –

.373, *p* = .71, *d* = .00. The mean score on posttest 1 (*M* = 7.35) was not significantly different from the pretest (*M* = 7.65).

The experimental group. The paired sample *t*-test shows that the experimental group's posttest 1 was significantly different when compared to their pretest scores, *t* (19) = – 8.748, *p* = .000, *d* = .66. The mean score of posttest 1 (*M* = 10.50) was larger than that of the pretest (*M* = 7.75). The difference is typical to larger than typical according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines.

Table 7 Paired Sample t-Test for the Control Group and Experimental Group's Scores on the Pretest and Posttest 1

Group	Source	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*	*d*
Control				–.373	16	.71	.00
	Pretest	7.35	3.52				
	Posttest 1	7.65	4.00				
Experimental				–8.748	19	.000	.66
	Pretest	7.75	4.06				
	Posttest 1	10.50	4.27				

The speech rate. To answer the third research question (Would different speech rates make a difference in Arab EFL learners' lexical segmentation?), two further paired sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the performance of each group's posttest 1 to their posttest 2. As indicated earlier, the speech rate of the pretest/posttest 1 was fast, whereas it was average for posttest 2. Table 8 summarizes the results of these comparisons, giving some descriptive and inferential statistics.

The control group. The paired sample *t*-test shows that the control group's posttest 1 was significantly different when compared to their posttest 2, *t* (16) = – 6.669, *p* = .000, *d* = .1.30. The mean score of posttest 1 (*M* = 7.65) was smaller than that of posttest 2 (*M* = 12.53). The effect size is very large.

The experimental group. The paired sample *t*-test shows that the experimental group's posttest 1 was also significantly different when compared to their posttest 2, *t* (19) = – 3.651, *p* = .002, *d* = .50. The mean score of posttest 1 (*M* = 10.50) was smaller than that of posttest 2 (*M* = 12.50). The effect size is medium.

Table 8 Paired Sample t-Test for the Control Group and Experimental Group's Scores on Posttest 1 and Posttest 2

Group	Source	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*	*d*
Control				–6.669	16	.000	1.30
	Posttest 1	7.65	4.00				
	Posttest 2	12.53	3.48				
Experimental				–3.651	19	.002	.50
	Posttest 1	10.50	4.27				
	Posttest 2	12.50	3.59				

Questionnaire: Participants' perceptions

To answer the third research question and explore participants' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the partial dictation treatment they received, the first subset of 9 items from the questionnaire was considered for analysis. To assess the reliability of internal consistency of questionnaire items, Dörnyei (2003) suggested a Cronbach α value of no less than 0.60 is necessary to have confidence that the items are measuring what they are intended to measure. Based on this suggestion, the internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α = 0.84) was considered suitable for this subset of items. The second subset of 9 items (i.e., 10–18) was then analyzed to answer the fourth research question and measure participants' satisfaction. The internal consistency reliability was considered suitable for the subset of nine items, as Cronbach's α was 0.64. Descriptive statistics summarizing the survey items were computed on individual items and also on scale dimensions. These statistics included the following: frequencies, response percentages, means, and standard deviations. On the Likert scale for this analysis, perceptions that fall between 1.00 and 2.60 are considered as disagreement, 2.61 and 3.40 as neutral, and 3.41 and 5.00 as agreement.

Effectiveness of the partial dictation

The questionnaire data indicate strong agreement among students on the effectiveness of the partial dictation, as the mean across all 9 items is 4.08 (SD = .58), given that an answer of 4 on every item indicates agreement. Looking at the data in more detail in Table 9, approximately 75% percent of students agreed that partial dictation activities effectively enhanced their segmentation abilities. In addition, the most frequent answer across all scale items was strongly agree followed by agree, amounting to 72 (36%) and 63 (31.5%) of the 180 responses, respectively. The strongest agreement occurred for questionnaire item 1, in which 100% of students confirmed that they liked the partial dictation activity. The second strongest agreement occurred for item 3, in which 95% of students confirmed that partial dictation was a helpful activity for developing listening skills in English. In contrast, items 4 and 8 yielded the least agreement, with the same mean of 3.65. These two items also included the strongest disagreement: 15% of students disagreed that partial dictation was a challenging activity, and 15% also disagreed that it helped them to better recognize assimilated forms in connected speech.

Table 9 Response Frequencies and Descriptive Statistics for the Effectiveness of Partial Dictation

Items	Strongly Disagree *n* (%)	Disagree *n* (%)	Neutral *n* (%)	Agree *n* (%)	Strongly Agree *n* (%)	*M*	*SD*
Item 1	0	0	0	5 (25)	15 (75)	4.65	0.49
Item 2	0	0	5 (25)	10 (50)	5 (25)	3.90	0.72
Item 3	0	1 (5)	0	7 (35)	12 (60)	4.40	0.82
Item 4	0	3 (15)	6 (30)	5 (25)	6 (30)	3.65	1.04
Item 5	0	2 (10)	3 (15)	6 (30)	9 (45)	4.00	1.03
Item 6	0	1 (5)	3 (15)	9 (45)	7 (35)	4.05	0.89
Item 7	0	1 (5)	3 (15)	10 (50)	6 (30)	4.05	0.83
Item 8	0	3 (15)	6 (30)	4 (20)	7 (35)	3.65	1.09
Item 9	0	1 (5)	7 (35)	7 (35)	5 (25)	3.75	0.91
Total	0	12 (6.6)	33 (18.3)	63 (35)	72 (40)	4.08	0.58

Procedures & contents of the partial dictation

The mean across all 9 items is 3.70 (SD = .55), indicating satisfaction among students regarding the procedures and contents of the partial dictation. Looking at Table 10 in more detail, students agreed on five items (10, 11, 12, 16, 18) and were neutral on four items (13, 14, 15, 17). The most frequent answer across all scale items was agree followed by strongly agree, amounting to 58 (32.32%) and 49 (27.2%) of the 180 responses, respectively. Thus, approximately 60% of students were satisfied with procedures and content. The strongest agreement occurred for questionnaire item 16, in which 75% of students confirmed that the length of recordings was appropriate. The second strongest agreement occurred for item 11, in which 80% of students confirmed that the amount of weekly listening dictation sessions (two to three sessions) was adequate. In contrast, the strongest neutral responses occurred for items 13 and 15 with means of 3.20 and 3.10, respectively. These two items also reflected the strongest disagreement: 35% of students disagreed that the recordings they listened to in the partial dictation activities were interesting, and 30% disagreed that the difficulty level of recordings was appropriate.

Table 10 Response Frequencies and Descriptive Statistics for the Procedures & Contents of the Partial Dictation

Items	Strongly Disagree *n* (%)	Disagree *n* (%)	Neutral *n* (%)	Agree *n* (%)	Strongly Agree *n* (%)	*M*	*SD*
Item 10	0	1 (5)	4 (20)	9 (45)	6 (30)	4.00	0.86
Item 11	0	2 (10)	2 (10)	9 (45)	7 (35)	4.05	0.94
Item 12	1 (5)	1 (5)	3 (15)	6 (30)	9 (45)	4.05	1.146
Item 13	1 (5)	6 (30)	5 (25)	4 (20)	4 (20)	3.20	1.24
Item 14	1 (5)	3 (15)	9 (45)	4 (20)	3 (15)	3.25	1.07
Item 15	2 (10)	4 (20)	4 (20)	10 (50)	0	3.10	1.07
Item 16	0	1 (5)	4 (20)	5 (25)	10 (50)	4.20	0.95
Item 17	2 (10)	3 (15)	7 (35)	3 (15)	5 (25)	3.30	1.30
Item 18	1 (5)	1 (5)	5 (25)	8 (40)	5 (25)	3.75	1.07
Total	8 (4.4)	22 (12.2)	43 (23.8)	58 (32.2)	49 (27.2)	3.70	0.55

Discussion

To answer the first research question, participants were reclassified as low-, mid-, and high-proficiency students. The results of the three tests suggested that Arab EFL learners in general, and low-proficiency ones in particular, do have weak segmentation abilities. Mid-proficiency students' lexical segmentation ability did not differ much from the low-proficiency students in this respect. Although the high-proficiency students significantly outperformed the other two levels on the pretest and posttest 2, some of them appeared to have some word recognition problems according to, for example, their performance on posttest 1 in which some recognized as few as two out of 20 missing words.

The posttests were used to answer the second research question. The results suggested it is possible to improve lexical segmentation and word recognition skills with partial dictation, since only the experimental students showed significant segmentation improvement on posttest 1 compared to their pretest. Additionally, the *t*-test and paired sample *t*-test showed a significant difference between the two groups on posttest 1. As such, this study provides evidence that partial dictation is an effective teaching method for enhancing L2 segmentation ability. Our results thus lend general support to previous findings (Al-jasser, 2008; McQueen, 1998; Weber &

Cutler, 2006) that a bottom-up approach is effective in improving L2 segmentation. Our results also lend particular support to previous findings from Kiany and Shiramiry (2002), Rahimi (2008), and Kuo (2010) that dictation affects development of EFL learners' listening comprehension. Although our study did not assess comprehension, Field (2008b) believed that better segmentation leads to better comprehension and emphasized the following: "efficiency in the fundamental process of matching strings of phonemes to words and phrases allows the listener greater opportunity to focus on wider issues of meaning" (p. 140). Our findings also support Field's (2003) proposal to enhance L2 listeners' segmentation skills with dictation.

Regarding posttest 2 and research question 3, two observations need to be carefully considered. First, both groups showed a significantly better performance on posttest 2 compared to posttest 1—the large difference for the control group and medium difference for the experimental group are basically relative to the groups' performances on posttest 1, which were already better for the experimental group. Second, there was no difference in performance between the two groups on posttest 2. These observations can be explained by the fact that posttest 2 was much easier than posttest 1 because the posttest 2 speaker was slower than the posttest 1 speaker. As pointed out earlier, the pretest/posttest 1 speaker's speech rate was fast whereas the posttest 2 speaker's speech rate was average. Thus, rate of speech appears to contribute to this relatively improved performance on posttest 2 by both groups. At the same time, however, we maintain that even average-speed connected real-life speeches represent a problem for low-proficiency learners because of the lack of between-word pauses and other phenomena discussed in the literature review. There is no doubt, however, that faster speech rate makes the problem even worse, as observed in posttest 1. In summary, posttest 1 was more critical in showing a difference between the groups.

With regard to the fourth research question, our results are in line with Kuo's (2010) questionnaire results. Our students liked the partial dictation activity and they thought it was an interesting, helpful, and challenging activity that helped them develop lexical segmentation ability. They felt they are more able to recognize word boundaries in fast, connected speech as they now better recognize reduced, assimilated, and elided forms. In the focus group–based discussion, students confirmed that the dictation activity was more interesting than the listening exercises in their textbook. They indicated that they learned from the dictation because the recordings were slightly above their proficiency levels—more so than the textbook, whose content was simple.

Students agreed that the frequency of two to three dictation sessions a week was adequate, the use of one recording in each session was adequate, and the length of the recordings was appropriate. The interviewed students confirmed these points, stating that they could have handled only one 2–3 minute recording in each dictation session. While students agreed that the recordings themselves were helpful for improving listening skills, they were neutral about the recordings being interesting or challenging and also neutral about their content being appropriate. In the discussion, students clearly stated that the recordings were not very interesting because most of them had political content, and they preferred more enjoyable content such as sports or comedy. Students were neutral about the difficulty level of recordings being appropriate, explaining that some of the recordings were slow and easy.

Conclusion and Implications

This study suggests partial dictation is effective, both in enhancing Arab EFL learners' segmentation ability and in assessing such ability. As partial dictation activities drew students' attention to the causes of their segmentation failures, the activities also prepared them to, for example, recognize reduced forms, assimilated forms, and elided forms in connected speech. While students perceived partial dictation as an effective activity and were generally satisfied with the procedures, they preferred different content. However, this study is not without limitations. Some researchers have argued that segmentation is more likely to be an issue for poor listeners (e.g., Hulstijn, 2003; Vandergrift, 2011), whereas the current study had a larger number of high-proficiency listeners (n = 9) in the control group than in the experimental group (n = 6); this might have affected the study's outcomes regarding the lack of significant difference on posttest 2. We also believe that the short training period (five weeks) and the limited number of training sessions might have affected the study outcomes; had there been fewer high-proficient listeners in the control group and if the treatment had been longer, the experimental group likely would have significantly outperformed their peers. Subsequent studies should include only low-proficient listeners and conduct longer treatment on larger groups for more accurate results. Future research using partial dictation should assess comprehension in addition to segmentation to provide evidence for the belief that better segmentation also leads to better comprehension. Finally, more comparative research is needed to investigate learners' performance on the different types of segmentation problems.

Acknowledgment

The author gratefully acknowledges Qassim University represented by the Deanship of Scientific Research for the material support for this research under the number 3454 during the academic year 1439AH/2018AD.

References

Al–jasser, F. (2008). The effect of teaching English phonotactics on the lexical segmentation of English as a foreign language. *System*, *36*(1), 94–106.

Bardhoshi, G., & Erford, B. T. (2017). Processes and procedures for estimating score reliability and precision. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, *50*(4), 256–263.

Broersma, M., & Cutler, A. (2008). Phantom word activation in L2. *System*, *36*(1), 22–34.

Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Chang, A. C. (2018). Speech rate in second language listening. *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching.* Edison, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Cutler, A. (2001). Listening to a second language through the ears of a first. *Interpreting*, *5*, 1–23.

Dehaene, S., Dupoux, E., Mehler, J., Cohen, L., Paulesu, E., Perani, D., van de-Moortele, P.-F., Lehericy, S., & Le Bihan, D. (1997). Anatomical variability in the cortical representation of first and second language. *Neuroreport*, *17,* 3809–3815.

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Field, J. (2001). Finding one's way in the fog: Listening strategies and second-language learners. *Modern English Teacher, 9*(1), 29–34.

Field, J. (2003). Promoting perception: Lexical segmentation in L2 listening. *ELT Journal*, *57*(5), 325–334.

Field J. (2004). An insight into listeners' problems: Too much bottom-up or too much top-down? *System*, *32*, 363–377.

Field, J. (2008a). Guest editor's introduction emergent and divergent: A view of second language listening research. *System*, *36*(1), 2–9.

Field, J. (2008b). *Listening in the language classroom*. Cambridge University Press.

Goh, C. (2000). A cognitive perspective on language learners' listening comprehension. *System*, *28*, 55–75.

Goh, C. (2002). *Teaching listening in the language classroom*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.

Graham, S. (2006). Listening comprehension: The learners' perspective. *System*, *34*(2), 165–182.

Harding, L., Alderson, J. C., & Brunfaut, T. (2015). Diagnostic assessment of reading and listening in a second or foreign language: Elaborating on diagnostic principles. *Language Testing*, *32*(3), 317–336.

Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hulstijn, J. H. (2003). Connectionist models of language processing and the training of listening skills with the aid of multimedia software. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *16*(5), 413–425.

Kiany, G. R., & Shiramiry, E. (2002). The effect of frequent dictation on the listening comprehension ability of elementary EFL learners. *TESL Canada Journal*, *20*(1), 57–63.

Kuo, Y. (2010). Using partial dictation of an English teaching radio program to enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension. *Asian EFL Journal*, *47*(October), 1–26.

Liu, N. F. (2003). *Processing problems in L2 listening comprehension of university students in Hong Kong*. PhD. dissertation, Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Long, D. R. (1989). Second language listening comprehension: A schema-theoretic perspective. *Modern Language Journal*, *73*, 32–40.

Long, D. R. (1990). What you don't know can't help you. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 12*, 65–80.

Lynch, T. (2006). Academic listening: Marrying top and bottom. In A. Martínez-Flor & E. Usó-Juan (Eds.), *Current trends in the development and teaching of the four language skills* (pp. 91–110). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Markham, P., & Latham, M. (1987). The influence of religion specific background knowledge on the listening comprehension of adult second language students. *Language Learning*, *37*(2), 157–170.

McQueen, J. (1998). Segmentation of continuous speech using phonotactics. *Journal of Memory and Language, 39*, 21–46.

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language* *acquisition*. Cambridge University Press.

Pallier, C., Colome, A., & Sebastian, N. (2001). The influence of native language phonology on lexical access. *Psychological Science, 12*, 445–449.

Rahimi, M. (2008). Using dictation to improve language proficiency. *The Asian EFL Journal*, *10*, 33–47.

Renandya, W. A., & Farrell, T. S. C. (2011). "Teacher, the tape is too fast!" Extensive listening in ELT. *ELT Journal*, *65*(1), 52–59.

Schmidt-Rinehart, B. C. (1994). The effects of topic familiarity on second language listening comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*(2), 179–189.

Tabossi, P., Burani, C., & Scott, D. (1995). Word identification in fluent speech. *Journal of Memory and Language, 34*(4), 440–467.

Tauroza, S., & Allison, D. (1990). Speech rates in British English. *Applied Linguistics*, *11*(1), 90–105.

Vandergrift, L. (2003). Orchestrating strategy use: Toward a model of the skilled second language listener. *Language Learning*, *53*(3), 463–496.

Vandergrift, L. (2004). Listening to learn or learning to listen? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 3–25.

Vandergrift, L. (2007). Recent developments in second and foreign language listening comprehension research. *Language Teaching*, *40*(3), 191.

Vandergrift, L. (2011). Second language listening: Presage, process, product, and pedagogy. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 455–471). New York, NY: Routledge.

Vandergrift, L., & Goh, C. C. M. (2012). *Teaching and learning second language listening*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Weber, A., & Cutler, A. (2006). First-language phonotactics in second-language listening. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *119*(1), 597–607.

Wilson, M. (2003). Discovery listening — improving perceptual processing. *ELT Journal*, *57*(4), 335–343.

Yeldham, M. (2017). Techniques for researching L2 listeners. *System*, *66*, 13–26.

Yeldham, M., & Gruba, P. (2014). Toward an instructional approach to developing interactive second language listening. *Language Teaching Research*, *18*(1), 33–53.

Appendix A: Script of Pre-/Post-Test 1

Thank you, Darrell. Thank you, Brookings, for hosting me and this discussion about the future (1) **of** broadband and the Internet. (2) **We've** just finished a summer of big-ticket commemorations, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Apollo landing and of Woodstock. 1969 (3) **was** a good year to be a kid in New York with Joe Namath calling the Super Bowl, and the Knicks' season that (4) **ended up** with the legendary Willis Reed in Game 7. I grew up a long fly ball from Shea Stadium and soaked up every minute of the Miracle Mets' season.

Maybe that's why I tend (5) **to** believe in miracles. (6) **but** perhaps the most momentous birthday from that famous summer of 1969—in its way, a miracle—(7) **went by** just a couple (8) **of** weeks ago with little mention. Just over 40 years ago, a handful of engineers in a UCLA lab connected two computers with a15-foot gray cable and transferred little pieces of data back (9) **and** forth. It (10) **was** the first successful test of the ARPANET, the U.S. government-funded project that became the Internet—the most transformational communications breakthrough since the (11) **printing** press.

Today, we (12) **can't** imagine what our lives would be like without the Internet—any more than we (13) **can** imagine life without running water or the light bulb. Millions of us depend upon it every day—at home, (14) **at** work, in school, everywhere in between. Ones all across America. The Internet has unleashed the creative genius of countless entrepreneurs and (15) **has** enabled the creation of jobs and the launch of small businesses and the expansion of large ones all across America.

That's why Congress and the President have charged the FCC with developing a National Broadband Plan to ensure that every American (16) **has** access to open and robust broadband. The fact is (17) **that** we face great challenges as a nation right now: health care, education, energy, public safety. (18) **While** broadband Internet alone (19) **won't** provide a complete solution to any of those problems, it can and must play a critical role in solving each one. Why has the Internet proved to be such a powerful engine for creativity, innovation, and economic growth?

A big part of the answer traces back to one key decision by the Internet's original architects: to make the Internet an open system. Historian John Naughton describes the Internet (20) **as** an attempt to answer the following question: How do you design a network that is "future proof"—that can support the applications that today's inventors have not yet dreamed of?

Appendix B: Script of Posttest 2

As the State Attorney General, he (1) **can't** select which laws he will defend and which laws are politically expedient to refuse to defend. His excuse (2) **that** his own internal policies would be affected is wrong. All employment policies for cities (3) **and** corporations and the Attorney General's own policies remain exactly the same. The Attorney General is inventing conflict (4) **that** simply doesn't exist.

When you are the state's lawyer, you are a lawyer first and a politician (5) **second**. Therefore, I'd like (6) **to** encourage the Attorney General to reconsider his flawed logic. I am fulfilling my oath of office (7) **as** Governor of North Carolina and we expect him to do the same as the Attorney General of North Carolina. As elected officials we (8) **don't** get to choose the perfect circumstances that surround the decisions we have to make under very difficult circumstances.

You know, I did not call for a special session. I expressed concerns over some of the provisions that (9) **were** in the legislation. But (10) **at** the end of the day, the General Assembly acted within the provisions of the constitution and (11) **presented** me with a bill that, while it may not be perfect, provided protection for our basic expectation (12) **of** privacy in public restrooms and locker rooms.

I signed that bill because if I (13) **didn't**, on April the 1st of (14) **this** year, the expectation of privacy of North Carolina citizens could be violated. This is (15) **not about** demonizing one group of people. In fact, let's put our differences aside. Let's stop the political rhetoric—and yes, a lot of hypocrisy—and work on solutions that (16) **will** make this bill better in the future. I am open to new ideas (17) **and** solutions. And to the people and businesses of North Carolina: (18) **We're** a state of inclusiveness, openness, and diversity. And I'm very, very proud of that. I believe in North Carolina, its people, and also (19) **our** democratic process. And I will not shy away from taking the responsibility to do what it takes to make our state better. These are the (20) **values** I learned more than 50 years ago when I first came to North Carolina.

Appendix C: Student Questionnaire

Dear student: Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. This questionnaire involves giving your opinion about the partial dictation activities.

Directions: Read the statements below. Choose your degree of agreement for each statement in the right-hand column.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I like partial dictation activity.	SD	D	N	A	SA
2. Partial dictation is an interesting activity.	SD	D	N	A	SA
3. Partial dictation is a helpful activity for developing listening in English.	SD	D	N	A	SA
4. Partial dictation is a challenging activity.	SD	D	N	A	SA
5. Partial dictation helped me develop my lexical segmentation ability.	SD	D	N	A	SA
6. I feel I am now more able to recognize word boundaries in fast, connected speech.	SD	D	N	A	SA
7. Partial dictation helped to better recognize reduced forms in connected speech.	SD	D	N	A	SA
8. Partial dictation helped me to better recognize assimilated forms in connected speech.	SD	D	N	A	SA
9. Partial dictation helped me to better recognize elided forms in connected speech.	SD	D	N	A	SA

10. The amount of daily listening dictation (one recording) was adequate.	SD	D	N	A	SA
11. The amount of weekly listening dictation sessions (two to three sessions) was adequate.	SD	D	N	A	SA
12. The recordings I listened to in the partial dictation activities were helpful for improving my listening skill.	SD	D	N	A	SA
13. The recordings I listened to in the partial dictation activities were interesting.	SD	D	N	A	SA
14. The recordings I listened to in the partial dictation activities were challenging.	SD	D	N	A	SA
15. The difficulty level of recordings was appropriate.	SD	D	N	A	SA
16. The recordings' length was appropriate.	SD	D	N	A	SA
17. The recordings' contents were appropriate.	SD	D	N	A	SA
18. The speakers' accents were appropriate.	SD	D	N	A	SA

The Impact of Global English: Perceptions of English Promotion, English Education and the ELT Industry in Taiwan

Han-Yi Lin

National Taipei University of Technology, R. O. C.

Bioprofile

Han-Yi Lin has a PhD in English Language and Linguistics from the University of Sheffield, UK and an MA in English Language Teaching from the University of Nottingham, UK. She is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, National Taipei University of Technology, Taiwan. Her research interests include the dispersal of English in the East Asian context as well as broader issues in Global Englishes. **Email**: hanyilin@ntut.edu.tw; hanyilin@hotmail.com

Abstract

This research is a contextual, empirical study on the impact of global English in Taiwan in the early 21st century with a special focus on English promotion, English education and the ELT industry and their interrelationships. By employing semi-structured interviews, it explores Taiwanese people's responses to the policies, measures and practices regarding the English language and uncovers the mechanism and implication of global English in the non-English speaking East Asian context. The findings of this study reveal that the prevalence of English in Taiwan is reinforced by significant global trends and local practices and through discourses propagated by the government, educational institutions, and individuals. It is suggested that the power of global English is multi-directional. National English promotion, the state English education and the ELT industry are interrelated, mutually-reinforced forces and can be regarded as an integral part of the mechanism of English dispersal in the expanding circle.

1, Sec. 3, Zhongxiao E. Rd., Taipei
10608 Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Key words: global English, English promotion, English education, the ELT industry, Taiwan

Introduction

Since the second half of the 20th century, significant global trends in economy, technology, culture and politics have led to English being acquired as an additional language by more individuals and institutions than any other languages. English is no longer a simple foreign language acquired for personal interests or hobbies. Rather, it represents an unprecedented phenomenon in our so-called ‘global age’ and can exert a profound influence on the social, cultural, political and economic aspects of individuals and communities worldwide. Studies on the phenomenon of English dispersal and the effect of global English have been proposed on issues such as new Englishes (e.g. Kachru, 1985; 1992a; 1992b), English as a Lingua Franca (e.g. Jenkins, 2000; 2009; 2014; Meierkord, 2012; Murata & Jenkins, 2009), linguistic rights (e.g. Phillipson & Skuttnab-Kangas, 1996; 1997; Skuttnabb-Kangas, 2000a; 2000b), and the politico-economic and socio-cultural effects of English (e.g. Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992; Ricento, 2012; Tollefson, 2000; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). Although the global spread of English has been investigated by many scholars employing various perspectives, its impact and consequences are still controversial. This is not only because the phenomenon of global English is unprecedented, but also because it is complex and contextually varied.

In the context of non-Anglophone East Asian countries, the spread of English can be regarded as a process of deliberate imposition in response to globalization. In Taiwan as well as in other non-English-speaking countries, the dominance of English in the major international domains has resulted in a national promotion of English, for English is considered instrumental in enhancing national and individual competitiveness (Lin, 2008). English has been promoted by the state governments as well as educational and socio-cultural institutions through various policies, measures and practices. The late twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries have seen considerable changes in English education policy and a boom of the English language teaching (ELT) industry in this region (Ho & Wong, 2003; Nunan, 2003). To a great extent, English dispersal in the non-English speaking context is reinforced by the process of globalization, national English promotion and the development of the ELT industry.

Although significant discussion has been devoted to specific issues regarding English dispersal in the non-Anglophone East Asian contexts, such as language education policy (e.g. Kirkpatrick, 2016; Spolsky & Moon, 2012) and education practices (e.g. Hu & McKay, 2012; Kirkpatrick & Sussex, 2012; Williams, 2017), there is considerably less research on the interplay of multifaceted forces that drive the spread of English in this region and how its implications and effects are perceived by individuals in the local context. Therefore, with a special focus on the key forces of English dispersal in a non-Anglophone East Asian context, i.e. English promotion, English education and the ELT industry, and their interrelationships, this research intends to provide an empirical study on the effect of global English in the context of Taiwan in the early 21st century. By employing semi-structured interviews, it explores Taiwanese people's responses to the policies, measures and practices regarding the English language and reveals the mechanism and implication of English dispersal in the non-English speaking East Asian context. The ELT industry in this research refers to commercial ELT, which includes products and services regarding English language teaching and learning provided by institutions and businesses, such as private English language schools and publishers of ELT materials.

This paper is organized as follows. The next section is a review of the literature.

In the third section, the details of the research method are described. The research findings are then presented. Finally, discussion on the research findings and a conclusion is presented.

Literature Review

Globalization, English, and Economic Nationalism

Globalization can be regarded as one of the most influential phenomena in the late twentieth and the early twenty-first century. As suggested by several scholars (e.g. Eitzen & Zinn, 2012; Giddens, 1990; Gray, 1998; Tomlinson, 1997), it refers to an increasing process of transnational interconnections around the world in terms of people, goods, information, capital, communication and culture. The process of globalization can be applied to language in different ways. They include the diffusion of any one individual language across the globe and the globalization of language or language capacities through the diffusion of bilingualism and multilingualism. As Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton (1999, p. 345) suggest, the existence of shared languages or language capacities is the key element which reinforces the basic infrastructure of intercultural communication and interaction. Without shared languages or linguistic competencies, none of the telecommunications could actually facilitate and maintain global communication. In De Swaan's (2001) political-economic framework of the global language system, English is labeled as a 'hyper-central' language connecting 'super-central' languages with one another and that, therefore, constitutes the linguistic hub of the global system. As super-central languages serve as regional *lingua franca*, English, located at the very center of the global language system, has become the main language of international communication as well as the dominant language of global advertising and popular culture. In a way, globalization both facilitates the spread of

English and is facilitated by it in a dialectical, reciprocal manner.

Although the process of globalization is a well-recognized world phenomenon, its conceptualization and significance can be diverse for different participants depending on the resources they possess and the strategy or policy choices they have (Kim, 2000). Vaish (2010, p. 5) proposes a list of unique aspects of globalization in Asia that sets it apart from the rest of the world: the resilient and strong nation state model; several challengers to global English in the region, such as Mandarin, Hindi and Arabic; the spread and identities of Asian culture; and the Western economic model of unbridled, unregulated capitalism being under serious attack in this region. These unique aspects of globalization reveal the significant socio-cultural and politico-economic characteristics of East Asian countries which, to a great extent, affect the shaping of national policies regarding English promotion and the development of English education in this region.

While economic development has been a common goal of almost all political regimes in the modern world, the remarkably high degree of state intervention has made East Asian economies, e.g. Taiwan and South Korea, distinctive from democratic capitalism in Western Europe since the second half of the twentieth century (Shin, 1998). Through effective state intervention in the economy, governments in East Asia can provide significant financial support and guidance for the private sector. At the turn of the century, the influence of economic neoliberalism and globalization processes forced governments in East Asia to adopt a more pragmatic role in the state intervention. That is, through selective measures and reforms which aim to enhance national manpower and support national economy, states assist in the process of adjustment to globalization (D’Costa, 2012). English is believed to be the most important medium for access to power and resources, and the promotion of English is adopted as an effective measure to enhance the national workforce and help the local society adjust to the globalized world. As a result, the intimate relation between globalization, economic development and the English language is believed to be not only crucial for national development, but also the rationale of English promotion in East Asia.

English and National Plans in Taiwan

Two major national plans were proposed by the Taiwanese government in the early twenty-first century in order to enhance national English ability, i.e. *Taiwan Six-Year National Development Plan* (2002-2008) and *Plan for Enhancing National English Proficiency* (2010-2012). Both plans can be regarded as a response to the processes of globalization and a reflection of the politico-economic situation at that time.

The *Taiwan Six-Year National Development Plan* (2002-2008) represents the blueprint of Taiwan's national development at the beginning of the twenty-first century and emphasizes the importance of English at national level. It includes wide-ranging projects focusing on economic growth and environmental protection (GIO, 2005). Specific goals and measures are stated in order to establish an internationalized environment and facilitate international interaction (MOE, 2005). Following the theme of promoting national English ability, the *Plan for Enhancing National English Proficiency* was proposed in 2009. This plan focuses on the importance and influence of national English ability for Taiwanese society. The aim is to enhance the English proficiency of public and private sector personnel and to improve the environment for learning and using English. (RDEC, 2009).

In these two national plans, the necessitation of English is assumed, which is based on a pragmatic version of East Asian economic nationalism and state activism. English as the language of power and the infrastructure of globalization is regarded as the key means to ensure economic prosperity. Economic development, used as the major means to regain national power, has become the underlying force that has driven Taiwan to promote English learning in order to obtain a greater knowledge of the world. Overall, the discourses of globalization and English promotion in Taiwan's national plans are economics-driven. They reveal a sense of deficiency and competition that propels the need to cultivate manpower with English competence and manifest the perception of the English language at the national level.

A Brief Overview of English Education in Taiwan

English has been the only required foreign language to be taught at the secondary level in the Taiwanese education system since 1968 (Chen, 2003). Through the implementation of *the General Guideline of Grade 1-9 Curriculum of Elementary and Junior High School Education* (MOE, 1998), English education was introduced for the fifth and the sixth grade of elementary schools in 2001 and was officially extended to the third and the fourth grade in 2005. However, many local governments have already introduced English education in all grades of the elementary curriculum (Dai, 2002).

Following the implementation of the new curriculum, the textbooks used at both elementary and junior high levels are no longer the unified national edition. Since September 2001, different sets of textbooks, developed by private publishers but examined and approved by the National Institute of Compilation and Translation (NICT), have been available for teachers' selection. At senior high level, textbooks were deregulated even earlier than at junior high level. Since September 1999, senior high school teachers have had the freedom to select teaching materials from different sets of NICT-approved English textbooks developed by private publishers.

At the tertiary level, English was a required subject, referred to as 'Freshman

English', for the first year of university until 1993. In 1993, the Freshman English course was replaced by a foreign language course. Students could choose any foreign language provided by their universities to fulfill the six-credit requirement. English became elective rather than a requirement. In 1997, universities were allowed to decide on foreign language requirements, including credit hours and the content of courses. In spite of the changes made by the Ministry of Education, English has remained the core of the foreign language curriculum. In general, the mandates of 1993 and 1997 have provided students and teachers with more freedom to take and offer courses in English (Shih, 2000).

In general, 'foreign language education' in Taiwan basically means 'English education', for English is offered as the only required foreign language in Taiwan's education system. As a foreign language, the status of English was promoted by the government for historical and realistic reasons, such as the influence of the US in Taiwan and English as a medium for international communication. As in other East Asian countries, learning English has become 'a whole nation movement' in the twenty-first century (Chern, 2003).

Research Method

Semi-structured Interviews

In order to investigate Taiwanese people's perceptions on English promotion, English education and the ELT industry, a qualitative approach was adopted in this research. Semi-structured interviews on a one-to-one basis were employed. Based on the review of English education and the ELT industry in Taiwan and an overview of official documents and English-related news reports, the interview themes and questions were generated by the author. The interview themes are as follows: (1)

policies and measures of English promotion; (2) English teaching and learning in state education system and in the private ELT sector; (3) English language textbooks; (4) English language tests; (5) the impact of global English and English promotion. Twenty questions were included in the interview schedule with follow-up questions asked accordingly.

Data Collection and Analysis

In general, quota sampling and convenience sampling were employed in this research. The interviewees consist of people from the following six groups: (1) participants from the preschool and elementary level of the education system; (2) participants from the secondary level of the education system; (3) participants from the tertiary level of the education system; (4) student parents; (5) people from the other private sectors; (6) participants in the ELT industry.

Group One to Four can be regarded as a cluster of participants from different levels of the education system. Since English is required in the state education system, students and teachers can be regarded as significant participants of the state and supplementary English education as well as users of ELT materials and textbooks. They are those who really have the chance to use English and deal with issues about English education and the private ELT sector in Taiwan. However, students at the preschool and elementary level were not included because students at these stages are very young and not really capable of answering the interview questions, and their perceptions of English education and the ELT industry are mostly influenced by their teachers, parents and surroundings. Parents of students at preschool, elementary, secondary and tertiary levels were also selected as a group because they usually make decisions for their children and play a significant role in students' education.

Group Five can be considered as a cluster of participants from different professions. In order to present individuals' perceptions in other social sectors, interviewees from different social backgrounds were also selected. Their perceptions provide a different account of the impact of English promotion, English education and the ELT industry. Although some of them might not have the chance to use English or to benefit from English in their private and career life, their perceptions represent those in different fields and industries of Taiwanese society and, therefore, are significant.

Group Six represents a cluster of participants in the ELT industry. Informants who work in different sectors of the ELT industry were included. Their perceptions are significant, for they are the direct participants in the ELT industry and can provide a realistic perspective on the business and a real account of the ELT industry. Interviewees were selected from the following categories: owners or executives in businesses of ELT; employees in ELT publishers; English teachers in private language centers or cram schools.

Each group of informants was allocated a quota of interviews. The interviewee classifications are illustrated in Table 1. Codes of interviewees are presented in brackets, e.g. PET1= the first English teacher in preschool and elementary level. Table 2 provides the background information about the interviewees. Interviewees of different groups were chosen through the recommendation of friends, schoolteachers in the Taichung area and other interviewees. Thirty-four interviews were conducted in a period of four months from April to July 2013. Each interview took approximately one hour, and all the interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese. All the statements made by interviewees during the interviews were recorded and transcribed by the author for further analysis.

In the analysis, interviewees' responses are treated as personal perceptions and belief. The methods of qualitative data analysis were adopted (O'Leary, 2017). Interviewees' responses were examined through a process of coding, looking for patterns and themes and searching for interconnections and illustrated according to the interview themes. Other variables, such as age, ethno-linguistic background and occupational background, are considered as influential factors which are taken into account in data analysis.

Table 1 Table of Interviewees

Group 1: Preschool and Elementary Level
English teachers in preschool and elementary level [PET1, 2] (2 interviews)

Group 2: Secondary Level
English teachers in high schools [SDT1, 2] (2 interviews)
Students in senior high schools [SDS1, 2, 3, 4] (4 interviews)

Group 3: Tertiary Level
English teachers at university/college level [TET1, 2] (2 interviews)
English-major students [TES1, 2] (2 interviews)
Non-English major students [TNES1, 2, 3, 4] (4 interviews)

Group 4: Student Parents
Parents of students in kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools [SP1, 2, 3, 4, 5] (5 interviews)

Group 5: People in the Private Sectors
Car trader [PS1]; purchasing assistant in the manufacturing industry [PS2]; salesperson of women's wear [PS3]; marketing planner in the IT industry [PS4]; medical doctor [PS5]; manager in the machinery industry [PS6] (6 interviews)

Group 6: Participants in the ELT Industry
Owners or executives in businesses of ELT [ETLO1, 2] (2 interviews)
Employees in publishers of ELT materials [ELTE1, 2, 3] (3 interviews)
English teachers in private language centers or cram schools [ELTT1, 2] (2 interviews)

Table 2 Background information of the interviewees

Codes of interviewees	***Gender***	***Age***	***Post/***	***Education level/ Major***	***Self-rated English proficiency***
PET1	F	40	English teacher/ Elementary school	Master/ Public health	High intermediate
PET2	F	57	English teacher/ Elementary school	Bachelor/ Foreign languages	Average
SDT1	F	33	English teacher / Junior high school	Master/ Translation	Advanced
SDT2	F	33	English teacher/	Master/ English	Advanced

			Vocational high school	and American literature	
SDS1	F	16	Student/ Senior higher school	Senior higher school	Basic
SDS2	F	18	Student/ Senior higher school	Senior higher school	High intermediate
SDS3	F	17	Student/ Vocational higher school	Vocational higher school/ Business administration	Average
SDS4	F	18	Student/ Senior higher school	Senior higher school	Need improvement
TET1	F	55	Lecturer/ University	Master/ Curriculum design and teaching	High intermediate
TET2	F	41	Assistant professor/ University	PhD/ English language and linguistics	Advanced
TES1	F	25	Postgraduate student/ University	Postgraduate/ Applied English	Average
TES2	F	22	Undergraduate student/ University	Undergraduate/ Applied English	Average
TNES1	F	21	Undergraduate student/ University	Undergraduate/ Public finance and taxation	Average
TNES2	M	22	Undergraduate student/ University	Undergraduate/ Applied mathematics	Basic
TNES3	M	21	Undergraduate student/ University	Undergraduate/ International trade	Average
TNES4	M	24	Undergraduate student/ University	Undergraduate/ Computer science and engineering	Intermediate
SP1	F	34	Salesperson/ Trading company	Associate degree/ Business administration	Below average
SP2	F	56	Employee/ Insurance company	Associate degree/ Accounting	Average
SP3	F	40	Sales assistant/ Hospital	Associate degree/ Business information	Below average
SP4	F	37	Housewife	Vocational higher school/ Child care	Below average
SP5	F	52	Art teacher/ Private learning center	Bachelor/ Commercial design	Average
PS1	M	45	Trader/ Car trading company	Associate degree/ Finance	Below average
PS2	F	24	Purchasing assistant/ Industrial parts manufacturing	Bachelor/ Applied English	Average
PS3	F	26	Salesperson/ Apparel industry	Bachelor/ Leisure services management	Below average
PS4	M	26	Marketing planner/ IT industry	Master/ Information engineering	Average
PS5	F	42	Medical doctor/ Hospital	Master/ Medicine	Intermediate
PS6	M	33	Manager/ Machinery industry	Master/ Engineering	Basic

ETLO1	F	62	Owner/ English language center	Bachelor/ Foreign languages	Basic
ETLO2	F	46	Manager/ ELT publisher	Bachelor/ Foreign languages	Intermediate
ELTE1	M	35	Business representative/ ELT publisher	Bachelor/ Foreign languages	High intermediate
ELTE2	F	42	Business representative/ ELT publisher	Bachelor/ English	Intermediate
ELTE3	F	52	Business representative/ ELT publisher	Bachelor/ International trade	High intermediate
ELTT1	M	24	English teacher/ Children's English language center	Master/ Applied foreign languages	High intermediate
ELTT2	F	24	English teacher/ Children's English language center	Bachelor/ Applied foreign languages	Average

Findings

Policies and Measures of English Promotion

In order to explore perceptions of English promotion in Taiwan, interviewees were asked to express their opinions on the major policies and measures regarding English promotion, including: (a) the introduction of English education in the first year of elementary education; (b) the establishment of English villages; (c) the introduction of Test of English Listening Comprehension (TELC) as a component of the college admission process; (d) the graduation requirement of English proficiency set up by universities and colleges; (e) the establishment of English-medium instruction (EMI) programs in universities. Table 3 offers a summary overview of interviewees' responses to these policies and measures. Interviewees' perceptions on each policy or measure are reported and further discussed below.

(a) Early introduction of English education at elementary level

In terms of the earlier beginning of elementary English education, respondents' opinions are polarized. Some interviewees agreed with 'the younger the better' hypothesis, while some questioned the effect of this policy and worried that English instruction might interfere with the learning of Mandarin Chinese. An interesting

Table 3 Summary overview of responses to the policies and measures of English promotion in Taiwan

Policies and measures of English promotion	***Number of informants (N=34)***			
	Positive responses	***Negative responses***	***Concerns about the policy***	***No idea about the policy***
(a) Early introduction of English education at elementary level	11	15	8	0
(b) English villages	20	4	8	2
(c) The inclusion of TELC in the college admission process	14	3	14	3
(d) University graduation requirement of English proficiency	21	3	10	0
(e) EMI programs at universities	11	11	9	3

differentiation in the responses of students and parents can be found. All student parents (SP1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and secondary students (SDS1, 2, 3) agreed that an earlier start of elementary English education was necessary and effective while almost all university students (TES1, TNES1, 2, 3, 4) considered it was too early to learn English at the elementary level. An English teacher at the tertiary level (TET1) indicated that the earlier English education was introduced in the state education system, the earlier student parents would send their children to private English language centers. In a way, elementary English education becomes a war of resources for students and student parents. At elementary level, students from wealthier families normally have already taken private English language classes at an earlier stage. For those from underprivileged families, English is often an alien subject, and the limited hours of English instruction at school and the peer pressure could easily frustrate them and hinder their interests in learning English. As pointed out by English teachers at elementary level (PET1 and PET2), the polarization of English proficiency among elementary students was a common phenomenon in the English language classroom, and though 'the younger the better' hypothesis was widely accepted, elementary English instruction was inevitably affected by the restrictions on the elementary curriculum and the linguistic interference between English and Chinese, and, therefore, the effect of English instruction at this level was sometimes questionable.

(b) English villages

In order to enhance national English proficiency, English villages which provide a short-term English immersion environment have burgeoned in non-English speaking East Asian countries, especially South Korea (The Korea Times, 2007). In Taiwan, around forty English villages have been established in the past few years (Chang, 2010). They are located in different regions and provide different kinds of services, such as one-day tours and English summer camps. For the majority of the interviewees, English villages were regarded as interesting and practical facilities for learning English. They could provoke students' motivation of using English and establish their confidence. However, as some informants indicated, such as ELTT2 and ELTE2, the effectiveness of English villages could be quite finite, for they can only provide short-term experience of English communication and the number of students visiting the villages was limited.

(c) The inclusion of TELC in the college admission process

The Test of English Listening Comprehension (TELC) is a comprehensive test administered by the College Entrance Examination Center (CEEC) and designed to test high school students' English listening skills. Learning from other Asian countries, such as South Korea and Japan, TELC is established as an indicator of English competence and aims to prepare students for English-medium academic learning and real-world communication. Since 2015, TELC has been included as a listed qualification in applying for universities. This policy has provoked discussion about its effects, implications and implements (e.g. Gerber, 2014; Hung, 2014).

Most of the participants agreed that this policy would give students incentive to work on their listening skills and, thus, might have positive effects on improving English proficiency. As an owner of a private English language center (ELTO1) expressed, Taiwanese students were passive and they only studied for exams. To include TELC in the college admission process meant to force students to improve their listening ability, and, to a certain extent, the policy worked. However, for English teachers at the secondary level, the intention of this policy is good, but the realization falls short. A junior-high-school English teacher (SDT1) expressed concern about the insufficient facilities and devices to assist students in enhancing English listening skills at school. A high-school English teacher (SDT2) who had been helping students prepare for TELC indicated the contradiction between this new policy and the high school curriculum. Although the training of English listening competence was supposed to be an integrated part in the English pedagogy, the reality was that English listening skills had been neglected in the exam-oriented curriculum of English education for quite a long time and, to a certain degree, they were new to teachers and students alike. Without some rearrangements of the school curriculum and sufficient information and teaching materials about TELC, it was very difficult to find resources and extra time to prepare students for this new exam in the existing curriculum. The case of TELC, it not only shows the particular role English language tests play in the process of English promotion in the non-English speaking context, but also reveals the contradictory effects they may cause.

(d) University graduation requirement of English proficiency

Another example of using English language tests as a measure of English promotion is the graduation requirement of English proficiency implemented in most universities and colleges. The intention is to set up a requirement of students' English proficiency before graduation by encouraging them to take the English language tests approved by the universities. For most of the interviewees, graduation requirement of a certain level of English proficiency is considered an acceptable policy. For informants in the private sector, such as a purchasing assistant in the manufacturing industry (PS2) and a salesperson of women's wear (PS3) and all of the student parents, it is an effective method to require and ensure students' English capacity and to enhance their competitiveness in finding better jobs after graduation. Although it could be useful for students to strengthen their capability, this requirement might also cause pressure or stress for non-English major students, as pointed out by most of the senior high students (i.e. SDS1, SDS2 and SDS3), and raise concerns that the requirement of English tests might benefit certain institutions of English language testing, as indicated by interviewees such as a car trader (PS1) and an elementary English teacher (PE1). For these informants, the intention of setting up a graduation threshold is good, but the coercing nature of this requirement might result in negative effects.

(e) EMI programs at universities

At the tertiary level, the establishment of EMI programs at universities is encouraged by the Ministry of Education, for it is regarded as an indication of the degree of internationalization and a means to attract international students (MOE, 2012). Some of the interviewees agreed that university EMI programs could be helpful in terms of increasing English speaking and listening ability (e.g. SP2, SDS2, TNES1, PS2 and ELTO1). However, the effectiveness of EMI programs was questioned by a few informants (e.g. SDT1, PS5, SDS4 and SP1) who expressed concerns about qualified teachers, curriculum design and facilities. It is also indicated that EMI might have negative effects on the learning process and could frustrate Taiwanese students' efforts and motivation of learning. Furthermore, an employee in the ELT publishing industry (ELTE2) pointed out the underlying motive and concerns of setting up EMI programs. That is, while EMI is used as a survival strategy for Taiwanese universities in the face of challenges, such as the severe global and local competition of higher education and the declining student enrollment due to low birth rate (Grentzer, 2017), the recruitment of international students might also lead to a worry about the competition for the limited educational resources between local and foreign students. To sum up, the interviewees' responses reflect their perceptions on EMI and higher education. When the association between the mastery of English and EMI is constructed and perceived, the establishment of EMI programs is considered positive and useful. When the effectiveness of knowledge transmission and circumstantial factors in higher education are taken into account, the provision of EMI programs without sufficient supporting measures might result in negative consequences.

English Language Teaching and Learning

English education in the state education system

The interviewees were asked to express their opinions on English education at the elementary and secondary level in the state education system. For most of the respondents, especially student parents (e.g. SP1 and SP3), the focus is on the effectiveness of English education. It is indicated that schools should provide effective and consistent English education which can really enhance students' English ability and, therefore, decrease the need to attend supplementary English courses after school. Interviewees' responses reveal the prevalence of private supplement English instruction in Taiwan and a discrepancy between what is expected to be achieved and what has been actually realized in practice in the state education system.

At the elementary level, while it is perceived by the majority of the informants that English instruction should be inspiring and communication-oriented, the result and effect of English instruction is far from satisfactory. Most of the interviewees expressed their concerns about elementary English education and pointed out problems and issues regarding teacher quality, teaching methods, teaching materials and curriculum. To a great extent, interviewees' responses reveal that there is a mismatch between social expectations and educational effects of English teaching and learning at schools. As indicated by the elementary English teachers (PE1 and PE2), the introduction of English instruction at the elementary level could result in suppressing pupils' interests, instead of greatly enhancing their English ability, due to curriculum requirements, such as monthly exams, especially for those who have not attended any supplementary English courses outside the school curriculum. The divergence of English proficiency among pupils and the constraints on curriculum and syllabus also bring about great difficulty in designing and implementing an appropriate syllabus and inevitably restrict the outcome of English teaching and learning.

In terms of English education at the secondary level, the practice and outcome of English instruction were also criticized. Informants who were students and teachers (e.g. TES1, TES2, TNES1, TNES2, TET1, TET2) and those who had relevant experiences (e.g. ELTE1, ELTE2, ELTE3) indicated that English education in the state education system was usually grammar-focused, exam-orientated and force-feeding. Students are required to memorize vocabularies and grammar rules and to prepare for exams, and the large number of students in a class also limits the effect of teaching. It was also mentioned by some interviewees (e.g. TET1 and TES1) that there was a trend of polarization of English proficiency among students due to the discrepancy of their socioeconomic background, which, to a large extent, determined the resources and time they could devote to English learning. For most of the respondents, structural factors, such as school curriculum and exams for entering senior high schools and universities, have restricted English instruction in the state education system and ultimately make English a subject rather than a language in the process of teaching and learning.

Overall, respondents' discontent over elementary and secondary English education can be attributed to the contradiction between the acquisition of communicative competence and curriculum requirements, the inconsistency of objectives and practices between elementary and secondary English education, and a discrepancy between expectation and reality about the syllabus, pedagogy and outcome of English instruction. To a certain extent, the disaffection with the state English education has become one of the stimulants to the development of supplementary English instruction in the private sector.

English teaching and learning in the private ELT sector

ELT in the private sector in Taiwan includes supplementary English education in the so-called '*busibans'* (cram schools), which aim to assist in performance at schools or preparation for specific English language tests, and English instruction in private English language centers or schools that provides English training for communicative purposes. Two types of private English instruction were frequently mentioned by the interviewees, i.e. private English instruction for children and private supplementary English education at secondary level.

According to the statistics of short-term tutorial centers/ *busibans* in Taiwan (EBKCG, 2017), as of 30 September 2017 there are 4,331 short-term tutorial centers offering foreign language education, and 2,522 of them are language centers or schools for children. In terms of private English instruction for children, some interviewees (e.g. ELTT2, TNES1 and TES2) indicated that comparing to English education in the state education system, private English classes for children were more inspiring and motivating because, generally, they had fewer students in a class and tended to focus on communicative language teaching and learning. However, some informants expressed their concerns. Student parents, such as SP1 and SP2, indicated that it was the dissatisfaction with English education at elementary schools that led to the demand of private supplementary English instruction. There were also worries that sending children to private language centers too early might suppress their interests in English (e.g. PS2 and TNES2). In addition, children's English instruction focusing on communicative purposes and activities could result in difficulties in understanding the instruction of grammar rules in the context of junior high schools (e.g. TNES4).

Another prevalent type of private supplementary English instruction is the private supplementary English education at secondary level. Some informants (e.g. TNES1, SDS2, and ETLO1) indicated that this kind of English instruction provided students with organized and exam-oriented instruction on English learning and focused on techniques for preparing for exams in the state education system. However, as some respondents (e.g. TNES3, TNES4 and SDS4) commented, it could not really enhance students' motivation and ability to actually use the language. To a large extent, private supplementary English education at this level is exam-driven and result-focused. Its prevalence can also be attributed to the great importance attached to education in Taiwanese society as well as parents' high expectation on students' academic performance.

In general, supplementary English instruction in the private sector can be regarded as a response to and remedy for the deficiencies in English instruction in Taiwan's state education system, including the grammar-focused and exam-oriented English education at the secondary level and the lack of communicative language learning in the English classrooms at the elementary level. The state English education, which was originally intended to equip every student with sufficient English competence, on the contrary, causes a sense of competition and creates the demand of private supplementary English instruction.

English Language Textbooks

English language textbooks can be regarded as one of the most important elements in the process of English teaching and learning. Interviewees were asked to express their opinions on English teaching materials developed and published by local publishers and those developed and published by global publishers in the traditionally recognized ENL (English as a native language) countries such as the USA and the UK. According to the interviewees, global English coursebooks can be distinguished from local ones by some specific features, including significant investment on research and development, the content of authentic native English and relatively high prices. The informants such as English-major university students (e.g. TES1, TES2) and people in the private sectors indicated that coursebooks published by global publishers were more appealing than local ones due to their active and interesting contents. The interviewees such as university English teachers (TET1, TET2) and participants in the ELT industry (ELTE1, ELTE2, ELTE3) especially emphasized the authenticity and integrity of global English coursebooks. The informants who worked in the publishing industry (e.g. ELTE1, ELTE2, ELTE3, ELTO2) further pointed out that global English coursebooks could provide consistent and theory-based pedagogies because the scale of investment and development of global coursebooks is far larger than the local ones. In a way, through their authenticity and professionalism, the authority of global English coursebooks is established.

However, local English teaching materials are actually strong competitors in the Taiwan market. This is because coursebooks published by local publishers are normally cheaper than global ones and can provide cultural-related contents and flexible, customized service. These are important advantages for promoting their products in the state education system, especially in elementary and secondary schools. Due to the restriction on the contents and design of school textbooks and the need to provide extra services and supporting materials, it is difficult for global publishers to compete. Some informants indicated that they prefer local English teaching materials because the contents are more culturally accessible and function-oriented. According to elementary and secondary English teachers (PET1, PET2, SD1, SD2), coursebooks of local publishers were preferred at elementary and secondary level due to their attentive and customized services and the localized contents.

Generally speaking, the interviewees' responses reflect the characteristics of the ELT textbook market in Taiwan. Their preferences depend on their purposes and the locus of using English teaching materials. If the aim is to enhance English proficiency for global communication with less restriction on the process of coursebooks selection, English teaching materials published by global publishers are preferred. If the purpose of choosing certain English teaching materials is institute-oriented, e.g. English textbooks for elementary schools, or function-oriented, e.g. preparation for a specific exam, local English teaching materials are more suitable for the needs.

English Language Tests

In Taiwan, a verification of English proficiency offered by an approved English language testing institution is required at certain points of the process of education or employment, e.g. university graduation requirement of English proficiency. Interviewees were asked about their views on English language tests provided by the local and international institutions and on the popularity and usefulness of these tests. The interview data show that the most frequently mentioned English language tests are GEPT (the General English Proficiency Test) and TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). GEPT is developed and administrated by LTTC (the Language Training and Testing Center) in Taiwan while TOEIC is developed and administrated by the US-based organization - ETS (the Educational Testing Service). For several respondents, GEPT is considered an English language test suitable for Taiwanese people because it is an approved qualification in Taiwan's education system. For secondary, or even elementary students, taking GEPT has been encouraged by schools and parents. However, according to the informants at the tertiary level (e.g. TET1, TES1, TES2, TNES1), TOEIC is perceived to be a better choice because it is an internationally recognized proficiency test. Their opinions also reflect the current situation of tertiary education in Taiwan. Many universities and colleges in Taiwan encourage their students to take TOEIC in order to improve their English capability and to gain advantage in the severely competitive job market. For most of the respondents, TOEIC is more popular in Taiwan because of its usefulness for employment and its added value as an international certificate.

In terms of the usefulness of English language tests, most of the interviewees agreed that taking English language tests provided by a recognized institution was necessary for students and employees. It could be beneficial for various reasons, e.g. enhancing individual and national English ability, gaining an advantage over others and expanding one's international perspective. However, in terms of the association between English language tests and English communicative competence, interviewees' responses reveal an interesting contrast. Although a few respondents thought that English proficiency certificate should be referential to real capability of using the language, a majority of the interviewees indicated that possessing a certificate of English proficiency did not guarantee one's communicative competence. That is, the ability to achieve a certain English level in English language tests, which can be enhanced through intensive training and by employing effective test strategies and techniques, is different from the English ability for real-life communication. Consequently, the requirement of verifying one's English level through English language tests is considered useful, for it provides a mechanism for improving English ability.

The Impact of Global English and English Promotion

Effects on individuals' education, employment and life

For most of the interviewees, it is agreed that English is important in terms of education and employment. Some informants, especially those in the state education system (e.g. SDS1, SDS2, SDS3, SDT1, SDT2), indicated that more attention had been paid to English education in Taiwan due to the global spread of English. Some other informants (e.g. TES1, TNES3) pointed out the important role of English in one's career. High English proficiency can be a very useful tool to find a better job, to have better school performance or to enter a better school. However, few interviewees (e.g. PS2, PS3) responded that they could not feel the impact of global English on their life. Especially for the informants who worked in the private sectors, if English was not a required skill in their career, global English would just be a term not a reality. As indicated by some interviewees (e.g. TET1, ELT2), English is important for those who need to use the language for certain purposes in their life, while, for those who do not have the need to use the language, the impact of global English is unrecognizable.

Effects on local cultures and cultural identities

Interviewees were asked to express their opinions on the impact of global English and English promotion on local cultures and cultural identities. For a large proportion of the respondents, the effect of English is both positive and negative. On the one hand, it is considered that English is a medium to learn new thoughts and things of Western cultures (e.g. SP2) as well as a tool to promote Taiwan and link to the world (e.g. TNES2). On the other, the negative impact of global English on local cultures and cultural identities is also pointed out. Informants, such as a student parent (SP3) and an English-major university student (TES1), expressed the view that local cultures and traditional values in Taiwan had been changed or replaced by Western cultures and values. As a secondary student (SDS2) explained, it is almost inevitable that learning English would result in Westernization of the local society and the excessive admiration of people and things from foreign countries.

For some other respondents, language and culture were viewed as two independent concepts, and the global and the local are not necessarily incompatible. English was regarded as a tool for international communication. For example, an owner of a language center (ELTO1) pointed out that three hours of English instruction per week would not have a noticeable influence on local cultures.

The impact of global English on local cultures in Taiwan is complicated. English combined with globalization processes inevitably have effects on Taiwan's local cultures. However, the extent of influence depends on how the cultures and values transmitted by global English are identified and appropriated at the local level.

National English proficiency and national capability for global competition

In terms of the correlation between national English proficiency and national competitiveness, many informants believed that the enhancement of national English proficiency was important for Taiwanese society because of the dominant status of English in the international domains. For example, a manager of an engineering company (PS6) remarked that English ability was necessary for international communication and business and therefore significant for global competition. For some other respondents, it is considered that national competitiveness cannot be totally attributed to national English proficiency. For example, a purchase assistant in the manufacturing industry (PS2) made the point that national English proficiency can only be a reference and a country's competitiveness should depend on the directions and aims of national development. For these respondents, language ability is only one of the factors that determine national economic competitiveness. Other factors, such as productivity, technology and industrial structure, are also influential.

To a great extent, the interviewees' responses reflect their perspectives of the essential elements of national competitiveness in the globalized world. When international interaction and communication is perceived as the key factor for global competition and English is regarded as the medium of external communication, a higher level of national English proficiency is considered imperative for enhancing Taiwan's global competitiveness.

Discussion

Subject to the selection of interviewees and the design of interview questions, the interview data reveal some significant issues and implications regarding English dispersal and manifest a complex interplay of English promotion, English education and English industry in the context of Taiwan.

First, corresponding to several studies on the spread of English in East Asia (e.g. Chung & Choi, 2016; Kobayashi, 2013), the responses of interviewees show that English dispersal in Taiwan is, to a great extent, based on the assumption of a strong correlation between global English and economic wellbeing. The discourses about the possible economic returns of English have made English competence a premise as well as a gateway to national competitiveness and individual economic achievement. These types of discourses and the national and institutional measures associated with the English language can be regarded as the dynamics of English promotion in the non-English-speaking context. On the one hand, it is through national policy and educational practices of English promotion that individuals are induced and driven to acquire English competence for personal goals in education and employment. On the other, the discourses of economic nationalism, linguistic instrumentalism (Wee, 2008) and neoliberal human capital (Keeley, 2007; Williams, 2010) further enhance the prevalence of English by connoting English as a competence or skill which can be acquired through education, investment and personal endeavors.

Another significant issue is the implication of the institutionalization of English language tests in the non-Anglophone context. When English language tests are adopted in the state education system, e.g. achieving a certain level of English proficiency as a graduation requirement, and their necessity is emphasized in companies' recruiting process, English language tests not only become a mechanism for examining one's educational achievement and confirming one's language ability, but also the ultimate goal of English learning. As argued by Shohamy (2007), the imposition of language tests in a certain language has ideological implications and can be regarded as de facto language policies. In the non-Anglophone context, the institutionalization of English language tests inevitably leads to prestige and priority of the English language and English language tests performing a gatekeeping function in education and some professions. In addition, where English language tests become an important stimulus to the demand of English learning, the providers of English language tests are not only institutions which offer assessment and verification of English proficiency, but also important business actors of the ELT industry. For example, the non-profit public-interest corporations of language testing, such as LTTC, which administers and offers GEPT in Taiwan, and IIBC (the Institute for International Business Communication), which administers and offers TOEIC in Japan, have generated impressive revenue by providing not only language tests, but also test-related services and products, e.g. training courses and magazines (Business Today, 2004; McCrostie, 2009). In Taiwan, encouraged by the English benchmark policy adopted in the education system and employment, the number of test-takers of TOEIC and GEPT has increased dramatically (Apple Daily, 2014; Hu, 2015). The need to take English language tests also stimulates the demand of relevant courses and teaching and learning materials. To a great extent, English language tests in the context of Taiwan can be regarded as an integral part of the ELT industry.

In addition, the discontent of the state English education combined with the institutionalization of English language tests reinforces the demand for supplementary English education, such as English classes in private academies or cram schools. A discourse on the scarcity of English was frequently expressed by the interviewees in this research. While English is the only required foreign language taught in the state education curriculum, whereby a university graduate normally has more than ten years of English learning experiences, the scarcity of English actually represents a kind of anxiety and discontent over the outcome of English learning and the level of English proficiency acquired. A sense of comparison and envy embedded in this kind of discourse reinforces the discontent. For most of the interviewees, the need to attend private English training courses is driven by a sense of deficiency and competition, a series of assessments set in the path of education and employment and the prevailing discourses of linguistic instrumentalism and neoliberal human capital.

Finally, the interviewees' expressions on the dichotomy of global vs. local in terms of ELT services and products indicate the current constraints and presuppositions on English promotion and the ELT industry in the non-English speaking context. The concern on the mismatch between test-oriented language skills and real-life language ability constantly expressed by the interviewees reveals a need to reexamine the appropriateness and practicability of the native English model embedded in teaching and assessment. In Taiwan, where a localized English model is absent, although there is demand for culturally appropriate teaching materials and customized services, global providers of ELT products and services are considered to be legitimate to provide standards and knowledge of ELT. The global scale of market and revenue also allows them to invest more money and resources in research and development and in advertising and marketing, which not only enhances their professionalism, but also reinforces the authority of the native English model. However, the monolithic notion of native English speaker and the applicability of the native English model in international communication could be questionable (e.g. Cook, 1999; Jenkin, 2006; Kirkpatrick, 2012). As suggested by several ELF (English as a lingua franca) scholars (e.g. Canagarajah, 2007; Jenkins, 2007; Widdowson, 2012), since the aim of English learning is to acquire proficiency for international communication, which is usually context-and-practice-based and fluid in terms of interlocutors, language norms and situational resources, it is suggested that the focus of teaching and assessment be moved to how English is actually used and the ability of facilitating communicative performance in contact situations.

Implications for Policy and Pedagogy

Overall, the findings from this research indicate a complex interrelationship between policies and measures of English promotion, the practices and effectiveness of English education, and ELT services and products. The interviewees' responses reveal high expectations as well as concerns about the effects of English promotion and English education in Taiwan. In a way, the main concerns can be attributed to a divergence between the intention and the actual implementation of policies and measures regarding English promotion and English education and a discrepancy between the standard norms embedded in English teaching and assessments and the real-life English competence needed for international communication. Since English in Taiwan is assumed to be necessary and, similar to other non-English-speaking East Asian countries (e.g. Chung & Choi, 2016; Gil, 2016; Glasgow & Paller, 2016; Nunan, 2003), is usually promoted through policy initiatives and educational practices, the applicability and practicability of policy measures has become the key factor determining the (in)effectiveness of English education and ELT practices. As a result, it is suggested that appropriate planning and supports which aim to bridge the gap between intension and implementation of policy initiatives should be provided at the national and institutional levels. They entail a review of measures and practices regarding English education and English promotion and a need to reexamine the adequacy of the norms embedded in the practices of English education and ELT as well as the sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors affecting the effects of policy measures. For policy makers and educational practitioners, instead of simply setting up curriculum requirement and English benchmark for admission, graduation and employment, more attention should be paid to the contextual and sociolinguistic aspects that the state English education has been confined to, the impact of divergent language competence and personal needs among English learners, and the pedagogical implication of the practice-based and communicative nature of English as a global language.

Conclusion

By exploring Taiwanese people’s perceptions of English promotion, English education and the ELT industry, this research reveals the impact and implication of English dispersal in the context of Taiwan. Corresponding to other non-Anglophone Asian contexts (e.g. Hu & McKay, 2012; Kirkpatrick & Bui, 2016), English language education policies and measures can be regarded as a response to globalization processes at the national level, a significant drive for English teaching and learning at the individual level, and a stimulus to ELT business in the local context. They also result in considerable effects and implications in terms of beliefs and education practices regarding the English language. The importance of English and the benefits of learning English were assumed by most of the interviewees. English is highly approved of in areas related to national and personal economic wellbeing while the prevalence of English also leads to concern about local cultures and the effectiveness of the state English education. Respondents’ opinions on measures and policies of English education and English promotion implemented by the government reflect a sense of deficiency and the necessitation of English for Taiwanese society. Moreover, English promotion combined with globalization processes not only has considerable effects on educational practices in Taiwan, but also transforms the power relations between the state English education and the ELT industry and between the global and the local. The integration of English education, national policies and educational practices creates a strong base for the expansion of the ELT industry. In the case of English education and the ELT industry, where the legitimacy of a native English model is assumed, global providers of English products and services are privileged, while the power of local providers has emerged through specialization and localization. Consequently, Taiwanese society and individuals are not passive receivers, but active participants in the globalization of English. The prevalence of English in Taiwan is reinforced by significant global trends and local practices and through discourses propagated by the government, educational institutions, and individuals. It is suggested that the power of global English is multi-directional. National English promotion, the state English education and the ELT industry are interrelated, mutually-reinforced forces and can be regarded as an integral part of the mechanism of English dispersal in the expanding circle.

Acknowledgements:

This study was supported by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Taiwan (grant number NSC 101-2410-H-240-006).

References

Apple Daily. (2014, January 16). 全民瘋英檢 50 萬人報考 [Everyone's crazy about English: 500,000 test-takers]. 蘋果日報 (Apple Daily). Retrieved from https://tw.appledaily.com/new/realtime/20140116/327671/.

Business Today. (2004, October 21). 全台最賺錢的財團法人出列 [Who is the most profitable non-profit corporation in Taiwan]. 今周刊 (Business Today). Retrieved from https://www.businesstoday.com.tw/article/category/80392/post/200410210012/%E5%85%A8%E5%8F%B0%E6%9C%80%E8%B3%BA%E9%8C%A2%E7%9A%84%E8%B2%A1%E5%9C%98%E6%B3%95%E4%BA%BA%E5%87%BA%E5%88%97%20P.26.

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2007). Lingua franca English, multilingual communities, and language acquisition. *The Modern Language Journal*, *91*(1), 923-39.

Chang, Y.-S. (2010). 提升國民英語能力政策之研究 [A study on policy for enhancing national English proficiency]. National Development Council, the Executive Yuan, Taiwan. Retrieved from https://ws.ndc.gov.tw/Download.ashx?u=LzAwMS9hZG1pbmlzdHJhdG9yLzEwL3JlbGZpbGUvNTY0NC8zMjE4LzAwNTg5MDBfMS5wZGY%3D&n=MjAxMDAzMDUxMjU5NDkyOTM3MTAyLnBkZg%3D%3D&icon=..pdf.

Chen, S.-C. (2003). *The spread of English in Taiwan: Changing uses and shifting attitudes*. Taipei, Taiwan: Crane.

Chern, C.-L. (2003). English language teaching in Taiwan today. In W. K. Ho & R. Y. L. Wong (Eds.), *English language teaching in East Asia today: Changing policies and practices* (pp. 427-439). Singapore: Times Academic Press.

Chung, J. & Choi, T. (2016). English education policy in South Korea: Planned and enacted. In R. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *English language education policy in Asia* (pp. 281-299). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, *33*(2), 185-209.

Dai, W.-Y. (2002). 國民小學全面實施英語教學的理論基礎 [The theoretical base of implementing English education in elementary curriculum]. 第十九屆中華民國英語文教學國際研討會論文集 (The proceedings of the nineteenth international conference on English teaching and learning, pp. 163-171). Taipei, Taiwan: Crane.

D'Costa, A. P. (2012). Capitalism and economic nationalism: Asian state activism in the world economy. In A. P. D,Costa (Ed.), *Globalization and economic nationalism in East Asia* (pp. 1-32). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

De Swaan, A. (2001). *Words of the world*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

EBKCG (Education Bureau, Kaohsiung City Government). (2017). *All cities and counties short-term tutorial center information and management System*. Retrieve from http://bsb.edu.tw/.

Eitzen, D. S. & Zinn, M. B. (2012). Globalization: An introduction. In D. S. Eitzen & M. B. Zinn (Eds.), *Globalization: The transformation of social worlds* (3rd ed., pp. 1-9). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Gerber, A. (2014, Nov.25). Activists target listening tests. *Taipei Times*, p.3. Retrieved from http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2014/11/25/2003605265.

Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Gil, J. (2016). English language education policies in the People's Republic of China. In R. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *English language education policy in Asia* (pp. 49-90). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

GIO (Government Information Office). (2005). *Taiwan six-year national development plan*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonstate.org.tw/English/taiwan-trade-economy/ 6-year-plan/index.htm.

Glasgow, G.P. & Paller, D.L. (2016). English language education policy in Japan: At a crossroads. In R. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *English language education policy in Asia* (pp. 153-180). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Gray, J. (1998). *False dawn: The delusions of global capitalism*. London, UK: Granta.

Grentzer, K. (2017). *In Taiwan, a shrinking youth population sparks competition among universities*. Retrieved from https://www.elsevier.com/connect/in-taiwan-a-shrinking-youth-population-sparks-competition-among-universities

Held, D., McGrew, A. G., Goldblatt, D. & Perraton, J. (1999). *Globalization transformations: politics, economics and culture*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Ho, W. K. & Wong, R. Y. L. (Eds.) (2003). *English language teaching in East Asia today: Changing policies and practices*. Singapore: Times Academic Press.

Hu, C.-H. (2015, February 7). 多益報考人數 增 2 成 3 [TOEIC test-takers increase by 23 percent]. 中時電子報 (*China Times*). Retrieved from http://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20150207002926-260405.

Hu, G. & McKay, S. L. (2012). English language education in East Asia: Some recent developments. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *33*(4), 345-362.

Hung, P. (2014, September 1). TELC to be listed as standard entrance test. *China Post*. Retrieved from https://chinapost.nownews.com/20140901-53698

Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language: New models, new norms, new goals*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2006). Point of view and blind spots: ELF and SLA. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *16*(2), 137-62.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: Attitudes and identity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2009). English as a Lingua Franca: Interpretations and attitudes. *World Englishes*, *28*(2), 200-207.

Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a lingua franca in the international university: The politics of academic English language policy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11-36). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kachru, B. B. (1992a). World Englishes: Approaches, issues and resources. *Language Teaching 25*, 1-14.

Kachru, B. B. (1992b). Models for non-native Englishes. In B. B. Kachru (Ed.), *The other tongue: English across cultures* (2nd ed., pp. 48-74). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Keeley, B. (2007). *Human capital: How what you know shapes your life*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing.

Kim, S. S. (2000). East Asia and globalization: Challenges and responses. In S. S. Kim (Ed.), *East Asia and globalization* (pp. 1-30). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2012). English as an Asian lingua franca: ‘The lingua franca approach’ and implications for language education policy. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *1*(1), 121-39.

Kirkpatrick, R. (Ed.) (2016). *English language education policy in Asia*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Kirkpatrick, R. & Bui, T.T.N. (2016). Introduction: The challenges for English education policies in Asia. In R. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *English language education policy in Asia* (pp. 1-23). Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Kirkpatrick, A. & Sussex, R. (Eds.) (2012). *English as an international language in Asia: Implications for language education*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Kobayashi, Y. (2013). Global English capital and the domestic economy: The case of

Japan from the 1970s to early 2012. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *34*(1), 1-13.

Lin, H.-Y. (2008). *The cultural politics of English as a global English in Taiwan* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK.

McCrostie, J. (2009, August 18). TOEIC: Where does the money go? *The Japan Times*. Retrieved from http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgibin/fl20090818zg.html.

Meierkord, C. (2012). *Interactions across Englishes: Linguistic choices in local and international contact situations*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

MOE (the Ministry of Education). (1998). 國民中小學九年一貫課程綱要 [*General guideline of grade one through nine curriculum of elementary and junior high education*]. Taipei, Taiwan: Ministry of Education.

MOE (the Ministry of Education). (2005). *Challenge 2008: Key national development plan – Project of cultivating talent for E-generation*. Taipei, Taiwan: Ministry of Education.

MOE (the Ministry of Education). (2012). *MOE policy blueprint*. Retrieved from http://english.moe.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=15708&ctNode=11410&mp=11.

Murata, K. & Jenkins, J. (2009). *Global Englishes in Asian context: Current and future debates*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region. *TESOL Quarterly*, *37*(4), 589-613.

O’Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (3rd ed.). London, UK: SAGE Publications.

Pennycook, A. (1994). *The cultural politics of English as an international language*. London, UK: Longman.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Phillison, R. & Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1996). English only worldwide or language ecology? *TESOL Quarterly*, *30*(3), 429-452.

Phillison, R. & Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1997). Linguistic human right and English in Europe. *World Englishes*, *16*(1), 27-43.

RDEC (Research, Development and Evaluation Commission, Executive Yuan). (2009). *Plan for enhancing national English proficiency*. Retrieved from http://s3.amazonaws.com/zanran_storage/www.bless.nat.gov.tw/ContentPages/13

4045759.pdf .

Ricento, T. (2012). Political economy and English as a “global” language. *Critical Multilingualism Studies*, *1*(1), 31–56.

Shih, Y. H. (2000, November). *General English education at the university level in Taiwan*. Paper presented at JACET 39th Annual Convention: English Education in the East Asia for the 21st Century. Okinawa, Japan.

Shin, K.Y. (1998). The political economy of economic growth in East Asia: South Korea and Taiwan. In E. M. Kim (Ed.), *The Four Asian Tigers: Economic Development and the Global Political economy* (pp. 3-32). London, UK: Academic Press.

Shohamy, E. (2007). Language tests as language policy tools. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, *14*(1), 117-130.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000a). *Linguistic genocide in education- or worldwide diversity and human rights?* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000b). Linguistic human rights and teachers of English. In J. K. Hall & W. Eggington (Eds.), *The socialpoltics of English language teaching* (pp. 22-44). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Spolsky B. & Moon, Y. (Eds.). (2012). *Primary school English-language education in Asia*. New York, NY: Routledge.

The Korea Times. (2007, May 28). English immersion villages. *The Korea Times*. Retrieved from http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinon/2007/05/137_3652.html#.

Tollefson, J. W. (2000). Policy and ideology in the spread of English. In J. K. Hall & W. Eggington (Eds.), *The Sociopolitics of English language teaching* (pp. 59-86). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Tomlinson, J. (1997). Cultural globalization and cultural imperialism. In A. Mohammadi (Ed.), *International communication and globalization* (pp. 170-190). London, UK: SAGE.

Tsui, A. B.M. & Tollefson, J. W. (2007). Language policy and the construction of national cultural identity. In A. B.M. Tsui & J. W. Tollefson (Eds.), *Language policy, culture, and identity in Asian contexts* (pp. 1-21). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Vaish, V. (2010). Introduction: Globalization of language and culture in Asia. In V.

Vaish (Ed.), *Globalization of language and culture in Asia: The impact of globalization processes on language* (pp. 1-13). London, UK: Continuum.

Wee, L. (2008). Linguistic instrumentalism in Singapore. In P. K.W. Tan & R. Rubdy (Eds.), *Language as commodity: Global structures, local market places* (pp. 31-43). London, UK: Continuum.

Widdowson, H. G. (2012). ELF and the inconvenience of established concepts. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *1*(1), 5-26.

Williams, G. (2010). *The knowledge economy, language and culture*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Williams, C. (2017). *Teaching English in East Asia: A teacher guide to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Learners*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Leveraging Students' Digital Literacy through Project-Based Learning

Alexander Nanni

Mahidol University International College, Thailand

Kerry Pusey

Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos, Brazil

Bioprofiles

Alexander Nanni is the Associate Dean for International Affairs at Mahidol University International College, where he was previously the director of the Preparation Center for Languages and Mathematics. He holds an M.Ed. in TESOL and an Ed.D. in Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, and Leadership. Some of his publications are available at mahidol.academia.edu/AlexanderNanni.
Email: alexander.nan@mahidol.ac.th **(corresponding author)**

Kerry Pusey received his MA-TESL from Northern Arizona University and is currently a U.S. Department of State sponsored English Language Fellow at Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos and Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. Kerry has also taught ESL/EFL in the United States, Macau, Colombia, Japan, and Thailand. He has contributed articles to several English language teaching journals and has presented at various international English language teaching conferences. **Email**: kerry.pus@muicpc.io

Abstract

Many language learners possess well-developed skills in certain aspects of digital literacy—finding, sharing, and creating content—but are less adept at evaluating and using content. This study introduces a term-long project that draws on students' digital literacy strengths while providing them with opportunities to hone their less developed

999 Phutthamonthon Sai 4 Rd, Salaya,
Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand

Universidade do Vale do Rio do Sinos
Av. Unisinos, 950 - Cristo Rei, São Leopoldo - RS, 93022-750, Brazil

digital literacy skills. The design of the project was informed by the principles of project-based learning (PBL). To investigate the effectiveness of this project in improving participants' skills, the researchers administered a survey to 33 participants in two sections of a course at a Thai university. The participants indicated that they perceived improvement in their technology skills and study skills due to their completion of the project. While the methods used in this project limit its generalizability, it contributes to the limited amount of research available on PBL in the Thai context

Key words: Digital literacy, project-based learning, ASEAN

Introduction

Cultivating learners' digital literacy is an increasingly important aspect of education. Cornell University (2009) defines digital literacy as proficiency in finding, evaluating, using, sharing, and creating digital content. Fortunately, for educators, many of the students who undertake higher education already have significant, if unevenly developed, digital literacy skills. Drawing on learners' already proficient digital literacy skills allows teachers to create meaningful and engaging projects that provide opportunities for learners to hone their current abilities and acquire new skills at the same time. The average modern learner's extensive use of the Internet and social media for recreation and networking often result in well-developed skills in finding, sharing, and creating content; however, their ability to evaluate and use content is often less developed. In academic contexts, the development of these latter skills may therefore be of particular importance to students and teachers alike (Phuapan *et al.*, 2016).

This paper introduces a project that is currently being used at the intermediate-level in an intensive English course at a Thai university. The project requires students to investigate an ongoing news story in an ASEAN country other than Thailand; write an extended essay on that topic, including a comparison between that event and a recent event in Thailand; script and record an informative news video about the topic; interview an expert on the topic; and finally edit the informative news video and interview into a 6-minute news piece. The design of the project was guided by Thomas' (2000) five criteria for project-based learning (PBL). In addition to enhancing language skills, this project aims to enhance students' digital literacy skills, in particular, their ability to evaluate and use Internet sources in an academic context. This project also aims to motivate learners to push the limits of their existing digital literacy skills and leveraging the existing skills to raise the overall quality of the finished product.

Little research on PBL has been conducted in the Thai context. This paper presents research on PBL that has been conducted in a university program in Thailand. While the study is relatively limited in scope, it represents an initial contribution to the conversation on PBL from a novel context.

Project-Based Learning

PBL is gaining growing acceptance as an effective pedagogical approach (Martin, Lopez, & Martinez, 2014). Researchers have noted various benefits of this approach: a shift from teacher-centered memorization to student-centered investigation (Grant, 2011), development of learners' ability to cooperate (Beckett, 2002), the honing of academic skills (Ducker, 2013), including the enhancement of students' critical thinking (Horan, Lavaroni, & Beldon, 1996) and writing skills (Nurhajati, 2018), and engagement with real-world issues and materials (Boss & Krauss, 2014). Regarding this final benefit—engagement with real-world issues, such as accessing international news articles in ASEAN (the focus of the media project, described below), the use of English becomes closely intertwined with PBL, due to its status as the primary language of international communication (Patil, 2006). This gives students an authentic reason for using and producing the language, which is a key objective of PBL in the ESL/EFL context. A further benefit of PBL that is of particular importance to this paper is the integration of technology into PBL. In well-designed projects, the use of technology is an integral part of the process, not an optional "add-on" (Richards, 2005, p. 60). PBL is thus highly compatible with the teaching of digital literacy and 21st Century skills (Binkley *et al.*, 2012; Foss, Carney, McDonald, & Rooks, 2008; Hafner, 2014; Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010).

Several academics have proposed criteria for PBL, which sets range in complexity and specificity, but generally contain between two and 10 criteria. On the simpler side, Grant (2011) has proposed a set of two basic criteria as follows: PBL must include a "driving question or problem" and result in "production of one or more artifacts as representations of learning" (p. 38). As the result of their literature review, Condliffe *et al.* (2017) propose another set of project design principles, including using "driving questions to motivate learning" (p. 5), "target[ing] significant learning goals" (p. 6), "us[ing] projects to promote learning" (p. 6), and "dedicate[ing] sufficient time to PBL" (p. 7).

In their 2015 report, Larmer and Mergendoller, who are respectively the Editor in Chief and Senior Fellow of the Buck Institute for Education (currently one of the foremost organizations that promotes PBL), proposed a revised version of their 2010 "7 Essentials for Project-Based Learning" (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010), called "Gold Standard PBL," which includes the following "design elements": Challenging problem or question (i.e., an open-ended question or problem that is the impetus for all learning that takes place, which makes the project meaningful; in essence, what the project is "about"); sustained inquiry (i.e., iterative, in-depth investigation and information gathering that extends over a period of time); authenticity (i.e., a real-world orientation, which may be in terms of authentic *context*, such as solving a problem faced by real people outside of school; authentic *processes*, *tasks*, *tools*, and *quality standards*, such as using digital video editing tools to create a professional-looking video [see below]; authentic *impact*, such that the project affects others in the local or greater community; or *personal* authenticity, which occurs when the project relates meaningfully to students' personal lives); student voice and choice (i.e., considering students' preferences, ideas, and other capacities for decision-making when designing projects, as well as granting students some degree of autonomy in carrying out their projects); reflection (i.e., thinking about the what, how, and why of learning; assessing learning at various "checkpoints" [i.e., formative assessment]); critique and revision (i.e., the development of students' capacity to give and receive constructive feedback from peers and more knowledgeable experts); and public product (i.e., presenting or otherwise publicizing the final project [the "product"] to an authentic audience beyond the classroom) (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2015, p. 1-3). The model also includes "student learning goals," comprised of "key knowledge, understanding, and success skills," (the latter of which being more or less analogous to [though broader than] 21st century skills), as well as "project based teaching practices" (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2015, p. 1).

Within the context of English as a second/foreign language education, specifically, Stoller (2006, p. 24) specifies the following "conditions" necessary for effective project-based learning:

> Project-based learning should (a) have a process and product orientation; (b) be defined, at least in part, by students, to encourage student ownership in the project; (c) extend over a period of time (rather than a single class session); (d) encourage the natural integration of skills; (e) make a dual commitment to language and content learning; (f) oblige students to work in groups and on their own; (g) require students to take some responsibility for their own learning through the gathering, processing, and reporting of information from target language resources; (h) require teachers and students to assume new roles and responsibilities (Levy, 1997); (i) result in a tangible final product; and (j) conclude with student reflections on both the process and the product.

Some additional criteria for PBL have been proposed by other scholars (Boss & Krauss, 2014, p. 12; Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2005, p. 2; Martin, Lopez, & Martinez, 2014, p. 1; Ravitz, 2010, p. 293), but there is a general convergence around a set of core criteria which include a driving question, sustained learning, the acquisition of new knowledge in order to complete a project, autonomy, and authenticity (Nanni, 2016). Table 1 (see below) includes sets of criteria for PBL described by the authors mentioned heretofore. The criteria have been quoted verbatim.

Table 1 Comparison of Criteria for Project-Based Learning

Boss and Krauss (2014, p. 12)	1. Projects form the centerpiece of the curriculum — they are not an add-on or extra at the end of a "real" unit 2. Students engage in real-world activities and practice the strategies of authentic disciplines 3. Students work collaboratively on problems that matter to them 4. Technology is integrated as a tool for discovery, collaboration, and communication, taking learners places they couldn't otherwise go and helping teachers achieve essential learning goals in new ways 5. Increasingly, teachers collaborate to design and implement projects that cross geographic boundaries or even jump time zones

Condliffe *et al.* (2017, p. 5-7)	1. Driving questions to motivate learning 2. Target significant learning goals 3. Use projects to promote learning 4. Dedicate significant time to PBL
Grant (2011, p. 38)	1. Driving question or problem 2. Production of one or more artifacts as representations of learning
Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2005, p. 2)	1. They start with a driving question, a problem to be solved. 2. Students explore the driving question by participating in authentic, situated inquiry – processes of problem solving that are central to expert performance in the discipline. 3. Students, teachers, and community members engage in collaborative activities to find solutions to the driving question. 4. While engaged in the inquiry process, students are scaffolding with learning technologies that help them participate in activities normally beyond their ability. 5. Students create a set of tangible products that address the driving question.
Larmer and Mergendoller (2015, p. 1)	1. Challenging problem or question 2. Sustained inquiry 3. Authenticity 4. Student voice and choice 5. Reflection 6. Critique and revision 7. Public product
Martin, Lopez, and Martinez (2014, p. 1)	1. It is engaging and oriented to the real world. 2. It is ill-structured and complex. 3. It generates multiple hypotheses. 4. It requires team effort. 5. It is consistent with desired learning outcomes. 6. It builds upon previous knowledge/experiences. 7. It promotes development of higher order cognitive skills.

Ravitz (2010, p. 293)	1. In-depth inquiry 2. Over an extended period 3. That is student self-directed to some extent, and 4. That requires a formal presentation of results
Thomas (2000, p. 3)	1. Centrality 2. Driving question 3. Constructive investigations 4. Autonomy 5. Realism

This paper, however, will discuss the media project in terms of the five criteria for PBL proposed by Thomas (2000, p. 3), which include centrality, driving question, constructive investigations, autonomy, and realism. This set of criteria, which is based on an extensive literature review, has the advantage of being relatively succinct while also including the key ideas from the majority of other models (see Table 1 above). According to Thomas (2000), the criterion of centrality means that the project is an integral part of the course. Typically, the project takes place over a relatively long peroid of time and requires that several early products be submitted in addition to the final version of the project. The criterion of driving question means that the project pushes students to engage with the key ideas in a discipline through their investigation of a question. These questions are usually relatively open, allowing students some leeway in their investigation. The criterion of constructive investigations means that completing the project requires students to learn new knowledge and skills. In PBL, projects are not assigned for reinforcement of existing knowledge; they are opportunities to acquire new knowledge. The criterion of autonomy requires that the students have a degree of freedom in choosing the topic and in choosing how they investigate the topic. The role of the teacher is generally that of advisor or coach rather than as the source of knowledge and authority. Finally, the criterion of realism means that the learners should be investigating real-world problems using real-world materials. To the extent that it is possible, they should also have an authentic audience for their final product.

Media Project

As noted above, the project discussed in this paper has been implemented at the intermediate-level in an intensive language course at a Thai university. The project requires students to follow current events in an ASEAN country other than Thailand in that country's English-language press. They, then, choose a recent event to investigate in detail and gather information about that event from several sources. Next, they write an extended essay about the event, including information about the event itself and a comparison to a situation in Thailand. After the essay has been checked by their advisor, students then write a script for a 3-minute informative news video about their event and questions for an interview with an expert on the topic. Once the script and questions have been approved, they record the informative video and interview. The final step is to edit the informative video and interview into a 6-minute news piece. At the end of the course, the final video projects are screened in class and graded by course instructors.

Students' projects are assessed using a rubric (see Appendix). The rubric includes three dimensions: research, presentation, and production. In each dimension, students can receive either distinction, pass, or fail. The research dimension of the rubric indicates that in order to pass, students must use at least three different sources, achieve the minimum word count of the news report and compare/contrast sections (400 and 150 respectively), write to an adequate standard for the level (as indicated by the rubric used in their writing course), reference at least one source in the writing, and compose interview questions that are open-ended and mostly suitable. The passing requirements for the presentation dimension are that the student's language does not cause much strain for listeners, the student makes eye contact most of the time, and that at least one source is referenced. In production, the basic requirements are as follows: interviewees are clearly identified, the video is under 7 minutes long, sound and picture glitches do not interfere with comprehension, the sound is mostly audible, and the interviewees have relevant knowledge and are professional.

Methods

The media project has been a part of the intermediate-level course for several years. During this time, it has been revised periodically based on input from teachers and students. At the end of the final term of 2017 (September to November), students in two sections of the course were asked to complete a 14-item Likert scale survey about the project. A total of 33 students out of 40 responded to the survey in this study, yielding a response rate of 82.5%. The survey used a seven-point scale, where "1" was "Strongly Disagree" and "7" was "Strongly Agree." The survey was administered using Google Forms. All participants in this study were registered in the Google Classroom of their respective section of the course. The researchers shared the survey with them via Google Classroom, and the participants completed the survey outside of class time. Data collection was anonymous, and the researchers had no means of determining which participant submitted each response. The collected data was analyzed using Google Sheets. The participants in this study represented a sample of convenience for the researchers. In addition to collecting data for the study, a significant goal of administering the survey was to improve the project for future cohorts of students enrolling in the course.

The survey items were designed to assess several key areas, including whether the students felt that the project improved their language skills (Items 7, 9, and 13), was interesting and useful (Items 1, 12, and 14), helped them meet other people and work as a team (Items 4, 6, and 8), increased their knowledge and interest in current events (Items 2, 3, and 11), developed their study skills (Item 5), and improved their ability to use technology (Item 10).

Results

Overall, the average response to the survey items was relatively high: 5.40, which indicates a generally high level of student satisfaction with the project. The three items that received the highest average scores were Item 10 ("The project helped me to get better at using technology"), which received an average score of 5.9; Item 5 ("The project helped me to improve my study skills"), which received an average score of 5.78; and Item 13 ("The project helped me to improve my writing skills"), which received an average score of 5.75. The three items that received the lowest average scores were Item 8 ("The project helped me to learn to work as a team"), which received an average score of 4.84; Item 1 ("The project was interesting"), which received an average score of 4.97; and Item 4 ("The project helped me to meet other students in my class"), which received an average score of 5.00. The complete results are available in Table 2 below.

In 12 of the 14 items, the median score was higher than the average score. This is explained by a single outlier, who responded "Strongly Disagree" (1) to every item.

Students felt that the areas in which they improved most were technology skills, study skills, and language skills. The lowest average scores appeared in the areas of interest and utility, and meeting and working with others. The average score in each key area is included in Table 3 below.

Table 2 Mean and Median Scores of Likert-Scale Items
(1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

Survey Item	Mean	Median
1. The project was interesting.	4.97	5
2. The project helped me to learn about ASEAN.	5.28	6
3. The project helped me to learn about current events.	5.72	6
4. The project helped me to meet other students in my class.	5.00	5
5. The project helped me to improve my study skills.	5.78	6
6. The project helped me to meet people outside of my class.	5.72	6
7. The project helped me to improve my overall English ability.	5.38	6
8. The project helped me to learn to work as a team.	4.84	5
9. The project helped me to improve my speaking skills.	5.44	6
10. The project helped me to get better at using technology.	5.90	6
11. The project helped me become more interested in current events.	5.38	6
12. I liked the project.	5.09	5
13. The project helped me to improve my writing skills.	5.75	6
14. The project was useful.	5.41	5.5

Table 3 Mean Results of Likert-Scale Survey Items Grouped by Construct
(1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

Area	Survey Items	Mean
Interest and utility	1, 12, 14	5.16
Meeting and working with others	4, 6, 8	5.19
Knowledge of and interest in current events	2, 3, 11	5.46
Language skills	7, 9, 13	5.52
Study skills	5	5.78
Technology skills	10	5.90

Discussion

The media project was designed to align with Thomas' (2000) criteria for PBL: centrality, driving question, constructive investigations, autonomy, and realism. Three of the criteria—constructive investigations, autonomy, and realism—are particularly relevant to the results above. The criterion of constructive investigations indicates that PBL should require learners to gain new skills and knowledge in order to complete the project. The survey results show that in this case students do feel that they have improved their skills and knowledge in several areas, including language and technology. This result is encouraging and aligns with other studies in which project work has been shown to positively influence the acquisition of digital literacy skills and language development (see Coleman, 1992, as cited in Beckett, 2002; Hafner, 2014; Hafner & Miller, 2011; Nurhajati, 2018; Pérez-Mateo, Romero, & Romeu, 2014; Petrucco, 2013).

According to the criterion of autonomy (referred to as student "voice and choice" in the Larmer and Mergendoller (2010; 2015) framework), students should work independently of the teacher and take responsibility for their project (Thomas, 2000). In response to the item asking whether students perceived that their study skills increased, the average score was a relatively high 5.78 out of 7, showing that students did feel some development of their autonomy. It is worth noting that, although the criterion of autonomy (in its various forms and definitions) is considered essential to PBL by most authorities on the approach (see Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010; 2015; Thomas, 2000; see also Table 1 above), and has been a positive outcome documented in many studies of PBL in the contexts language learning (e.g., Nunn, 2014) students themselves do not always view this aspect of project-based learning favorably. In a study by Loizzo, Conner, and Cannon (2018), for example, which explored students' perceptions and experiences of a PBL course in an undergraduate agricultural and environmental sciences communication program, the researchers found that although students valued their freedom of "voice and choice" (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010; 2015; Stoller, 2006) in choosing their project topics (a digital photo and video essay covering topics related to the course), they struggled with other aspects of autonomy, including time management and experienced "stress as a result of having the agency to organize, set, and meet deadlines to complete individual projects" (Loizzo *et al.*, 2018). Within the ESL context, Beckett (2002, citing a systematic review from Beckett, 1999) found that students enrolled in a project-based ESL course thought that "learning by themselves from other sources through project work distracted them from learning English from their teachers and textbooks" (p. 61). It could therefore be inferred that while autonomy may be seen as a positive and important component of PBL—particularly in terms of giving students "voice and choice" (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2010; 2015; Stoller, 2006), students themselves will likely need time to adjust to their new found freedom and may benefit from careful guidance, scaffolding, and instructor feedback.

For Thomas (2000), the criterion of realism emphasizes the importance of authentic materials and authentic tasks. In response to the media project survey, students indicated that the project stimulated their knowledge of and interest in current events, showing that this criterion was at least partially met. Specifically, authenticity was attained through students' engagement with real-world (i.e., genuine, published news articles and stories), locally relevant (i.e., occurring within ASEAN) events and knowledge sources. In addition, students completed tasks with transferrable applications and developed digital literacy skills that can be applied to many different activities inside and outside of the university.

It is worth noting that Thomas' (2000) concept of realism, which other proponents of PBL refer to variously as "authenticity" (Boss & Krauss, 2014 and/or the creation of a "public project" (Larmer & Mergendoller, 2015), can take many forms in actual practice. Furthermore, depending on the particular project and other contextual variables (e.g., time, age, cultural context, access to resources), realism may be constrained in various ways (Pusey, 2018). which is part of the challenge more generally of implementing communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches such as PBL (Eguchi & Eguchi, 2006) and task-based language teaching (Butler, 2011). Although Larmer and Mergendoller (2015) insist that final projects be literally made public (that is, available for inspection and evaluation outside of the classroom) in order to be "authentic," it can be argued that teachers and especially peers still constitute an authentic audience, as was the case for the media project, as each of these audiences hold opinions, have sets of expectations, and can provide meaningful feedback on students' work. However, Larmer and Mergendoller (2015) hold a more critical view: "Think of what often happens when students make presentations to their classmates and teacher. The stakes are not high, so they may slack off, not take it seriously, and not care as much about the quality of their work" (p. 4). Nevertheless, for the media project, it is believed that the screening of the final videos in class, in combination with the consultation of authentic knowledge sources and engagement with locally relevant events all increased the authenticity of the project and made it a meaningful experience for students.

The criteria of centrality and driving question are less directly addressed by the survey items; however, the centrality of the project is highly evident in the structure of the project. The project is of long duration, and it incorporates many key objectives of the course, including question grammar, compare and contrast writing, APA citations and references, and evaluating sources. Although much of the project work is accomplished outside of class time, the project integrates the major topics covered in the course. Thus, the project adheres to the “conditions for effective project-based learning” (in the context of language learning, specifically) set forth by Stoller (2006), including reflections on the process (via regular teacher-student advising sessions throughout the course) and product (via completion of the survey at the end of the course).

Similar to projects described by Foss *et al.* (2008) which capitalized on students’ existing digital literacy skills to produce a newspaper project and a Wikipedia project, this project draws on students’ existing digital literacy skills and gives them opportunities to further develop skills at which they are less adept. Cornell University (2009) has defined digital literacy as being able to “find, evaluate, use, share, and create content” (para. 1). In the context of this program, students tend to have relatively well-developed skills in finding, sharing, and creating content using technology—skills that can certainly be harnessed for a variety of academic and real-world tasks (e.g., conducting Internet searches for information; using file sharing and other collaborative tools online [e.g., Google Docs]); creating and editing videos with transitions, music, and other effects). As Hafner (2014) observes (whose study similarly focused on the process and outcomes of a video project in an English for science course at a university in Hong Kong), “creating and sharing a digital video is an authentic everyday practice that students can relate to” (p. 682). However, many students still lack the ability to skillfully evaluate and use content acquired from digital sources—skills which are particularly critical in academic contexts. This observation is echoed by Phuapan *et al.* (2016), who investigated which specific digital literacy skills were perceived to be most important for the successful use of digital technology in society. The researchers surveyed 400 senior Thai undergraduate students in their final semester at nine different Thai universities (mostly in the Bangkok metropolitan area—including students of the same university in which the project and study discussed in the present paper is situated) about their learning environments and their capacity to use and adapt to learning in Information and Computer Technology (ICT) rich environments. The results showed that of the digital literacy skills included in the survey (access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create, and communicate), the ability to evaluate was the most significant indicator of digital literacy development.

It is thus noteworthy that in the media project, students develop their ability to evaluate whether online sources are trustworthy, whether they are factually accurate, and whether they are appropriate for use in an academic environment. In addition, they develop their ability to use content in an academically appropriate way. An important component of this ability is knowledge of intellectual property, plagiarism, and when and how to cite sources.

Several steps in the process of collecting, recording, editing, and sharing content are "normalized" (to borrow Bax's (2011] terminology)," and thus do not require extensive explanation from the teacher. Bax (2011, p. 1) defines the normalization of technology as follows:

A technology has reached its fullest possible effectiveness in language education when it has arrived at the stage of 'normalisation,' namely when it is used without our being consciously aware of its role as a technology, as a valuable element in the language learning process.

Bax (2003) gives the examples of textbooks and pens that are completely normalized. At this stage, a technology is "invisible and truly integrated" (p. 13). Before becoming normalized, however, a technology must pass through “intermediate stages” (Bax, 2011, p. 1) during which it becomes progressively less conspicuous. While recording video using a mobile phone and posting videos to YouTube may not yet be “invisible,” these uses of technology are everyday tasks for the majority of the students completing the video project (but see Hafner (2014) for exceptions). Video editing is also partially normalized, but to a lesser extent than recording and sharing videos. Focusing on students’ digital literacy skills that are less developed while allowing them the freedom to use partially normalized technology (e.g., video editing) to the limits of their ability results in student learning and high-quality projects.

In many cases, students may surpass their teachers in certain technology skills. In this video media project, students choose from a wide selection of applications and programs, some of which they have already learned to use for entertainment purposes and some of which they are able to quickly master because of their familiarity with similar software. Requiring the students to use one particular method for video editing would result in less creative and less diverse final products. In their own time, students can engage with tutorial videos on YouTube (some created by students after completing this very project) to receive guidance on video capture and editing, leaving the teacher ample time to focus on other aspects of the project.

Conclusion

This paper has introduced a project that improves learners’ digital literacy skills, particularly the skills of evaluating and using content, while also developing their language skills. PBL is highly compatible with the development of digital literacy, and the project was designed to align with Thomas’ (2000) five criteria for PBL as detailed above: centrality, driving question, constructive investigations, autonomy, and realism.

By supporting students in their research and academic use of sources, then, giving them the autonomy to create and share content using their well-developed technology skills, the project provides opportunities for students to overcome their weaknesses and emphasize their strengths. This study had many limitations. One major limitation was the use of a survey to gather data. This limitation is further compounded by the limited scope of the survey. Another major limitation was the population included in the study: a small, relatively homogeneous group of students. These limitations limit the generalizability of the study.

References

Bax, S. (2003). CALL—past, present and future. *System*, *31*(1), 13-28.

Bax, S. (2011). Normalisation revisited: The effective use of technology. *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching, 1*(2), 1-15.

Beckett, G. (2002). Teacher and student evaluations of project-based instruction. *TESL Canada Journal, 19*(2), 52–66. Retrieved from https://teslcanadajournal.ca/index.php/tesl/article/view/929/748

Binkley, M., Erstad, O., Herman, J., Raizen, S., Ripley, M., Miller-Ricci, M., & Rumble, M. (2012). Defining 21st Century Skills. In P. Griffin, B. McGaw, & E. Care (Eds.), *Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills* (pp. 17-66). Dordrecht: Springer. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2324-5

Boss, S., & Krauss, J. (2014). *Reinventing project-based learning: Your field guide to real-world projects in the digital age*. International Society for Technology in Education.

Butler, Y. G. (2011). The implementation of communicative and task-based language teaching in the Asia-Pacific region. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 31*, 36-57. doi: 10.1017/S0267190511000122

Condliffe, B., Quint, J., Visher, M. G., Bangser, M. R., Drohojowska, S., Saco, L., & Nelson, E. (2017). Project-based learning: A literature review. Retrieved from http://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/ler/MDRC+PBL+Literature+Review.pdf

Cornell University. (2009). What is digital literacy? Retrieved from https://digitalliteracy.cornell.edu/

Ducker, N. (2013). Academic English and content development thorough ethnographic research projects. *The Asian EFL Journal*, *15*(4), 422-430. Retrieved from https://www.asian-efl-journal.com/7649/volume-15-issue-4/academic-english-and-content-development-thorough-ethnographic-research-projects/

Eguchi, M., & Eguchi, K. (2006). The limited effect of PBL on EFL learners. *The Asian EFL Journal, 8,* 207–225. Retrieved from https://www.asian-efl-journal.com/1195/main-journals/the-limited-effect-of-pbl-on-efl-learners-a-case-study-of-english-magazine-projects/#squelch-taas-tab-content-0-3

Foss, P., Carney, N., McDonald, K., & Rooks, M. (2008). Project-based learning activities for short-term intensive English programs. *The Philippine ESL Journal, 57,* 57-76. Retrieved from http://www.philippine-esl-journal.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/August-2008-Vol1.pdf#page=57

Grant, M. M. (2011). Learning, beliefs, and products: Students' perspectives with project-based learning. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning*, *5*(2), 37-69. https://doi.org/10.7771/1541-5015.1254

Hafner, C.A. (2014). Embedding digital literacies in English language teaching: Students' digital video projects as multimodal ensembles. *TESOL Quarterly 48*(4), 655-685. doi: 10.1002/tesq.138

Hafner, C. A., & Miller, L. (2011). Fostering learner autonomy in English for science: A collaborative digital video project in a technological learning environment. *Language Learning and Technology, 15*(3), 68–86.

Horan, C., Lavaroni, C., & Beldon, P. (1996). Observation of the Tinker Tech Program students for critical thinking and social participation behaviors. *Novato, CA: Buck Institute for Education*.

Krajcik, J., & Blumenfeld, P. (2005). Project-Based Learning. In R. Sawyer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences* (Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology, pp. 317-334). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511816833.020

Larmer, J., & Mergendoller, J. R. (2010). Seven essentials for project-based learning. *Educational Leadership*, *68*(1), 34–37.

Larmer, J., & Mergendoller, J. (2015). Why we changed our model of the "8 essential elements of PBL." *The Buck Institute for Education*. Retrieved from http://devonshire.ccsd59.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2016/03/8_Essential-Elements-of-PBL.pdf

Loizzo, J., Conner, N.W., & Cannon, K.J. (2018). Project-based learning for developing digital literacy in undergraduate science communication. *NACTA Journal, 62*(2), 142-150. Retrieved from https://www.nactateachers.org/index.php/volume-62-number-2-june-2018/2732-project-based-learning-for-developing-digital-literacy-in-undergraduate-science-communication

Martín, J. G., López, C. L., & Martínez, J. E. P. (2014). Supporting the design and development of Project Based Learning courses. In *2014 IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference (FIE) Proceedings* (pp. 1–6). IEEE. Retrieved from http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpls/abs_all.jsp?arnumber=7044388

Nanni, A. (2016). Project-based learning in intensive EAP courses at a Thai university. In D. Shaffer & M. Pinto (Eds.), *KOTESOL Proceedings 2016: Shaping the Future with 21st Century Skills*. Paper presented at 24th Korea KOTESOL International Conference, Seoul, Korea (pp. 223-229). Seoul: Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Nunn, R. (2014). Holistic learning, first-person voice, and developing academic competence. *The Asian EFL Journal 74,* 19-31. Retrieved from https://www.asian-efl-journal.com/7907/monthly-journals/holistic-learning-first-person-voice-and-developing-academic-competence/#squelch-taas-tab-content-0-3

Nurhajati, D. (2018). Project-Based Learning used to develop supplementary materials for writing skill. *The Asian ESP Journal*, *14*(3), 6-11. Retrieved from https://www.asian-efl-journal.com/9928/research-editions/aej-tesol-indonesia-conference-volume-2/#squelch-taas-tab-content-0-2

Patil, Z. N. (2006). On the nature and role of English in Asia. The Linguistics Journal *1*(2), 88-131. Retrieved from https://www.linguistics-journal.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/June_2006LinguisticsJournal.pdf

Pérez-Mateo, M., Romero, M., & Romeu, T. (2014). Collaborative construction of a project as a methodology to acquire digital competences. *Comunicar 42,* 15-23. doi: 10.3916/C42-2014-01

Petrucco, C. (2013). Fostering digital literacy between schools and the local community: Using service learning and project-based learning as a conceptual framework. *International Journal of Digital Literacy and Digital Competence, 4*(3), 10-18. doi: 10.4018/ijdldc.2013070102

Phuapan, P., Viriyavejakul, C., & Pimdee, P. (2016). An analysis of digital literacy skills among Thai university seniors. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET) 11*(3), 24-31. http://dx.doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v11i03.5301

Pusey, K. (2018, December). *Teacher agency in PBL and beyond*. Paper presented at the 3rd Vietnam National Conference on Project-based Language Learning "Project Teaching At K-12 Schools In Vietnam," Thai Nguyen, Vietnam.

Ravitz, J. (2010). Beyond changing culture in small high schools: Reform models and changing instruction with project-based learning. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *85*(3), 290–312.

Richards, C. (2005). The design of effective ICT-supported learning activities: Exemplary models, changing requirements, and new possibilities. *Language Learning & Technology*, *9*(1), 60–79.

Stoller, F. L. (2006). Establishing a theoretical foundation for project-based learning in second and foreign language contexts. In G. H. Beckett & P. C. Miller (Eds.), *Project-based second and foreign language education: Past, present, future* (pp. 19–40). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Thomas, J. W. (2000). A review of research on project-based learning. Retrieved from http://www.bobpearlman.org/BestPractices/PBL_Research.pdf

Appendix

Grading Rubric

	Distinction 80 %	**Pass 65-80 %**	**Fail -65 %**
Research	The project provides three **distinctly different** sources. The written work is of a high standard (see writing rubric). The written work references **multiple sources**. Questions are open questions and logical.	The project provides three different sources. The sources are not the **exact same** report published on different websites. The written work includes both the news report and compare/contrast sections with required word count, 400 and 150. The written work is of an adequate standard (see writing rubric). The written news report **references at least one** source. Questions are open questions and mostly suitable.	Less than three sources are provided. Sources are inadequate, off topic and/or duplicated. Either of the written sections are omitted or under the word count. The written work or finished video contain a substantial amount of material that is **off topic or irrelevant.** The written work is of an inadequate standard (see writing rubric). **No reference** is made to any sources. Questions are closed and/or mostly off topic.
Presentation	Pronunciation is generally clear and correct. Speech has a natural rhythm. Eye contact with the viewer is maintained throughout. **Three Sources** are referenced.	The student's presentation can be easily followed and does not cause too much strain on the viewer. There are some pronunciation errors and speech rhythm might be unnatural. Eye contact with the viewer is maintained most of the time.	Throughout speech is mumbled or unclear and causes considerable strain on the listener. Numerous pronunciation errors cause difficulty in communication. The student reads from a script.

		At **least one source** is referenced.	**Little or no eye** contact with camera. **No sources** are referenced.
Production	Throughout the first half of the news report the student has creatively used images and video clips to increase the viewers' knowledge. The entire video is **under** 7 minutes. Filming locations are selected creatively and logically (**NOT** bedrooms, canteen or coffee shops). The student has found a **suitable** interviewee for the expert subject, someone who provides insight into the situation not just opinion. Sound is **clear throughout**. Picture is **mostly in focus**. Interviewees respond in a professional manner and have detailed knowledge on the topic as it pertains to Thailand.	Interviewees are clearly indicated with name and position. The entire video is **under** 7 minutes. There may some sound and picture glitches but they do not interfere with the viewers' understanding. Sound is **mostly audible**. Interviewees have knowledge of the topic as it pertains to Thailand and are professional.	The interviews are with **students from our program.** The interviewee is clearly uninformed about the topic. The entire video is **over** 7 minutes. No name or position is given for an interviewee. The interview is conducted partly in Thai without journalistic necessity. Sound is **completely inaudible**. Interviewees have little knowledge of the topic and lack professionalism.

Exploring English language teaching: Language in action (2nd ed.)

Graham Hall, New York, NY: Routledge, 2018. Pp. xi+282.

Waheeb S. Albiladi

University of Arkansas, U. S. A.

Bioprofile

Waheeb Albiladi is a Ph.D. candidate in the TESOL program at the University of Arkansas. He has 8 years of experience in teaching English as a second/foreign language. His research interests include: ESL/EFL pedagogy, technology in English teaching and learning, bilingual education, and teachers' use of data. **Email**: walbilad@gmail.com

This book provides an extensive theoretical framework and practical guidelines that explore the new trends in English language teaching from an applied linguistics perspective. The intended audience for this book includes English language educators, English teachers, educational policymakers, and graduate students in English language teaching.

The book consists of 12 chapters, each of which explores an important aspect of teaching English. It addresses four main themes which represent significant elements of English teaching and teachers' education: classroom interactions and management; English teaching methodology; English language learners; and the institutional frameworks and social contexts regarding English teaching. In each theme, the author first explores the conceptual framework and then provides an in-depth understanding of some of the key dilemmas and concerns surrounding teaching English.

The first theme, addressed in chapters 1, 2, and 3, covers the interactions that occur in language classrooms between teachers and language learners. According to the author, these interactions are derived from several directions including but not limited to the social

University of Arkansas
Department of Education
Peabody Hall
Fayetteville, AR 72701 U.S.A.

and pedagogical characteristics of teachers and language learners, the diversity of the language classrooms, and the complexity of teachers' and learners' roles in the learning process. These domains are essential in creating effective and productive language classrooms. Moreover, within these chapters, the author offers language teachers with guidelines that define "the good language teacher," which includes controlling and managing language classrooms, integrating new technological devices, and contextualization of the teaching practices.

In the second theme, represented in chapters 4,5, and 6, the author discusses the concept of "teaching method" in English teaching and learning. These chapters help teachers raise questions about what language aspects they should teach and how those language aspects should be taught. Hall points out that language teachers usually have beliefs and concerns regarding ways to meet the goals and objectives of their teaching, and these beliefs and concerns affect their teaching practices. In addition, these chapters explore various teaching methods used throughout the years (e.g. Grammar Translation Method, Audiolingual Method) and connect them with a wider social context. In other words, language teachers' understanding of these methodologies helps them decide which teaching method fit their students' learning needs. This has resulted in some differences in perspectives between teachers and language experts as teachers understand and implement the method in their own professional context.

The third theme, covered in chapters 7, 8, and 9, focuses on developing an understanding of the essential role of language learners in English classrooms. Hall reported that each language learner has unique characteristics that add and contribute to the language classrooms. In English teaching, individuality is an important factor that affects how language should and is taught and learned. In other words, learners approach English learning differently as they have differences in terms of motivation, beliefs, and learning styles. Additionally, these chapters provide teachers with an in-depth explanation of different characteristics of language learners, offering some implications which may allow teachers to understand and then respond to the differences.

The fourth theme, included in chapters 10, 11, and 12, examines some of the contextual factors that might affect language learners and language classrooms. According to Hall, English language teaching and learning has been influenced by many social, cultural, and political dimensions which language teachers should take into consideration. One of the factors that has been emphasized is the idea of authentic or real language. The author concluded these chapters by identifying some significant aspects of curriculum development such as syllabus design, assessment, and teaching materials. These aspects can be used as a guideline for language teachers to develop and enhance their teaching practices.

The book has two main objectives: discussing the foundational theories of English teaching pedagogy from an applied linguistics lens and linking these theories with practical implications that benefit language teachers and learners. These objectives were achieved because the book guides readers to explore the theoretical perspectives surrounding language teaching and learning in an easy-to-follow and concise language. Also, the practical implications were presented at the end of each chapter allowing readers to understand how to apply knowledge to teaching or learning practices.

The book also helps educational policymakers to increase and broaden their knowledge regarding teachers' education. More importantly, with the rich theoretical framework and practical implications, this book is an enlightening resource for some of the key issues and concerns that language teachers have regarding teaching and learning English in various contexts. The merit of this book is that it succeeds in identifying some of these issues which might hinder the teaching and learning process. However, the author could have expanded the discussion on how teachers, especially prospective language teachers, can deal with or avoid these issues. This would have increased the authenticity of the implications presented throughout the book.

Reference

Hall, G. (2018). *Exploring English language teaching: Language in action (2nd* ed). New York, NY: Routledge.

Declaration

I, Waheeb Albiladi, declare that this book review has not been previously published or is not under review by any other professional journal.

ASIAN EFL JOURNAL The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Agency at Work： An Agentic Perspective on Professional Learning and Development

Goller, M., & Paloniemi, S. (Eds.). Springer, 2017. Pp. xviii + 484.

Xiaolei Ruan

Anhui University, China

Bioprofile

Xiaolei Ruan is a lecturer at School of Foreign Studies, Anhui University, Hefei, Anhui, China. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics, with special research interests in educational linguistics and foreign language teachers' career development. **Email**: 19024@ahu.edu.cn

As the 20th volume of Springer's book series of *Professional and Practice Based Learning,* this book aims to explore the relationship between agency (defined as individuals' capacities to act) at work and professional development. The topics have been selected from a range of disciplines and educational and organizational domains. This book is divided into 23 chapters written by 41 authors from 11 different countries.

In the first chapter, Goller and Paloniemi raised the issue that agency has become increasingly popular over the last two decades, while the conceptualization of which remained relatively abstract. Against this backdrop, they pinpointed the aims of the book, namely, to synthesize the perspectives on agency at work and to discuss the empirical research that has been generated by these perspectives.

There are eight chapters conceptualizing agency at work from various perspectives. In Chapter 2, Evans proposed the notion of bounded agency based on an interdisciplinary aspect for new dialogic endeavors between communities of thought

School of Foreign Studies, Anhui University
No. 111 Jiulong Road, Hefei, Anhui Province, 230601 China

and practice in the field of adult learning. In Chapter 3, Wiethe-Körprich *et al.* proposed the concept of intrapreneurship to stress the creative and innovative entrepreneurial thinking and acting ability of employees. In Chapter 4, Smith probed into the relationship between agency and workplace learning from a socio-personal perspective, where agency as properties, relations and transformations have been considered to highlight the socio-personal nature of engagement with workplace learning. In Chapter 5, Goller and Harteis conceptualized work agency not only as something individuals do, but also as their personal characteristics divided into competence, beliefs and personality. In Chapter 6, Kwon expanded the notion of agency to include *a behavioral facet* and elaborated why it was necessary to incorporate it into the understanding of agency in an individual's life course. In Chapter 7, Hopwood explored agency from the perspective of three epistemic dilemmas, i.e. *incompleteness, fragility and instability* of knowledge, which are closely related to the nature, status and adequacy of knowledge. In Chapter 8, Messmann and Mulder analyzed the relations between work-related reflection, innovative work behavior and professional learning. In Chapter 9, Hökkä *et al.* examined the reciprocal relationship between *professional agency* and *emotions* in work contexts. In Chapter 10, Eteläpelto summarized the major themes in previous chapters: the core interpretations of agency, the societal and sociocultural context of agency, the role of the individual subject in agency and the connections between agency and learning.

The following 12 chapters are concerned with empirical studies and methodological findings from a range of domains. In Chapter 11, Billett and Noble, based on 34 qualitative interviews with Australian pharmacists, novice doctors, and senior doctors, suggested that *co-working professional learning* had been most effective when individuals get the chance to work with other more knowledgeable persons. In Chapter 12, Edwards *et al.* applied ethnographic approach to address educational inequalities in four Chilean schools from *a cultural-historical perspective*. In Chapter 13, Collin *et al.* examined how agency and creativity manifested themselves in the daily work of Finnish information technology professionals. In Chapter 14, Palesy and Billett identified five emerging *agentic action*s through qualitative interviews and observation: drawing upon past experience and knowledge, deciding to apply already learnt knowledge, relying on their own assertiveness and resilience, deliberately seeking to engage with peers and intentionally consulting written materials in the workplace. In Chapter 15, Ylén conducted an ethnographic study on software developers' work and identified several *agency-enabling practices*: democratic work structures, openness to an experimental approach towards the work, a climate fostering self-directed learning and the organization of daily work within project teams. In Chapter 16, Rajala and Kumpulainen, based on a qualitative study with Finnish teachers, revealed four distinct temporal orientations of agency: *practical-evaluative, reproductive, critical-projective, and creative-projective*. In Chapter 17, Kerosuo used *cultural-historical activity theory* to unpack the interplay of transformative agency and means of supporting it in development processes at work. In Chapter 18, Vähäsantanen *et al.* evaluated how *work conferences* could be used as agency-promoting learning arenas. In Chapter 19, Kreuzer *et al.* operationalized *intrapreneurship* (IP) as a manifestation of work agency in the context of the German industrial clerk apprenticeship program to reiterate the assumption that this technology-based assessment tool is able to visualize IP competence. In Chapter 20, Raemdonck *et al.* conducted four consecutive studies to construct and validate a 14-item scale to measure *self-directedness in work-related learning processes*. In Chapter 21, Harwood and Froehlich explored how teachers' engagement in *proactive feedback-seeking* had been related to their teaching performance as well as overall psychological and social wellbeing. In Chapter 22, Damşa *et al.* concluded that *agency as an individual construct* and *agency at a collective level* were two perspectives to analyze agentic learning, and that both qualitative and quantitative methods were used as analytical approaches.

Finally, in the conclusion part, Paloniemi and Goller, discussed and reemphasized the multi-faceted nature of agency and professional learning, two complementary understanding of agency: *"an individual phenomenon*" and *"a collective phenomenon"*; two perspectives on agency: something that people *have* and *do*; and the implications for possible future research. Overall, with a masterful marshaling of different theoretical as well as empirical explorations, this book will provide food for thought for researchers with interests in agency, workplace learning and career development.

Fund: Supported by the National Tertiary Foreign Language Teaching and Research Project (2019AH0020A)

Reference

Goller, M., & Paloniemi, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Agency at work: An agentic perspective on professional learning and development*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

Declaration

The review has not been previously published and is not being considered for publication elsewhere.