

The Asian EFL Journal

Volume 24, Issue 3



Senior Editors:
Paul Robertson and John Adamson

Production Editor:
Bonifacio T. Cunanan



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>

©Asian EFL Journal 2020

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of the Asian EFL Journal Press.

No unauthorized photocopying

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the Asian EFL Journal.

editor@asian-efl-journal.com

Publisher: Dr. Paul Robertson

Chief Editor: Dr. John Adamson

Production Editor: Dr. Bonifacio T. Cunanan

College of Arts and Letters, Bulacan State University, Philippines
Don Honorio Ventura State University, Philippines

ISSN 1738-1460



Table of Contents

1	Amer Ahmed and Iryna Lenchuk <i>Making Sense of Task-Based Language Teaching in the Omani EFL Context</i>	6
2	Marzieh Bagherkazemi <i>Individual/Collaborative Output vs. Input Enhancement and Metapragmatic Awareness Raising: Impacts on Immediate and Delayed Speech Act Production ...</i>	27
3	Chieh-Hsiang Chuang <i>Causes of English Majors' EFL Anxiety: Tertiary Teachers' Perceptions</i>	50
4	Hyang-Il Kim and Hyekyeng Kim <i>The Mediating Effects of Self-Efficacy on Learners' Reading Strategy Use and Reading Proficiency</i>	73
5	Mahmood Safari & Leila Niknasab <i>Interlanguage Pragmatic Development: Input-providing or Output-prompting Tasks?.....</i>	99
6	Yimin Zhang & Issra Pramoolsook <i>Beyond the Argument: Generic Diversity in Instruction-based Writing by Chinese EFL Undergraduate Students</i>	123



Foreword

The Asian EFL Journal May 2020, Issue 24 Volume 3 contains six articles written by teachers of English as a Foreign Language. These six articles include topics that deal with classroom practices, pedagogical procedures, and language policy which are crucial in in-depth review of EFL trends and issues in an Asian context.

The featured articles in this volume were written by Amer Ahmed and Iryna Lenchuk (Dhofar University, Sultanate of Oman), Marzieh Bagherkazemi (Islamic Azad University - South Tehran Branch), Chieh-Hsiang Chuang (School of Foreign Languages at Fujian Medical University, China), Hyangil Kim (Smith College Sahmyook University, Korea) and Hyekyeng Kim (Hyekyeng Kim Kumoh National Institute of Technology, South Korea), Mahmood Safari and Leila Niknasab (Hazrat-e Masoumeh University), and Yimin Zhang and Issra Pramoolsook (Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand).

In *Making Sense of Task-Based Language Teaching in the Omani EFL Context*, Amer Ahmed and Iryna Lenchuk discuss the task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach to address two pedagogical issues: (1) the definition of a task and (2) the integration of language form into a task. In their research, the authors follow the idea of principled pragmatism and develop a sample lesson plan in the EFL context. Containing a summary of the teacher's introspection on and observations about the students' reactions to the task, the paper can be useful to practicing teachers developing their own tasks and applying TBLT in the EFL contexts.

In *Individual/Collaborative Output vs. Input Enhancement and Metapragmatic Awareness Raising: Impacts on Immediate and Delayed Speech Act Production*, Marzieh Bagherkazemi has sought to investigate the impacts of individual and collaborative output, input enhancement, and metapragmatic awareness-raising on English as a foreign language learners' production of speech acts. The study carries important pedagogical implications: (1) that pragmatic instruction, in its various realizations can lead to short-term and long-term Interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) development and (2) that valuing output-based instruction alongside merely input-based instructional approaches may have overwhelming implication for interventionist ILP research.

In *Causes of English Majors' EFL Anxiety: Tertiary Teachers' Perceptions*, Chieh-Hsiang Chuang reports the factors that can contribute to the learning anxiety of students in English as a foreign in Taiwan. The study reveals that the respondents had difficulty in tolerating others' negative comments or evaluation and had poor group interactions. In the study, such findings must give way to teachers in order to have better understanding of their students, raise the learners' awareness on how emotion can optimize second language (L2) acquisition, and make them aware of the pervasive nature of L2 acquisition.

In *The Mediating Effects of Self-Efficacy on Learners' Reading Strategy Use and Reading*

Proficiency, Hyangil Kim and Hyekyeng Kim discuss the relationship between the learners' reading strategy use and reading proficiency of 259 Korean university students. Their study shows that positive relationship between reading strategy and reading proficiency. These strategies are metacognitive strategy, cognitive strategy, and support strategy use.

Mahmood Safari and Leila Niknasab, in *Interlanguage Pragmatic Development: Input-providing or Output-prompting Tasks*, disclose the effect of output-based tasks on developing pragmatic competence among 42 Iranian intermediate English foreign language (EFL) learners. Using paired sample *t*-tests, the study reveals that the explicit teaching group performed significantly better than the role play group. More so, the study indicates that input-based activities are more effective than output-based activities for pragmatic development.

In *Beyond the Argument: Generic Diversity in Instruction-based Writing by Chinese EFL Undergraduate Students*, Yimin Zhang and Issra Pramoolsook discuss a corpus analysis of the written compositions of 40 English-major students enrolled in 3 writing-related courses offered in the curriculum in a Chinese university. Using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the researchers found that the student-participants 'learner pathways' are more complex, and their writing genres are more dynamic, diverse, varied, and richer than what those prescribed by the national syllabus in China. Moreover, the study indicates that the student-participants writing genres were more random and unrestricted but were circumscribed by the design of the course syllabus. The study implies that students should be supported by way of expanding their rhetorical and generical repertoire by giving them exposure to a wide range of genres and broader rhetorical contexts.

With these substantial research articles, The Asian EFL Journal wishes to push EFL teaching and learning in the Asian region and beyond.

Bonifacio T. Cunanan, Ph.D.

Production Editor of The Asian EFL Journal, May 2020

College of Arts and Letters, Bulacan State University, Philippines

Graduate Faculty, Don Honorio Ventura State University, Philippines



Making Sense of Task-Based Language Teaching in the Omani EFL Context

Dhofar University, Sultanate of Oman

Bioprofiles

Iryna Lenchuk is an Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, Dhofar University. Her research interests include task-based instruction, interlanguage pragmatics, and pedagogy and methodology of second and foreign language learning. She has been teaching ESL, TESL and courses in applied linguistics in Canada and Oman. ilenchuk@du.edu.om

Amer Ahmed is an Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, Dhofar University. His research interests are in the areas of linguistic interfaces, second language acquisition, second language pedagogy and methodology, and Arabic diglossia. He has been teaching ESL and courses in linguistics in Canada and Oman.

College of Arts and Applied Sciences (CAAS) Department of Languages and Translation Dhofar University P. O. Box 2509, Postal code: 211 Salalah, Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

This paper discusses the task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach, which is currently used in the ESL and EFL contexts as a methodological option of the communicative language teaching. Despite its prevalence, a number of issues related to TBLT are disputed in the literature. Two of these issues are (1) the definition of a task; (2) the integration of language form into a task. Such a dispute poses a challenge to practicing teachers using this approach in their classrooms. Using social constructivism as a theoretical framework, we follow the idea of principled pragmatism and develop a sample lesson plan in the EFL context. The paper also includes a summary of the teacher's introspection on and

observations about the students' reactions to the task. We believe that this paper can be useful to practicing teachers developing their own tasks and applying TBLT in the EFL contexts.

Key words: social constructivism, TBLT, action research, EFL in Oman

Introduction

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an approach to second language (L2) teaching and learning which has been widely discussed in the literature on L2 learning (Ellis, 2018, 2017, 2009; Long, 2015) and used by practitioners in the ESL and EFL contexts (see e.g., Center for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB), 2012; East, 2017; Hawkes, 2015; Samuda et al., 2018). For example, the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs), a document that outlines a Canadian language standard for the teaching and assessment of ESL in Canada, lists task-based instruction as one of its guiding principles (CCLB, 2012, p. IX). According to the CLBs, ESL learners acquire communicative competence by doing real tasks that emphasize community, work and education. In addition, Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA), a new type of assessment recently introduced in federally and provincially funded ESL classes in Canada, uses the concept of a real-world task as an assessment artefact. A learner's collection of the artefacts (i.e. a collection of real-world tasks completed by an ESL learner) constitutes evidence of the progress made by the ESL learner.

Advocates of the TBLT promote the use of this approach in the classroom (see e.g., Willis & Willis, 2007). It is claimed that active engagement and participation of L2 learners in tasks leads to the development of the proficiency of the learner's target language. These claims are supported by a number of empirical studies on TBLT (Long, 2015). However, despite a growing number of theoretical and empirical studies on TBLT, some questions remain unanswered and as such they are widely debated in the literature. For example, there is no consensus in the literature on TBLT as to (1) what constitutes a task and (2) whether there is a place for explicit instruction in the TBLT (For a comprehensive list of questions raised by the proponents of the TBLT, see Ellis, 2017; Long 2015).

The theoretical debates, interesting as they are, constitute a challenge for ESL and EFL teachers who are often required, as in the context of federally and provincially funded programs in Canada, to use the TBLT for teaching and assessment purposes (CCLB, 2012).

One way to address this challenge is to encourage practicing teachers to base their judgements of how to use TBLT in the classroom on *principled pragmatism*, which is proposed by Widdowson (1990, 2017), and is viewed as a type of pedagogic *mediation* between theory and practice, and between abstract ideas and their actualization in teaching practices. By applying principled pragmatism in the classroom, teachers are encouraged to challenge the implementation of top-down practices. While making their pedagogic choices, practicing teachers can draw on a variety of methods that seem ‘plausible’ to them, that reflect their subjective understanding of their teaching practices and sociocultural local contexts where their teaching takes place (Prabhu, 1990). For example, in defining a task as a real-world task or a pedagogical activity, teachers should use their professional knowledge, their experience, knowledge of the teaching context and knowledge of their learners that might include among other things learners’ previous experiences, their cultural and educational background. The task that we present in this paper is designed by taking into account the current discussion on TBLT as well as our own sense of plausibility as EFL instructors teaching EAP in one of the universities in the Sultanate of Oman where English is considered to be the official foreign language.

Two Debatable Issues in TBLT

This section starts with a brief discussion of the main principles of social constructivism as a chosen theoretical framework for this study (Sjøberg, 2010, pp. 485-490; Vygotsky, 1978, 1987; Gal’perin, 2010). The proponents of social constructionism argue that knowledge is actively constructed by learners rather than passively transmitted to them. Since learners’ approach to learning tasks is shaped by the social and cultural practices of their communities, teachers need to take into consideration the broader sociocultural context of their learning and development. The proponents of social constructivism, like Vygotsky and Gal’perin as his student and follower, argue that sociocultural tools (e.g., language) play a major role in the development of higher psychological processes, such as the development of abstract scientific concepts and abstract thinking. According to Vygotsky (1978, 1987), learners can potentially develop a new, more advanced way of thinking when they are engaged in solving a cognitively demanding task with the assistance of a more knowledgeable other, e.g. a teacher or a peer. While working on a culturally advanced task and/or activity, learners can potentially develop and internalize knowledge that would lead them to solving a similar task

without the assistance of a more knowledgeable other. Therefore, the learning task itself, when structured as a cognitively demanding activity, provides opportunities for learners' cognitive development and growth.

A highly debated topic in TBLT is the concept of *task*. According to the definition provided by Long (2015, p. 6), a task is a real-world activity that “people think of when planning, conducting or recalling their day”. These types of real-world tasks are also known in the literature as situational real-world tasks (Bachman & Palmer 1996, pp. 23-29; Ellis, 2017). Based on the needs assessment of L2 learners, an ESL/ EFL instructor can identify a set of tasks that L2 learners are likely to complete outside the classroom in unrehearsed situations and practice those tasks inside the classroom. For example, such tasks can potentially include the task of describing symptoms to a doctor and/ or asking for an extension on an assignment, among other things. Ellis (2017) argues that there is a problem with a needs-based approach to tasks. A needs-based approach may work well in the context of ESL where L2 learners encounter the target language outside the classroom and are therefore ‘pushed’ to prepare themselves for such tasks.¹ However, in the EFL context, where L2 learners have limited exposure to the target language outside the classroom, a needs-based approach to TBLT is questionable, since EFL learners may not be aware of how they are going to use the target language outside the EFL classroom.

As an alternative to the definition of a task as a real-world activity, a task can also be defined as a pedagogical activity. According to Nunan (2004, p.4), a task is “a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, and producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form”. What is emphasized in this definition is that first, a task as an activity should assist L2 learners in communicating meaning, since the ability to communicate meaning is the goal of CLT and TBLT, as one of its methodological options. Second, a task is designed in order to manipulate the target language so that the attention of learners is drawn to the linguistic resources that are needed to convey meaning. It is believed (see for example Ellis, 2017) that tasks that are pedagogical in nature lack the situational authenticity of real-world tasks; at the same time, it is claimed that they possess interactional authenticity, where the goal of the pedagogical task is not to replicate the task that L2 learners might encounter outside the classroom but to provide them with linguistic and

communicative resources that are necessary to be acquired in order to complete authentic, real-world tasks. To illustrate, when L2 learners participate in the activity known as dictogloss, where a group of L2 learners are required to reconstruct in writing the narrative that they have just heard, such a task has interactional authenticity. It is unlikely that L2 learners encounter a dictogloss as a real-world task. However, the linguistic and communicative resources they have utilized in order to complete the task and to negotiate for meaning may be used in other more authentic tasks outside the classroom.

In addition to the definition of a task (i.e. real-world, needs-based tasks vs. tasks as pedagogical tools), the debate in TBLT is centred on the role of explicit instruction. The main argument that is put forward by the proponents of incidental implicit learning in TBLT (see for example Long, 2015) is that explicit instruction does not result in implicit knowledge, which is the ultimate goal of L2 acquisition. According to Long (2015), incidental implicit learning of forms happens when learners are working on the completion of their tasks. On the other hand, the proponents of explicit instruction in TBLT argue that language forms that are needed for the successful completion of a task should be isolated and explicitly taught to L2 learners in task-supported language teaching (TSLT) activities (Ellis, 2017). The goal of the TSLT activities is to focus learners' attention on the target language forms that are needed in order to complete a task.

In this section, we have outlined a theoretical framework chosen for the study and discussed the two main issues disputed in the literature on TBLT; specifically, the definition of a task and the integration of language form into a task. We believe that ESL and EFL teachers should be aware of this discussion; however, they should make their pedagogical decisions based on the ideas of principled pragmatism (Widdowson, 1990; 2017). According to principled pragmatism, teaching materials are hypothetical constructs from which actual instances of pedagogical activities are developed. These activities incorporate teachers' subjective understanding of their own teaching practices and contexts. Therefore, the next section provides a description of the broader sociocultural context that inform our decisions as EFL teachers as to what constitutes a task.

The Sociocultural Context of Teaching EFL in Oman

The Sultanate of Oman, one of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, is located on the southeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Ethnologue (2018) lists 17 languages that

are spoken in Oman. Among them are Standard Arabic, different varieties of Arabic, for example Omani Arabic, the languages of expat communities, and several indigenous languages, for example Mehri, Jibbali and Bathari. For its economic development, Oman heavily relies on expats that constitute approximately 44.8% of its total population of 4 million people (National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI), 2017). While Standard Arabic has the status of the official language of the country, English has the status of the language of wider communication (Ethnologue, 2018), the official foreign language of the country and a *lingua franca* to connect members of the highly diversified workforce in Oman. During the years of Oman's modern Renaissance that started in 1970s, many economic, social and educational reforms took place in Oman. As a result of the educational reforms, English is a subject in Omani public schools from Grade 1 to Grade 12 and a medium of instruction in all institutions of higher education (Ismail, 2011). In order to ensure a smooth transition from a secondary to a post-secondary educational level, the government also introduced the General Foundation Program where English is listed as one of the four areas of learning together with Mathematics, Computing and General Study Skills (Ismail, 2011). Therefore, proficiency in English is an essential condition for obtaining a college diploma or a university degree and for getting access to a highly competitive job market. With this in mind, we have developed a task that seems to be plausible to us, as it reflects our understanding of the theoretical debate on TBLT and the local context of teaching. The task developed emphasizes the following:

1. A task is a pedagogical activity that aims to provide learners with communicative resources that can be used outside the classroom.
2. A task includes TSLT activities, the purpose of which is to prepare the learners for the actual completion of a task; in addition, TSLT activities provide learners with opportunities to practice and recycle language forms (i.e. grammatical structures and vocabulary) in communicative contexts.
3. A task includes focus on form activities as a way of promoting noticing of language form and developing accuracy.
4. The content of a task incorporates local traditions as a way of acknowledging the learners' heritage and culture.

Research Question and Methodology

The study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the task that is developed based on the concept of principled pragmatism by using the methodology of Action Research (AR). According to Burns (2015), AR is done by a practitioner who is dissatisfied with a current pedagogical practice(s). A practitioner studies a teaching practice, identifies a problem and proposes an intervention that would positively affect teaching and learning. Thus, the goal of AR is to generate some practical and theoretical knowledge about a given social situation that is emergent in the classroom. This knowledge is supported by the data that might be gathered through observations and practitioner's introspection, as it is done in this study. This procedure for data collection is in line with the theoretical framework inspired by the ideas of Vygotsky and his followers. When critically evaluating the methods used in psychology, Vygotsky argued that every scientific problem should be studied "in its genesis, its causal dynamic basis" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 62). According to Vygotsky,

Any psychological process, whether the development of thought or voluntary behavior, is a process undergoing changes right before our eyes. The development in question can be limited to only a few seconds, or even fractions of seconds (as in the case of normal perception). It can also (as in the case of complex mental processes) last many days and even weeks. Under certain conditions it becomes possible to trace this development. (p. 61)

Thus, classroom observations provide opportunities for understanding the microgenesis of the process of learning, and introspection provides opportunities for critical reflection of any development and analysis of the moments where the development, no matter how big or small it is, has taken place. The impetus for this AR was the lack of communicative tasks that would incorporate focus-on-form activities within a communicative context that takes into consideration the cultural practices and the previous educational experiences of the Omani EFL learners. This task is discussed in the next section.

The Task

The content of the task developed is based on the Omani practice that is familiar to our students. In this task, students are asked to describe the process of making Frankincense, an aromatic resin used in incense and perfumes, which is obtained from trees grown in the Dhofar province of the Sultanate of Oman. This task would require knowledge of the English passive. What follows is a description of the lesson plan where the students learn how to

complete the task of describing a process. The TSLT activities presented in Appendix 1 are structured in a way to elicit the students' previous knowledge and create a context that is familiar to them. Thus, in TSLT activity 1, the students are presented with the word *Frankincense* and are asked to come up with the words and phrases that are associated with this word. The mind map that the students create sets the context, prepares them for the task and elicit background information about Frankincense that made Dhofar region famous. This introductory activity is followed by a reading passage titled *Omani Uses Medicinal Value of Frankincense* (see TSLT activity 2). The reading passage is adapted from the newspaper, *the Times of Oman* (2017). The reading passage talks about Atheer, a young Omani woman who, as a graduate student in one of the universities in the USA, conducts research in organic chemistry and biochemistry. In her research, Atheer combines the traditional knowledge of Dhofari Frankincense with the knowledge she gained through her university studies. In 2016, she founded her own company called *Lubaniah*, which produces natural wellness products. Before reading the passage about Atheer, students' attention is drawn to the words that might not be familiar to them and are needed to understand the article. Students' comprehension of the reading passage is checked by using True/ False and Not Given statements.

The reading activity that creates a context familiar to the students and prepares them for the task is followed by TSLT activity 3 where the students are presented with a set of six sentences and are asked to identify active or passive verbs. The students are also asked to identify the verb tense. In addition, the attention of learners is drawn to the transformation of the sentence from active to passive by highlighting the subject and the object. TSLT 3 activity is followed by a question that elicits the rule of constructing passive sentences in English based on the analysis of the linguistic data presented to the learners. This idea is rooted in the experiential and hands-on approach to EFL instruction. It is believed that experiential learning and discovery lead to better learning results. In other words, if an EFL learner is asked to discover grammatical rules on their own, the information that they discover about language will more likely be stored in their long-term memory. The elicitation of the rule activity is followed by an exercise where learners are asked to change the sentences from active into passive. All the sentences are contextualized and are based on the reading passage introduced to the students at the beginning of the class. TSLT 1-3 activities described above have provided the students with linguistic and communicative

resources that are needed to complete the task. The students are also reminded of the process of making Frankincense by watching a video *Frankincense in Oman* (2014). The students are also provided with 11 sentences that are used as prompts in order to assist the learners in their description of the process. A self-assessment activity where the learners are asked to reflect on their learning experiences concludes the lesson.

Teacher's Observations: Preparing for the Task

This section presents a summary of the teacher's observations about the use of the task described in the previous section and the reaction of the Omani undergraduate EFL students to the task. In addition, the section discusses the rationale of the choices made by the teacher, which are guided by the idea of principled pragmatism.

For the teacher, TBLT seems to be a more 'plausible' choice in Prabhu's terms, due to the teacher's knowledge, training and experience of successfully applying TBLT albeit in a different teaching context; more specifically, while teaching a federally funded ESL class to adult learners in Canada. The intention of the teacher was to develop a task that would incorporate the local cultural practices and reflect the students' backgrounds (on the importance of the development of culturally relevant materials, (see: Harendita, 2018). It was the teacher's belief that the prescribed textbooks, i.e. the *Unlock* series (Ostrowska, et al., 2014), which are used in the EFL Foundation program courses and the first year EAP course at the post-secondary level, do not reflect the local practices of the students, which are shaped by the cultural and religious traditions of the region. To illustrate, the course syllabus developed for ENGL101 *Basic Academic English* lists the following topics of the textbook to be introduced to the students: *Globalization*, *Education*, *Medicine* and *Risk* (Dhofar University, 2017a). While delivering the lessons, the teacher discovered that although the textbook series have been developed with the Arabic speakers in mind (see e.g., section on *How Unlock Helps Arabic-speaking Learners*, Stirling, 2014, p. 135) and is marketed in the GCC countries, the content of the textbook is biased towards the western, more specifically British content.² For example, the unit *Globalization* includes a reading passage from a blog that discusses a Turkish restaurant in Soho, London (Sowton, 2014, p. 19), whereas the unit *Education* includes a listening exercise that describes the job of a gondolier in Venice (pp. 34-35) and a reading passage on Middleton University (p. 37). A unit titled *Medicine* discusses the pros and cons of homeopathy and starts with the following sentence, "The British National Health Service was founded to provide free healthcare to

people who need it” (p. 55). In the reading passage of the unit *Risk* that discusses risk taking activities, the reference is made to the UK government and British workplace (p. 76).

While introducing the key words of the unit *Risk* to the students, such as *rollerblading*, *rock climbing*, *free climbing*, and *paragliding*, the teacher observed a lack of interest and motivation from the students. In order to boost the learners’ motivation, the teacher decided to expand the content of the unit *Risk* by supplementing it with the activities based on the movie *Tracks* that tells the story of Robyn Davidson, who walked 1,700 miles (2, 735 kilometers) for 9 months across the Australian desert accompanied only by four camels and her dog (Curran, 2013). The classroom discussion of the movie clips surprised the teacher, who was personally moved by the story and the aesthetics of the film. The teacher discovered that some students were indifferent to the story since it was a story that they can *never* relate to, while others found it strange and even shocking that a young woman would *willingly* walk through the desert accompanied only by her dog and four camels.

In the class taught by the teacher, most of the students were young females. Based on the teacher’s observations and her daily communication with the students, the teacher concluded that their behavior in many ways is shaped by the local cultural and religious traditions. Thus, it was noticed that taking risks at different levels, such as initiating a conversation with a male, leaving a family to pursue undergraduate or graduate studies or travelling alone without a husband’s permission is not something that is accepted by the local culture. Overall, the teacher noticed that the activities young women can participate in are somewhat restricted. This observation was also supported by a statement made by a female graduate Omani student who commented on the fact that typically, in local families, young men are provided with more opportunities compared to their female counterparts, as their activities are less restricted by the societal norms. (This very student was advised by her family against completing her undergraduate degree outside of Oman. However, her family supported her decision to complete an undergraduate degree in the only public university in Oman and later pursue her studies as a graduate student in a local private university).

It should be noted here that while observing and reflecting on the patterns of behavior of her female students, the teacher did not make any value judgements about their beliefs, practices and their cultural norms. In the spirit of principled pragmatism advocated for in this paper, while choosing teaching materials for her class, the teacher decided to develop a

task with content that the students can relate to. This task seemed in Prabhu's terms more 'plausible' to the teacher since it reflected the teacher's subjective understanding of the sociocultural context where her teaching took place.

Teacher's Observations: Doing the Task

The following section provides a summary of the teacher's observations and introspection of the task performed in the classroom.

The teacher observed that while introducing the outcomes of the lesson, i.e. being able to describe the process of making Frankincense, the students were somewhat reluctant to engage in the lesson. The teacher attributed their reluctance to participate in the activity to their lack of exposure to communicative tasks. Based on the students' educational experiences of studying English at the secondary and post-secondary levels, language is typically presented to them as a combination of four skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening, speaking) and language forms (i.e. vocabulary and grammar). For example, for ENGL101 *Basic Academic English* course, the students are required to have two textbooks, one is *Unlock 4: Reading and Writing Skills* (Sowton, 2016) and the second textbook is *Unlock 4: Listening and Speaking Skills* (Lansford, 2014). The bands of the IELTS test for the four language skills are taken as benchmarks for the exit test administered at the end of the Foundation program and as a newly introduced prerequisite for university graduation (Dhofar University, 2017b). Overall, it was quite challenging for the teacher to convey her beliefs that were shaped by her education and training. For the teacher, target vocabulary and grammar practice as well as language skill practice introduced in TSLTs should be used as communicative resources that are needed for the successful completion of the task.³ In other words, the teacher observed that many students continued to view vocabulary, grammar and language skills included in the TSLTs as separate components that should be mastered and tested in isolation. During the class, some students raised questions as to whether or not their knowledge of the target vocabulary and grammatical structures introduced in TSLTs is going to be tested in a formal quiz or an exam.

It took some time for the students to understand the first activity, the goal of which was to create word associations with the word *Frankincense* and to engage the students by bringing to class the local practices. Gradually, the students were able to come up with very creative associations that included among other lexical items the following words: *perfume*,

incense, Luban tree, seed, medicine, mummy and sea. The last two words reflected students' knowledge of the use of Frankincense in mummification and the rich seafaring tradition of the local region. The activity ended with a very engaging discussion on the use of Frankincense as alternative medicine.

The teacher observed that while doing TSLT activity 2 whose goal was to create a communicative context for the task, the students became more engaged. The students' active engagement in TSLT 2 was due to the fact that the students were able to relate to the main character of the passage, a Dhofari female student. The content of the passage that discusses the use of Al Hawjari frankincense for medicinal purposes was also familiar to the students. At the end of the activity, the students described Atheer as being smart and commented on the opportunity provided to her to study in one of the American universities.

TSLT activity 2 was followed by a focus on form activity (i.e. TSLT activity 3), whose purpose was to isolate the passive and elicit the rule based on the examples provided to the students. While doing this activity, the teacher observed that in the sample active and passive sentences, only lexical items, such as subjects, objects and main verbs, were noticed by the students. As a result, the students came up with the incorrect rule by stating that in order to form the passive, the subject and the object should change places and the form of the main verb should change from the present to the past. The verb *to be* was not included in the rule. This observation confirmed the teacher's pedagogical decision to draw students' attention to the language form that is needed for the task by providing immediate negative feedback and opportunities for practice.

When the time came to do the actual task, the teacher observed that the majority of the students were engaged in completing the task. Their engagement was attributed to the following: (i) the students dealt with content that was familiar to them and reflected their local practices; (ii) the students were provided with additional reading and listening activities that built on their pre-existing knowledge; (iii) the students were provided with opportunities to practice the target vocabulary and grammar form needed for the successful completion of the task; (iv) the students were given prompts that guided their description of the process.

The teacher also observed that one of the major difficulties for the students in relation to the language form was the use of the passive in sentences with complex subjects and objects. For example, in the first prompt *resin of the special tree/ harvest*, the subject is *resin of the special tree*. The teacher observed that some students separated the prepositional

phrase of *the special tree* from the word *resin*, which resulted in an ungrammatical sentence, such as *Resin is harvested of the special tree*.

The Best Intentions: Introspection on Students' Reactions to the Task

The previous section described the teacher's observations about the students' reactions to the task developed by the teacher. As a result of her observations, the teacher discovered a gap between the developments in theory and methodology of teaching EFL and its actual realization in the classroom. The intention of the teacher trained in the best spirit of communicative language learning and TBLT, as one of its methodological options, was to bring a communicative task in the EFL classroom. While developing the task, the teacher used recent theoretical and practical advances in the field of second language education together with the idea of principled pragmatism. By treating the task as a pedagogical activity and incorporating the language form in the task, the teacher's intention was to equip her students with the linguistic resources that would enable them to complete a similar task outside of the classroom. In addition, the teacher's intention was to incorporate the local customs and traditions into the task and to make the content of the task relevant to the students.

As a result of her observations, the teacher discovered that although the students were engaged in the lesson where the task was introduced, they also found it quite challenging. For example, one student approached her after the class with the following question *Why did you make it so difficult for us?* The teacher attributed the difficulties encountered by the students to their tendency to approach language learning in a more traditional way either as a combination of language skills and/or language forms that are introduced, practiced and assessed as discrete points in isolation from their communicative contexts. Based on the students' reactions to the task, the teacher concluded that learning how to do things with language is not something that many students have experienced as language learners. For the students, foreign language learning becomes more about the acquisition of language knowledge than about the development of the actual ability to do things with language.

Communicative language teaching and learning through tasks has been widely advocated for in Oman starting from language learning in public school. For example, in the introduction to the Teacher's book for Grade 10 (Directorate General of Curriculum, 2006-2007, p. vi), it is stated that "...the course is structured around a series of topics, which

provide opportunities for a multi-layered, task-based approach to be adopted”. The question as to why the EFL students still approach language learning in a more traditional way presents an interesting area for future research.

A summary of the discussion of the data obtained through the teacher’s observations and introspections on students’ engagement with the task at its different stages of implementation is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
A Summary of the Teacher’s Observations and Introspections

Observation	Introspection
1. Learners do not engage with the ready-made materials (e.g., textbooks) that lack a cultural context familiar to them.	1. A communicative task should reflect a context that is familiar to the learners.
2. Learners view language as a combination of discrete points, either as separate skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) or separate language components (grammar, vocabulary) that have to be mastered in isolation.	2. Language is not viewed as a communicative resource despite the philosophy of communicative language teaching promoted at the secondary and post-secondary education in Oman.
3. Despite learners’ previous educational experiences, learners can engage with communicative tasks	3. A more integrated approach to language teaching and learning is possible when language learners are working with tasks that integrate their previous educational experiences and cultural practices.
4. Learners engage with TSLT activities that constitute an integral part of a communicative task.	4. TSLT promote noticing and opportunities for corrective feedback.
5. Learners find task prompts helpful.	5. A communicative task should be structured. Learners should be provided with enough guidance as to how to complete a task.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Task: A Word of Caution

Based on the discussion of the data collected through teacher’s observation and introspection, we revisit the question investigated by this study. Was the task effective? When analyzed from the point of view of the theory of social constructivism, the task itself provides opportunities for the development of learners’ knowledge. Learners ‘gradual engagement with the task, their motivation and interest to participate in the TSLT activities, as supported by the teacher’s observations of the learners’ performance in the classroom, can be used as indicators of the task effectiveness. However, a word of caution is needed regarding the introduction of TBLT in the Omani EFL classroom. In the educational context where this study took place, there is a strong tendency to view language either as a combination of

separate skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) or discrete grammatical forms (i.e. grammar and vocabulary), despite the attempts to introduce communicative language teaching and TBLT as one of its methodological options in the curricular of the secondary and post-secondary institutions in Oman (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012). In this context, it is much more plausible then to be aware of this tendency by gradually changing the perception of learners about English. It is challenging for learners to treat English as a communicative resource considering their past and present educational experiences. However, learners' perceptions can gradually change if the right teaching materials are used in the classroom. These materials should be developed based on teachers' subjective understanding of their current teaching practices and the sociocultural local contexts where their teaching takes place.

Conclusion

In this article, we provided a sample task for EFL learners. The task has been developed based on recent developments in the literature on TBLT; specifically, the concept of *task* (task as a real-world activity vs. task as a pedagogical activity) and the importance of TSLT activities, the purpose of which is to provide learners with linguistic resources that are needed to complete the task. This task has been developed based on our own sense of plausibility as language instructors teaching EFL in Oman. The article also includes a discussion of the observations of the teacher who introduced the task to the EFL learners in the Omani context and the teacher's introspection on the effectiveness of the task as a pedagogical tool. We believe that this article will be of interest to practicing teachers who are trying to make sense of TBLT and to apply this approach in their everyday teaching practices.

Notes

1. Based on our anecdotal evidence which was collected during our work as ESL instructors in federally and provincially funded schools for immigrants and refugees in Canada, tasks that are needs-based are limiting because ESL learners have a tendency to select the tasks related to their basic needs, such as going to the doctor, and/ or shopping for food or clothes. ESL learners may be reluctant to choose tasks that are not directly related to their everyday needs, however helpful those tasks might be for their future life in Canada. One such task can be a task that would teach L2 learners how to vote in municipal, provincial and federal elections in Canada.
2. It is perhaps not surprising that the section *What teachers and learners say* of the publisher's website features three reviews of teachers from Oman, UAE and the Saudi Arabia (Cambridge English, 2019).

3. The teacher found their reactions surprising. It is not that the students are unfamiliar with the concept of a task. While supervising the students for their practicum in public schools, the teacher familiarized herself with the textbooks. She discovered that the textbook used in public schools introduce learners to many authentic tasks, such as completing an itinerary, writing a letter of application, filling in a registration form, drawing a graph, to name just a few (Ministry of Education, 2018). Despite that, the teacher observed that her EFL students continue treating language as a combination of language skills and isolated language forms and they were far from developing the actual *ability* of doing things with language.

References

- Al-Issa, A. S. M., & Al-Bulushi, A. (2012). English language teaching reform in Sultanate of Oman: The case of theory and practice disparity. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 11, 141-176.
- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burns, A. (2015). Chapter eleven: Action research, In J. D. Brown & C. Coombe (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to research in language teaching and learning* (pp. 187-204). Cambridge University Press.
- Cambridge English. (2019). *Unlock*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/gb/cambridgeenglish/catalog/english-academic-purposes/unlock>
- Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB). (2012). *Canadian Language Benchmarks: English as a second language for adults*. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/language-benchmarks.pdf>
- Curran, J. (Director). (2013). *Tracks* [Motion picture]. Australia. Screen Australia.
- Dhofar University. (2017a). *ENGL101 Basic Academic English: Course syllabus*. Dhofar University.
- Dhofar University. (2017b). *Student handbook 2017-2018*. Dhofar University.
- Directorate General Curriculum. (2006). *English for me*. Basic education 10B teacher's book. Sultanate of Oman.
- Ellis, R. (2018). *Reflections on task-based language teaching*. Multilingual Matters.
- East, M. (2017). 'Research into practice: The task-based approach to instructed second language acquisition'. *Language Teaching* 50(3), 412–424.
- Ellis, R. (2017). 'Position paper: Moving task-based language teaching forward'.

- Language Teaching* 50(4), 507-526.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Methodology of task-based teaching. *Asian EFL Journal*, [special edition], 6-23.
- Ethnologue: Languages of the world. (2018). 'Summary by country'. Retrieved from <https://www.ethnologue.com/statistics/country>
- Frankincense in Oman. (2014). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQiCsbc2ejg>
- Gal'perin, P. Ia. (2010). O formirovanie umstvennyh dejstvij i ponjatij. [On development of mental actions and concepts]. *Kul'turno-istoricheskaja psihologiya. [Cultural-Historical Psychology]*. 3, 111-114.
- Harendita, M. E. (2018). Embracing EIL pedagogy in teaching speaking to university students through culturally relevant materials. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 20(5), 258-263.
- Hawkes, M. (2015). Using pre-task models to promote mining in Task-Based Language Teaching. *TESOL International Journal* 10(2), 80-96.
- Ismail, M. A. 2011. *Language planning in Oman: Evaluating linguistic and sociolinguistic fallacies* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Newcastle University, UK.
- Lansford, L. (2014). *Unlock 4: Listening and speaking skills*. Student's book. Cambridge University Press.
- Long, M. (2015). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Ministry of Education. (2018). *English for me*. Basic education 9B classbook. Ministry of Education: Sultanate of Oman.
- National Center for Statistics and Information. (2017). *Population clock*. Retrieved from <https://ncsi.gov.om/aboutus/Pages/PopulationClock.aspx>
- Natividad, M. R. A., & Batang, B. L. (2018). *TESOL International Journal*, 13(4), 104-121.
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ostrowska, S., O'Neill, R., Westbrook, C., Sowton, C., White N. M., Dimond-Bavir, S., Lansford, L., Pathare, E., Pathare G. (2019). *Unlock*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/gb/cambridgeenglish/catalog/skills/unlock>

- Prabhu, N. S. (1990). 'There is no best method – why?' *TESOL Quarterly* 24(2), 161-176.
- The Times of Oman. (2017). 'Omani taps into traditional value of Frankincense'.
Retrieved from <http://timesofoman.com/article/122582/Oman/Omanisation/omani-taps-into-medicinal-value-of-frankincense>
- Samuda, V., den Branden, K. V., & Bygate M. (2018). *TBLT as a researched pedagogy*. John Benjamins.
- Sjøberg, S. (2010). Constructivism and learning. In B. McGaw, E. L. Baker, & P. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (3d ed.) (pp. 485-490). Elsevier Ltd.
- Sowton, C. (2014). *Unlock 4: Reading & writing skills*. Student's book. Cambridge University Press.
- Stirling, J. (2014). *Unlock 4: Reading & writing skills*. Teacher's book. Cambridge University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, and E. Souberman (Eds.), *Mind in society. The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky. Volume 1. Problems of general psychology. Including the volume Thinking and Speech (R. W. Reiber and A. S. Carton (Eds.)). New York: Plenum Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2017). Henry Widdowson's interview, 50th anniversary BAAL annual meeting, University of Leeds. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebfxQV-zoWs> (accessed on 6 February 2018).
- Willis, J., & Willis, D. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching (Oxford handbooks for language teachers' series)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

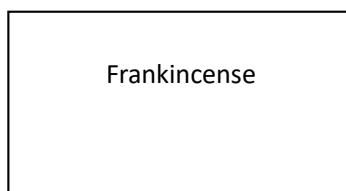
Appendix 1

A Sample Task

Describing a process: How to make Frankincense?

TSLT activity 1: Making a mind map

What words or phrases do you associate with the word 'Frankincense'? Write as many as possible.



TSLT activity 2: Creating a context

Read the passage below which talks about Atheer, an Omani girl who has used her knowledge of Frankincense in her scientific research. Below is a list of words that you may need to understand the passage. Study and discuss them with your partner.

Luxury (n), luxurious (adj), facewash, microbiology, bioscience, organic chemistry and biochemistry, natural wellness products, natural oil, ancient, therapy (n), therapeutic (adj), medical products, eczema, itching, consumers

Omani Uses Medicinal Value of Frankincense

Have you ever dreamed of enjoying a luxurious frankincense facewash? Well, thanks to Atheer Tabook, you can now!

Atheer is 25 years old. She is from Oman but currently she studies microbiology and bioscience at the University of Michigan in America. She also does research in the field of organic chemistry and biochemistry. In August of 2016 Atheer combined traditional Dhofari frankincense with the knowledge she gained through her university studies and she made a soap. In 2016 she also won a competition and she founded her own company called Lubaniah which produces natural wellness products.

There are many plants that were used by Omanis since ancient times to treat many diseases. Atheer gets natural oils from the plants in the Sultanate. Atheer is currently studying these therapeutic plants. During one of the lectures Atheer learnt that 99 per cent of the therapeutic benefits found in medicinal plants can be seen in Al Hawjari frankincense that is found in

Oman. Atheer learnt how to make medical products using frankincense and many of its natural oils.

One of her best products is the eczema frankincense lotion that helps stop the itching in eczema patients. It also makes the skin younger and it moisturizes the skin. The lotion does not have any chemicals.

Atheer's products are excellent because she uses many parts of the plant and not just the oil. She also promises that her wellness products are effective and inexpensive. Consumers want to buy the products, because they are 100 per cent natural, handmade, and have high quality ingredients.

What did you understand about Atheer, her research and her new business? Read the following statements and mark them as True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG)?

- 1 Atheer is a student. _____
- 2 Atheer is married. _____
- 3 Atheer studies microbiology and bioscience. _____
- 4 Frankincense is a natural ingredient. _____
- 5 Many therapeutic plants are found in Oman. _____
- 6 Atheer's products have only natural ingredients and are based on scientific research. _____
- 7 Atheer aspires to have her own company. _____

TSLT activity 3: Focus on form

Read the sentences below and answer the questions

Atheer conducts research. *Active or passive? Simple present or simple past?*

Research is conducted by Atheer.

Atheer produced a soap. *Active or passive? Simple present or simple past?*

A soap was produced by Atheer.

People produce perfume in Salaah. *Active or passive? Simple present or simple past?*

Perfume is produced in Salalah.

*What is **the rule**?*

Now change the sentences below from active into passive:

- 1 Omanis used many plants to treat different diseases.
- 2 Atheer founded her own company in 2016.
- 3 People can see many medicinal plants in Dhofar.
- 4 People can find Al Hawjari frankincense in Salalah.
- 5 Atheer uses frankincense to make many natural wellness products.
- 6 People use frankincense to make perfume.
- 7 Atheer does not use any chemicals.

Task: How is Frankincense produced?

Watch the video on Frankincense

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQiCsb2ejg>

Describe how Frankincense is produced. The sentences below will help you in your description of the process.

- 1 Resin of the special tree/ harvest
- 2 The bark of the tree/ scrape with a knife
- 3 Then the resin/ dry and sell at Hafa souk in Salalah
- 4 Many things/ derive from the special resin
- 5 Frankincense oil/ extract/ through distillation
- 6 The resin/ boil/ chemists in the lab to extract its essences
- 7 A tiny flask of perfume/ sell for \$50 in the US
- 8 Frankincense can/be/ use/ for therapeutic purposes
- 9 The white, sometimes greenish resin/ separate
- 10 It / think to be a good medicine to help with gastro-intestinal and other illnesses

Today I learnt how _____



Individual/Collaborative Output vs. Input Enhancement and Metapragmatic Awareness Raising: Impacts on Immediate and Delayed Speech Act Production

Marzieh Bagherkazemi

Islamic Azad University (South Tehran Branch)

Bioprofile

Marzieh Bagherkazemi is Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at Islamic Azad University (South Tehran Branch), Iran. She has run language testing, research methodology, second language acquisition, and language teaching methodology courses since 2008. Her research interests include interlanguage pragmatic development, pragmatic learning strategies, issues in language teacher education, and input and interaction in SLA. mbagherkazemi@gmail.com

Department of English Language and Literature, Islamic Azad University (South Tehran Branch, Valiasr Complex, Damavand St., Tehran, Iran)

Abstract

The present study sought to investigate the impacts of individual and collaborative output, input enhancement, and metapragmatic awareness-raising on English as a foreign language learners' production of speech acts. For this purpose, 107 Iranian intermediate learners' immediate and delayed speech act production was measured through a written discourse completion test (WDCT) at Time 1 (the pre-treatment phase), Time 2 (one week after the last treatment session), and Time 3 (four weeks after the last treatment session). ANOVA results showed three performance levels at Time 2: (1) CO and MA, (2) IE, and (3) IO, indicating the comparability of MA and CO in terms of their short-term impacts. As for long-term impacts, CO proved superior, followed by MA, while IE and IO jointly came in last. The findings are discussed in light of the noticing and output hypotheses.

Keywords: collaborative output; individual output; input enhancement; metapragmatic awareness; speech act

Background of the Study

Interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) research gained considerable momentum in the 1990s, in line with the explicit recognition of ‘pragmatic competence’ - knowledge of linguistic means (pragmalinguistics) and social norms (sociopragmatics) for effective communication (Roever, 2009) - as an indispensable aspect of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990). The interventionist body of such research, though principally investigating the teachability of pragmatics and instruction-versus-exposure effects at the outset (Rose & Kasper, 2001), addresses the impacts of various instructional pragmatics approaches mainly on speech act production and comprehension, given the potential challenges of classroom-based ILP development (see El-Okda, 2011; Kasper & Rose, 2002). The primacy of speech acts as instructed pragmatics research targets is due to the fact that these pragmatic features are realized differently in terms of both linguistic tools and social norms in different cultures. Cross-cultural variation is more evident in the realization strategies of apologies, requests, and refusals (see Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Takahashi, 2010 for a review).

Theoretically, the first decade of interventionist ILP research was majorly founded, in the main, on Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis, operationalizing explicit instruction (e.g., Cohen & Ishihara, 2005; Edwards & Csizér, 2004; Halenko & Jones, 2011; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001; Nguyen, 2013; Taylor, 2002), implicit instruction (e.g., Fukuya & Zhang, 2002; Narita, 2012; Sykes, 2013), or explicit and implicit instruction with comparative designs (e.g., Alcón, 2005; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martínez-Flor, 2006; Sardegna & Molle, 2010; Takahashi, 2001). Accordingly, instructed pragmatics research abounds with comparative studies of implicit and explicit instruction. In their meta-analyses of instructed pragmatics, Jeon and Kaya (2006), Roever (2009), Takahashi (2010), and Taguchi (2011) found out that explicit instruction (operationalized as metapragmatic awareness raising in the present study) is more effective and conducive to more durable gains than implicit instruction (operationalized as input enhancement in the present study). In a more recent analysis of 58 instructed pragmatics studies, however, Taguchi (2015) showed that implicit pragmatic instruction can be just as effective provided that it leads learners to notice and process form-function-context mappings for the target pragmatic features, notwithstanding the comparatively larger effect sizes explicit instruction has generally produced.

Explicit or metapragmatic awareness raising instruction has been principally operationalized as the direct provision of metapragmatic information on the

pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of targeted pragmatic feature(s). It has also incorporated one or more explicit metapragmatic awareness-raising tasks, including “dialogue/conversation analysis, discussions, role-plays, video viewing, narrative reconstruction, translation exercises, and self-reflection” (Takahashi, 2010, p. 399). Also, explicit conditions have been realized in the form of inductive and/or deductive instruction (e.g., Kubota, 1995; Martínez-Flor, 2008; Nguyen, 2013; Rose & Ng Kwai-fun, 2001). Research has shown the benefits of explicit instruction for ILP development (e.g., Eslami-Rasekh & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh, & Fatahi, 2004; Martínez-Flor, 2008); however, it is not clear whether the observed positive impact is due to explicit rule explanation per se, or its combination with consciousness-raising tasks, which in some cases involved learners in speech act production as well. On the other hand, implicit instruction (including input enhancement) has involved providing practices aimed at enabling learners to infer linguistic rules and social norms underlying the use of certain pragmatic features intentionally embedded in the input and practice opportunities provided (Taguchi, 2011, 2015; Takahashi, 2010). Among implicit instruction approaches, pragmatic input enhancement, mainly operationalized as typographic enhancement of relevant input-embedded features, stands out (e.g., Alcón Soler, 2005, 2007; Li, 2012; Nguyen, Pham, & Pham, 2012; Takahashi, 2001). In studies which have operationalized implicit pragmatic instruction as exposure to visually enhanced input, this treatment constituent has been generally offered along with production and/or feedback opportunities. Accordingly, the efficacy of enhanced input in the absence of these opportunities is yet to be investigated.

Against this background, the last decade of ILP research has involved a shift of focus from the predominant binary distinction between explicit and implicit instruction to the comparison of instructional approaches varying in the number and order of instructional strategies (e.g., Takimoto, 2010), type and amount of input and practice (e.g., Tateyama & Kasper, 2008), as well as assessment tasks (e.g., Pattemore, 2017). Abstracting away from or adding to the noticing hypothesis, such conditions have drawn upon several accounts of second language acquisition, including input processing theory and processing instruction (e.g., Takimoto, 2007, 2009, 2010), skill acquisition theories (e.g., Li, 2012), sociocultural theory and dynamic assessment (e.g., Khatib & Ahmadi Safa, 2011; Ohta, 2005; Tajeddin & Tayebipour, 2012), and comprehensible output hypothesis (e.g., Jernigan, 2007; Nguyen, 2013; Taguchi & Kim, 2016; Takimoto, 2012). Nevertheless, how approaches with any of

these theoretical underpinnings compare with the prevalent implicit and explicit pragmatic instruction has been only scarcely addressed (e.g., Nemati & Arabmofrad, 2014). To contribute to the empirical evidence required for expanding the theoretical scope of ILP development, the present study investigated the learning and retention of speech acts within the framework of Swain's (1985) 'comprehensible output hypothesis,' and compared the results with the findings of mainstream instructed pragmatics research. The study of output based ILP development is justified on two premises. First, instructed pragmatics studies informed by other theories than the noticing hypothesis are too few and far between, and further empirical evidence is needed to find out how effectively they, including Swain's (1985) 'comprehensible output hypothesis' and its post 2000 offshoot, i.e. 'collaborative dialogue,' can explain ILP development (Taguchi, 2011, 2015). Second, controlled production practice following the provision of metapragmatic information has contributed to the research-based superiority of explicit pragmatic instruction (Taguchi, 2015; Takahashi, 2010). Accordingly, researching output-based pragmatics instruction devoid of and in comparison, with (a) explicit rule explanation and (b) implicit teaching would shed light on the potential of learner output per se for ILP development.

In her comprehensible output hypothesis, Swain (1985, 1995, 2006) postulated pushed or modified output, both self-initiated or 'individual output,' and other-initiated or 'collaborative output,' to bear three acquisitionally relevant functions: consciousness raising, hypothesis testing, and reflection. Since 2000, she has capitalized on her concept of *collaborative dialogue* or *language* as 'language use mediating language learning' (Swain, 2000, p. 97), and this has more clearly reflected the sociocultural underpinnings of her hypothesis. Swain (2006) makes a distinction between individual and collaborative output pointing to the cognitive nature of the former and the socio-cognitive nature of the latter. Research into the potential of learner output for ILP development can be categorized into two groups. The first group includes studies which fall outside the framework of Swain's output hypothesis and appreciate the role of learner output only in knowledge proceduralization and development of processing control over acquired forms and functions (e.g., Li, 2012; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001). The second group involves studies which corroborate Swain's (1985, 1995, 2000, 2006) proposition as to the potential of learner output going beyond developing processing control to acquisition and internalization. These studies have assigned individual and/or collaborative output a focal part in their designs

(Jernigan, 2007; Nemati & Arabmofrad, 2014; Nguyen, 2013; Taguchi & Kim, 2016; Takimoto, 2012). As an example, Jernigan (2007) found individual output-based instruction operationalized as oral and written text reconstruction tasks effective for ILP development. On the other hand, Collaborative output features in Takimoto's (2012) study, who found 'collaborative metapragmatic discussion' effective for the production and recognition of request downgraders. Similarly, Nguyen (2013) found peer-peer metapragmatic discussion effective for the learning of constructive criticism's softeners. Along the same lines, Taguchi and Kim's (2016) 'collaborative dialoguing' approach involved the provision of explicit information as a main component.

The above background to instructed pragmatics research, related to the present study's concerns, can be conducive to six main conclusions which, in turn, show the gaps in the related literature. First, until about the last decade, the implicit/explicit instruction distinction haunted interventionist ILP research, with the noticing hypothesis providing its main theoretical foundation. Second, studies on the long-term impacts of instructed pragmatics approaches are too few and far between (e.g., Koike & Pearson, 2005; Li, 2012; Takimoto, 2007, 2012). Third, ILP studies with practice opportunities following input exposure in their designs limit the potential of learner output to knowledge proceduralization, and therefore do not reflect the premises of the output hypothesis. Fourth, within the framework of Swain's output hypothesis, collaborative output studies feature more frequently than individual output studies in instructed pragmatics research. Fifth, the few individual and collaborative output-based studies have shown the acquisitional significance of learner output; however, owing to the multiple-strategy instructional approaches featuring in these studies, conclusions regarding its efficacy per se and in comparison, with implicit and explicit conditions should be drawn cautiously. Finally, how individual output with its cognitive underpinnings and collaborative output with its socio-cognitive underpinnings promote the process of ILP development (speech act production in the present study) is a moot point. Given these gaps in the literature, the present study sought to compare the short-term/immediate and long-term/delayed impacts of four instructional approaches, namely 'individual output,' 'collaborative output,' 'input enhancement,' and 'metapragmatic awareness-raising,' on EFL learners' production of the three speech acts of apology, request, and refusal. To this end, the research question formulated in this study was, 'Do individual output, collaborative output, input enhancement, and metapragmatic awareness-raising

differ regarding (a) their short-term impacts on EFL learners' speech act production, and (b) their long-term impacts on EFL learners' speech act production?'

Method

This section provides information on the participants, instruments and procedure. Participant selection involved a convenience sampling procedure, using four intact 'Listening and Speaking in English' classes. They comprised Iranian sophomore students, majoring in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) at the South Tehran Branch of Islamic Azad University, Iran. There were 121 learners in the four classes; however, only data obtained from learners at the intermediate proficiency level (N=107) were used in the study. Decision as to the inclusion of intermediate level learners was made to make the results comparable with the findings of mainstream instructed pragmatics research, which mainly features with studies of learners "beyond a beginning level of proficiency" (Li, 2012, p. 13). Out of the 107 participants, 29 were male and 78 were female. They ranged in age from 18 to 28, averaging 22.5. The classes, all taught by one of the researchers, were assigned to four experimental conditions: (1) individual output (N=26), (2) collaborative output (N=28), (3) input enhancement (N=24), and (4) metapragmatic awareness raising (N=29).

The participants' proficiency and speech act production ability were assessed through two measures: The Quick Placement Test (QPT) and a Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT):

1. *Quick Placement Test (QPT):* The participants' general proficiency was measured through the paper-and-pencil version of the Quick Placement Test developed by Oxford University Press and the ESOL Examinations Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. The results are reported along ALTE's scale: Beginner (0-10); Breakthrough (11-17); Elementary (18-29); Lower Intermediate (30-39); Upper Intermediate (40-47); Advanced (48-54); and Very Advanced (55-60). In the present study, the first version of the paper-and-pencil test was used, which embodies 60 multiple-choice vocabulary, grammar, and reading items, as well as recognition-type cloze reading items. The complete test (Parts I and II) took about 30 minutes to complete, and the test enjoyed internal consistency as shown in Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .87. Based on the results of this test, only intermediate level learners were included in the study. The 107 participants' scores ranged between 38 and 43, with a mean of 40.19.

2. *Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT)*. The speech act production ability of the participants was measured through a 24-item Written Discourse Completion Test, consisting of eight situation prompts on each of the three speech acts of apology, request, and refusal. The situations were sampled in a way to reflect plausible situations in the life of university students, based on an initial survey of 29 English-major sophomores, following the ‘exemplar generation’ phase of Liu’s (2007) pragmatics test development. Moreover, they represented sufficiently varied combinations of the three social context variables of ‘power,’ ‘distance,’ and ‘imposition,’ following Brown and Levinson (1987). Responses were rated on a 6-point Likert scale developed by Taguchi (2006), which places a premium on three aspects of speech act performance: situational appropriateness, and grammatical and discoursal felicity. The WDCT took about 50 minutes to complete and proved to have a remarkable internal consistency in the present study, as indicated by Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of .94. In addition, 30 of the participants were randomly selected and rated by a native speaker, and a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of .97 was obtained, indicating nearly perfect inter-rater reliability.

As for the data collection procedure, the pre-treatment phase of the study involved (1) presentation of parts of the two series ‘Lost’ and ‘Friends,’ and the movie ‘Doubt,’ followed by class discussions of their themes and characters, and (2) administration of the QPT as well as the WDCT over two consecutive sessions. Based on the QPT scores, only intermediate learners were included in the study. Each of the four treatments was offered over nine weekly sessions, divided into three three-week sections targeting ‘apologies,’ ‘requests,’ and ‘refusals,’ in the order mentioned. Finally, at the post-treatment phase, the participants took the same WDCT one week after the last treatment session as the immediate Posttest, and once more three weeks afterwards as the delayed Posttest.

The four experimental groups were exposed to input in the form of 30 speech act-contained video excerpts (10 for each of the three speech acts) from the series ‘Lost,’ and ‘Friends,’ and the movie ‘Doubt.’ The themes of the speech situations resembled those in the real life of the participants, and the situations represented various degrees of weightiness and several semantic formulae. The excerpts covered such role relationships as close friends; colleagues; teacher-student; teacher-school principal; distant acquaintances of same or different age(s); mother-son; father-son; doctor-patient; etc. Moreover, they varied in length from 10 seconds (10”) to 2 minutes and 20 seconds (2’.20”). In operationalizing the four

instructional conditions, great care was taken to ensure procedural distinctiveness. More specifically, the two output conditions were operationalized in a way to offer ample pushed output opportunities, but no enhanced input or metapragmatic information.

Table 1

Instructional Treatments Provided to the Four Experimental Groups

	IO Treatment	CO Treatment	IE Treatment	MA Treatment
Session One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 4 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Individual personalizing (warm-up) task: Writing down about own similar experience(s); 3. Individual output production task: Completion of 4 speech act-removed scripts of video excerpts from the same series and movie 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 4 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Paired personalizing (warm-up) task: Discussing own similar experience(s) 3. Paired output production task: Completion of 4 speech act-removed scripts of video excerpts from the same series and movie 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 4 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Presentation of 4 more video excerpts with the speech acts boldfaced in the scripts 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 4 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Provision of explicit information on speech act strategies, with reference to issues of politeness, power, distance, and imposition, and to the speech acts contained in the input presented at Phase 1
Session Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Individual completion of 5 WDCTs and manipulation of similar peer output 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Paired completion of 5 WDCTs and manipulation of similar peer output 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their enhanced scripts 2. Speech act recognition: Recognition of speech acts among the underlined sections of the scripts of videos shown at Phase 1 of Session one 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Speech act use analysis: Determination of speech act strategies (contained in four video excerpts presented along with their scripts) and relation of their use to power, distance, and imposition, followed by related teacher-student discussion
Session Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Individual written production of 2 speech-act contained dialogues and manipulation of similar peer output 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Paired written production of 2 speech-act contained dialogues and manipulation of similar peer output 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their enhanced scripts 2. Speech act recognition: Recognition of the speech act statement(s) in 4 dialogues 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of 3 video excerpts and their scripts 2. Speech act recognition and use analysis: Completion of 5 MDCTs, followed by related teacher-student discussion

Note. IO=individual output; CO= collaborative output; IE=input enhancement; MA= metapragmatic awareness raising.

On the other hand, no output tasks were built into input enhancement and

metapragmatic awareness raising conditions. Since the instructional procedure was consistent across the three speech acts for each of the four experimental groups, a speech-act-independent account of the procedure implemented over a three-session period is provided in Table 1.

The two output conditions embodied identical pushed output (production and manipulation) tasks, except for the fact that individual output tasks were completed individually, but collaborative output tasks were completed in same-gender pairs (4 female and 10 male pairs) following the teacher's modelling. Overall, 6 hours and 35 minutes of instruction was offered to the IO group (2:05 hours on apology; 2:10 hours on request; and 2:20 hours on refusal), and a total of 7 hours and 20 minutes of instruction was provided to the CO group (2:20 hours on apology; 2:25 hours on request; and 2:35 hours on refusal). The input enhancement condition was operationalized as a combination of typographic enhancement of the input-embedded speech act strategies and role relationships, and two implicit awareness-raising tasks involving speech act recognition. The IE group received a total of 5 hours and 50 minutes of instruction (1:50 hours on the speech act of apology; 1:55 hours on the speech act of request; and 2:05 hours on the speech act of refusal). On the other hand, the metapragmatic awareness-raising group received pragmatic instruction implemented as the explicit provision of metapragmatic information, paired with two explicit awareness-raising tasks involving speech act use analysis with reference to power, distance, and imposition, each followed by related teacher-student discussion. Metapragmatic information was provided based on Olshtain and Cohen's (1983; cited in Ellis, 2008) strategy set for apology, Trosborg's (1995; cited in Yamagashira, 2001) strategy set for request, and Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz' (1990) strategy set for refusal. Overall, 6 hours and 10 minutes of instruction was offered to the metapragmatic awareness-raising group (1:55 hours on the speech act of apology; 2 hours on the speech act of request; and 2:15 hours on the speech act of refusal).

The four groups' change of WDCT performance from the Pretest to the immediate and delayed Posttests was traced through separate repeated-measures ANOVAs. Effects of Time, Group, and Time by Group were investigated through a mixed between-within groups ANOVA. Further one-way between-groups ANOVAs together with post-hoc analyses, using Bonferroni's adjustment for multiple comparisons, yielded comparative accounts of the short-term and long-term improvements in the four groups' production of the three speech

acts under investigation.

Results and Discussion

Group-specific repeated measures ANOVAs provided within-group comparisons of WDCT mean scores on the Pretest, immediate Posttest, and delayed Posttest. For all the 12 score sets (3 for each group), ratios of skewness and kurtosis to their associated standard error values fell within the range of -1.96 and +1.96, indicating distributional normality at the .05 level of significance (see Table 2 for descriptive statistics). Figure 1 shows the four groups' patterns of performance change from the Pretest to the immediate and delayed Posttests.

Table 2
The Four Groups' WDCT Scores: Descriptive Statistics

Group	WDCT	Mean	SD	Skewness			Kurtosis		
				Statistic	SE	Ratio	Statistic	SE	Ratio
IO	Pretest	3.06	.21	.14	.45	.32	-.46	.88	-.52
	Immediate	3.60	.20	.25	.45	.56	-.91	.88	-1.03
	Delayed	3.72	.17	.24	.45	.54	-.22	.88	-.25
CO	Pretest	3.07	.19	-.55	.44	-1.25	-1.22	.85	-1.43
	Immediate	3.97	.17	-.00	.44	.00	-.44	.85	-.05
	Delayed	4.17	.18	-.30	.44	-.69	-.20	.85	-.24
IE	Pretest	3.05	.21	-.51	.47	-1.09	-.57	.91	-.63
	Immediate	3.76	.13	-.37	.47	-.79	.00	.91	.00
	Delayed	4.84	.15	-.56	.47	-1.20	-.73	.91	-.80
MA	Pretest	3.01	.19	.31	.43	.73	-.84	.84	-1
	Immediate	4.05	.21	-.16	.43	-.38	-.12	.84	-.14
	Delayed	4.03	.16	-.58	.43	-1.36	.59	.84	.71

Note. IO=individual output; CO= collaborative output; IE=input enhancement; MA= metapragmatic awareness raising.

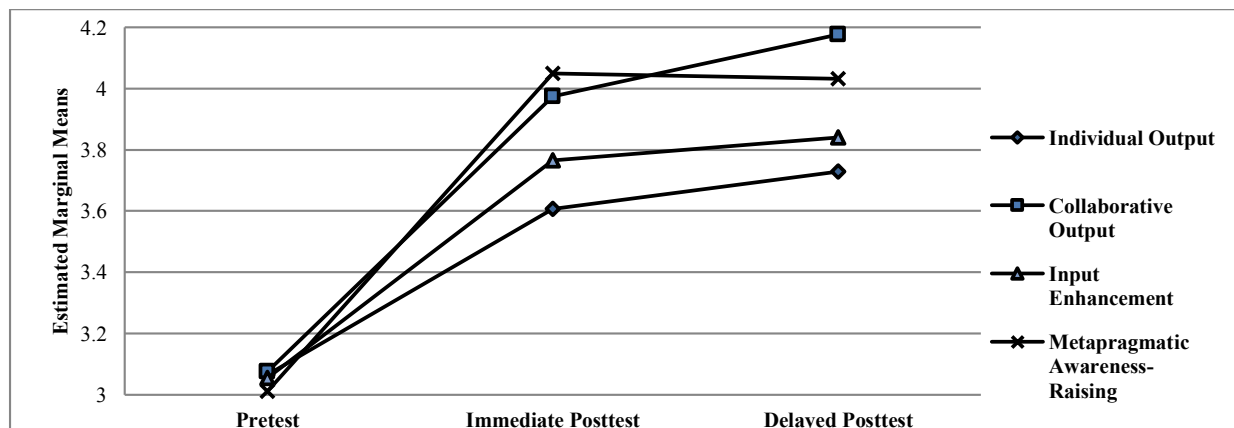


Figure 1. Patterns of WDCT performance of the four groups

ANOVA results are presented in Table 3. Significant F ratios with effect sizes exceeding .9 in all the four cases indicated all the four groups' significant improvement over time [$F_{IO}(2)=340.25$, $F_{CO}(2)=712.91$, $F_{IE}(2)=357.04$, $F_{MA}(2)=458.74$, $p<.05$].

Table 3

Repeated Measures ANOVA Results for Each of the Four Groups' WDCT Scores

Group		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta ²
IO	Sphericity Assumed	6.52	2	3.26	340.25*	.00	.93
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6.52	1.74	3.74	340.25*	.00	.93
CO	Sphericity Assumed	19.24	2	9.62	712.91*	.00	.96
	Greenhouse-Geisser	19.24	1.55	12.41	712.91*	.00	.96
IE	Sphericity Assumed	9.12	2	4.56	357.04*	.00	.93
	Greenhouse-Geisser	9.12	1.31	6.92	357.04*	.00	.93
MA	Sphericity Assumed	20.52	2	10.26	485.74*	.00	.94
	Greenhouse-Geisser	20.52	1.30	15.76	485.74*	.00	.94

Note. IO=individual output; CO= collaborative output; IE=input enhancement; MA= metapragmatic awareness raising.

* The F-ratio is significant at the .05 level.

Post hoc pairwise mean comparisons were conducted for each group, using Bonferroni's adjustment for multiple comparisons. The results displayed that all the four groups made significant improvements at the .05 level from the Pretest to the immediate Posttest [$MD_{IO}=.54$, $MD_{CO}=.89$, $MD_{IE}=.71$, $MD_{MA}=1.03$], and likewise from the Pretest to the delayed Posttest [$MD_{IO}=.66$, $MD_{CO}=1.10$, $MD_{IE}=.79$, $MD_{MA}=1.02$]. Regarding improvements from the immediate to the delayed Posttest, the CO group achieved the highest gain score [$MD=.20$, $p<.05$], followed by the IO group [$MD=.12$, $p<.05$] and the IE group [$MD=.07$, $p<.05$]; however, some loss, though insignificant, was observed for the MA group [$MD= -.01$, $p>.05$].

Table 4

*ANOVA Results for the Main Effects of Time and Time*Group*

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta ²
Time	Sphericity Assumed	51.35	2	25.67	1775.86*	.00	.94
	Greenhouse-Geisser	51.35	1.48	34.48	1775.86*	.00	.94
Time*Group	Sphericity Assumed	2.60	6	.43	29.99*	.00	.46
	Greenhouse-Geisser	2.60	4.46	.58	29.99*	.00	.46
Error (Time)	Sphericity Assumed	2.97	206	.01			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	2.97	153.38	.01			

* The F-ratio is significant at the .05 level.

After investigating within-group changes, the data were probed comparatively across

the four groups. The results of a mixed between-within subjects ANOVA (as presented in Tables 4 and 5) showed significant main effects for Time (or tests over time) [$F(2)=1775.86$, $p<.05$, $Eta^2=.94$], Group [$F(3)=17.46$ $p<.05$, $Eta^2=.33$], and Time and Group in combination [$F(6)=29.99$, $p<.05$, $Eta^2=.46$].

Table 5
ANOVA Results for the Main effect of Group

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta ²
Intercept	1390.88	1	1390.88	55285.15	.00	.99
Groups	1.31	3	.43	17.46	.00	.33
Error	2.59	103	.02			

*. The F-ratio is significant at the .05 level.

These observations, which showed the differential interactions of the four groups with Time, warranted between-groups comparisons of Pretest, immediate Posttest, and delayed Posttest WDCT scores. Three one-way between-groups ANOVAs were conducted, of which the results are presented in Table 6. The participants were homogeneous in terms of their speech act production ability at the pre-treatment phase of the study as shown in the insignificant F-ratio [$F(3)=.52$, $p>.05$], though they proved to significantly differ in this regard at both the immediate Posttest phase [$F(3)=31.88$, $p<.05$] and the delayed Posttest phase [$F(3)=39.10$, $p<.05$]. The two significant F-ratios implied the differential impacts of the four pragmatic instructional approaches.

Table 6
ANOVA Results for the Four Groups' Pretest, Immediate Posttest and Delayed Posttest WDCT Scores

WDCT	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pretest	Between groups	.06	3	.02	.52	.66
	Within groups	4.40	103	.04		
	Total	4.46	106			
Immediate Posttest	Between Groups	3.29	3	1.09	31.88*	.00
	Within Groups	3.54	103	.03		
	Total	6.83	106			
Delayed Posttest	Between Groups	3.19	3	1.06	39.10*	.00
	Within Groups	2.80	103	.02		
	Total					

* The F-ratio is significant at the .05 level.

Pairwise mean comparisons of the four groups' immediate Posttest WDCT scores

showed where the actual differences lay. Differences reached statistical significance in the following five cases: (1) IO - CO [$MD=-.36, p<.05$]; (2) IO - IE [$MD=-.15, p<.05$]; (3) IO - MA [$MD=-.44, p<.05$]; (4) IE - CO [$MD=-.20, p<.05$]; and (5) IE - MA [$MD=-.28, p<.05$]. The CO-MA mean difference was not statistically significant [$MD=.07, p>.05$]. Accordingly, on the immediate Posttest, CO and MA groups jointly occupied the first level of performance, with IE and IO groups following them, in the order mentioned.

Pairwise mean comparisons of the four groups' delayed Posttest WDCT scores showed the post hoc mean comparisons of the delayed Posttest scores. Mean differences were significant in the following five cases: (1) IO - CO [$MD=-.44, p<.05$]; (2) IO - MA [$MD=-.30, p<.05$]; (3) IE - MA [$MD=-.19, p<.05$]; (4) IE - CO [$MD=-.36, p<.05$]; and (5) CO - MA [$MD=.14, p<.05$]. The IO - IE difference was not statistically significant [$MD=.11, p>.05$].

The present study was designed to investigate the short-term and long-term impacts of IO, CO, IE, and MA on EFL learners' speech act production ability. Based on the results, all the four pragmatic instructional approaches exerted positive short-term and long-term influence on the participants' production of apologies, requests, and refusals, though differentially. At the immediate Posttest phase, CO and MA groups jointly evidenced the best performance, followed by IE and IO groups. On the other hand, at the delayed Posttest phase, the CO group outperformed the other three groups, while IE and IO groups jointly occupied the third position. Moreover, from the immediate to the delayed Posttest, CO, IO, and IE groups improved significantly in a descending order of gain score magnitude, while the MA group evidenced no significant change.

All the four groups made significant gains from the Pretest to the immediate Posttest and maintained their gains from the immediate Posttest to the delayed Posttest. This can be rationalized in light of the 'noticing hypothesis,' which has served as a major theoretical foundation of instructional pragmatics (Taguchi, 2011, 2015). All the conditions are likely to have raised the participants' consciousness of relevant pragmalinguistic forms and sociopragmatic constraints, implicating in speech act production, and led to their focus-on-form(s). It is likely that two common features across the four conditions jointly fulfilled this consciousness-raising function: video input and consciousness-raising tasks. Regarding video input, authentic audiovisual materials have proved beneficial, mainly on account of their embodiment of both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features implicating in the

speech situation (Alcón Soler, 2005; Jernigan, 2007; Takimoto, 2007). Moreover, direct and indirect awareness-raising tasks probably served to direct the learners' attention to pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of the speech situation. Following Doughty (2001), this probably activated their selective attention and cognitive comparison, i.e. comparison of own non-target-like speech acts and target-like ones, directly or indirectly made salient in the instructional treatments.

As far as the comparative short-term impacts of the four conditions are concerned, CO and MA groups jointly came in first. In line with Bialystok's (1994) language processing model, teacher-provided information in the MA condition might have created in the learners' minds analytic representations regarding pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic mappings. The subsequently provided explicit awareness-raising tasks might have led to the development of processing control over those pragmatic representations. Moreover, given the general finding in ILP research as to the greater effectiveness of explicit pragmatic instruction and metapragmatic awareness-raising (see Taguchi, 2011, 2015 and Takahashi, 2010 for reviews), the insignificant difference between MA and CO might be indicative of the latter's potential to induce metapragmatic awareness. This postulation is supported in qualitative studies of CO targeting pragmatics and other language features (e.g., Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Nguyen, 2013; Taguchi & Kim, 2016), evidencing its potential for engaging learners in profound metalinguistic talks and reflections. IE and IO probably did not raise learners' metapragmatic awareness, and consequently were least effective.

As for the better performance of the IE group, compared with the IO group, it can be postulated that while both groups engaged in implicit awareness-raising tasks, the typographic enhancement of input-embedded speech acts offered the IE group an additional attention-directing benefit. This additional advantage is reflected in Li's (2012) study which showed the superior performance of IE compared with explicit instruction and input-output treatment. The output component of the input-output treatment condition in Li's research, however, was used for the proceduralization of knowledge imported at an input presentation phase.

Mapping the present study's results onto existing ILP research findings helps us understand why some studies found implicit pragmatic instruction more effective than explicit pragmatic instruction (e.g., Kubota, 1995; Li, 2012) whereas some others found no significant difference between them (e.g., Martínez-Flor, 2004; Sardegna & Molle, 2010).

It might not be as much the explicitness of explicit pragmatic instruction that has led to ILP development in the existing ILP research; instead, the heightened metapragmatic awareness and reflections over form-function-context mappings seem to be the determinant factors, which can as well be induced by an essentially implicit mode of instruction as CO. In this regard, Taguchi (2015) states that what makes pragmatics instruction effective might be its potential for engaging learners in not only noticing but also processing linguistic and social characteristics of the target features. Regarding positive empirical evidence, Alcón Soler (2005) obtained similar results as to the greater short-term benefits of explicit instruction over input enhancement, operationalized in much the same way as in the present study. So did Takahashi (2001), whose form-search condition constituted part of the present study's input enhancement condition.

At the time of the delayed Posttest, the CO group showed the best performance. Also, the two output groups evidenced the highest gain scores. These findings are probably because output production and manipulation tasks engaged both groups in (1) noticing relevant formal and functional features as well as their own pragmatic knowledge gaps, (2) reflection, and (3) hypothesis generation and testing. Such tasks also entailed internal feedback or auto-input opportunities (as well as external feedback and metapragmatic discussions only for the CO group). The heightened output-induced pragmatic awareness might have primed the learners to notice relevant features in any subsequent input, reflect upon them, and form and test hypotheses regarding their production, hence their significant improvement even after the experimental period. What benefited the CO group over the IO group, however, might be due to the greater awareness induced by external (peer) feedback. Counterevidence for the durability of gains induced by output-based instruction comes from Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006). They found output-based practice following an exposure phase (MOBI) more effective for the production of Spanish object pronouns than (input-based) processing instruction (PI); however, the observed gains were not as durable, as indicated in the results of a delayed Posttest. A critical examination of the design of Morgan-Short and Bowden's study shows that output was offered only in the practice phase of the instructional treatment, and this precludes drawing any conclusions as to the efficacy of output for interlanguage restructuring. Nemati and Arabmofrad (2014) also found individual and collaborative input-based instruction more effective than individual and collaborative output-based instruction for speech act production; however, unlike the present study, the output tasks they offered

lacked variety, nor were they graded based on the amount of output required for their completion.

Regarding the IE group, the element of ‘prolonged noticing’ might explain the observed significant improvement from the immediate to the delayed Posttest. In other words, implicitly directing the participants’ attention to form might have advanced their concern for (or awareness of) relevant features in any subsequent input. This finding is, however, at odds with Koike and Pearson’s (2005) finding as to the loss of implicit instruction-induced gains in terms of the production of suggestions over time, though their study was different from the present study in that the implicit condition did not involve typographic enhancement of the input-embedded speech acts under investigation.

Finally, the MA group’s speech act production ability did not change significantly from the immediate to the delayed Posttest. It might be that the stakes of loss of memory-housed information as a result of explicit instruction are higher. Had the delayed Posttest been given within a longer period of time, the loss might have turned significant. This finding is in partial agreement with Takimoto’s (2007) results. In his study, the gain induced by the ‘structured input + explicit information’ condition was less durable than that induced by a similar condition which did not involve the provision of explicit information, while an inductive problem-solving condition led to durable gains.

Overall, it can be argued that the awareness-raising function of input-based instruction (whether implicit or explicit), which has long been hailed by ILP practitioners, can as well be achieved through sound output-based instruction, be it individual or collaborative. Moreover, the significance of collaborative output tasks, when constituting the core of instruction rather than incorporated as a tool for knowledge proceduralization, can even go beyond awareness raising, and induce more durable gains compared with input-based instruction and individual output-based instruction.

Conclusion and Implications

Pragmatic failure is tantamount to communication failure (Dash, 2004). As such, the investigation of factors contributing to effective classroom based ILP development in EFL contexts has been in the ELT research spotlight for the last two decades. The present study’s results warrant that pragmatic instruction operationalized as the presentation of speech act-contained video input followed by (a) input-based implicit awareness-raising tasks (as in the

input enhancement condition), (b) input-based explicit awareness-raising tasks (as in the metapragmatic awareness-raising condition), and (c) individual/collaborative output tasks (as in the individual and collaborative output conditions) all have short-term and long-term positive influences on EFL learners' speech act production. Impact of individual/collaborative output-based instruction seems to compare with that of implicit and explicit input-based instruction, for which there is abundant evidence in ILP research (see Taguchi, 2011 and Takahashi, 2010). As a further conclusion, collaborative output compares with metapragmatic awareness raising in its short-term influence on EFL learners' speech act production, but its effect is apparently more powerful in the long run. Moreover, both collaborative output and metapragmatic awareness raising offer clear short-term and long-term benefits for EFL learners' speech act production ability, compared with input enhancement and individual output. Input enhancement, in turn, carries a greater short-term potential than individual output, though this difference tends to fade away over time.

The study carries important pedagogical implications. First, based on the results, pragmatic instruction, in its various realizations (implicit or explicit, input-based or individual/collaborative output-based), can lead to short-term and long-term ILP development. In other words, focused pragmatic instruction as an essential component of the foreign language syllabus is a worthwhile investment. Moreover, authentic speech act video input can expose learners to a variety of contexts and picture all the contextual features implicating in speech act performance. Second, the findings warrant valuing output-based instruction alongside merely input-based instructional approaches (i.e. metapragmatic awareness raising and input enhancement) which have overwhelmingly dominated interventionist ILP research. Individual/collaborative output, when elevated to the core of classroom practices, along with tailor-made input, would serve as the foundation of an effective pragmatic instruction approach. Such an approach presumably has the potential to create in learners the urge for continuous ILP development, as shown in the significant improvement of both individual and collaborative output groups from the immediate Posttest to the delayed Posttest.

The superior performance of the collaborative output group over the individual output group indicates the significance of peer feedback, metalinguistic talk, and the cognitive, communicative, and social activity embodied in collaborative output for ILP development (Swain, 2000; van Lier, 2000). Moreover, such features of collaborative output-based

pragmatic instruction can be equated with the evidenced benefits of explicit pragmatic instruction, i.e. teacher-provided metapragmatic information and explicit feedback, but the former approach seems to offer greater benefits for continuous ILP development, given its potential for enhancing self-direction. Finally, individual output and input enhancement offer comparable benefits for ILP development, though the continuous development induced by the former is greater. This observation is again explicable in terms of the greater self-direction learner output can lead to.

Finally, the study targeted speech act production, as measured through a written discourse completion test; however, pragmatics covers a much wider domain, including pragmatic routines and implicature as well. Moreover, speech act comprehension is as important as its production. A similar study involving (a) a larger sample, (b) triangulation of the WDCT data, (c) the delayed assessment of speech act production ability within a longer period of time, and/or (d) the production and comprehension of other pragmatic features would definitely have much to contribute to the confirmation, or otherwise invalidation, of the study's findings.

References

- Alcón Soler, E. (2005). Does instruction work for learning pragmatics in the EFL context? *System*, 33(3), 417-435. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2005.06.005.
- Alcón Soler, E. (2007). Fostering EFL learners' awareness of requesting through explicit and implicit consciousness-raising tasks. In G. Mayo (ed.), *Investigating Tasks in Formal Language Learning* (pp. 221-241). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bialystok, E. (1994). Representation and ways of knowing: Three issues in second language acquisition. In N. Ellis (ed.), *Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages* (pp. 549-569). London: Academic Press.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, A. D., & Ishihara, N. (2005). *A Web-Based Approach to Strategic Learning of Speech Acts*. Minneapolis: Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota. Retrieved November, 2010 from:

<http://www.carla.umn.edu/speechacts/Japanese%20Speech%20Act%20Report%20Rev.%20June05.pdf>

- Dash, P. (2004). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure: a definitional analysis with implications for classroom teaching. *Asian EFL Journal*, 6(3). Article 5. Retrieved February 2019 from: http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Sept_04_pd.doc.
- Doughty, C. (2001). Cognitive underpinnings of focus on form. In P. Robinson (ed.), *Cognition and Second Language Instruction* (pp. 206-257). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Edwards, M., & Csizér, K. (2004). Developing pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 42(3), 16-21.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- El-Okda, M. (2011). Developing pragmatic competence: Challenges and solutions. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 13(2), 169-198.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z., & Eslami-Rasekh, A., (2008). Enhancing the pragmatic competence of non-native English-speaking teacher candidates (NNESTCs) in an EFL context. In E. Alcón Soler & A. Martínez-Flor (eds.), *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing* (pp. 178-197). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z., Eslami-Rasekh A., & Fatahi, A. (2004). The effect of explicit metapragmatic instruction on the speech act awareness of advanced EFL students. *TESL EJ*, 8(2), 1-12.
- Fukuya, Y. J., & Zhang, Y. (2002). Effects of recasts on EFL learners' acquisition of pragmalinguistic conventions of request. *Second Language Studies*, 21(1), 1-47.
- Halenko, N., & Jones, C. (2011). Teaching pragmatic awareness of spoken requests to Chinese EAP learners in the UK: Is explicit instruction effective? *System*, 39(2), 240-250. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2011.05.003.
- Jeon, E. H., & Kaya, T. (2006). Effects of L2 instruction on interlanguage pragmatic development. In J. M. Norris & L. Ortega (eds.), *Synthesizing Research on Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. 165-211). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Jernigan, J. (2007). *Instruction and Developing Second Language Pragmatic Competence: An Investigation into the Efficacy of Output*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Florida State University, Florida, United States.

- Kasper, G., & Rose, K. (2002). *Pragmatic development in a second language*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Khatib, M., & Ahmadi Safa, M. (2011). The effectiveness of ZPD-wise explicit/implicit expert peers and co-equals' scaffolding in ILP development. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*, 14(1), 49-75.
- Koike, D. A., & Pearson, L. (2005). The effect of instruction and feedback in the development of pragmatic competence. *System*, 33(3), 481-501. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2005.06.008.
- Kubota, M. (1995). Teachability of conversational implicature to Japanese EFL learners. *IRLT Bulletin*, 9, 35-67.
- Li, Q. (2012). Effects of instruction on adolescent beginners' acquisition of request modification. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(1), 30-55. doi: 10.1002/tesq.2.
- Liddicoat, A. J., & Crozet, C. (2001). Acquiring French interactional norms through instruction. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 125-144). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Liu, J. (2007). Developing a pragmatics test for Chinese EFL learners. *Language Testing*, 24(1), 391-415. doi: 10.1177/0265532207077206.
- Martínez-Flor, A. (2004). *The Effect of Instruction on the Development of Pragmatic Competence in the English as a Foreign Language Context: A Study Based on Suggestions*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Universitat Jaume I, Castellón, Spain.
- Martínez-Flor, A. (2006). The effectiveness of explicit and implicit treatments on EFL learners' confidence in recognizing appropriate suggestions. In K. Bardovi-Harlig, C. Félix-Brasdefer & A. S. Omar (eds.), *Pragmatics and Language Learning* (vol. 11) (pp.199-225). Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Martínez-Flor, A. (2008). The effect of an inductive-deductive teaching approach to develop learners' use of request modifiers in the EFL classroom. In E. Alcón Soler (ed.), *Learning How to Request in an Instructed Language Learning Context* (pp. 191-225). Berlin, Germany: Peter Lang.
- Morgan-short, K., & Bowden, H. W. (2006). Processing instruction and meaningful output-based instruction: Effects on second language development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28(1), 31-65. doi: 10.1017/S0272263106060025.

- Narita, R. (2012). The effects of pragmatic consciousness-raising activity on the development of pragmatic awareness and use of hearsay evidential markers for learners of Japanese as a foreign language. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(1), 1-29. doi: 10.1016/j.pragma.2011.09.016.
- Nassaji, H., & Tian, J. (2010). Collaborative and individual output tasks and their effects on learning English phrasal verbs. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(4), 397-419. doi: 10.1177/1362168810375364.
- Nemati, M., & Arabmofrad, A. (2014). Development of interlanguage pragmatic competence: Input- and output-based instruction in the zone of proximal development. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(2), 262-270.
- Nguyen, T. T. M. (2013). Instructional effects on the acquisition of modifiers in constructive criticisms by EFL learners. *Language Awareness*, 22(1), 76-94. doi: 10.1080/09658416.2012.658810.
- Nguyen, T. T. M., Pham, T. H., & Pham M. H. (2012). The relative effects of explicit and implicit form-focused instruction on the development of L2 pragmatic competence. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(4), 416-434. doi: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.01.003.
- Ohta, A. S. (2005). Interlanguage pragmatics in the zone of proximal development. *System*, 33(3), 503–517. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2005.06.001.
- Pattemore, M. (2017). *Task-based assessment of L2 pragmatics: Eliciting authentic suggestion strategies in an EFL context* (Unpublished MA thesis). University of Barcelona. Spain.
- Roever, C. (2009). Teaching and testing pragmatics. In M. Long & C. Doughty (eds.), *Handbook of language teaching* (pp. 560-577). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rose, K. R., & Kasper, G. (2001). *Pragmatics in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, K. R., & Ng Kwai-fun, C. (2001). Inductive and deductive teaching of compliments and compliment responses. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 145-170). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sardegna, V. G., & Molle D. (2010). Videoconferencing with strangers: Teaching Japanese EFL students verbal backchannel signals and reactive expressions. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 7(2), 279-310. doi: 10.1515/IPRG.2010.013.
- Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning, and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. Kasper

- & S. Blum-Kulka (eds.), *Interlanguage Pragmatics* (pp. 21-42). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (eds.), *Input in Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 235-253). Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook and B. Seidlhofer (eds.), *Principles and Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in Honour of H.G. Widdowson* (pp. 125-144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (ed.), *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (2006). Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced second language proficiency. In H. Byrnes (ed.), *Advanced Language Learning: The contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95-108). London: Continuum.
- Sykes, J. (2013). Multiuser virtual environments: Learner apologies in Spanish. In N. Taguchi & J. Sykes (eds.), *Technology in Interlanguage Pragmatics Research and Teaching* (pp. 71-100). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Taguchi, N. (2006). Analysis of appropriateness in a speech act of request in L2 Spanish. *Pragmatics*, 16(4), 513-533.
- Taguchi, N. (2011). Teaching pragmatics: Trends and issues. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, 289-310. doi: 10.1017/S0267190511000018.
- Taguchi, N. (2015). Instructed pragmatics at a glance: Where instructional studies were, are, and should be going. *Language Teaching*, 48(1), 1-50. doi: 10.1017/S0261444814000263.
- Taguchi, N., & Kim, Y. (2016). Collaborative dialogue in learning pragmatics: Pragmatic-related episodes as an opportunity for learning request-making. *Applied Linguistics*, 37(3), 416-437. doi: 10.1093/applin/amu039.
- Tajeddin, Z., & Tayebipour, F. (2012). The effect of dynamic assessment on EFL learners' acquisition of apology and request. *Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 31(2), 87-113.
- Takahashi, S. (2001). The role of input enhancement in developing pragmatic competence. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 171-199).

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Takahashi, S. (2010). Assessing learnability in second language pragmatics. In A. Trosborg (ed.), *Pragmatics Across Languages and Cultures* (pp. 391-421). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Takimoto, M. (2007). The effects of input-based tasks on the development of learners' pragmatic proficiency. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(1), 1-25. doi:10.1093/applin/amm049.
- Takimoto, M. (2009). The effects of input-based tasks on the development of learners' pragmatic proficiency. *Applied Linguistics*, 30, 1-25.
- Takimoto, M. (2010). Evaluating the effects of task repetition on learners' recognition and production of second language pragmatic chunks. Paper presented at the International Conference of Malaysian English Language Teaching Association, Selangor, Malaysia.
- Takimoto, M. (2012). Metapragmatic discussion in interlanguage pragmatics. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(10), 1240-1253. doi: 10.1016/j.pragma.2012.05.007.
- Tateyama, Y., & Kasper, G. (2008). Talking with a classroom guest: Opportunities for learning Japanese pragmatics. In E. Alc'on-Soler & E. Mart'inez-Flor (eds.), *Investigating pragmatics in foreign language learning, teaching, and testing* (pp. 45-71). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Taylor, G. (2002). Teaching gambits: The effect of instruction and task variation on the use of conversation strategies by intermediate Spanish students. *Foreign Language Annals*, 35(2), 171-189. doi: 10.1111/j.1944-9720.2002.tb03153. x.
- Van Lier, L. (2000). From input to affordance: Social interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In J. P. Lantolf (ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 245-259). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, C. (2018). Language input effects on L2 composition peer-review feedback. *TESOL International Journal*, 13 (1), Article 4. Retrieved February 2019 from: <https://www.elejournal.com/1721/tesol-journal/tij-2018/tesol-international-journal-volume-13-issue-1-2018/>
- Yamagashira, H. (2001). Pragmatic transfer in Japanese ESL refusals. *Buletin Akademi Kagoshima* [Kagoshima Academy Bulletin], 31(1), 259-275. Retrieved February, 2014 from: <http://www.kjunshin.ac.jp/juntan/libhome/bulletin/index.html>.

The Asian EFL Journal May 2020, Issue 24 Volume 3

Causes of English Majors' EFL Anxiety: Tertiary Teachers' Perceptions

Chieh-Hsiang Chuang

School of Foreign Languages at Fujian Medical University, China

Bioprofile

Chieh-Hsiang Chuang is Associate Professor the Department of English, Fujian Medical University, China. His research interest has been in psychology of language learning and teaching. jerry.chuang@outlook.com

No. 1, Xue Yuan Road, University Town, Fuzhou,
Fujian Province, China, 350122.

Abstract

This study investigated what can contribute to English majors' English as a foreign language learning anxiety by looking at university teachers' perceptions in Taiwan. Five teacher participants were interviewed individually for one hour in a semi-structured manner. Afterwards, the data collected were transcribed verbatim, coded, categorized, and then thematized in order to obtain the patterns of their perceptions of the issue. Based on three selection criteria, three out of eight thematic sources of anxiety generated were selected, introduced, and discussed. They were negative self-perception of L2 learning, concern about peers' judgments, and poor relationship between group members. In line with the findings, the implications were then suggested to tertiary teachers and learners of English (in Taiwan) as theoretical references to their teaching and learning.

Key words: English as a foreign language, English majors, tertiary teachers' perceptions, causes of EFL anxiety

Introduction

Anxiety about language learning and use is one of the most critical research areas in language learner psychology, with its strong association with poor language development (MacIntyre & Gregerson, 2012). The so-called (foreign) language anxiety (LA/FLA) was not clearly conceptualized and defined until Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) developed an anxiety scale specific to L2 classroom learning. Since then, FLA itself, as a situation-specific anxiety, has been considered a distinguishable emotional state from other general anxieties, and has been approached from such angles as its causes and effects and coping strategies for it.

Regarding the source, it is suggested that there are still some left to discover (Gkonou, 2012), partly because most investigations only looked at a few factors and their relationships to FLA. Thus, a systematic exploration of the causes needs conducting. Concerning the population from whom the data are collected, the experiences of learners have suppressed those of teachers. Horwitz (2013) and Oxford and Ehrman (1993), however, emphasize that the teacher's understanding of their students' psychological needs plays a critical role in the provision of effective instruction and support. Most importantly, the number of Taiwan-based FLA studies is scarce and therefore contribution to the knowledge, including the sources, should be made.

Given these unaddressed issues, the purpose of this project is to demonstrate tertiary English teachers' perceptions of English majors' sources of anxiety in Taiwan's English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. This research aims precisely to investigate what can contribute to the language anxiety of the learners. In line with the purpose and aim above, the main research question asked here is 'What are the sources of EFL learning anxiety of English major students in Taiwan?'

Literature Review

What Is FLA?

Anxiety has been connected with second language acquisition (SLA) since the 1970s, but the true term acknowledging the phenomenon did not appear until the middle of the 1980s. FLA connotes relatively negative meanings in nature like worry and nervousness (Williams, Mercer & Ryan, 2015) if compared to other learner differences, e.g. motivation. Considering the anxiety is related to L2 learning (and use), it is little wonder that any situation

encountered in the process could be the venue for negative feelings. With its situation-specific characteristic in mind, FLA is defined as a learner's "feelings of worry and negative, fear-related emotions associated with learning or using a language that is not an individual's mother tongue" (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 103), which is "especially relevant in a classroom where self-representation takes place" (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 3). Nevertheless, the earlier approach to the issue directly tested the relationship between general anxieties and language achievement, producing such various results (e.g. Chastain, 1975) that no solid conclusion was drawn. This problem was caused by the fact that no clear definition of and no specific scale for language anxiety were proposed and used to confirm its role in L2 learning (Horwitz, et al., 1986; Horwitz, 1986; Price, 1991; Scovel, 1991; Young, 1991).

The later approach, however, believes that there should be a distinct type of anxiety which can truly reflect learners' concerns in the language learning context. Horwitz et al. (1986) are the first not only conceptualizing and defining FLA, but also developing a scale called 'Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale' (FLCAS) to evaluate a learner's level of it. They regard FLA as 'a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process' (p. 128); the measuring tool has been widely used and proved valid. Their contribution is considered "a turning point in LA research" (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 105). Research has shown that FLA could be widespread across learners at different levels of proficiency, and its impact on L2 learning experience is usually negative (Daubney, Dewaele, & Gkonou, 2017).

What Can Cause FLA?

Given the complexity of language development and the social nature of the language classroom, it is not difficult to imagine that the sources of FLA are so multifarious as to range from 'highly personal [type], e.g. self-esteem, to procedural [type], e.g. classroom activities and methods' (Oxford, 1999, p. 62). More precisely, Young (1991) compiles six major thematic sources of FLA from the existing literature, as shown below.

Personal and interpersonal anxieties. Communicating in an L2 normally feels challenging since people may find it difficult to express themselves authentically in other languages than

their L1. According to Horwitz, et al. (1986),

Because complex and non-spontaneous mental operations are required in order to communicate at all, any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic (p.128).

In other words, if one becomes frustrated at their limited ability (real or imagined) to project themselves in the L2, in them may be engendered such feelings or thoughts as loss of face, negative self-perceptions, and feelings of insecurity (Williams et al., 2015). The language classroom, as a social environment, may arguably pose a threat to learners, for L2 communicative interaction is inevitable in there.

Personal factors mainly include an individual's self and personalities in the context of L2 learning. The three main constructs of the L2 self are self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-confidence, and the degree of this is, without doubt, interrelated with that of FLA. Regarding self-esteem, many researchers reported that anxious learners tend to exhibit lower self-esteem (e.g. Gkonou, 2012; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Yan and Horwitz, 2008). Individuals with high self-efficacy are hardly associated with negative learning emotions. Cheng (2001) unveiled a significant negative relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and FLA in Taiwan's tertiary learners of EFL. Gkonou (2012) discovered that low self-efficacy was one major cause of EFL anxiety of Greek adult learners. Bandura (1997) even points out that negative emotions can in turn abate one's self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, highly confident learners may exhibit such characteristics as "experiencing little anxiety when speaking English in class" and "showing motivation and desire to learn English" (Sampasivam & Clément, 2014, p. 24). In short, the more confident one feels, the less anxious they get in the classroom (Gkonou, 2012).

As for personality traits, FLA researchers have been concerned with its relationship to tolerance of ambiguity, perfectionism, risk-taking, sociability, and willingness to communicate. In their study of Hong Kong learners' English ambiguity tolerance and language anxiety, Dewaele and Ip (2013) found that these two not merely correlated with but also predicted each other significantly and negatively. That is, they feel anxious as their degree of tolerance is low and vice versa. Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) studied Chilean perfectionists and their FLA, demonstrating that the formers' characteristics were associated with the degree of the latter—high performance standard, procrastination, fear of negative

evaluation, and concern over errors. These are believed to be some potential triggers for unpleasant language learning. In addition, L2 learning normally involves communicating in the language, and the constant use of L2 facilitates the development of the competence (Yashima, 2012). Risk-taking, sociability, and willingness to communicate, thus, play an influential role in one's L2 acquisition. Because avoidance is normally seen in anxious students, it is not unusual to discover that FLA significantly and negatively predicts or correlates with the above traits (Ely, 1986; Liu & Jackson, 2008). Apparently, language teachers should be alert to the possibility of anxiety when their students stay inactive and/or quiet.

Concerning interpersonal factors, it is mainly comparison and face maintenance, including fear of negative evaluation, that lead a learner to get apprehensive in class. Comparison or competitiveness seems common in the classroom since the difference in competence between peers can be easily detected and may be considered a reliable index of language ability. Yan and Horwitz's (2008) grounded theory-based study revealed that comparison with peers was one direct contributor to FLA. Moreover, Kitano (2001) discovered in Japanese university EFL learners that their perception of being inferior to peers and native speakers in speaking ability was linked to higher FLA. Furthermore, the adverse manipulation of L2 may pose a threat to an L1-proficient learner's face in the language classroom where the continuous use of L2 is necessary (Dörnyei, 2007; Jones, 2004). That is, L2 learners may struggle with exposing their disadvantages while communicating in the target language. Furthermore, those concerned about losing face cannot 'endure the negative evaluation from their peers that may come as a result of their mistakes or social awkwardness' (Jones, 2004, p. 36). This is possibly far more serious to those inheriting Chinese culture, for instance, my research participants' students. According to Peng (2014), Chinese people do care about their images presented in the public. Because of their 'other-directed self-construal, negative attitudes and evaluations from others can impinge on one's face and self-esteem, and keeping a low profile is a crucial way to stay unified with the community' (p. 31).

Learner beliefs about language learning. How a learner learns an L2 and their view of it are possibly influenced by their beliefs about language acquisition itself (Horwitz, 1987). Horwitz, et al. (2010) argue that some unrealistic expectations are commonly shared among

learners. For instance, Cheng's (2001) tertiary students in Taiwan thought that acquiring a language requires a special aptitude. Jones (2004) comments that Asian students usually do not speak up until they know the answer to the question asked to prevent embarrassment. Horwitz (1988) unveiled that her university participants of modern languages had such beliefs as (1) learning a language indicates translation between languages, (2) adults have higher difficulty learning a language than children, and (3) speaking with a native-like accent is important. Horwitz et al. warn that when such beliefs cannot be fulfilled in practice, the holders may 'develop negative feelings about their personal ability as a language learner' (p. 103).

Instructor beliefs about language teaching. The concept of this is similar to the above. When the teacher's teaching beliefs clash with their students' learning needs or styles, the latter will experience undesirable modes of instruction and an ineffective learning environment be created. Young (1991) lists four teacher beliefs which presumably engender language learner anxiety. They are a teacher should (1) correct students' every error, (2) not allow any pair work to maintain classroom order, (3) be the only speaker, and (4) be a drill sergeant in class. In a nutshell, a classroom with excessive constraints and potential unfriendliness can impact negatively on students' emotions over learning.

Instructor-learner interactions. Error correction could be the most sophisticated interaction between the teacher and their students. Correcting students' errors harshly is often recognized as one contributing factor to FLA (Horwitz et al., 1986; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). By comparison, Young's (1990) high school and university students of Spanish thought that correcting some errors was required despite their concern over making them. Some adult learners of Spanish in Koch and Terrell's (1991) study expressed that immediate error correction should be employed. From these findings, it appears that language learners do not necessarily express a preference for 'no correction at all'. It turns out that the methods for correcting errors probably have a greater impact on the learner's emotional variation. Accordingly, three issues -- "how, how often, and when to correct" -- should be considered when addressing learner errors (Young, 1991, p. 429).

Classroom procedures. How a class is designed and conducted can also have an effect on the learner's emotion. Using the target language publicly is one critical situation where

language learners can easily get anxious. Liu (2006) and Young (1990) both reported that activities requiring self-exposure in class, especially speaking, provoke relatively higher anxiety in their students. Learners are also sensitive about how calling on is employed. Williams and Andrade (2008)'s study revealed that the more irregular calling on is, the more anxious students feel. Moreover, cooperative learning was demonstrated to be a significant and positive correlate of students' psychology of learning (Liu, 2006; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999). Nonetheless, Duxbury and Tsai (2010) found that university students in Taiwan became anxious as the teacher frequently employed 'working in groups' in class, caused partly by their being unaccustomed to this practice. Some other problems may arguably be poor interactions between group members, e.g. dislike, unfamiliarity, and unbalanced workload. Considering this, it should be the social dynamics within a group that determines the relationship between collaborative learning and FLA—whether it be positive or negative.

Language Testing. Tests, as part of the learning process, may be the most significant, but anxiety-evoking, because they will greatly influence a student's academic achievement. Any component of a test is likely to impact on their psychology in the context, such as test types, test materials, familiarity with question types, and the magnitude of it. Madsen, Bruse, and Randall (1991)'s survey of learner attitudes towards language tests suggested that different test types or formats could arouse students' anxiety to various extents. A test containing unfamiliar question types or testing materials also led them to the same psychological adversity (as cited in Young, 1991). Tests connected to upgrading or future learning probably produce the same effect.

Method

This section presented the data extracted from a larger quasi-mixed methods project investigating tertiary EFL learners' and teachers' perceptions of LA in *th* classroom. Below is an elaboration of how the qualitative, teacher-related study was conducted to answer the above research question, including the participants, instrument, procedure, and data analysis.

Participants

Five native Chinese-speaking university teachers of English, four female and one male, were

interviewed. They had different years of teaching experience (YTE) between 2 and 31. They all came from the Department of English of a university in southern Taiwan and were currently teaching or once taught University English for Year 1 and/or 2 to English majors. The English course compulsory consisted of English Listening and Conversation and English Reading and Writing. There was no ability grouping among the current students. They, around 19 years of age, all had learned English for at least seven years. Moreover, the participants received either PhD or MA from universities in English-speaking countries. Their academic backgrounds included Applied Linguistics (AL), English Literature (EL), and TESOL. Below is presented the detailed demographic information.

Table 1
Demographic Information of The Interviewees

Pseudonym	Gender	YTE	Education	Highest Qualification	Study Place
T01	Female	5	PhD	TESOL	USA
T02	Male	7	PhD	TESOL	USA
T03	Female	31	MA	AL	USA
T04	Female	2	PhD	EL	UK
T05	Female	30	MA	TESOL	USA

Instrument

A semi-structured interview was conducted with each individual teacher above since it allows the conductor to obtain a participant's "account of situations" and probe and prompt such unobservable things as 'feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and views' (Wellington, 2000, p. 71). Given the nature of the method, an interview protocol was developed as a guideline not only to prevent digression, but also to permit adjustments during each interview. The design of the protocol was based on Price's (1991) interview questions for her anxious students and Ohata's (2005) for ESL/EFL teachers. The first version was piloted with an experienced tertiary Chinese-speaking teacher of EFL, and not much needed modifying—some expressions should be more spoken. The revised one was then examined again to ensure its workability. The guide comprised three parts: (1) warm-up questions, (2) main questions, and (3) an ending question and statement. Some examples were as follows: 'Except for tertiary students, have you ever taught learners of English in other educational levels?', 'Where do you think tertiary student's EFL classroom anxiety come from?', and 'Is there anything missed that you would like to share?'. Importantly, the participants needed to answer the question about students' anxious situations before responding to that about the

sources of anxiety. This strategy was considered necessary as it helped create a logical connection between their experience and the latter inquiry.

Procedure

The teachers who were teaching English to second year English majors were first invited, but only two out of three (T01 and T02) agreed to participate. The other participants were (randomly) recruited because of their relevant experience. Before the interview started, they were presented with the research information sheet and consent form to ensure their full awareness of the study and willingness to participate. The whole process lasted approximately one hour, which was carried out in Chinese and recorded on an audio recorder. In the end, they were informed that the transcripts would need their examination before being analyzed.

Data analysis

The interviews recorded were transcribed verbatim, saved as Word files, and then uploaded to the NVivo 10 for data coding. A close reading of the texts was executed before the data were further processed. Afterwards, the lines on the hard copies that answered the research question were bracketed, and they were then coded in the NVivo. Due to my limited knowledge of the software, I only used the software for first level coding—saving the interview transcripts into a profile and highlighting in colors, allocating and coding the lines. Some of the lines could belong to more than one code if they had the quality of another. In order to categorize the codes, they were all listed in parallel on the Excel spreadsheet and then matched under the principle of sameness to form a coding frame containing ‘category’, ‘codes’, and ‘frequency’. The codes, as they were, did not have to stay in one exclusive category. Likewise, the categories generated were finally thematized according to their homogeneity, and no category appeared a second time in two contexts since each theme revealed specific properties.

Findings

Eight thematic sources of anxiety were generated through the analysis of the patterns of the responses that answer the research question. Nonetheless, only the relatively prominent ones are shown below due to the prescribed scope of the composition. The selection of the themes

was based on three criteria: (1) the number of codes in one theme, (2) the literature reviewed, and (3) the diversity of results. The first considered the strength of the interviewees' perception of a certain situation, the second the comparison and contrast with the existing literature, and the third the interesting and less discussed responses for the provision of different insights into FLA. Accordingly, in this section are presented three essential themes—'negative self-perception of L2 learning', 'concern about peers' judgments', and 'poor relationship between group members'.

Negative Self-perception of L2 Learning

The perceived L2 self is likely to affect a learner's emotions during their participation in different classroom situations. It was reported that students' anxiety was linked with three negative self-perceptions. They were low self-confidence, low self-efficacy, and comparison with classmates.

Low self-confidence. English majors' anxiety was partly connected with their self-conceived unfavorable English competences, i.e. no "lack of anxiety in using the L2" and negative "self-ratings of L2 proficiency" (Sampasivam & Clément, 2014, p. 25). Teachers T03 and T05 reported that anxious students criticized their own English ability. The former particularly clearly pointed out the relationship under discussion:

If they themselves think that they are good, they may feel comfortable with the speaking course. [However], if they themselves think that their own ability is not good enough, when [you] ask them to do any practice or something, you can feel that they are nervous all the time (T03).

Apparently, the students' emotional reactions to classroom activities may depend on how good they consider their English ability or skills to be.

Low self-efficacy. Low self-efficacy, unlike low self-confidence, is concerned with students' lack of 'beliefs in his/her ability to perform a designated task or complete an activity' (Mills, 2014, p.8) in the class. The male teacher provided some reasons for students' anxiety over sharing opinions in class, one of which was that

Maybe they are afraid that their grammar will be incorrect, but I think the content

is a bigger problem. They are constantly worried that their answers may not be correct (T02).

It is not unusual that students in Taiwan try to seek for standard answers to questions or ensure the concordance between their answers and the teacher's. Risk-taking is therefore not observed in them when they are uncertain about their responses.

Moreover, a female teacher elaborated on the trigger of students' anxiety in preparing for oral presentations: ((.) = a short pause)

I feel group (.) because there are individual and group [presentations]. Like speaking, I give them three minutes to prepare... Then, the reason why they feel anxious is that they are afraid that what they want to say is incomplete. In group work, this phenomenon may be even more obvious. I mean everyone has their own ideas, so how do they integrate [them] together within ten minutes? Then, they feel anxious about this since they are concerned about an incomplete presentation devoid of content when on stage (T04).

These low self-efficacy beliefs perhaps involve the actual difficulty of fulfilling the requirement of performing in a non-native language during the whole process.

Comparison with classmates. Comparison between students seems common in the learning context. Their differences in English ability are likely perceived during the process of learning, and become an indicator of their being either capable or incapable. In her response, the fourth informant pointed out not only her students' critical concerns in speaking, but also their behavioral reaction to self-perceived inferiority:

[They care about their] fluency and (.) exactly to what extent they can express their ideas [in English]... I feel that fluency is a very big problem as everyone hopes to speak English fluently. When they find that their classmates can do it, but they cannot, then they seem to shrink to some extent (T04).

Arguably speaking, peer pressure is probably an accompanying consequence, considering each individual student has their own learning pace and outcome even though they learn in the same class.

Concern about Peers' Judgments

This source of anxiety concerns with English majors' fear of perceiving and receiving negative comments from and exposing their drawbacks to their classmates. Specifically, it consisted of three sub-themes: (1) afraid of negative reactions—peers, (2) afraid of negative reactions—unfamiliar peers, and (3) face concerns.

Afraid of negative reactions—peers. Students were observed to be highly sensitive to their peers' negative impression of them. They were apprehensive that their classmates may look down upon or give them no credit for their English ability or performance in class. A female teacher also linked learners' performance anxiety to their attempt to 'build up a [positive] image of their own in class' (T03).

Students care about the degree of respect their classmates have for them in class...Thus, if they always cannot do [something], you can imagine that their peers will show some contempt for them in the class, won't they? [They] may hence lose other's respect for them (T03).

It was claimed that 'if you give students oral tests, if [you] let them do them individually rather than in front of their peers, perhaps the outcome is better' (T03).

Additionally, the second respondent suggested some causes of learner apprehension while discussing the role of anxiety in language learning. His so-called 'teacher's pet', as one of the triggers, immediately drew the researcher's attention:

I know that some students don't want to share their ideas in class because they don't want others to feel that they are 'teacher's pet' if they answer questions all the time (T02).

With his probing into its meaning, the teacher explained and defined the term as 'someone who always raises their hands to answer all the questions' (T02). Culturally speaking, Chinese people regard 'keeping a low profile' as a social norm and critical to their unification with the community (Peng, 2014, p. 31). Under the circumstances, those labeled 'teacher's pet' would be associated with showing off or ingratiating themselves with the teacher.

Afraid of negative reactions—unfamiliar Peers. Sharing the same concept with the above, this category put emphasis on unfamiliar peers. One informant discovered that students' degree of familiarity with classmates played a crucial role in how they react to making mistakes in class:

When unfamiliarity in the class is relatively high, they do care about [making mistakes]. [However,] when the degree becomes mild, they may not be concerned (T03).

For the sake of details, she was asked to what extent it triggered anxiety, and this was her response: (R = the researcher)

T03: Yes. I think so. I mean the atmosphere of the class. If everyone just laughs and nothing more happens, [the situation] may be [fine]. However, perhaps some of them are just so afraid that others make judgments [about them] behind their backs...

R: That is, when peers in the class are familiar with each other, they will have less (.)

T03: Better

R: Namely, [they] will care less about the detail

T03: Yes, less. Their fear of making mistakes will be less.

Face concerns. Students with face concerns attempt to maintain or protect their own image or avoid leading themselves or being led to embarrassment in class. In other words, they anticipate their disadvantages being veiled and themselves not being laughed at when not performing well. Three sources of anxiety were shared by a female teacher in discussing students' emotional resistance to being called to speak in class. They were human nature, inadequate English ability, and fear of others' observing flawed performance, which was exclusively described as follows:

It could be that they are afraid that [their] classmates hear them, for example, pronounce poorly and give the wrong responses. Or, they are uncertain whether what they say is right maybe [because] they are afraid of their mistakes being heard by their classmates (T04).

Nonetheless, it was suggested that ‘sometimes, in fact, [their] classmates do not pay attention to [them], so they do not have to worry much about this’ (T04).

Moreover, students’ avoidance of embarrassment or protection of face may be informed by their academic expectations of themselves. According to the male respondent, I think part of the anxiety is due to higher academic expectations of themselves. Maybe because they have these expectations, they do not want to embarrass themselves in front of others (T02).

One female teacher seemed to agree on this:

They also hope that they can learn English well. Just like what I said, because our department is English, they also still hope that they are able to speak [in English] (T03).

Although ‘face protection’ was not directly indicated in this remark, English majors conceivably certainly want to ensure that their ability to manipulate English well is demonstrable, especially when facing those knowing their background.

Poor Relationship between Group Members

Dividing students into groups may not be difficult, but it is probably unpredictable whether the interaction or relationship between group members will be positive. If the situation turns out negative, some students can become stressed or uncomfortable in the group. One experienced teacher related such discomfort to several phenomena. For instance, There are sometimes many problems in group work. Students, in fact, do not want to be in the same group, but are grouped together by accident. They have not got along well since the beginning, and then they just keep scolding each other. Or, if one was uncooperative once, they will consider this person to be always uncooperative...Unfortunately, this person gets grouped with them (T05).

Therefore, she claimed to allow her students to choose their own members when they need to carry out a project together as a group. It is, however, usually she who groups her students if it is only an exercise.

Discussion

This study attempted to provide some insights into the sources of EFL anxiety of English majors in Taiwan from five university teachers' perceptions. Through the qualitative analysis of the interview data, eight themes were generated (see Appendix), but, because of the reason and criteria previously indicated, only three relatively essential thematic sources were presented above, and will be discussed below. In this section, the discussion will be focusing on the items in Table 2.

Table 2
Selected Themes and Their Sub-themes

Theme	Negative self-perception of L2 learning	Concern about peers' judgments	Poor relationship between group members
Sub-theme	Low self-confidence	Afraid of negative reactions—peers	(This theme stands alone, so no sub-theme is shown here.)
	Low self-efficacy	Afraid of negative reactions—unfamiliar peers	
	Comparison with classmates	Face concerns	

Negative Self-Perception of L2 Learning

People's knowledge of the self in SLA is still evolving, but its relationship to language learner emotions has been examined to some extent. Take the self and learner anxiety for example. According to the literature, the connection, in general, is negative, that is to say, the higher the self, the lower the anxiety (self-esteem: e.g. Yan and Horwitz, 2008; self-efficacy: e.g. Gkonou, 2012; self-confidence: Sampasivam & Clément, 2014). As shown in Table 2, the participants also found that English majors' anxiety was triggered by low self-confidence and self-efficacy. This association could be explained from several angles.

First, while those students major in English, there is no guarantee that they are all equally excellent at English. They learn together in the same venue, so it is arguable that their self-perception of L2 competence can be influenced by and formed from the surroundings, e.g. their peers. That is, they can observe their differences in ability, which probably has an instant impact on their self-perceptions. As Teacher T04 experienced, 'when they find their classmates can do it, but they cannot, then they seem to shrink to some extent'.

Second, students' academic expectations of themselves mentioned above appear to suggest that they have their own views of how good they should be as an English major. In

view of this, they are unsurprisingly likely to set a higher standard for their English proficiency and want to achieve it shortly. If they are learning with such pressure find themselves unable to reach the standard or to perform a task well, but some peers can, it is little wonder that their self-confidence and/or efficacy can be negatively affected (Bandura, 1997). This consequence will, in turn, probably engender anxiety in them when they learn English, come to the class, and/or participate in activities or tasks.

Third, before entering university, students in Taiwan are used to being a listener in the (English) classroom, culturally because they are considered a knowledge receiver and pedagogically learning test-oriented. However, EFL education at tertiary level does regard the target language a communicative tool and expects to equip students with the ability to manipulate the language skills. They may, therefore, have many chances to perform in English in class. Despite their lack of speaking up, it should still be bearable if it is Mandarin (L1) in which they present. On the contrary, communicating in EFL (for purposes) can be problematic not only owing to their unfamiliarity with idea sharing and that in English, but also since their failure to cope with “complex and non-spontaneous mental operations” will result in the self-doubt of being a competent communicator and then ‘reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic’ (Horwitz, et al., 1986, p. 128). In other words, such individuals will possibly lose confidence and efficacy beliefs and address the L2 situations with negative emotions.

Comparison with classmates, although ‘self-’ is not directly indicated in this, is thought to be an influencing mechanism which directs the formation of those students’ L2 self. Comparison (or competitiveness) seems inevitable in the classroom because there are always performers and viewers. The latter are given the opportunity to reflect on their own performance and thus likely to make a comparative assessment between theirs and the former’s. That is, an evaluation of self-competence instantly occurs, which may endure until the end of the course. Given the lasting tension generated, it is unsurprising that comparison, in accord with Yan and Horwitz’s (2008) findings, was also regarded as one source of anxiety here. Furthermore, from Teacher T04’s response to this, it is almost certainly unhelpful in building up the positive L2 self and learning emotions if they judge their English competence to be unfavorable. This observation is actually supported by Kitano’s (2001) and Horwitz, et al.’s studies (1986), where their participants reported having the same experience.

Culturally speaking, comparison with peers may play a crucial role in students' construction of L2 self. As an individual's self is other-oriented in Chinese people's society (Peng, 2014), those learners may consider that comparison paves the way for a better and more direct understanding of one's self in the process of learning. In other words, through comparison, they are presumably able to realize their position or identity in the L2 context. 'Which group they belong to' thus becomes an important issue in discussing the link between the source and L2 anxiety. If they group themselves into the inferior rather than the superior, their state of self probably turns out to be so low that they dare not to participate in the L2 classroom activities.

Concern about Peers' Judgments

This social concern, based on the teachers' perceptions, comprises English majors' fear of negative feedback from (unfamiliar) peers and struggle for face. From the perspective of communication competency, those students, as young adults, usually consider themselves competent communicators who can express themselves well in their L1. However, this identity can be challenged when they speak in the L2 because it demands "complex and non-spontaneous mental operations" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p.128). If the situation does become problematic, the sudden loss of proper communicative ability will presumably bring them embarrassment or fear of receiving undesirable reactions from others. It is arguable that their identity as an English major possibly deepens their insecure feelings inside the classroom. More precisely, their teacher and classmates are perhaps both conceived as sensitive evaluators. Any error or mistake made may be picked up or exaggerated with feedback given against their professional identity. Hence, it is to be expected that the fear was reported by the teachers; it is reasonable to infer that such apprehension is more apparent in anxious English majors.

Moreover, face protection is another important issue raised during the interviews. The learners are considered sensitive to others' comments on them and/or whether their image is perceived as positive or negative. Where academic expertise is concerned, it appears to English majors that manipulating English well is not only essential, but also becomes the key to maintaining their professional image, especially when with others. Arguably, their concern about face may be more complicated than others', for example non-majors, as they must struggle to give the impression of being both a competent

communicator and a proficient English user. Nevertheless, this view does not suggest that the face issue mostly or only happens to students learning and studying an L2 at the same time. Dörnyei (2007) and Jones (2004) emphasize that in the language classroom lurk face-threatening risks, for learners need to continuously communicate or interact with others in their restricted L2. It is further indicated that those holding face concerns have difficulty coping with peers' negative evaluation of them, due to their mistakes or social clumsiness (Jones, 2004).

While face concerns appear widespread, it is arguable that the problem is presumably far more serious to the teachers' students, considering their cultural background. Peng (2014) elaborates that Chinese people's self-construal is so other-oriented that people's unfavorable evaluation of them can severely impact on their face and self-esteem. That is, they take seriously what image other people have of them, and this can further define the shape of their self-concept. Consequently, apart from their academic profession, the learners' sensitivity to others' evaluations must be reasonably doubtless reinforced by the culture they inherit.

Poor Relationship between Group Members

Working together as a group is a common practice in the language classroom. It provides learners with opportunities to learn from each other, cooperate to complete a task, and practice communicating in the target language within their own small social community. This form of learning usually also serves language learners' psychological needs. Both Liu (2006)'s and Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, and Dalay (1999)'s studies revealed that students of foreign languages, when learning cooperatively or working in groups, felt relatively at ease in class. However, Duxbury and Tasi (2010)'s students reported feeling anxious when group work was frequently implemented. Given that each individual group is community-like, the result seemingly suggests either that some students prefer to work alone, or the interaction within the group lacks harmony. That is, cooperative learning per se is generally beneficial, but there could be some issues arising when it comes to the inner dynamics of a group. As far as this and FLA is concerned, there appears to be little literature or research concerning how they affect each other. Nonetheless, Teacher T05 specified the potential problems to associate them with FLA even though she also promoted group work in her class. She, therefore, allowed herself the flexibility in grouping students. In line with this, despite its

overall benefit to learners, some questions may be worth thinking of if the teacher intends to group their students themselves, such as who should be grouped together, when the teacher should be in charge, how many students there should be in one group. In short, to bring collaborative learning into full play, both its acknowledged merits and dynamics issues need to be taken into account.

Conclusion

This study tried to investigate university teachers' perceptions of the contributing factors to English majors' EFL anxiety in Taiwan. In order to answer this question, a semi-structured interview was conducted with five native Chinese-speaking university teachers of English. Through the data analysis of coding, categorizing, and thematizing, several thematic sources of English learning anxiety were generated, three of which, with their relative significance, were selected and discussed in particular. Specifically, the teachers observed that anxious English majors perceived their L2 self to be low and had difficulty tolerating others' negative comments or evaluation. Poor interactions between group members were also associated with the learners' anxiety, which seems to be less addressed in the literature.

Considering the findings, the university teachers should try not merely to examine their perceptions, but also to have their students acknowledge the existence of FLA by openly discussing relevant issues in class. This activity serves three purposes: (1) to ensure the teacher's good understanding of their students, (2) to raise the learners' awareness of how learning affect and emotions can influence their L2 acquisition, and (3) to have them informed that FLA is normal and pervasive, and its arousal may have no direct connection with one's academic major and level of L2 ability. Apart from creating a friendly and supportive learning environment, it is important that the teacher co-develop with or provide their students with some coping strategies for FLA, which can help address and remove the root causes.

Even though this body of research has the undeniable merit of offering valuable insights into English majors' sources of EFL anxiety, it has some limitations. One major disadvantage is that only five teachers participated in this study, which may be questioned on the transferability of the findings. Nonetheless, the teachers were all experienced in teaching EFL to university students and their years of teaching had equipped them with the knowledge of different kinds of learners. Therefore, the result should be arguably valid enough to depict

the picture. Another drawback is that without student data as a contrast, it can become difficult to define the meaningfulness of the findings to the learners, and to conclude the teachers' sensitivity to or understanding of their students' psychological needs. Furthermore, there is some consistency between the study results and the previous findings, and yet it is probably still unwise to draw the conclusion that the teachers possess full knowledge of the learners' sources of EFL anxiety.

As a result, an additional interesting avenue of investigation might be to consider the similarities and differences between teachers' and students' perceptions of various aspects of FLA. This promising research is believed to provide more insight into not only L2 teachers' consciousness of learners' affect and emotions, but also the gap between the former's and the latter's perceptions of L2 learner psychology.

References

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- Chastain, K. (1975). Affective and ability factors in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 25 (1), 153-161.
- Cheng, Y. S. (2001). Learners' beliefs and second language anxiety. *Concentric: Studies in English Literature and Linguistics*, 27 (2), 75-90.
- Daubney, M., Dewaele, J. M., & Gkonou, C. (2017). Introduction. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, Research and educational implications* (pp. 1-7). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Dewaele, J. M., & Ip, T. S. (2013). The link between foreign language classroom anxiety, second language tolerance of ambiguity and self-rated English proficiency among Chinese learners. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 3 (1), 47-66.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). Creating a motivating classroom environment. In J. Cummins, & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 719-731). New York, NY: Springer.
- Duxbury J. G., & Tsai, L. L. (2010). The effects of cooperative learning on foreign language anxiety: A comparative study of Taiwanese and American universities. *International Journal of Instruction*, 3 (1), 3-18.
- Ely, C. M. (1986). An analysis of discomfort, risk-taking, sociability, and motivation in the

- L2 classroom. *Language Learning*, 36 (1), 1-25.
- Gkonou, C. (2012). A diary study on the causes of English language classroom anxiety. *International Journal of English Studies*, 13 (1), 51-68.
- Gregersen, T., & Horwitz, E. K. (2002). Language learning and perfectionism: Anxious and non-anxious language learners' reactions to their own oral performance. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86 (4), 562-570.
- Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). *Capitalizing on language learner's individuality: From premise to practice*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. Wenden, & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal*, 72 (3), 283-294.
- Horwitz, E. K. (2013). *Becoming a language teacher: A practical guide to second language learning and teaching (2nd ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1986). Preliminary evidence for the reliability and validity of a foreign language anxiety scale. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20 (3), 559-562.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70 (2), 125-132.
- Horwitz, E. K., Tallon, M., and Luo, H. (2010). Foreign Language Anxiety. In J. C. Cassady (Ed.), *Anxiety in schools: The causes, consequences, and solutions for academic anxieties* (pp. 95-115). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.
- Jones, J. F. (2004). A cultural context for language anxiety. *EA Journal*, 21 (2), 30-39.
- Kitano, K. (2001). Anxiety in the college Japanese language classroom'. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85 (4), 549-566.
- Koch, A. S., & Terrell, T. D. (1991). Affective reactions of foreign language students to natural approach activities and teaching techniques. In E. K. Horwitz, & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 109-125). New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Liu, M. H. (2006). Anxiety in Chinese EFL students at different proficiency levels. *System*, 34, 301-316.
- Liu, M. H., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' willingness to

- communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92 (1), 71-86.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gregersen, T. (2012). Affect: The role of language anxiety and other emotions in language learning. In S. Mercer, S. Ryan, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Psychology for language learning: Insights from research, theory, and practice* (pp. 103-118). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mills, N. (2014). Self-efficacy in second language acquisition. In S. Mercer, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on the self in SLA* (pp. 6-22). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Ohata, K. (2005). Language anxiety from the teachers' perspective: Interviews with seven experienced ESL/EFL teachers. *Journal of Language and Learning*, 3 (1), 133-155.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Bailey, P., & Daley, C. E. (1999). Factors associated with foreign language anxiety. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 20, 217-239.
- Oxford, R. L. (1999). Anxiety and the language learner: New insights. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 58-67). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L., & Ehrman, M. (1993). Second language research on individual differences. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 13, 188-205.
- Peng, J. E. (2014). *Willingness to communicate in the Chinese EFL university classroom: An ecological perspective*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Price, M. L. (1991). The subjective experience of foreign language anxiety: Interviews with highly anxious students. In E. k. Horwitz, & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 101-108). New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Sampasivam, S. and Clément, R. (2014). The dynamics of second language confidence: Contact and interaction. In S. Mercer, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on the self in SLA* (pp. 23-40). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Scovel, T. (1991). The effects of affect on foreign language learning: A review of the anxiety research. In E. K. Horwitz, & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 15-23). New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Wellington, J. (2000). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical*

- approaches*. London, UK: Continuum International.
- Williams, K. E., & Andrade, M. R. (2008). Foreign language learning anxiety in Japanese EFL university classes: Causes, coping, and locus control. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 5 (2), 181-191. Retrieved from <http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/>
- Williams, M., Mercer, S., & Ryan, S. (2015). *Exploring psychology in language learning and teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Yan, X., & Horwitz, E. K. (2008). Learners' perceptions of how anxiety interacts with personal and instructional factors to influence their achievement in English: A qualitative analysis of EFL learners in China. *Language Learning*, 58 (1), 151-183.
- Yashima, T. (2012). Willingness to communicate: Momentary volition that results in L2 behavior. In S. Mercer, S. Ryan, & M. Williams (Eds.), *Psychology for language learning: Insights from research, theory, and practice* (pp. 119-135). Bristol, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Young, D. J. (1990). An investigation of students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, 23 (6), 539-553.
- Young, D. J. (1991). Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest? *The Modern Language Journal*, 75 (4), 426-439.

Appendix

Themes Generated from Teacher Participants' Interview Data

Sources of FLA of English Majors	
1	Poor relationship between group members
2	Personal issues about learning
3	Negative self-perception of L2 learning
4	Concern about peer's judgments
5	Concern about teacher's judgments
6	Inadequate English ability
7	Academic expectations of themselves
8	Task/test design



The Mediating Effects of Self-Efficacy on Learners' Reading Strategy Use and Reading Proficiency

Hyangil Kim

Smith College

Sahmyook University, Korea

Hyekyeng Kim

Kumoh National Institute of Technology, Korea

Mailing address: 61, Daehak-ro, Gumi, Gyeongbuk 39177, South Korea

Bioprofiles

Hyangil Kim is an Assistant Professor at Smith College in Sahmyook University, Korea. She studies second language acquisition, including reading strategy use, self-efficacy beliefs, and motivation. hyangil@syu.ac.kr

Hyekyeng Kim, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor at Department of Liberal Arts and Teacher Training at Kumoh National Institute of Technology, South Korea. She has received the teacher's certification both from Canada and South Korea and taught international students as an ESL teacher in P-K12 school in Canada. Her research interests lie in interlanguage pragmatics, intercultural competence, as well as diverse topics in SLA. kimhk@kumoh.ac.kr

Hyangil Kim, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor at Smith College, Sahmyook
University, Korea. hyangil@syu.ac.kr

Hyekyeng Kim, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Dept. of Liberal Arts & Teacher Training
Kumoh National Institute of Technology
61, Daehak-ro, Gumi, Gyeongbuk 39177, South Korea

Abstract

This study aimed to examine whether there exists a mediating impact of self-efficacy on the relationship between the learners' reading strategy use and reading proficiency, as well as to investigate the role of anxiety in this relationship. For this study, a total of 259 Korean university students completed questionnaires and shared personal background information. Regression analyses indicate that reading strategy use significantly predicted reading proficiency. However, such significant direct effects of reading strategy use—metacognitive, cognitive, and support strategy use—on reading performance were reduced or insignificant when the indirect effect of reading strategy use mediated by self-efficacy was included in the analysis model. These findings suggest that self-efficacy plays a mediating role, which explains the positive relationship between the learners' reading strategy use and reading proficiency. On the other hand, anxiety was found not to serve any mediating role in this relationship.

Key Words: mediating effect, reading strategy use, self-efficacy, anxiety, reading proficiency

Introduction

A great deal of research regarding the second language (L2) reading has focused on strategy use for over last four decades, and the outcomes have laid an emphasis on different characteristics between more proficient and less proficient readers. Considering the existing skill gaps between these two groups in L2 reading classrooms, a number of studies have investigated the relationship between the learner's reading strategy use and reading performance in conjunction with other influential variables such as L2 learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.

Reflecting the fact that reading is a complex and active meaning-making process involving cognitive, motivational, and affective factors, it has been considered highly likely that variables have effects on both learners' strategy use and performance in reading. Previous studies have offered insightful findings to help understand the nature and effects of self-efficacy and anxiety in relation to L2 reading (e.g., Li & Wang; Solheim, 2011; Lien,

2011, 2016; Saito et al., 1999; Sellers, 2000; Wu, 2011, etc.). However, as problematized by Lien (2016), most studies have explored the relationships employing only a minimal number of variables at a time in a relatively simple manner, which may limit a more profound understanding of the roles that these important variables multiply in L2 reading. With this in mind, the present study first attempted to examine whether the learners' reading strategy use predicts reading proficiency with a sample of Korean university students. Further, this study also examined if there exist any potential internal mediating mechanisms in the link between reading strategy use and reading proficiency with the inclusion of these two important factors such as self-efficacy beliefs and anxiety. The findings of this study would yield more profitable and pedagogical viewpoints concerning the effectiveness of reading strategy use in connection with learners' beliefs in self-efficacy and anxiety in L2 reading and lead to developing facilitative pedagogical interventions for L2 learners, particularly English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, in reading classrooms.

Literature Review

Reading Strategy Use and Reading Proficiency

After Strategy Inventory for Language Learning was introduced by Oxford (1990), L2 studies have been more actively conducted in relation with the learners' strategy use. As one of the significant factors that affects reading proficiency, strategy use in L2 reading has received considerable attention as well. Based on the previous research concerning language learning strategies, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) developed reading strategies and grouped them into three categories in general: metacognitive, cognitive, and support strategies. According to Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001, p.436), metacognitive strategies refer to those related to intentional and carefully planned techniques that readers monitor or manage their reading by (e.g., keeping a purpose in mind, previewing the length or organization of the text, utilizing information embedded in the text from typographical aids, tables, and figures, etc.); cognitive strategies are those related to actions and procedures that learners use when working directly with the text (e.g., adjusting reading speed according to text difficulty, guessing the meaning of an unfamiliar word using context clues, etc.); supportive strategies indicate "basic support mechanisms" related to assisting learners in comprehending the reading text (e.g., using dictionaries, highlighting or underlying textual information, translating English into mother tongue, etc.).

Reviewing the previous studies related to L2 learners' reading strategy use, the major focus of the research has been on identifying learner differences between proficient and less proficient L2 readers (e.g., Anderson, 1991; Kim, 2016; Lau & Chan, 2003; Lien, 2016; Macaro, 2001; Macaro & Erler, 2008; Malcolm, 2009; Sheorey & Moktahri, 2001; Zhang, 2010; Zhang & Wu, 2009, etc.). The results of these studies suggest that proficient and less proficient readers are likely to exhibit different strategic behaviors when engaged in reading processes. For example, proficient readers tend to employ strategies more frequently and use different selections of strategies as compared to less proficient counterparts. Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008, p. 365) defined reading strategies as the actions of "intentional control and deliberate direction" to enhance reading comprehension. They argued that intentionality is the key to the nature of strategies, and which distinguishes strategies from skills which are considered automatic. According to them, strategic readers *intentionally employ* strategies to accomplish their reading goals. In this sense, L2 readers are depicted as being active and responsible agents who participate in their reading processes to achieve their aims of reading. The active use of strategies for cognitive information processing is considered to allow learners to facilitate effective meaning-making of a text. The findings of Lau and Chan's study (2003) also reported that more proficient Chinese readers of English used sophisticated cognitive strategies as well as metacognitive strategies to foster their reading comprehension, indicating that the effective strategy use served as the strongest and most predictable factor of reading proficiency. The related studies show that L2 readers' strategy use is likely to be strongly correlated with reading proficiency (Lau & Chan, 2003; Malcolm, 2009; Sheorey & Moktahri, 2001; Zhang & Wu, 2009).

In many cases, the findings of the previous studies regarding reading strategy use have contributed to helping relatively less proficient readers learn and practice how to use strategies effectively to become more skillful readers as proficient readers do in their reading processes. However, they reveal some limitations in that they simply focus on the relationship between reading strategy use and reading proficiency, irrespective of other relevant variables which may also have an impact on this relationship. Therefore, more research needs to be conducted to search for further information regarding the relationship between reading strategy use and reading proficiency with the inclusion of other influential variables.

Self-Efficacy Beliefs, Reading Strategy Use, and Reading Proficiency

Under the framework of social cognitive theory, human beings are referred to as ones who have the cognitive abilities to make their own decisions for lives as social beings; such as organizing, reflecting, and regulating to the changes in the environment based on their initiatives (Pajares, 2009). The human agency gets focal attention for the discussion of developmental changes, and beliefs in one's efficacy are viewed to play a vital role in such agency (Bandura, 2006). Bong and Skaalvik (2003) defined self-efficacy beliefs, or self-efficacy, as expectations and convictions of what an individual can achieve in given circumstances. This indicates "a judgment of how strongly a person believes that he or she can successfully" (p. 5) accomplish a particular task in given situations.

Bandura (2006) argues that it is one's efficacy beliefs that offer a key source of "self-development, successful adaptation, and change" (p. 4). He added that self-efficacy beliefs have an influence on one's goals and aspirations, the degrees of motivation, and perseverance when encountering adversity. They may also shape one's expectations for the outcome—anticipating that their efforts would result in favorable or unfavorable outcomes. Several studies have reported relevant and distinctive behavioristic patterns based on self-efficacy beliefs. According to these patterns, highly efficacious individuals are likely to challenge themselves to maintain their direction when facing difficulties in order to reach their goals, while learners with low efficacy tend to easily give up or avoid confronting such challenges (Bandura, 2006; Vuong, Brown-Welty, & Tracz, 2010; Wang & Pape, 2007). To this end, it is conceivable that self-efficacy beliefs have a close relationship with academic performances.

A majority of empirical studies showed that self-efficacy yielded the positive outcomes in academic contexts (Li & Wang, 2010; Kim & Cha, 2017; Kim, Wang, Ahn, & Bong, 2015; Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2006; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991). For example, the findings by Mills et al. (2006) provided insightful information regarding the powerful link of self-efficacy beliefs to reading proficiency in French. They suggest that students who believe themselves as good readers are likely to become competent in reading. In this respect, self-efficacy seems to serve as an optimizer for increasing individuals' capabilities (Graham, 2007), which possibly leads to successful academic outcomes.

With the aim of understanding the nature of self-efficacy beliefs, a good deal of research regarding learning strategies has been conducted in terms of the role of human agency in

academic settings (e.g., Graham, 2007; Lau & Chan, 2003; Li & Wang, 2010; Pajares, 2009, etc.). These studies suggested the crucial roles of self-efficacy in goal setting, effort and persistence, and academic success, as well as effective strategy use in academic contexts (Bong & Skaavik, 2003). Students who presented stronger self-efficacy beliefs tended to show a higher degree of cognitive engagement in their activities and reported more attempts to regulate their thinking and effort (Yang, 1999). Similarly, Graham (2007) pointed out that highly self-efficacious students are likely to be better at having control over and exhibiting knowledge in using strategies more effectively. In addition, Li and Wang (2010) examined the data collected from 182 Chinese undergraduates and found that all three of the sub-categories of reading strategies—metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies—were significantly correlated with reading self-efficacy. In other words, English learners with high self-efficacy are likely to present a high use of these strategies, supporting the notion that individuals' self-efficacy affect the choices they make.

Reading Anxiety, Reading Strategy Use, and Reading Proficiency

Language anxiety can be conceptualized as an adverse emotional response to learning or using a second language. It is considered that the impact of anxiety is not easily measured in the language learning context since it is a complex psychological construct involving many affective variables such as uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, etc. (Sellers, 2000). For a careful approach, Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) developed a specific instrument called Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) to gauge anxiety in foreign language reading. Based on this, a few empirical studies have identified that anxiety in reading is a related, yet it is also a specific and distinguishable construct from second or foreign language anxiety (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Saito et al., 1999; Sellers, 2000; Wu, 2011).

Anxiety has been reported to play a detrimental role in performances as a common manifestation in many studies, such as in listening (Elkhafaifi, 2005), in speaking (Aida, 1994; Kitano, 2001; Liu, 2006; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), and in reading (Saito et al., 1999; Sellers, 2000). Saito et al. (1999) examined the reading anxiety of 383 university students who took French, Japanese, and Russian courses, with the use of the FLRAS. They found that the participants showed increased degrees of anxiety when they felt that reading level became more challenging, and they also reported a negative relationship between their grades and the degrees of reading anxiety in a foreign language. In line with this result,

Sellers (2000) also found a close correlation between reading anxiety and outcomes of recall tasks with 89 university students learning Spanish. It was found that the more anxious participants were able to recall fewer important pausal units than the less anxious ones. These studies indicate that the anxiety aroused in reading processes is likely to play an adverse role in the learners' reading process.

Recently, there have been some attempts to explore the role of reading anxiety in more depth using variables that are considered central in reading such as reading strategy use and reading proficiency. Lien's (2011) study revealed some specific and distinctive patterns of reading strategies depending on the levels of anxiety in reading. In her study, the participants with lower anxiety reported more uses of reading strategies, such as guessing—which requires more cognitive capacity through utilizing context clues—while those with higher anxiety tended to rely on relatively basic strategies such as translation. More recently, Lien (2016) conducted a study involving a high sample of 523 Taiwanese university students and reported that reading anxiety served as a mediator for how self-perceived reading proficiency influences metacognitive reading strategy use. This study describes the internal mediating mechanism in the relationship between important variables and anxiety. Similarly, but distinctively, given that reading strategy use is an effective predictor of reading proficiency as suggested in the previous literature, it is worth examining how the inclusion of anxiety affects the way reading strategy use influences reading proficiency through the current study with a similar Asian sample of Korean students.

The previous reading literature has shed light on the relationships between important variables, such as reading strategy use, reading proficiency, self-efficacy, and anxiety that influence reading processes. However, limited attention has been paid to examining the potential internal mediating mechanisms in the relationship between reading strategy use and reading proficiency. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate if there exist any mediating effects of self-efficacy on the relationship between strategy use and proficiency in the domain of reading skills using a sample of Korean university students. In so doing, this study also purposed to examine the mediating effects of the learners' anxiety within the same context. The research questions are as follows;

Research question 1: Does reading strategy use has a positive effect on reading proficiency?

Research question 2: Does self-efficacy mediate the relationship between reading strategy use and reading proficiency?

Research question 3: Does anxiety mediate the relationship between reading strategy use and reading proficiency?

Method

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 259 Korean undergraduate students (117 males; 142 females) from two universities located in Seoul, Korea. The participants were taking English courses related to language skill development or language pedagogy at the time of the data collection. Their age ranged from 18 to 27 years ($M = 22.1$, $SD = 1.99$), and their majors were various, such as languages, humanities, or science. The participants voluntarily joined the study, shared personal background information, and responded to the questionnaires for the study under the promise of anonymity. The data were collected across two semesters, and they gave permission for the employment of the collected data.

Self-Perceived Reading Proficiency

A self-reported reading proficiency in English was adopted as a data collection tool. The participants were asked to mark on a six-point Likert scale from 1 (no learning experience) to 6 (advanced) according to their own judgments toward proficiency in three language aspects—vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension—which are related to reading ability. In order to ensure the validity of the self-perceived proficiency questionnaire, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted with the data collected from the 259 participants using a principal axis factoring method for extraction and an oblique direct oblimin rotation. It resulted in one-factor solution, explaining 69% of the total variance (eigenvalue = 2.37), which shows the validity of the self-reported data. To this regard, self-evaluated proficiency scores in reading were employed for the data analysis, following the research design of previous studies (e.g., Kim & Cha, 2017; Lien, 2016; Liu, 2013; Thompson & Lee, 2014, etc.). The average of the three scores was used as a continuous variable.

The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS)

To measure the participants' perceptions of how they use reading strategies, this study employed the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) adapted from Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001). The SORS has been developed to gauge ESL students' awareness of reading strategy use and has been popularly employed in many studies (e.g., Malcolm, 2009). It consists of

30 items categorized into three areas; metacognitive (13), cognitive (8), and supportive strategies (9 items). The participants responded to these items constructed from the SORS on a 6-point Likert scale with options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

Reading Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

Academic self-efficacy beliefs should have been not only context-specific but also domain-specific in nature (Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006). Keeping this in mind, Wang (2004) developed the Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy for L2 learners. His instrument consists of 32 items across four skill domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—and has been subjected to analysis of its psychometric properties, validity, and reliability in a few recent studies using samples from several nationalities such as Korean, Chinese, German, etc. (see Kim & Cha, 2017; Kim, Wang, Ahn, & Bong, 2015; Li & Wang, 2010; Wang, Kim, Bai, & Hu, 2014; Wang, Kim, Bong, & Ahn, 2013). In the present study, the eight items in the reading section from the Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy were extracted to fulfill the research aims, and the participants were asked to respond using a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

Reading Anxiety Questionnaire

The Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) was developed and its probability as a valid measurement tool was discussed by Saito et al. (1999). It is a self-report measurement tool that gauge learner anxiety elicited from the reading processes in the target language that consists of 20 items. This study employed the FLRAS on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

All the instruments—SORS, English Self-Efficacy for Reading, and FLRAS—were translated into Korean from English and scrutinized by a colleague—who is also a researcher in the field of TESOL—and were provided to the participants for their better understanding.

Data Analyses

The purpose of the study was delivered to the participants and they were informed of how to respond to the questionnaires before administrating the survey. After the completion of the survey, the data¹ were analyzed with SPSS version 18.0.

This study aimed to examine the relationship among variables such as self-efficacy,

reading anxiety, reading strategy use, and reading proficiency. More specifically, the current study aimed to examine the mediating effect of reading self-efficacy and reading anxiety on the relationship between reading strategy use and reading proficiency. The research questions were addressed through a statistical analysis of mediation effects, a crucial tool for assisting researchers to explore processes thought to be causal (Preacher & Kelly, 2011). Baron and Kenny (1986) noted, “mediators explain how external physical events take on internal psychological significance” (p. 1176). A few studies (e.g., Baron & Kenny, 1986; Judd & Kenny, 1981; James & Brett, 1984) discussed four causal steps to examine mediating effects for the potential mediator (see Figure 1; a diagram which depicts the relationships between variables including mediator). Baron and Kenny (1986) view that a critical requirement for testing mediation is a significant relationship between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y). Therefore, the first step is to examine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable ($X \rightarrow Y$). Second, the relationship between the independent variable and the mediator ($X \rightarrow M$) is examined. Third, the relationship between the combination of both the independent and the mediating variables is examined with the dependent variable ($X+M \rightarrow Y$). Lastly, all these relationships are checked for significance. In addition, the beta value of $X \rightarrow Y$ (total effect) in the first equation is checked as it should be larger than that of $X \rightarrow Y$ after controlling for the $M \rightarrow Y$ (direct effect) in the third equation. Therefore, in order to follow the proposed four steps, this study used simple and multiple regression analyses to examine if reading self-efficacy and reading anxiety respectively have a mediating effect between reading strategy use and reading proficiency. These analyses were also necessary to obtain the indirect effect—or mediating effect—and to test if the coefficients of the indirect effects are statistically significant. For example, indirect effects were obtained from multiplying ‘the partial regression coefficient (B_2) obtained from a multiple regression analysis’ (condition 3: $Y=B_0+B_1X+B_2M+e$) by ‘the regression coefficient (B) obtained from a simple regression analysis’ (condition 2: $Y= B_0 + BX+e$) as suggested by Sobel (1982). In other words, the indirect effect can be gained from multiplying these two regression coefficients; $B_{indirect}=(B_2)(B)$. In addition, a Sobel’s test was performed to examine if these coefficients are significant, using the website (<http://quantpsy.org/sobel/sobel.htm>).

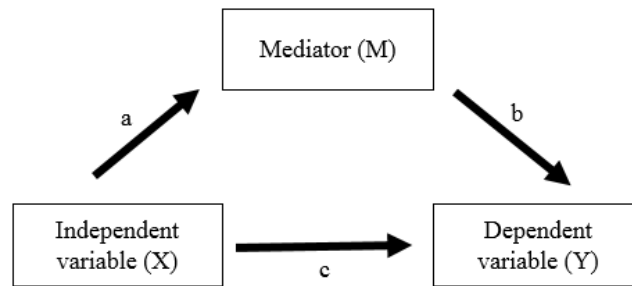


Figure 1. A diagram of the basic casual chain involving in mediation (adapted from the study by Baron and Kenny (1986))

Results

Table 1 lists the descriptive statistics for the variable scores that the participants marked: reading self-efficacy, reading anxiety, reading proficiency, and three types of reading strategy use. The mean score of reading self-efficacy was higher than the midpoint (3.5) of the scale. This reveals that the participants felt relatively self-efficacious on average in the domain of reading. At the same time, they were found to have slightly higher reading anxiety (mean = 3.80). As for their reading strategy use, all three types of reading strategies were used quite frequently—the means of each respective score were more than 4.00 out of 6, and the most frequently used type was cognitive strategies. The psychometric properties of the scales regarding these variables were evaluated for internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for reading self-efficacy and reading anxiety were .87 and .84 respectively. The SORS questionnaire was found to have a good level of overall reliability, as shown by a high Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for metacognitive strategy use and cognitive strategy use were 0.83 and 0.80 respectively, but it was .60 for support strategy use, which is a slightly lower than the acceptable level of .70.

Table 1
Frequency Distribution of the Respondents according to Personal Profiles and Strategies (n=259)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.
1. Self-efficacy	4.07	0.97	1.00	6.00
2. Anxiety	3.80	0.64	1.65	5.85
3. Proficiency	3.65	1.02	1.00	6.00
4. Metacognitive strategy use	4.03	0.69	1.62	5.85
5. Cognitive strategy use	4.52	0.71	2.00	6.00
6. Support strategy use	4.00	0.64	2.00	5.89

Correlation coefficients were determined among the variables—reading self-efficacy, reading anxiety, reading proficiency, and three types of reading strategy use. Reading self-efficacy was found to be statistically significant with the other five variables ranging from $r = .24$ to $r = .49$. The results of the correlation analysis indicate that a higher degree of reading self-efficacy is related to self-perceived reading proficiency and is negatively related to reading anxiety. In addition, the results revealed that a stronger degree of self-efficacy is associated with all the three types of reading strategy use, which is in line with the studies of Lau and Chan (2003) and Li and Wang (2010). Nevertheless, reading anxiety was negatively correlated with self-perceived reading proficiency and only correlated with support strategy use.

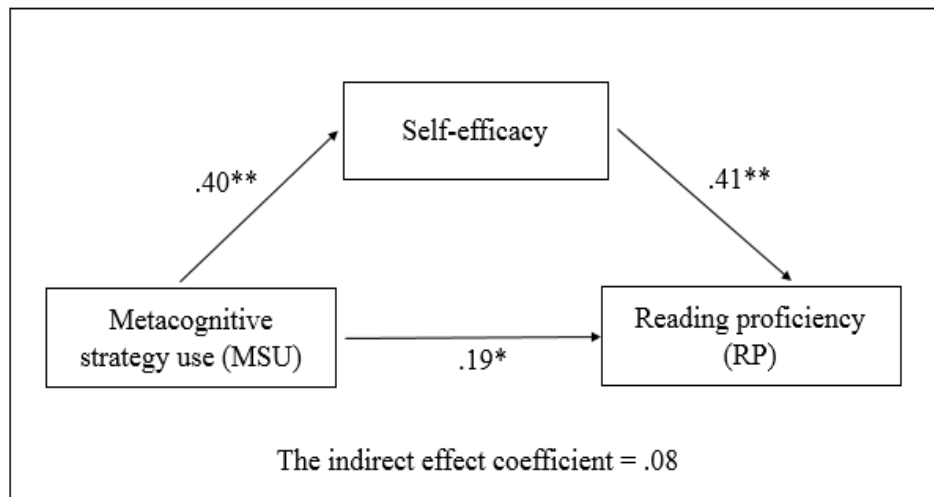
The first research question was to examine if reading strategy use had a significant effect on reading proficiency (RP). Each category of reading strategy use—metacognitive strategy use (MSU), cognitive strategy use (CSU), and support strategy use (SSU)—was analyzed separately to answer the question using three simple regression analyses. It was revealed that all three types of reading strategy use were statistically significant predictors of RP (see Step 1 in Table 3, 4, 5, respectively); $MSU \rightarrow RP, F(1, 257) = 35.50, p = .000 (R^2 = .12)$; $CSU \rightarrow RP, F(1, 257) = 24.56, p = .000 (R^2 = .09)$; $SSU \rightarrow RP, F(1, 257) = 7.09, p = .008 (R^2 = .03)$. This result is consistent with many previous studies (e.g., Lau & Chan, 2003; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001, Zhang & Wu, 2009, etc.). However, despite the statistical significance of the relationships between them, SSU explained only 3% of the total variance of RP, which was much less than MSU and CSU, showing 12% and 9% respectively. In other words, metacognitive and cognitive strategy use had more predictive value toward reading proficiency than did supportive strategy use.

Table 2
Zero ordered correlations of the reading self-efficacy, reading anxiety, reading proficiency, and reading strategy use

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Self-efficacy	—					
2. Anxiety	-.42**	—				
3. Proficiency	.49**	-.19**	—			
4. Metacognitive strategy use	.40**	.01	.35**	—		
5. Cognitive strategy use	.41**	.09	.30**	.72**	—	
6. Support strategy use	.24**	.28**	.16**	.64**	.60**	—

Note. ** $p < .01$.

The second research question was addressed by examining the relationships among self-efficacy, reading strategy use, and reading proficiency. More plainly, it aimed to examine if there is any plausibility of additional mechanisms in the relationships with the three variables. To analyze the relationship, this study tested the potential mediating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between the three types of reading strategy use and RP using the four steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) (see Method section). First with the relationship between MSU, self-efficacy, and RP, as shown in Table 3, it was already shown that MSU significantly predicted RP with a simple regression analysis in the first research question (Step 1). Another simple regression analysis (Step 2) revealed that MSU was a significant predictor of self-efficacy, $F(1, 257) = 47.95, p = .000 (R^2 = .16)$. A multiple regression analysis (Step 3) shows that there was a significant relationship between the combination of MSU and self-efficacy and RP, $F(2, 256) = 46.13, p = .000 (R^2 = .27)$, explaining 15% more of the total variance of RP than the simple regression model of MSU as a predictor variable². As the last step (Step 4), it was found that the total effect ($\beta = .35$) was larger than the direct effect ($\beta = .19$), suggesting that self-efficacy had a mediating effect on the relationship between MSU and RP (see Figure 2). The result of a multiple regression analysis (Step 3) indicates that there remained a significant direct effect of MSU \rightarrow RP after controlling for the mediator (self-efficacy). Therefore, it is seen that self-efficacy *partially* mediates the relationship between MSU and RP (see Figure 2). The mediating effect—or indirect effect—was .08, which falls in the relatively medium effect size³. This study also performed the Sobel test to analyze the significance of the mediation coefficient of self-efficacy. The result of the Sobel test indicates that self-efficacy plays a mediating role in the relationship between MSU and RP ($Z = 5.14, p = .000$).

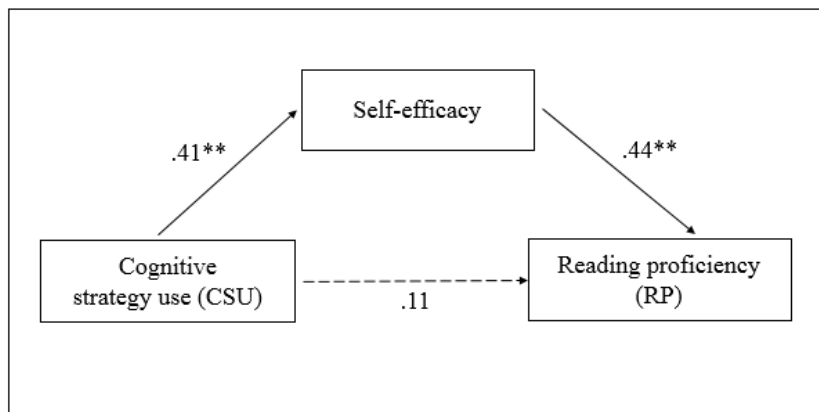


Note. The numbers indicate standardized coefficient (beta)

* $p < .01$; ** $p < .0001$

Figure 2. A path diagram that illustrates a causal chain involving self-efficacy as a mediator on the relationship between MSU and RP

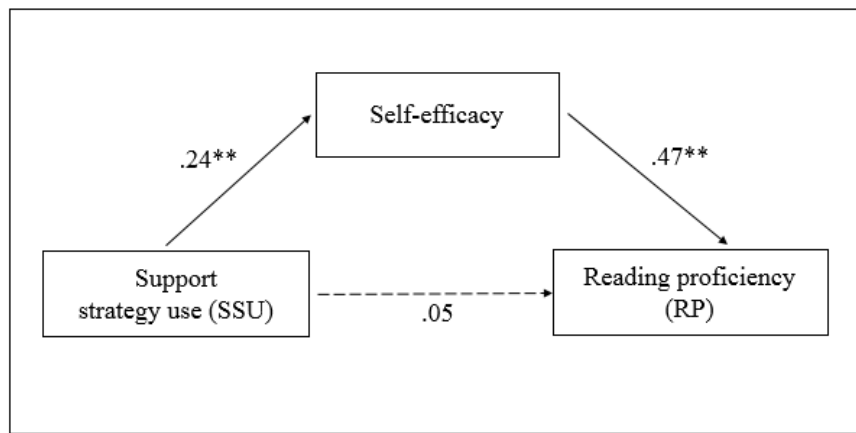
Table 4 shows the relationship between CSU, self-efficacy, and RP. It was already shown that CSU significantly predicted RP with a simple regression analysis in the first research question (Step 1). Another simple regression analysis (Step 2) was performed to find that CSU was a significant predictor of self-efficacy, $F(1, 257) = 53.01$, $p = .000$ ($R^2 = .17$). A multiple regression analysis (Step 3) showed that there was a significant relationship between the combination of CSU and self-efficacy and RP, $F(2, 256) = 41.97$, $p = .000$ ($R^2 = .25$), explaining 16% more of the total variance of RP than the simple regression model of CSU as a predictor variable⁴. As the last step (Step 4), it was found that the total effect ($\beta = .30$) was larger than the direct effect ($\beta = .11$), suggesting that there was a mediating effect of self-efficacy between CSU and RP (see Figure 3). In the result of a multiple regression (Step 3), the direct effect of CSU \rightarrow RP after controlling for the mediator (self-efficacy) was found to be insignificant ($p = .057$), indicating that self-efficacy *completely* mediates the relationship between CSU and RP. The Sobel test indicates that self-efficacy plays a mediating role in the relationship between CSU and RP ($Z = 5.58$, $p = .000$).



Note. The numbers indicate standardized coefficient (beta)
 $*p < .01$; $**p < .0001$

Figure 3. A path diagram that illustrates a causal chain involving self-efficacy as a mediator on the relationship between CSU and RP

Additionally, the relationship between SSU, self-efficacy, and RP is shown in Table 5. It was already discovered that SSU significantly predicted RP through a simple regression analysis in the first research question (Step 1). Another simple regression analysis (Step 2) revealed that SSU was a significant predictor of self-efficacy, $F(1, 257) = 15.54$, $p = .000$ ($R^2 = .06$). A multiple regression analysis (Step 3) shows that there was a significant relationship between the combination of SSU and self-efficacy and RP, $F(2, 256) = 40.11$, $p = .000$ ($R^2 = .24$), explaining 21% more of the total variance of RP than the simple regression model of SSU as a predictor variable⁵. As a last step (Step 4), it was found that the total effect ($\beta = .16$) was larger than the direct effect ($\beta = .05$), suggesting that there was a self-efficacy had a mediating effect between SSU and RP (see Figure 4). In the results of a multiple regression analysis (Step 3), the direct effect of SSU \rightarrow RP after controlling for the mediator (self-efficacy) was found to be insignificant ($p = .368$), indicating that self-efficacy *completely* mediates the relationship between SSU and RP. The Sobel test indicates that self-efficacy plays a mediating role in the relationship between SSU and RP ($z = 3.69$, $p = .000$).



Note. The numbers indicate standardized coefficient (beta)

* $p < .01$; ** $p < .0001$

Figure 4. A path diagram that illustrates a causal chain involving self-efficacy as a mediator on the relationship between SSU and RP

The third research question was concerned with whether there exist any additional mechanisms in the relationships with anxiety, reading strategy use, and reading proficiency. Table 2 indicates there were no significant correlations in the relationship not only between MSU and anxiety but also between CSU and reading anxiety. Therefore, the potential mediating effect of reading anxiety on the relationship between SSU and RP was examined alone. As illustrated in Table 6, a simple regression analysis indicated a significant relationship between SSU and RP (Step 1). It was also shown that SSU was a significant predictor of reading anxiety (Step 2), $F(1, 257) = 22.01, p = .000 (R^2 = .08)$. A multiple regression analysis (Step 3) shows that there was a significant relationship between the combination of SSU and reading anxiety and RP, $F(2, 256) = 12.40, p = .000 (R^2 = .09)$, explaining just 1% more of the total variance of RP than the simple regression model of SSU as a single predictor variable⁶. When the last step (Step 4) was examined, the total effect ($\beta = .16$) was smaller than the direct effect ($\beta = .24$), identifying no mediating effect of reading anxiety in the relationship between SSU and RP existed.

Table 3

The results of the three causal steps for mediation regression analysis: the role of self-efficacy in the relationship between MSU and RP

Dependent variables		Step 1						Step 2						Step 3					
		RP						Self-efficacy						RP					
		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Independent variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R2</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R2</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R2</i>	
MSU	.52	.09	.35	5.96	.000	.12	.56	.08	.40	6.93	.000	0.16	.27	.09	.19	3.16	.002		
Self-efficacy													.43	.06	.41	7.07	.000	.27	

Table 4

The results of the three causal steps for mediation regression analysis: the role self-efficacy in the relationship between CSU and RP

		Step 1						Step 2						Step 3					
	Dependent variables	RP						Self-efficacy						RP					
		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Independent variables		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²
CSU		.43	.09	.30	4.96	.000	.09	.57	.07	.41	7.28	.000	.17	.17	.09	.11	1.91	.057	.25
Self-efficacy														.46	.06	.44	7.37	.000	

Table 5

The results of the three causal steps for mediation regression analysis: the role of self-efficacy in the relationship between SSU and RP

Dependent variables	Step 1						2nd step						3rd step					
	RP						Self-efficacy						RP					
	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Independent variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²
SSU	.26	.10	.16	2.66	.008	.03	.37	.09	.24	3.94	.000	.06	.08	.09	.05	.90	.368	.24
Self-efficacy													.50	.06	.47	8.44	.000	

Table 6

The results of the three causal steps for mediation regression analysis: the role of anxiety in the relationship between SSU and RP

Dependent variables	Step 1						Step 2						Step 3					
	RP						Anxiety						RP					
	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Independent variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²
SSU	.26	.10	.16	2.66	.008	.03	.28	.06	.28	4.69	.000	.08	0.38	0.10	.24	3.80	.000	.09
Anxiety													-.42	0.10	-.26	-4.16	.000	

Discussion and Conclusions

The major aim of this study was to investigate the mediating effects of self-efficacy and anxiety on the relationship between reading strategy use and RP. First, regarding self-efficacy in reading, it appeared to have a central explanatory mechanism through which reading strategy use affects RP. The results indicate that all three types of reading strategy use enhance RP; however, these directly positive relationships between three each category of reading strategy use and RP attenuated (MSU → RP) or became insignificant (CSU → RP; SSU → RP) if self-efficacy is included as a mediator. In other words, this study found that self-efficacy serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between MSU and RP, while it works as a complete mediator between CSU and RP and between SSU and RP. According to Preacher and Kelly (2011), partial and full mediation can be seen important as a mediating variable in terms of explaining the total effect. This study presents a significant mediating role of self-efficacy for how reading strategy use—MSU, CSU, and SSU—influences reading competence.

The literature related to L2 reading has advocated for the positive and significant effects of reading strategy use on reading proficiency (e.g., Lau & Chan, 2003; Macaro, 2001; Macaro & Erler, 2008; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001, etc.). Although a few studies attempted to reveal a close association between reading strategy use and self-efficacy (e.g., Lau & Chen, 2003; Li & Wang, 2010, etc.), little attention has been paid to examining the potential mediating mechanism in the relationship between them. This study supports the previous literature to show the positive influence of reading strategy use on RP. In addition, it further widens the understanding of the centrality of self-efficacy beliefs in enhancing the relationship between reading strategy use and RP.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's subjective judgement of capability in performing a particular task successfully in given situations (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003), and is deeply related to the concept of human agency (Bandura, 1997). If individuals believe they have no capabilities to produce outcomes, they will not try to overcome challenges to achieve their goals. Based on a judgement of their own capabilities, individuals attempt to generate courses of action in order to perform given tasks. Such intentional courses of action constitute the key feature of the agency which affects

outcomes—whether they are productions of action that was intended to bring about or actual productions influenced by the effects by the courses of action taken (Bandura, 1997). With intentionality in mind, this study suggests that self-efficacy works as a driving force for individuals to optimize their options and resources around them. In other words, when self-efficacy serves as a mediating variable, students seem to have better control in regulating reading strategies, which significantly contributes to proficiency in reading.

As for the learners' anxiety in reading, this study found that anxiety has a significant negative correlation with RP, which plays a detrimental role in reading which shows consistency with previous studies (e.g., Lien 2011; Saito et al., 1999; Sellers, 2000, etc.). This study examined whether anxiety in reading mediates the relationship between SSU—the only sub-strategy variable that had a significant correlation with RP—and RP and revealed that anxiety does not serve as a mediator in the relationship between SSU and RP. It could be said that there is no mediating effect of anxiety on how reading strategy use influences RP. Nonetheless, as Liu (2006) and Aida (1994) noted when students become more experienced, they become less anxious in using the language. The participants (average age = 22.1) in this study were university students and would have been frequently exposed to English reading for many years due to the demand of the university entrance exam in Korea in which more than half of the questions were based on reading comprehension. With frequent experiences in reading, anxiety may not have affected the relationship between reading strategy use and proficiency. For a future study, it would be insightful to explore the nature of anxiety using cross-sectional data with varying amounts of experience in reading.

The findings presented in this study should be interpreted with care due to some limitations. There is the potential that the participants may have not described their feelings or perceptions appropriately on the scales of the self-report instruments although this issue was intended to be minimized by not only assuring confidentiality and anonymity of the data collected but also by securing the validity and reliability of employed questionnaires. In addition, the generalizability of the results should be

limited since this study was carried out only with Korean EFL students.

In conclusion, this study found a positive impact of reading strategy use on RP. Moreover, it identifies an additional mediating effect on the relationship between L2 learners' reading strategy use and RP by extending our understanding of the roles of self-efficacy. The emergent models indicate that self-efficacy beliefs perform a mediating function from all three types of reading strategy use (MSU, CSU, and SSU) to RP, while the construct of anxiety does not display any mediating effects. These findings support the previous literature in highlighting the pivotal value of self-efficacy beliefs for academic advantages, especially in reading.

References

- Aida, Y., 1994. Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's construct of foreign language anxiety: the case of students of Japanese. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(2), 155–168.
- Afflerbach, P., Pearson, P. D., & Paris, S. G. (2008). Clarifying differences between reading skills and reading strategies. *Reading Teacher*, 61(5), 364–373.
- Aghaie, R., & Zhang, L. J. (2012). Effects of explicit instruction in cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies on Iranian EFL students' reading performance and strategy transfer. *Instructional Science*, 40(6), 1063-1081.
- Anderson, N. J. (1991). Individual differences in strategy use in second language reading and testing. *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 460–472.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY: W. H. Freeman and Company.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Adolescent development from an agentic perspective. In F. Pajares, & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 1–43). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173–1182.

- Bong, M., & Skaalvik, E. M. (2003). Academic self-concept and self-efficacy: How different are they really? *Educational Psychology Review*, 15(1), 1–40.
- Dhieb-Henia, N. (2003). Evaluating the effectiveness of metacognitive strategy training for reading research articles in an ESP context. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22(4), 387-417.
- Dreyer, C., & Nel, C. (2003). Teaching reading strategies and comprehension within a technology-enhanced learning environment. *System*, 31(3), 349-365.
- Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1995). Cognition plus: Correlates of language proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79(1), 67-89.
- Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). Listening comprehension and anxiety in the Arabic language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(2), 206-220.
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a foreign language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Graham, S. (2007). Learner strategies and self-efficacy: making the connection. *Language Learning Journal*, 35(1), 81–93.
- James, L. R., & Brett, J. M. (1984). Mediators, moderators, and tests for mediation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 69(2), 307–321.
- Judd, C. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1981). Process analysis: Estimating mediation in treatment evaluations. *Evaluation Review*, 5(5), 602–619.
- Kim, H. I. (2016). The relationships between Korean university students' reading attitude, reading strategy use, and reading proficiency. *Reading Psychology*, 37(8), 1162-1195.
- Kim, H. I., & Cha, K. A. (2017). Effects of experience abroad and language proficiency on self-efficacy beliefs in language learning. *Psychological Reports*, 120(4), 670-694.
- Kim, D., Wang, C., Ahn, H. S., & Bong, M. (2015). English language learners' self-efficacy profiles and relationship with self-regulated learning strategies. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 38, 136–142.
- Kitano, K., 2001. Anxiety in the college Japanese language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal* 85(4), 549–566.

- Lau, K., & Chan, W. D. (2003). Reading strategy use and motivation among Chinese good and poor readers in Hong Kong. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 26(2), 177-190.
- Li, Y., & Wang, C. (2010). An empirical study of reading self-efficacy and the use of reading strategies in the Chinese EFL Context. *Asian EFL Journal*, 12(2), 144–162.
- Lien, H. Y. (2011). EFL learners' reading strategy use in relation to reading anxiety. *Language Education in Asia*, 2(2), 199–212.
- Lien, H. Y. (2016). Effects of EFL individual learner variables on foreign language reading anxiety and metacognitive reading strategy use. *Psychological Reports*, 119(1), 124–135.
- Liu, M. (2006). Anxiety in Chinese EFL students at different proficiency levels. *System*, 34(3), 301–316.
- Liu, H. J. (2013). Effects of foreign language anxiety and perceived competence on learning strategy use. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 3(3), 76–87.
- Liu, M. (2013). English Bar as a venue to boost students' speaking self-efficacy at the tertiary level. *English Language Teaching*, 6(12). 27-37
- Macaro, E. (2001). *Learning strategies in second and foreign language classrooms*. London, U.K: Continuum.
- Macaro, E., & Earler, L. (2008). Raising the achievement of young-beginner readers of French through strategy instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 29(1), 90-119.
- MacIntyre, P.D., Gardner, R.C., 1989. Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning* 39(2), 251–275.
- Malcolm, D. (2009). Reading strategy awareness of Arabic-speaking medical students studying in English. *System*, 37(4), 640-651.
- Mokhtari, K., & Sheorey, R. (2002). Measuring ESL students' reading strategies. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 25(3), 2–10.
- Mills, N., Pajares, F., & Herron, C. (2006). A reevaluation of the role of anxiety: Self-efficacy, anxiety, and their relation to reading and listening proficiency. *Foreign Language Annals*, 39(2), 276-295

- Multon, K. D., Brown, S. D., & Lent, R. W. (1991). Relation of self-efficacy beliefs to academic outcomes: A meta-analytic investigation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 38(1), 30-38.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. NY: Newbury House Publisher.
- Pajares, F. (2009). Motivational role of self-efficacy beliefs in self-regulated learning. In D. H. Schunk & B. J. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Preacher, K. J., & Kelly, K. (2011). Effect size measures for mediation models: Quantitative strategies for communicating indirect effects. *Psychological Methods*, 16(2), 93–115.
- Saito, Y., Horwitz, E.K., Garza, T.J., 1999. Foreign language reading anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal* 83(2), 202–218.
- Sellers, V. D. (2000). Anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(5), 512-521.
- Sheorey, R., & Mokhtari, K. (2001). Differences in the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among native and non-native readers. *System*, 29(4), 431–449.
- Solheim, O. J. (2011). The impact of reading self-efficacy and task value on reading comprehension scores. *Reading Psychology*, 32(1), 1–27.
- Spielmann, G. & Radnofsky, M. (2001). Learning language under tension: New directions from a qualitative study. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(2), 251-255.
- Taylor, A., Stevens, J. R., & Asher, W. J. (2006). The effects of explicit reading strategy training on L2 reading comprehension. In J. M. Norris, & L. Ortega (Eds.), *Synthesizing research on language learning and teaching* (pp. 213-245). Amsterdam, the Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Thompson, A. S., & Lee, J. (2014). The impact of experience abroad and language proficiency on language learning anxiety. *TESOL Quarterly*, 48(2), 252–274.
- Vuong, M., Brown-Welty, S., & Tracz, S. (2010). The effects of self-efficacy on

- academic success of first-generation college sophomore students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 51(1), 50–64.
- Wang, C. (2004). *Self-regulated leaning strategies and self-efficacy beliefs of children learning English as a second language* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd/>
- Wang, C., Kim, D-H., Bai, R., & Hu, J. (2014). Psychometric properties of a self-efficacy scale for English language learners in China. *System*, 44, 24–33.
- Wang, C., Kim, D-H., Bong, M., & Ahn, H. S. (2013). Examining measurement properties of an English Self-Efficacy scale for English language learners in Korea. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 59, 24–34.
- Wang, C., & Pape, S. (2007). A probe into three Chinese boys' self-efficacy beliefs learning English as a second language. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 21(4), 364–377.
- Wu, H. (2011). Anxiety and reading comprehension performance in English as a foreign language. *Asian EFL Journal*, 13(2), 271-307.
- Yang, N.-D. (1999) The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use, *System*, 27(4), 515–535.
- Zhang, L. J. (2010). A dynamic metacognitive systems account of Chinese university students' knowledge about EFL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(2), 320–353.
- Zhang, L. J., & Wu, A. (2009). Chinese senior high school EFL students' metacognitive awareness and reading-strategy use. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 21(1), 37–59
- Zimmerman, B. J., & Cleary, T. J. (2006). Adolescents' development of personal agency. In F. Pajares, & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Adolescence and education* (Vol. 5): *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 45-69). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Notes

¹ This article was written based on a proportion of a larger data set collected by Kim and Cha (2017).

¹ Variance inflation factors (VIFs) were employed to check the effect of multi-collinearity. The VIF

values related with predictor reveal a range from 1.00 to 1.19, which is considered an acceptable level (Hair et al, 2010), indicating no need to concern regarding multi-collinearity.

¹ According to Kenny (2016) and Preacher and Kelly (2011), an indirect effect coefficient can be considered as follows; .01 would be for a small, .09 for a medium, .25 for a large effect size.

¹ The VIF values related with predictor indicate a range from 1.00 to 1.21, indicating no need to concern regarding multi-collinearity.

¹ The VIF values related with predictor indicate a range from 1.00 to 1.06, indicating no need to concern regarding multi-collinearity.

¹ The VIF values related with predictor reveal a range from 1.00 to 1.19, which is considered an acceptable level (Hair et al, 2010), indicating no need for concern regarding multi-collinearity.



Interlanguage Pragmatic Development: Input-providing or Output-prompting Tasks?

Mahmood Safari* & Leila Niknasab

Hazrat-e Masoumeh University

Bioprofiles

Mahmood Safari is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics at Hazrat-e Masoumeh University in Qom, Iran. He teaches courses such as English Grammar, Language Testing, Teaching Methodology, Applied Linguistics, and Materials Development, at BA and MA levels. His fields of interest include Corpus Linguistics, Pragmatics, and Formulaic Expressions. Email: m.safari@hmu.ac.ir

Leila Niknasab is a lecturer at Hazrat-e Masoumeh University in Qom, Iran. She teaches translation courses such as Reading Comprehension, Translating Literary Texts, Principles of Translation, and Reading Newspaper Texts. Her fields of interest include Interpretation, Translation of Social Sciences Texts, Theoretical Principles of Translation.

Email: niknasab@gmail.com

* Corresponding author

Department of English Translation,

Hazrat-e Masoumeh University, opposite Yadegar

Abstract

Despite the abundance of research on interlanguage pragmatics, few studies have explored the effect of output-based tasks on developing pragmatic competence. The present study attempted to compare the effects of an input-providing activity (explicit teaching) and an output-prompting activity (role play) on learning request speech act by Iranian intermediate English foreign language (EFL) learners. The participants were 42 freshman English majors in two intact classes at two universities in Qom, Iran, who were randomly assigned to the explicit teaching and role play groups. Initially, a general proficiency test (TOEFL Test, 2002) and a discourse completion test ensured homogeneity of the participants in general proficiency and pragmatic competence. Then,

the groups received the instructional treatments, which included reading and listening to some English dialogues containing the intended speech act and the explicit instruction of request speech act for the explicit teaching group and developing and acting out role plays by students in the role play group. Subsequently, the participants took the Posttest and the collected data were analyzed using the SPSS. The results revealed that the explicit teaching group performed significantly better than the role play group. Moreover, the results of the paired samples t-tests indicated that explicit teaching significantly influenced the participants' acquisition of the instructed speech act but the effect of the role play task on learning request speech act was statistically non-significant. The findings suggest that input-based activities are more effective than output-based activities for pragmatic development. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for farther research will be discussed.

Keywords: explicit teaching, input-providing tasks, output-prompting tasks, pragmatic features, role play

Introduction

Since the inception of the concept of communicative competence, language teaching scholars have realized that linguistic competence (i.e., knowledge of sounds, words and structures) is not sufficient for developing the ability to use the second language accurately and appropriately. Language learners need to develop communicative competence, which includes other competences, in order to communicate effectively and properly in the second language (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Communicative competence entails several competences, one of which is pragmatic competence. Ellis (2008) defines pragmatic competence as “knowledge of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior in a particular situation” (p. 956). Language learners need to develop pragmatic competence in order to behave properly in different situations of second language use. It is worth to note that pragmatic competence is independent of grammatical competence and an advanced grammar knowledge does not guarantee higher level of pragmatic performance (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Blum-Kulka, House, &

Kasper (1989) report that “even fairly advanced language learners’ communicative acts regularly contain pragmatic errors, or deficits, in that they fail to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value” (p. 10). Thus, second language learners need to develop pragmatic competence on its own.

Takahashi (2001) divided the studies on the effect of instruction on interlanguage pragmatic development into two groups: the studies comparing no instruction to instruction providing metapragmatic information and those comparing instruction providing no metapragmatic information (implicit teaching) to instruction providing metapragmatic information (explicit teaching). The first group of studies investigated teachability of different types of pragmatic features, including pragmatic routines, discourse strategies, politeness in requests, and various speech acts. Generally, these studies revealed that pragmatic features are teachable, that is, language learners who receive instruction on pragmatic features comprehend and use these features more effectively than those who receive no instruction on these features (e.g., Billmyer, 1990; Bouton, 1994; Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh, & Fatahi, 2004; Lyster, 1994; Martínez-Flor, 2016). The second group of studies explored the impact of different pedagogical approaches on pragmatic development, typically comparing explicit and implicit instruction (e.g., Eslami-Rasekh, Mirzaei, & Dini, 2015; Fordyce, 2014; Ghobadi & Fahim, 2009; House & Kasper, 1981; Pearson, 2001; Tateyama, 2001) and the majority of the studies provided evidence to the superiority of explicit instruction to implicit teaching.

Studies investigating the effects of input-based and output-based instructions on language learning have produced mixed and inconclusive results. Although, most studies in this area have revealed that both types of instruction (input- and output-based instruction) have positive effects on learning different language features, some studies have shown that input-based instruction is significantly more effective than output-based instruction (e.g., Farley, 2001; Lee & Benati, 2006; VanPatten & Wong, 2004) and others have revealed that output-based instruction is more effective (e.g., Izumi, 2002; Morgan-Short & Bowden, 2006; Rassaei, 2012; Toth, 2006). Still the third group of studies have shown that the two types of instructions are equally effective on second

language learning (e.g., Erlam, Loewen, & Philip, 2009; Loewen, Erlam, & Ellis, 2009).

Within the realm of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), few studies have investigated the effects of output-based activities on acquiring certain speech acts (e.g. Ahmadi, Ghaemi, & Birjandi, 2016; Tajeddin & Bagherkazemi, 2014) and just a few studies have compared the effects of input-providing and output-prompting activities on learning pragmatic features by EFL learners (e.g., Ahmadi, Ghafar Samar, & Yazdanimoghaddam, 2011; Sydorenko, 2015).

Literature Review

Developmental ILP mainly focuses on the effect of instruction, in general, and the comparison of the effects of explicit and implicit teaching, in particular, on learning pragmatic features. The majority of the studies in the first group (i.e., the studies investigating the effect of instruction in general on pragmatic development) revealed that instruction has a significant effect on pragmatic development and learners who receive instruction on pragmatic features perform significantly better than those who do not receive such an instruction on tests of second language pragmatics (e.g., Bouton, 1994; Eslami-Rasekh & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martínez-Flor, 2016; Salazar, 2003; Wishnoff, 2000). Martínez-Flor investigated the effects of teaching apologies at a discourse level and the results revealed that “After receiving instruction, learners produced more elaborated apologetic responses attending to the sociopragmatic aspects involved in the different situations, a performance that was maintained over time” (p. 13).

The second group of studies, comparing the effects of different types of instruction (mainly explicit teaching versus implicit teaching) on pragmatic development, indicated that explicit teaching is more effective than implicit one (Ahmadian, 2018; Fordyce, 2014; House, 1996; Kargar, Sadighi, & Ahmadi, 2012; Pearson, 2001; Takahashi, 2001). Ahmadian examined the differential effects of explicit and implicit teaching of refusal strategies in English and whether and how the influences of teaching methods interact with learners' working memory capacity. The results indicated that explicit instruction was more effective than implicit instruction for both production and

comprehension of refusals. Fordyce investigated immediate and long-term impact of implicit and explicit teaching on learners' use of epistemic stance forms in written production. The results revealed that explicit instruction was more effective than implicit instruction for most of the target features and the positive effects of instruction were maintained after five months. Recent studies have explored other aspects of interlanguage pragmatics, such as the effect of personality on pragmatic developments (Taguchi, 2014), the effect of recognizing collocational behaviors on developing lexical pragmatics (Lee, 2010), and longitudinal pragmatic development of EFL learners (Xu, Case, & Williams, 2017).

Input-based versus Output-based Tasks

Studies comparing input-based and output-based tasks on learning various aspects of second language have yielded mixed and inconclusive results. Although the majority of the studies have shown that both types of instruction are significantly effective on learning different linguistic features (e.g., Benati, 2001; Morgan-Shot & Bowden, 2006; Toth, 2006), some studies have favored the input-based activities (e.g., Benati, 2005; Farley, 2001; Lee & Benati, 2006; VanPatten & Wong, 2004), other studies have shown that output-based instruction is more effective (e.g., Allen, 2000; Izumi, 2002; Rassaei, 2012; Toth, 2006; Younesi & Tajeddin, 2014) and the third group have revealed equal effectiveness for the two types of instruction (e.g., Erlam, Loewen, & Philip, 2009; Loewen, Erlam, & Ellis, 2009; Salimi & Shams, 2016). Toth examined the impacts of the two types of teaching (input- and output-based teaching) on acquiring a Spanish morphosyntactic feature by learners of Spanish as a second language and the results revealed that both groups improved on a grammar task. Izumi compared the effects of input-based instruction to output-based instruction on ESL learners' acquisition of English relativization and discovered a facilitative effect for the output-based task but no effect for the input-based task. However, Farley (2001) indicated that input-based teaching was generally more effective than output-based instruction on how the students produced and interpreted the Spanish subjunctive of doubt. Salimi and Shams investigated the effects of the two types of instruction on language students' autonomy

on writing and showed that “there was no significant difference between input-based instruction and output-based one in terms of accuracy as the means for both groups were the same” (p. 530).

However, there has been a scarcity of research on the effects of output-based tasks on pragmatic development by EFL learners and there have even been fewer studies comparing the effects of input-based and output-based activities on the acquisition of pragmatic features by language learners. Tajeddin and Bagherkazemi (2014) investigated the impacts of individual and collaborative output on Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ speech act production and revealed that both types of output had significant effects on the learners’ short-term and long-term production of speech acts, but collaborative output was shown to be more effective. Sydorenko (2015) explored the effects of oral practice through computer-delivered structured tasks (CASTs) with native speaker models and learner-learner role-plays on language learners’ pragmatic development. According to the researcher, “Qualitative analysis of participants’ output during practice suggests that rehearsal via CASTs promotes FonF and incorporation of NS models into learners’ speech, while rehearsal via role-plays results in more creative, but often pragmatically inappropriate, language and content”. Ahmadi, Ghafar Samar, & Yazdanimoghaddam (2011) compared the effects of an output-based task (dictogloss) and an input-based task (consciousness raising) on Iranian EFL learners’ acquisition of English request forms. The results indicated that both teaching types significantly enhanced the EFL learners’ performance in the immediate and delayed Posttests and there was no significant difference between the effects of the two instruction types.

The Present Study

Despite the plethora of research on interlanguage pragmatics investigating the cross cultural differences among pragmatic systems of different languages, differences between native speaker and nonnative speaker pragmatic behavior and the effects of pedagogical intervention and different types of instruction (mainly explicit versus implicit teaching) on EFL learners’ pragmatic development, there have been a scarcity of research on the effect of output-based tasks on the acquisition of pragmatic features

by EFL learners and even fewer studies comparing input-providing and output-prompting pragmatic instructions. The present study attempted to fill in the gap and shed more light on the issue by comparing the effects of an input-based activity (explicit teaching) and an output-prompting activity (role play task) on EFL learners' pragmatic development. To that end, the following research questions were put forth and for each question a null hypothesis was considered:

- 1- Is there a significant difference in the effects of explicit teaching and role play task on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian freshman English majors?
- 2- Does explicit teaching have any significant effect on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian freshman English majors?
- 3- Does role play task have any significant effect on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian freshman English majors?

Method

Participants

The participants of the present study were 42 freshman university students majoring in English Translation and English Language and Literature at two state universities in Qom, Iran. All the participants were female EFL learners in 18-24 age range and were taking their second semester courses from February to June of 2018. The participants were from two intact classes, which were randomly assigned to the explicit teaching and role play groups. The explicit teaching group consisted of 20 participants and the role play group contained 22 students. The general proficiency test (TOFEL Test, 2002) revealed that the two groups of participants were homogeneous in terms of general English proficiency and they were at the intermediate proficiency level.

Instrumentation

The present study included the following instruments: (1) a general proficiency test (TOEFL Test, 2002); (2) a multiple-choice discourse completion task (MDCT) test, which was used as the Pretest and Posttest, and (3) the instructional materials for teaching the intended speech act (i.e., request).

Proficiency and MDCT Tests

In order to homogenize the two groups on the onset of the study, an available general proficiency test (TOEFL Test, 2002) was employed. The test was used by the authors in their previous studies and was shown to be reliable. For practicality issues, the test was shortened into 70 multiple-choice items of structure and reading comprehension. The test included two sections: The Structure and Written Expressions section, which contained 50 multiple-choice items, and the Reading Comprehension section, which included two reading passages and 20 reading comprehension questions. As the test was truncated, a Cronbach Alpha analysis was conducted on the participants' TOEFL test scores to calculate the reliability of the test. The result of the Cronbach Alpha analysis (.84) indicated that the test was still a reliable one.

The Pretest and Posttest were a multiple-choice discourse completion task (MDCT) test. The test contained 12 multiple-choice discourse completion items. There was a brief description of a hypothetical situation in the stem of each item, which required the realization of request speech act. The four choices presented different request forms, one of which was the most suitable for the situation. The items and the choices were developed on the basis of a list of request structures which was adopted from House and Kasper (1981), Blum-Kulka, et al., (1989), and Brown & Levinson (1987) (Appendix A). All the items were reviewed by English native speakers (See Appendix B for some example MDCT items). There was a two-month interval between the Pretest and Posttest, so it was very unlikely for the test to have a practice effect.

The test was created and validated with the aid of twenty-two English native speakers. They were British and American native speakers in the 18-40 age range. They agreed to contribute to the study by replying the MDCT questions. First, two native speakers reviewed the 16 items in the first version of the MDCT test and revised them. They enhanced the wording and naturalness of the scenario descriptions and choices. Also, when none of the choices were pragmatically suitable, they offered alternative sentences as the correct response. For instance, the sentence '*My car is broken down*' was changed to '*My car broke down*'. Then the researcher administered the revised MDCT test among the remaining twenty native speakers. The choices which were

selected by all or the majority of the native speakers (at least 18 out of the 20 native speakers) were regarded as the right answers. For 12 items there was 90% to 100% agreement among the native speakers on the best choice. The 12 items were used to develop the test which was used as the Pretest and Posttest. The reliability analysis performed on the Pretest scores guaranteed that the MDCT test was a reliable measure (Cronbach's Alpha for the test was .74).

Instructional Materials

To develop the instructional materials, the researcher examined some English course books which are currently used in English Institutes to find dialogues which involved request speech act. The researcher identified 36 dialogues containing request speech act and included five dialogues in each lesson of the developed booklet in order to have lessons of equal length. Six dialogues were included in the last lesson. The booklet was composed of seven lessons. There was an audio file for each dialogue, which was played to the participants while they were reading the dialogues. The booklet versions for both experimental groups (i.e., the role play and explicit teaching groups) included the same dialogues, but they presented and practiced the intended speech act in different ways. In the explicit teaching group's booklet, there was some instructional information on request speech act, which was presented prior to the dialogues. The instructional points on request speech act was based on a list of request structures adopted from House and Kasper (1981), Blum-Kulka, et al., (1989), and Brown & Levinson (1987) (Appendix A). The booklet for the role play group included the same dialogues (with no information on request) but at the end of each lesson there was a role play exercise. The participants of the role play group were requested to read a formal and an informal hypothetical situation and, in pairs, write a dialogue for each situation and role play them in class.

Data Collection Procedures

Initially, the participants took a general proficiency test (TOEFL, 2002) to ensure that the participants in the two groups were homogenous in terms of general proficiency.

Then, the participants took the Pretest, whose aim was to ensure that the groups did not significantly differ from each other in pragmatic competence. A week after the Pretest, the participants received the instructional treatments, which lasted for seven weeks. The participants of the two groups listened to and read the same dialogues and after each dialogue the instructor provided vocabulary meanings and grammatical points. However, the groups were provided with different types of instruction or practice on request speech act and different booklet versions as the treatment materials.

The explicit teaching group received some instruction on the intended speech act before they read the dialogues. The teacher explained to the participants that when making a request, a speaker must take some social and pragmatic factors into account. That is, a speaker must consider the relationship and social status of the interlocutors and the speech act imposition in order to determine the degree of indirectness and formality required for each context (sociopragmatic points). Then based on the specified formality and indirectness, the speaker selects an appropriate request form. The request forms presented in the dialogues and instructed by the teacher included the following structures: *imperative sentences, tag questions, informal address terms, I want / need statements, providing reasons for the request, politeness markers, interrogatives, hesitators and hedges, consultative devices, apology, query preparatory, I wonder if* (Appendix A). Then the teacher referred to these request formulae and explained which structures are appropriate for which contexts (pragmalinguistic points). After the participants read and listened to the dialogues, the teacher-researcher asked them to identify those request structures in the dialogues.

The participants in the role play group were asked to read and listen to the same dialogues but the teacher did not provide any explicit information on request speech act. After listening to the dialogues, the participants were asked to read two hypothetical scenarios and in pairs write a dialogue for each scenario. One of the scenarios was an informal situation and the other was a formal one. Then, the teacher asked some students to role play their developed dialogues for their classmates.

The treatments were presented in seven sessions of 20-30 minutes; each session being held in one week. Finally, a week after the last treatment session, the Posttest was

administered to the participants of the two groups in order to identify the effect of the instruction types (input-providing and output-prompting instructions) on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' pragmatic development (i.e., the acquisition of English request speech act).

Results and Discussion

Results

Initially, the results of the general proficiency test (TOEFL Test, 2002) was analyzed using independent samples t-test to make sure the two groups were homogeneous in general English. Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for the TOEFL test results. As the table displays, the mean scores of the two groups were not considerably different but an independent samples t-test was required to determine if the difference was significant or not.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the TOEFL Test Scores

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Explicit Teaching	20	36.50	5.24
Role Play	22	35.90	4.88

The results of the t-test (table 2) revealed that there was no significant difference between the two groups. The p value ($p = .708$) was considerably larger than the critical p value ($p = .05$), which proved that the difference between the two groups was statistically non-significant and the groups were identical in general English at the onset of the study.

Table 2

The Results of Independent Samples t-test on the MDCT Pretest Scores

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference
Equal variances assumed	.193	.663	.378	40	.708	.590

Subsequently, the scores of the participants on the Pretest was analyzed using

an independent samples t-test in order to ensure that the two groups were not significantly different in their pragmatic competence before the instructional treatments. The mean scores of the two groups were identical (table 3) and there seemed to be no significant difference between the two groups. The results of the independent samples t-test ($t [40] = -.264, p = .793$) indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups in pragmatic competence.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for the MDCT Pretest Results

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Explicit Teaching	20	7.10	1.37
Role Play	22	7.22	1.71

Then, the performance of the participants on the Posttest was compared through another independent samples t-test to reveal if there was any significant difference in the effects of the two types of instruction (explicit teaching and role play) on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Table 4 displays the descriptive statistics of the two groups' performance on the Posttest. As the table indicates, there was a considerable difference between the mean scores of the two groups, but an independent samples t-test was needed to reveal if the difference was statistically significant or not.

Table 4: *Descriptive Statistics for the MDCT Posttest Scores*

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Explicit Teaching	20	8.45	1.14
Role play	22	7.36	1.70

The independent samples t-test comparing the Posttest performances of the explicit teaching and role play groups (table 5) indicated that the difference between the mean scores of the two groups was statistically significant. Thus, the first null hypothesis (There is no significant difference in the effects of explicit teaching and role play on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian freshman English majors) was

rejected and the results revealed that there is a significant difference in the effects of explicit teaching and role play task on pragmatic development of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Table 5

The Results of Independent Samples t-test on the MDCT Posttest Scores

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference
Equal variances assumed	4.36	.043	2.39	40	.02	1.08

Then, the performance of each group on the preset and Posttest was compared in order to ascertain if the instructional approaches had significant effects on enhancing pragmatic competence (i.e., the acquisition of request speech act) of the participants. Table 6 displays the information about the performance of the two groups on the Pretest and Posttest.

Table 6

Mean Scores of the Two Groups on the Pretest and Posttest

Groups	Pretest	Posttest
Explicit Teaching	7.10	8.45
Role play	7.22	7.36

The results of the paired samples t-test comparing the mean scores of the explicit teaching group on the Pretest and Posttest (table 7) indicated that the difference between the two means was statistically significant. That is, the explicit teaching group performed significantly better on the Posttest in comparison to the Pretest. Thus, the second null hypothesis (Explicit teaching does not have any significant effect on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian freshman English majors) was rejected and it was shown that explicit teaching has a significant effect on learning request speech act by Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Table 7

Paired Samples t-test on the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Explicit Teaching Group

Group	Paired Differences							
	95% Confidence Interval for Difference							
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Partial dictation	-1.35	1.69	.37	-2.14	-.55	-3.56	19	.002

The paired samples t-test comparing the mean scores of the role play group on the Pretest and Posttest (Table 8) revealed that there was no significant difference in the Pretest and Posttest performances of the role play group. Therefore, the third null hypothesis (Role play task does not have any significant effect on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian freshman English majors.) was confirmed and it was shown that role play task does not have any significant effect on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Table 8

Results of Paired Samples t-test on the Pre- and Posttest Scores of the Role Play Group

Group	Paired Differences							
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval for Difference				
				Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Partial dictation	-.13	2.37	.50	-1.18	.91	-.26	21	.79

Discussion

The present study attempted to investigate and compare the effects of an input-providing task (explicit teaching) and an output-prompting task (role play) on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' pragmatic development. The first research question tried to ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the effects of explicit teaching and role play task on the acquisition of a pragmatic feature (i.e., request speech act). The results indicated that there was a significant difference in the effects of the two types of instruction. Explicit teaching was significantly more effective than role play task on the acquisition of request speech act by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. This finding suggests that EFL learners can learn pragmatic features more effectively when

their attention is more drawn to these features. It seems that pragmatic features are rather less conspicuous and language learners do not notice them without explicit reference to these features. Language learners, in general, and lower level language learners such as intermediate EFL learners, in particular, need to be provided with explicit instruction of pragmatic features in order to acquire these features. Hence, language teachers and materials developers must present pragmatic features more explicitly and draw learners' attention to them more clearly in order to instruct them more effectively.

As there was a significant difference between the explicit teaching and role play groups on their Posttest performance, the results for the first research question is in line with previous studies which revealed that input-based instruction is more effective than output-based instruction on learning linguistic and pragmatic features (e.g., Benati, 2005; Farley, 2001; Lee & Benati, 2006; VanPatten & Wong, 2004). Farley revealed that input-based instruction was generally more effectual than output-based teaching on how the participants interpreted and produced a linguistic feature (i.e., the Spanish subjunctive of doubt).

However, the findings were against the studies which revealed that output-based instruction is more effective than input-based instruction (e.g., Izumi, 2002; Rassaei, 2012; Toth, 2006) and the studies which revealed that both types of instruction are equally effective (e.g., Ahmadi, et al, 2011; Loewen, et al., 2009; Salimi & Shams, 2016). Izumi found a facilitative impact for the output-based task but no influence for the input-based task on second language learners' acquisition of English relativization. Ahmadi, et al. compared the effects of dictogloss, as an output-based task, and consciousness raising, as an input-based task, on learning English request forms by Iranian EFL learners. The findings showed that both types of instruction significantly improved the performance of the EFL students on the immediate and delayed Posttests and there was no significant difference in the effects of the two teaching types.

The second research question attempted to find out if explicit teaching has any significant effect on learning request speech act by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The results revealed that explicit teaching had a significant effect on the acquisition of

English request speech act. The findings suggest that explicit teaching can be effectively used in teaching pragmatic features. This finding is in line with studies on explicit teaching and metapragmatic instruction which have indicated that this type of pedagogical intervention is effective for pragmatic development (e.g., Billmyer, 1990; Kargar, et al., 2012; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Lyster, 1994; Martínez-Flor, 2016; Salazar, 2003). Koike and Pearson examined the effectiveness of teaching pragmatic features to language learners by examining the production of suggestions by the experimental and control groups on the Posttest. The results revealed that explicit teaching of pragmatic features was significantly effective on learning those features by the language learners. Kargar, et al. examined the effect of different kinds of pragmatic instruction on the production of apology sentences by EFL learners. The results showed that explicit instruction on pragmatic features enhance learners' interlanguage pragmatic competence.

The aim of the third research question was to investigate the effect of role play task, as an output-prompting activity, on intermediate EFL learners' pragmatic development and the results revealed that role play task has no significant effect on learners' acquisition of request speech act. This finding suggests that although role play activity may be influential in teaching other linguistic features, it is less effective in teaching pragmatic features. It seems that EFL learners need explicit instruction for learning pragmatic features. Role play activity does not explicitly draw language learners' attention to pragmatic features and learners may not recognize pragmatic rules in linguistic input that they are provided with. Thus, the present study suggests that pragmatic features must be presented explicitly and mere exposure to these features along with output-based activities such as role play may not result in pragmatic development. The results confirm the research findings that indicated output-based tasks do not positively influence the acquisition of language features and input-based tasks are more effective than output-based tasks. (e.g., Farley, 2001; Lee & Benati, 2006). Farley discovered that input-based instruction had a greater effect than output-based instruction on how the students produced and interpreted the Spanish subjunctive of doubt.

Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

The present study aimed at investigating and comparing the effects of role play, as an output-based activity, and explicit teaching, as an input-based activity, on learning a pragmatic feature (i.e., request speech act) and revealed that there is a significant difference in the effects of the two types of instruction. The explicit teaching group significantly outperformed the role play group on the Posttest, while the performance of the two groups on the Pretest was identical. Moreover, explicit teaching was shown to be significantly effective on learning request speech act, but role play activity did not have such an effect. That is, there was a significant difference in the performance of the explicit teaching group on the Pretest and Posttest (i.e., it improved significantly), while there was no significant difference in the performance of the role play group on the Pretest and Posttest. The findings suggest that second language learners need input providing activities like explicit teaching in order to master pragmatic features, such as request speech act. Input-providing tasks, especially explicit instruction, seem to be more effective than output-prompting tasks, such as role play activities, on pragmatic development. It was shown that pragmatic features must be explicitly presented to language learners in order to be acquired by them. Mere exposure to pragmatic features alongside output-based activities seems to be insufficient for pragmatic development. Therefore, language teachers and materials developers are suggested to explicitly present language learners with information on pragmatic features, such as request speech act.

The findings of the present study may have some pedagogical implications for second language materials developers, teachers and learners. The results suggest that materials developers should explicitly present pragmatic features in textbooks that they prepare for second language learners. Mere exposure to request structures seems to be insufficient for acquiring these features and language teaching materials should include explicit information on pragmatic features in order to be effective on pragmatic development. Materials developers can allocate a specific section of their course books to pragmatic features, in which they explain social factors and appropriate language use. Also, language teachers can take advantage of the findings of the present research. They

can develop their own supplementary materials if the course books they teach does not include explicit information on pragmatic features. The findings suggest that teachers should explicitly teach pragmatic features such as request speech act, explaining pragmatic rules and appropriate pragmatic formulae for different language use situations.

Like all research projects, the present study did not cover all relevant variables and further research is required to investigate those factors. First, interested researchers can examine learners at other proficiency levels (e.g., beginners, lower intermediated or advanced EFL learners). It seems that learners at different proficiency levels need different instructional approaches, beginners requiring more explicit instruction and advanced learners being able to take advantage of more implicit teaching. Further research can explore the acquisition of request speech act by learners at other age ranges (e.g., teenagers or child EFL learners) and other educational levels (e.g., high school or MA program). Moreover, other studies can examine the effects of other presentation methods such as watching movie excerpts involving realization of request speech act, searching for request structures in well-prepared corpora using concordance programs, picture prompts, discussion of request structures in L1 and L2, etc. Finally, further research can explore learners' use of request structures in written language, for instance in letters of request, complaint, etc.

References

- Ahmadi, H., Ghaemi, F., & Birjandi, P. (2016). The effect of output-based task repetition on EFL learners' speech act production. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 1-32.
- Ahmadi, A., Ghafar Samar, R., & Yazdanimoghaddam, M. (2011). Teaching requestive downgraders in L2: How effective are input-based and output-based tasks? *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14(2), 1-30.
- Ahmadian, M.J. (2018) Explicit and implicit instruction of refusal strategies: Does working memory capacity play a role? *Language Teaching Research*, 22(5), 481-506.

- Allen, L. (2000). Form-meaning connections and the French causative: An experiment in Input Processing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 22, 69-84.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2001). Evaluating the empirical evidence: Grounds for instruction in pragmatics. In K.R. Rose, & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 13- 32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Benati, A. (2005). The effects of processing instruction, traditional instruction, and meaning-output instruction on the acquisition of the English past simple tense. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(1), 67-93.
- Billmyer, K. (1990). I really like your lifestyle: ESL learners learning how to compliment. *Penn Working Papers in Educational Linguistics*, 6, 31-48.
- Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Bouton, L. (1994). Conversational implicature in a second language: Learned slowly when not deliberately taught. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22, 157-167.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition (2nd ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Erlam, R., Loewen, S., & Philip, J. (2009). The role of output-based and input-based instruction in the acquisition of L2 implicit and explicit knowledge. In R. Ellis, S. Loewen, C. Elder, J. Philip, & H. Reinders, *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching* (pp. 241-261). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z., & Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2008). Enhancing the pragmatic competence of nonnative English speaking teacher candidates in an EFL context. In E. S. Alco'n, & A. Martı'nez-Flor (Eds.), *Investigating pragmatics in foreign language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 178-197). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z., Eslami-Rasekh, A., & Fatahi, A. (2004). Using metapragmatic instruction to improve advanced EFL learners' pragmatic awareness. *TESL EJ*, 8,

1-12.

- Eslami, Z.R., Mirzaei, A., & Dini, Sh. (2015). The role of asynchronous computer mediated communication in the instruction and development of EFL learners' pragmatic competence. *System*, 48, 99-111.
- Farley, A. (2001). Authentic processing instruction and the Spanish subjunctive. *Hispania*, 84, 289-299.
- Fordyce, K. (2014). The differential effects of explicit and implicit instruction on EFL learners' use of epistemic stance. *Applied Linguistics*, 35(1), 6-28.
- Ghobadi, A., & Fahim, M. (2009). The effect of explicit teaching of English "thanking formulas" on Iranian EFL intermediate level students at English language institutes. *System*, 37, 526-537.
- House, J. (1996). Developing pragmatic fluency in English as a foreign language: Routines and metapragmatic awareness. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18(2), 225-252.
- House, J., & Kasper, G. (1981). Politeness markers in English and German. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *Conversational routine* (pp. 157-85). The Hague: Mouton.
- Izumi, S. (2002). Output, input enhancement, and the noticing hypothesis: An experimental study on ESL relativization. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24(4), 541-577.
- Johnson, K., & Johnson, H. (1989). *Encyclopedic dictionary of applied linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Kargar, A.A., Sadighi, F., & Ahmadi, A.R. (2012). The effects of collaborative translation task on the apology speech act production of Iranian EFL learners. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 4(3), 47-78.
- Koike, D.A., & Pearson, L. (2005). The effect of instruction and feedback in the development of pragmatic competence. *System*, 33(3), 481-501.
- Lee, Ch. (2010). A Study of collocation behaviors on lexical pragmatics. *Asian EFL Journal*, 12 (4), 102-113.
- Lee, J.F., & Benati, A. G. (2006). *Research and perspectives on processing instruction*. Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter.

- Loewen, S., Erlam, R., & Ellis, R. (2009). The incidental acquisition of third person -s as implicit and explicit knowledge. In R. Ellis, S. Loewen, C. Elder, R. Erlam, J. Philp, & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning and teaching* (pp. 262-280). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Lyster, R. (1994). The effect of functional-analytic teaching on aspects of French immersion students' sociolinguistic competence. *Applied Linguistics*, 15(3), 263–287.
- Martínez-Flor, A. (2016). Teaching apology formulas at the discourse level: Are instructional effects maintained over time? *Estudios de Lingüística Inglesa Aplicada*, 16, 13-48.
- Morgan-Short, K., & Bowden, H. W. (2006). Processing instruction and meaningful output-based instruction: Effects on second language development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28(1), 31-65.
- Pearson, L. (2001). *Pragmatics in foreign language teaching: The effects of instruction on L2 learners' acquisition of Spanish expressions of gratitude, apologies, and directives*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin.
- Rassaei, E. (2012). The effects of input-based and output-based instruction on L2 development. *TESL-EJ*, 16(3), 1-25.
- Richards, J.C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. New York: Pearson Education Limited.
- Salazar, P. (2003). Pragmatic instruction in the EFL context. In A. Martí'nez-Flor, E. Uso-Juan, & A. Ferna'ndez-Guerra (Eds), *Pragmatic competence and foreign language teaching* (pp. 233-246). Castello: Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I.
- Salimi, A., & Shams, K. (2016). The effect of input-based and output-based instruction on EFL learners' autonomy in writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6(3), 525-533.
- Sifianou, M. (1992). *Politeness phenomena in England and Greece*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Sydorenko, T. (2015). The use of computer-delivered structured tasks in pragmatic instruction: An exploratory study. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 12(3), 333–362.
- Taguchi, N. (2014). Personality and development of second language pragmatic competence. *Asian EFL Journal*, 16(2), 203-221.
- Tajeddin, Z., & Bagherkazemi, M. (2014). Short-term and long-term impacts of individual and collaborative pragmatic output on speech act production. *TELL*, 8(1), 141-166.
- Takahashi, S. (2001). The role of input enhancement in developing pragmatic competence. In K.R. Rose, & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 171-199). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tateyama, Y. (2001). Explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatic routines. In K.R. Rose, & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 200-222). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Toth, B. (2006). Processing instruction and a role for output in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 56(2), 319-385.
- VanPatten, B., & Wong, W. (2004). Processing instruction and the French causative: Another replication. In B. VanPatten (Eds.), *Processing instruction: Theory, research, and commentary* (pp. 97-118). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.
- Wishnoff, R.J. (2000). Hedging your bets: L2 learners' acquisition of pragmatic devices in academic writing and computer-mediated discourse. *Second Language Studies*, 19(1), 119-157.
- Xu, W., Case, R., & Williams, G. (2017). Longitudinal pragmatic and grammatical development in English among Chinese students. *TESOL International Journal*, 12(2), 65-77.
- Younesi, H., & Tajeddin, Z. (2014). Effects of structured input and meaningful output on EFL learners' acquisition of nominal clauses. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 17(2), 145-167.

Appendices

Appendix A: Request Structures in the dialogues and tests

- 1- Imperative sentences (e.g., *Open the door.*)
- 2- Tag questions (OK? / Will you?) (e.g., *Please pass the salt. Will you?*)
- 3- Informal address terms (first name, nick name, Son) (e.g., *Come here, son.*)
- 4- Want / need statements. (e.g., *I want you to do the project by Monday. / I need a repairman to come upstairs immediately*)
- 5- Providing reasons for the request (e.g., *Can you lend me ten dollars, I have left my wallet at home.*)
- 6- Politeness markers (e.g., *please, kindly*)
- 7- Interrogatives (Can / Could / Will / Would you ...?) (e.g., *Can you clean the board.*)
- 8- Hesitators and hedges (e.g., *kind of, uh*)
- 9- Consultative devices (*Would you mind *ing ...? / Would you mind if ...?*)
- 10- Apology (apologizing before the request, e.g., *Excuse me but ...*)
- 11- Query preparatory (Can you do me a favor? / Can I ask you something?)
- 12- *I wonder if*

Appendix B: Example MDCT items

- 1- You and your colleagues are in a restaurant having lunch at the same table. A colleague of yours keeps talking about different things, but you want to eat in silence. You would say:
 - a. Let's get on with lunch, eh?
 - b. Please keep silent while we are eating. Will you?
 - c. Shut up and have your lunch. OK?
 - d. I was wondering if you could stop talking and have your lunch.
- 2- Your car broke down outside the town and you see a man who is going to get into his car, parked by the side of the road. You want to ask him for a ride. You approach him and say:
 - a. You are taking me to the town, will you?
 - b. If you give me a lift into town, I'll pay you 20 dollars.
 - c. Excuse me sir, my car broke down; could you please give me

a lift into town?

- d. Sir, can I ask you something? I was wondering if you would mind if I asked you to give me a lift into town.



**Beyond the Argument: Generic Diversity in Instruction-based Writing by
Chinese EFL Undergraduate Students**

Yimin Zhang & Issra Pramoolsook
Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand

Bioprofile

Yimin Zhang, currently a PhD candidate in School of Foreign Languages, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. Her research interests include genre/discourse analysis, L2 writing, systemic functional linguistics. ym.cherie@gmail.com

Issra Pramoolsook, PhD in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching, assistance professor in School of Foreign Languages, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology. His research interests include genre/discourse analysis, L2 writing, English for Academic/Specific Purposes. issra@sut.ac.th

111 University Avenue, Muang District, Nakhon Ratchasima 30000, Thailand

Abstract

Existing research on instruction-based writing by Chinese EFL undergraduate students has been narrowly focused on argumentative essays, especially those written in examination situations. This article, in an attempt to capture the larger picture, explored the hybrid of genres that Chinese EFL undergraduate students performed inside and outside the writing classrooms. Adopting a cross-sectional approach, we followed 40 English-major students enrolled in 3 writing-related courses offered in the curriculum in a Chinese university and created a small corpus by collecting the complete sets of written assignments produced by these students. Analysis of the corpus, based on genre theories developed within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), unveiled a generic diversity that characterised the student writing in the instructional settings, which

manifested itself quantitatively via the number and qualitatively via the variety of genres that those students were actively engaged in. This paper then argues that by looking into wider generic spaces beyond the *argument*, we can gain a nuanced understanding of how EFL undergraduate students perform rhetorically in the instructional settings and how well they write academically. Suggestions for future research were also presented and discussed.

Keywords: SFL, genre analysis, instruction-based writing, generic diversity, L2 writing

Introduction

Over the past three decades, the notion of ‘genre’ has been viewed as a powerful tool in L2 writing as well as traditional L1 composition studies, crucial in particular to developing academic literacy for student writers (Tardy, 2006; Hyland, 2007). More recently, for example, Moore et al. (2018) emphasised that the writing of genres is an essential form of participation in English language learning and a necessary prerequisite to student literacy success. In a review of 60 studies focusing on the learning of genre, Tardy (2006) distinguished two types of genre learning contexts. Specifically, she categorised the contexts in which learners build genre knowledge through practice within educational, disciplinary, or workplace domains as practice-based settings, while those in which genres are learnt in writing classrooms, usually through specific instructional approaches, as instructional settings. However, as Tardy (2006) pointed out, classroom-based instructional contexts have been a far less exploited domain of study within genre learning research, perhaps due to difficulties in research design or gaining access.

The present study shall dig into this less exploited territory by exploring, in particular, the instruction-based genre learning undergone by Chinese EFL undergraduate students. In so doing, we humbly hope to contribute to the existing scholarship a truthful representation of the diversity of genres that furnishes the instructional phases of the students’ literacy journey. Among the various approaches to

genre, the methodologies and frameworks from the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) tradition (which is also widely known as ‘*Sydney School*’) will be drawn upon, which is a decision motivated by theoretical as well as practical considerations. Theoretically, SFL approach to genre is informed by Michael Halliday’s sophisticated and mature theory of language, which views language as a semiotic system with contrasting options for making meaning (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). As a concept located in the *context of culture*, genre in this school is defined by Martin (1997) as ‘the system of staged goal-oriented social processes through which social subjects in a given culture live their lives’ (p.13). In other words, genres, shaped by their social, cultural purposes, in turn shape the rhetorical stages through which the purposes are achieved (Hasan, 1977, 1984; Coffin, 2006). Raveli & Ellis (2004) noted that it is the richness and applicability of Halliday’s grammatics and language theories that mark SFL approach as distinctive from other traditions in genre studies. Practically, genre research in this camp was initiated from a large-scale text analysis situated in infant, primary and secondary schools in Australia (for example, Martin, 1984, 2002; Martin & Plum, 1997). Varieties of genres were labelled by names and stages, along with synopses of their primary social purposes, and then grouped into 7 ‘genre families’: namely, *stories*, *chronicles*, *reports*, *explanations*, *procedures*, *arguments*, and *text responses* (Appendix A presents a general taxonomy of the key written genres identified by SFL genre theorists). Descriptions of these genres, as diverse, complex networks of social processes, have fed into language teaching in varying disciplinary fields in educational institutions at different levels. Therefore, the SFL approach to genre, with its pedagogical orientation and emphasis on explicit teaching of genres, is regarded as particularly relevant to research in instructional contexts.

Literature Review

L2 writing instruction for English-major students in the Chinese context

This study is situated within the background of existing knowledge on the instruction-based writing by Chinese English-major undergraduate students. In Chinese tertiary institutions, undergraduate students of English, in most cases, do not engage in

disciplinary writing until they are getting more advanced in the academic ladder (for example, they are expected to write a 3000-5000-word bachelor's thesis in English in the final year of study). Instead, in accordance with the English Teaching Syllabus for Tertiary English Majors (a national syllabus, Teaching Advisory Committee for Tertiary English Majors, 2000), in the first two or three years, they take relevant writing courses in which they receive training on general writing skills and are often assigned to write within some basic, pedagogical genres with an average length of 300-400 words. This type of writing, as produced on the basis of classroom instructions, does not respond to any social purpose that is meaningful to the disciplinary or academic settings, but primarily serves the purpose to help students hone their basic English writing skills.

Previous studies and research gap

A number of studies investigated instruction-based writing by Chinese English-major students, yet with an almost exclusive focus on argumentative essays, especially those written in examination situations such as Test for English Majors-Band 4 (TEM-4) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS, a critical test for English majors in the second year of their study) or simulated situations designed to closely replicate the task prompt required in these (inter)national tests. These studies addressed the linguistics features of Chinese English-major students' writing either at the lexico-grammatical level or at the discourse semantic level. At the lexico-grammatical level, for example, Ma (2009) examined 801 timed essays written by Chinese English majors' in examination situations in terms of 191 high-frequency lexical bundles extracted from a native-speaker corpus consisting of articles published in the United States. She found that two thirds of these target lexical bundles were used by Chinese EFL students at a significantly lower frequency, especially those containing past-tense verbs, 'noun + preposition' phrases and subordinate clauses, which were weak spots in the students' writing performances and thus subject to pedagogical remedial intervention. At the discourse semantic level, on the other hand, the focus was mainly on the realisation of textual as well as interpersonal meanings in the student writing. Specifically, using Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA, a computational statistical method), Wang & Sui

(2006) analysed the textual coherence in the essays written by 70 Chinese EFL students on a given topic from an IELTS written examination. Results of this study showed that LSA was an objective and appropriate method to measure textual coherence and that the use of appropriate cohesive devices contributed significantly to the overall writing coherence. As a conclusion, the two authors argued that analysis of textual cohesion should be more productively employed in actual teaching practice of English writing. In addition, drawing on Halliday's theme-rheme theory, Wang (2010) analysed the patterns of thematic progression in three argumentative essays taken from TEM-4 in the year of 2006, representing lower-, intermediate-, and higher-level of grading, respectively, and concluded that the more multiple theme and clausal theme were used, the more coherent the composition was. He also identified, specifically, four patterns of thematic progress, i.e., R - T (the rheme of the first clause is taken up as the theme of the subsequent clause, R - R (the rheme of the first clause is reiterated in the rheme of the following clause), T - R (the theme of the first clause is taken up as the rheme of the subsequent clause) and T - T (the theme of the first clause is reiterated in the theme of the following clause), that were positively correlated with coherence and overall quality of the student writing. More recently, with data drawn from the Chinese Longitudinal Learner Corpus – a specialised corpus consisting of 130 students' argumentative essays collected across two years of university study in an English language degree, Liardét (2018) investigated Chinese EFL students' deployment of interpersonal grammatical metaphors, a construct mapped within SFL (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In short, three key findings emerged from this study: first, the Chinese EFL learners' showed a noticeable preference (78%) for subjective interpersonal metaphors; second, the students often tended to hedge their evaluations with multiple co-occurring subjective metaphors; and third, the Chinese EFL learners' deployment of interpersonal grammatical metaphors decreased across the four semesters.

It is noticeable that the existing research on Chinese EFL students' instruction-based writing, though yielding remarkable insights from myriad perspectives, was largely confined to writing happening in examination situations, with a monotonous

focus on one single genre – *arguments* (or *argumentative essays*). Bazerman et al. (2017) argued, however, that ‘a writing curriculum should provide students with access to and effective participation in a range of genres’ (p. 357). Similarly, in exploring an eclectic approach to teaching writing in Chinese universities, Gao (2007) also stressed that teachers should raise learners’ awareness of a rich variety of genres. Therefore, it would be amiss to focus exclusively on argumentative essays written in the test venues at the expenses of losing sight of the bigger picture of the writing practices in the real classrooms, which, as can be expected, may embrace a greater diversity of genres beyond the argument.

The Present Study

As part of a larger study examining Chinese EFL learner’s development of academic literacies at the university level, the present study aims to fill in this gap by offering a more realistic account of the diversity of genres that Chinese EFL students perform throughout the writing curriculum. To this end, we, adopting a cross-sectional approach, followed 40 English-major students in 3 writing-related courses offered in the curriculum in a Chinese university and created a small corpus by collecting the complete sets of written assignments produced by the 40 students in the writing courses under focus. Analysing the corpus by using the methodologies and frameworks from SFL-based genre tradition, this study attempts to answer the following two questions:

1. What types of genres do Chinese EFL students perform in the instruction-based settings?
2. To what extent are these genres practiced throughout the 3 instruction-based writing courses?

Research Methods

Research Site

This study was carried out in the English Department in a public university in the Southwestern China. Students in this Department take two general writing courses in the third (*English Writing I*) and fourth (*English Writing II*) semesters, respectively.

During the two 28-hour courses, students learn and practice general writing skills across ‘modes of discourse’ (Herrington & Moran, 2005), including *narration*, *description*, *exposition* and *argumentation*, as well as some practical genres like *emails* or *r. sumés*. As part of the course contents, the course instructors regularly assign the students to compose independently short essays of an average length of 200-300 words. In the sixth semester, the students take a 10-week course of *Academic Writing*, during which they are introduced to MLA writing conventions and get prepared for the later bachelor’s thesis writing. At the time of research, two Chinese-speaking teachers cooperated with two Peace Corp volunteers from the United States in the two general writing courses, and another tenure-track full professor was responsible for lecturing to the students in *Academic Writing* course.

Data Collection

For the purpose of this study, we selected 40 students from each of the 3 writing related courses and created a small corpus by collecting the full sets of assignments composed by these students, as responses to instructor-set writing tasks, throughout the courses. Given the timeframe of this research and also the university’s academic calendar, the two sub-corpora for *Academic Writing* and *English Writing II* were compiled concurrently in Spring 2018 from students enrolled into the university in the academic years 2015 and 2016, while the other sub-corpus for *English Writing I* was compiled in Autumn 2018 from students in the batch of 2017. On balance, the students involved in the three writing-related courses were enrolled into the university in three consecutive academic years and thus were at different levels of their study. Since these students invariably come from a similar background and have demonstrated nearly equivalent initial English language proficiency by going through *gaokao* (the longstanding national entrance examination to tertiary education in China), they were assumed as comparable participants. Table 1 presents a profile of our data sources from the 3 writing courses in focus.

For *English Writing II*, the 2016 cohort was divided into 5 groups, and each group met for 2 hours each week. Aware of potential mortality threat, we invited initially 48

students to participate in our study. In the Spring 2018, the 14-week course of *English Writing II* was divided into two sections. The first section, from week 1 to week 9, was delivered by the two Chinese-L1 instructors, and the second section, from week 10 to week 14, by the two native-speaking volunteers from the United States. Because these 4 instructors did not collaborate in planning or teaching the course, there were naturally some differences between the modules they conducted; however, fundamental aspects of the course were similar in terms of the basic goals and objectives of the course and the same course textbook used by all four instructors.

Table 1
Profile of Data Sources

	English Writing I	English Writing II	Academic Writing
Class hours	28 h	28 h	20 h
Participants	40 students selected from 4 groups	40 students selected from 5 groups	40 students selected from 2 groups
Year of students' enrolment	2017	2016	2015
Time of data collection	Autumn 2018 (1 st semester of Year 2)	Spring 2018 (2 nd semester of Year 2)	Spring 2018 (2 nd semester of Year 3)
Instructors involved	2 Chinese-L1 English lecturers; 1 American Peace-Corp volunteer	2 Chinese-L1 English lecturers; 2 American Peace-Corp volunteers	1 Chinese-L1 English professor
Total number of writing samples	280	231	80

An orientation meeting was arranged with the 48 participants on the first week, during which requests were made to all students to bring every single writing assignment from this course, produced both in and after each class, either in hand-written or electronic formats, for us to scan, copy and/or save. When the course ended, 5 students who failed to submit the whole set of assignments or had one or more assignments judged by the instructor as unsatisfactory, were excluded, and another student dropped out due to irresistible factors in the middle of the course. In the end, on the principle of maintaining an approximately equal number of participants from each group, another three students were randomly removed so that the final breakdown of students among the 5 groups was 8, 8, 8, 7, and 9. Altogether, 231 assignments were

collected to form the sub-corpus of *English Writing II*.

In the case of *Academic Writing*, the 2015 cohort was divided into two groups, both of which were taught by a tenor-track full professor who obtained an master diploma in linguistics & applied linguistics from a Chinese university and had been responsible for this course since its inceptive introduction into the curriculum. Initially, 26 students from group 1 and 17 students from group 2 consented formally to their assignments being collected and analysed. In reality, the lessons in this course were delivered mainly in the form of lectures or in-class reading/discussion sessions, with only 2 pieces of written assignments given out throughout the course. Given the small number, the written assignments of the 43 participating students were directly forwarded to us from the course instructor soon after his assessment. In the end, 3 students were randomly deleted from group 1, and hardcopies of the remaining 40 students' assignments, totalling up to 80, were used to create the sub-corpus.

As for *English Writing I*, the 2017 cohort was divided into 4 groups, and 12 students were initially recruited from each group. A similar orientation meeting, as with *English Writing II*, was held, during which the same guidelines were given for them to share their written assignments. In the Autumn 2018, the two Chinese-speaking teachers who were previously in charge of *English Writing II* taught *English Writing I* from week 1 to week 4 and resumed later from week 9 to week 12, meeting the class for 2 hours each week. At the same time, a female American Peace-Corp volunteer met the 4 groups of students for 2 hours each week from week 7 to week 12. At the end of this course, only 1 participant from group 3 did not submit the full package of written assignments, so a decision was made to retain randomly 10 participants in each group. In total, 280 assignments were collected to form the sub-corpus of *English Writing*

Data Analysis

Genre analysis of the corpus was manually done based on the taxonomy of key written genres identified by previous SFL genre theorists (Appendix A, also see Rose, 2010, 2015a, for a collective review). There were a few cases in which the students fulfilled the writing assignment by utilising 2 or 3 genres, either combining them into a

‘macrogenre’ (Martin, 1994, 2002) or simply as discrete texts. In these cases, each text was identified as instantiating one particular genre on its own and tallied separately. Three extra genres, namely, *emails*, *résumés*, and *resignation letters*, were specifically addressed by certain individual instructors in *English Writing I & II* as serving important personal and practical purposes in real-life situations. They were grouped together under a genre family labelled as ‘*practical genres*’. In addition, there were a few assignments in *English Writing II* and *Academic Writing* that contained *decontextualised* pattern drills to reinforce taught vocabulary or sentential patterns, with neither a controlling theme in the content nor a recognisable structure at the discourse level. Assignments, or ‘texts’, like these, instantiating no particular genres in the current definitional sense of the word, were glossed as ‘*exercises*’ — a term borrowed from Nesi & Gardner (2012) as a sweeping categorisation. For the purpose of this study, and also for their apparent ‘lack of interest’ in genre, these exercises will not be emphasised any more than necessary in the succeeding analysis and discussions. Otherwise, texts (or assignments) in the rest of the corpus were labelled as instantiating a particular genre according to a set of differentiating criteria, including the primary purpose, staging (generic structure), and critical linguistic features, together with some typological parameters that have been set in previous works by J. R. Martin and his colleagues (e.g., Martin, 1997; Rothery, & Stenglin, 1997, 2000; Veel, 1998; Coffin, 2006; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose, 2015a, 2015b, 2017).

The manual work of labelling was done by the first author of this paper herself. To increase the reliability, the corpus was coded twice with an interval of two weeks to ensure that the first coding had no impact on the second. The two codings demonstrated a high intra-coder consistency (94.8%). With texts for which the two codings were inconsistent, the second author of this paper who was equally familiar with the taxonomy was consulted to make a final decision.

Findings

In this section, we present and discuss the major findings from this study. The section is organised as follows: After giving an overview of genre distribution in the corpus,

we argue that such an illustration of the generic diversity characterising the current writing curriculum can provide relevant and useful information for L2 writing teachers and the students to reflect on their pedagogical practices and learner choices. Then, to provide a more nuanced picture of the students' learner pathway (Martin, 2009), we elaborate on the particular genres variably performed in each of the 3 writing courses in the sequence they were scheduled in the curriculum.

An Overview of the Genre Distribution in the Entire Corpus

Altogether, 591 writing assignments were collected from the 40 students in the 3 writing-related courses, amounting to 613 instances of genres, averaging 15.33 cases per student as (s)he strode through the writing part of curriculum. Eighteen types of genres (including the extra *practical genres* and *exercises*) were found across the entire corpus. The whole genre family of *interpretations* was absent, for which a possible explanation could be that they might be more appropriately attended to in other reading- or literature-oriented courses. Similarly, no instances were found for *news story*, *autobiographical recount*, *biographical recount*, *sequential explanation*, *conditional explanation*, *classifying report*, *compositional report*, *protocol* and *procedural recount*.

Overall Frequency Description

The overall frequency counts and proportions of the genres and genre families, taken up by students in the instructional settings as responsive to instructor-assigned tasks, are presented in Table 2 and then graphically demonstrated in *Figure 1* and *Figure 2*.

Table 2

Frequency of Genres in the Corpus of Instruction-based Writing

Genre family	Genre	Count of instances		Percentage	
Stories	anecdote	18		2.94	
	observation	30		4.89	
	exemplum	5	98	0.82	15.99
	recount	15		2.45	
	narrative	30		4.89	
Chronicles	historical account	1		0.16	
	historical recount	2	3	0.33	0.49
Explanations	factorial explanation	50		8.16	
	consequential explanation	2	52	0.33	8.48
Reports	descriptive report	73	73	11.91	11.91
Procedural genres	procedure	16	16	2.61	2.61
	exposition	177		28.87	
Arguments	challenge	8	188	1.31	30.67
	discussion	3		0.49	
Practical genres	email	40		6.53	
	résumé	40	104	6.53	16.97
	resignation letter	24		3.92	
Exercises	exercises	79	79	12.89	12.89
Total		613		100.00	

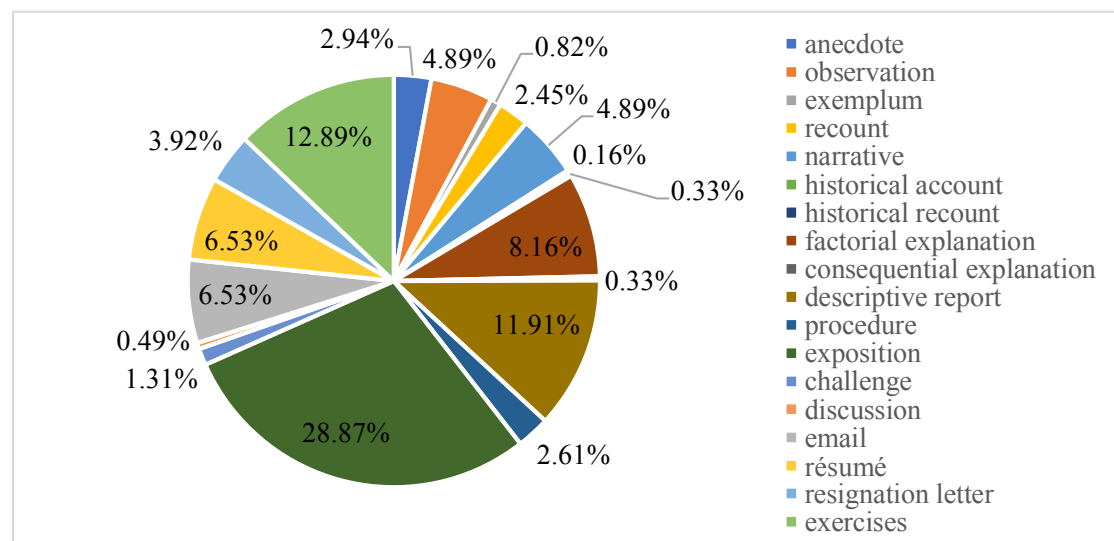


Figure 1. Distribution of genres in the corpus of instruction-based writing

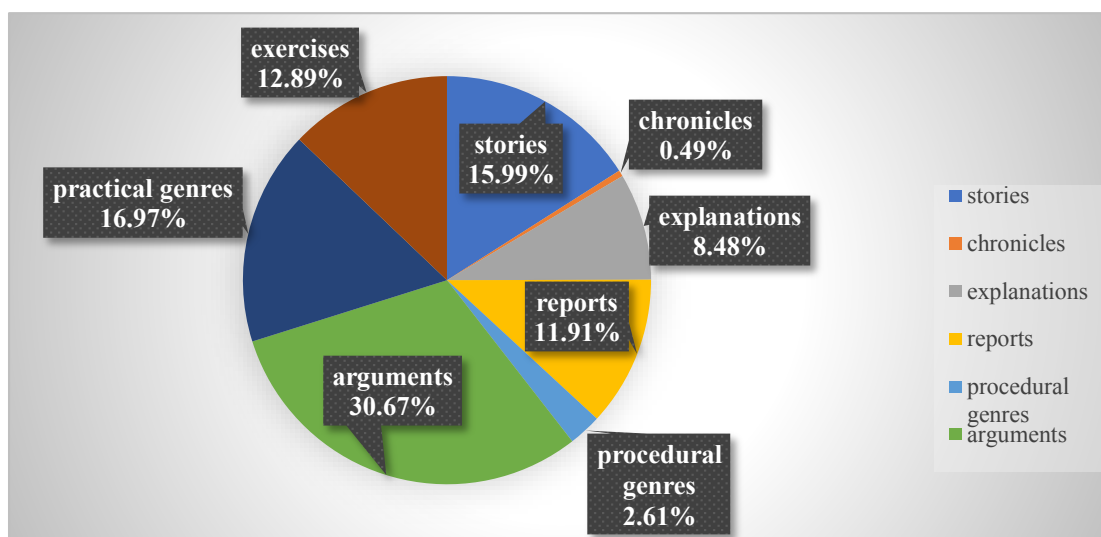


Figure 2. Distribution of genre families in the corpus of instruction-based writing

On the whole, *arguments* were performed most frequently in the 3 writing courses, comprising 30.67% of the overall corpus. *Expositions*, in particular, occupied a predominant position in this genre family, amounting to as much as 28.87%. In contrast, *challenges* (1.31%) and *discussions* (0.49%) were only occasionally practised. This preference for *expositions* over *challenges* and *discussions* in argumentative writing assignments seems to suggest that both teachers and students paid much more attention to developing the students' capacity to voice their opinion in support of a stance, rather than to inspect an issue from divergent perspectives (by way of a *discussion*), or to refute an existing claim (via a *challenge*).

The second highest number of occurrences was found, unexpectedly, among the family of *practical genres* (16.97%). In reality, however, the 3 practical genres were only taken up by certain individual instructors for one or two weeks, usually at the end of the related courses, and only one assignment was given accordingly. The relatively large proportion of *practical genres* in the corpus could then be best explained by the fact that the assignments prompting each of the 3 practical genres were highly circumscribed; that means, it was not realistically possible for any of the students to respond to the teacher's request for an *email*, a *résumé* or a *resignation letter* with anything otherwise composed. Relatedly, in many of the other assignments, the students were perhaps allowed more liberty and more options of genres to choose from, to

address the teachers' writing prompts.

Stories were also common, reaching up to 15.99% of the whole corpus, the five members of which, roughly speaking, were evenly distributed, as shown in *Figure 1*. Following stories, *reports* comprised 11.89% of the total, but solely exclusive to *descriptive reports*. As for the other 3 genre families — *explanations* (8.48%), *procedural genres* (2.61%) and *chronicles* (0.49%), they were found to be relatively infrequent and in rather restricted use.

Reflections: Insights into the Instruction-based Writing in General

By far, we have reported in a broad stroke the overall distribution of instruction-based genres playing out throughout the curriculum. This preliminary portrait mirrored the writing teachers' pedagogical practices inside the classrooms as well as the students' diverse writing performances stimulated by such practices. It provides a viable and straightforward route, as we believe, for writing teachers to scrutinise whether or not the amount of instructional efforts invested on particular genres is sufficient, appropriate or effective by means of measuring the pedagogical realities against the expected learning outcomes (as specified in the national syllabus) or the individual student's learning needs. For example, it is stated in the national syllabus that English-major students are expected to be able to write *formal correspondences* (falling into practical genres in the present study) by Year 3. In this regard, writing course instructors may find themselves confronted by some pressing questions: Has this type of writing been sufficiently taught in the writing courses? Are there any genres of formal correspondences other than *email* or *resignation letter* (as used in the current case) likely to be encountered by students in their further learning or future career? What kinds of writing tasks or prompts can be designed to facilitate students' practice and control over these genres? Similarly, given the prominence laid on *arguments*, it is still likely that writing teachers may feel that the ability of critical thinking remains a weak spot for students in argumentative writing. As a solution, they may consider expanding their current focus on *expositions* and lending more pedagogical affordances for *challenges* and *discussions*, through which students can be trained to argue critically,

that is, not from one single point of view but from opposing or diverging perspectives. In short, we tend to argue that such a generic portrait offers a springboard for writing teachers' reflection on their pedagogical choices and their refashioning of classroom practices, if necessary, in order to be better aligned with larger goals.

Well beyond this contour of genre distribution, however, it would be more interesting to know by which way, via which route, or in what sequence English-major students were shepherded into these genres in the instructional stage of learning to write. In what follows, the genres performed by students in each of the three writing-related courses, in respect of their variety and frequency, will be presented and discussed. To illustrate, canonical examples from the data will be used in cases where we deem it necessary to highlight the manner in which the genre is staged. Key linguistic clues that signal the genres and stages are manually marked. Errors or grammatical mistakes in the original copies, if any, are not to be discussed. Note that writers of the exemplars will be referred to by a code indicating the course name, the group number, and the student's number in the group (For example, 'EW1G4S4' represents the fourth student from Group 4 in *English Writing I*).

Genres performed in English Writing I in the Autumn of 2018

In the autumn term of 2018, the 40 students taking *English Writing I* in their second year of study composed 280 short texts both in and out of class. Throughout this course, these second-year students wrote on a range of either instructor-prescribed or, in rarer cases, self-selected topics; for example, 'My Idea of Good English Writing', 'Escape the Modern Stress', 'Description of a Person', '*** is a Great University', 'A Personal Experience', 'My Last Day in Nanjing', 'Volunteer! Make a Difference', as well as an email and a résumé in the last two weeks.

The students wrote their essays in response to the topics listed above, adopting appropriate genres, each of which was assessed, accepted and on some occasions, provided written feedback, by the course instructors. *Table 3* presents the distribution of genres and genre families within this sub-corpus, which is then graphically represented in *Figure 3* and *Figure 4* that follow.

Table 3

Frequency of genres in the sub-corpus of English Writing I

Genre family	Genre	Count of instances	Percentage		
Stories	anecdote	9	75	3.21	26.79
	observation	24		8.57	
	exemplum	5		1.79	
	recount	11		3.93	
	narrative	26		9.29	
Chronicles	historical recount	1	1	0.36	0.36
Explanation	consequential explanation	1	1	0.36	0.36
Reports	descriptive report	48	48	17.14	17.14
Arguments	exposition	71	75	25.36	26.79
	challenge	3		1.07	
	discussion	1		0.36	
Practical	email	40	80	14.29	28.57
Genres	résumé	40		14.29	
Total		280			100.00

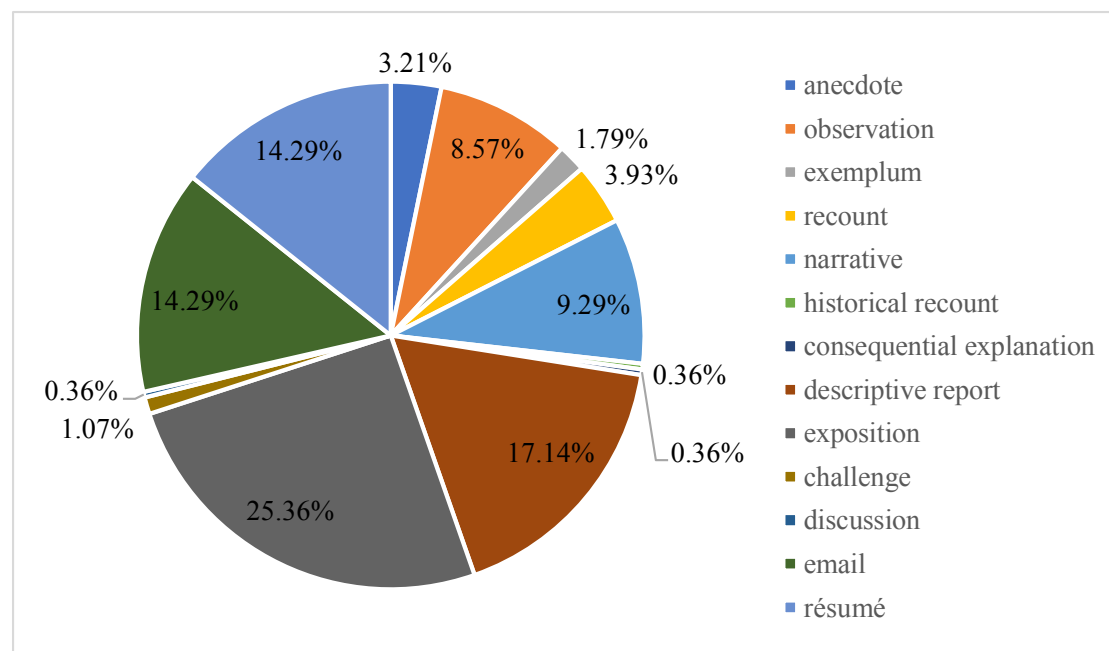


Figure 3. Distribution of genres in the sub-corpus of English Writing I

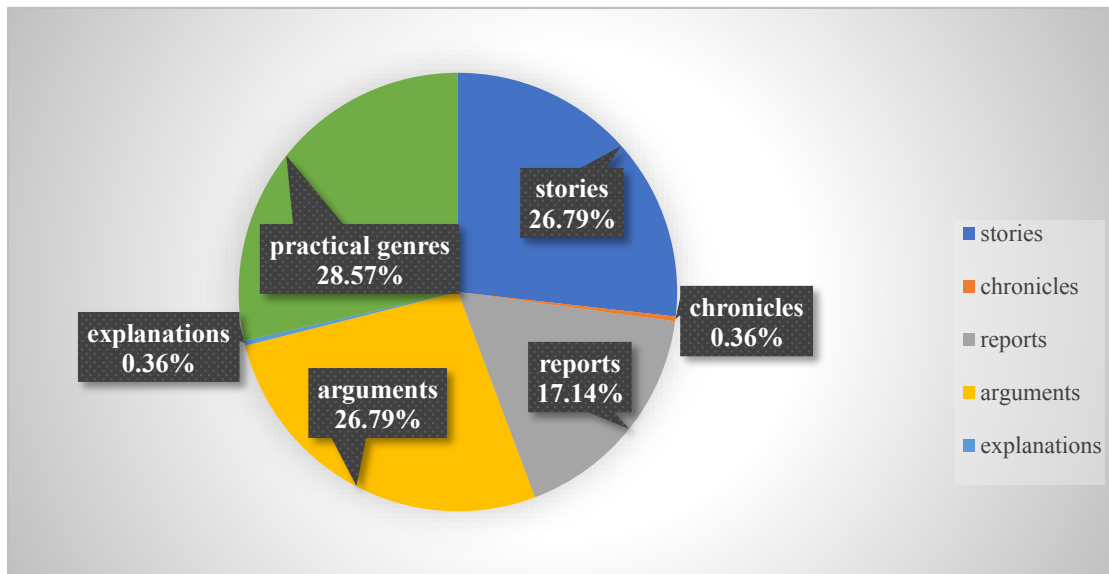


Figure 4. Distribution of genre families in the sub-corpus of English Writing I

It can be observed that the compositional efforts during this stage were more or less evenly distributed among 4 major genre families, namely, *practical genres*, *stories*, *arguments*, and *reports*, whereas by contrast, the occurrences of *chronicles* and *explanations* were rather anecdotal, with only one single case for *historical recount* and *consequential explanation*, respectively.

Practical genres: The highest frequency

For reasons previously explained, *practical genres* occupied the highest proportion (28.57%) in the whole sub-corpus. In the actual classroom practice, the teaching of how to write an *email* and a personal *résumé* was taken up by the American instructor at the end of this course, and every student was then assigned to produce one sample for both genres.

Stories and *arguments*: A shared weight

Interestingly, *stories* and *arguments* shared exactly the same proportion in the sub-corpus (26.79%); however, their employment varied.

Stories

Within *stories*, the five sub-types were almost evenly split, with *narratives* (9.29%) and *observations* (8.57%) slightly higher than the other three. This seems to reflect that in this course the students were often encouraged and guided to represent their personal experiences into their writing, and in so doing, they attended more to highlighting the complication and resolution of happenings, by way of *narratives*, or injecting their personal response or comment to the event being related, by way of *observations*.

An example of *narrative* is given in *Figure 5*, in which the student writer recounted an unexpected incident during her ‘Last Day in Nanjing’, demonstrating a canonical schematic structure of narratives, i.e., Orientation ^ Complication ^ Evaluation ^ Resolution ^ Code.

Orientation
 It was the last day of our stay in Nanjing. My
 parents had told me that don't walk around. I responded
 by a nod. (My parents were sitting in the waiting room
 of the railway station waiting for our train back to Beijing.)
 The temperature was a little high and I began to be on the
 anxious bench. Suddenly, here came a little girl holding
 a beautiful Barbie doll. Looking the direction of my parents,
 they didn't notice me. I wanted to play with that girl, exactly
 with her Barbie doll. But when I came to the place ^{where} she
 just was, she disappeared. I began wandering then, wanting
 to return. Complication Strange surroundings told me that I was lost.
 The train was going to start. What should I do? Evaluation Peering
 to and fro, I was so worried that I bursted into tears.
 Just then a woman dressed like a police woman occurred.
 Immediately I headed toward her. "Excuse me? I can't find
 my parents, could you help me?" I cried. "Don't be afraid.
Resolution I'll help you. Follow me." She took me to the broadcasting
 station. "Little baby, what's your name? I'll inform your parents
 by the loudspeaker." I told her my name. Soon, their announcement
 brought my parents. Coda

Ch08264 邮编:625014 第 页

Figure 5. A narrative written by EW1G4S4 and its staging

Figure 6 exemplifies a typical *observation*, staged as Orientation ^ Event
 Description ^ Comment, which was a response to a writing task requiring the students
 to expand from a single sentence 'an old woman was walking in the woods.'

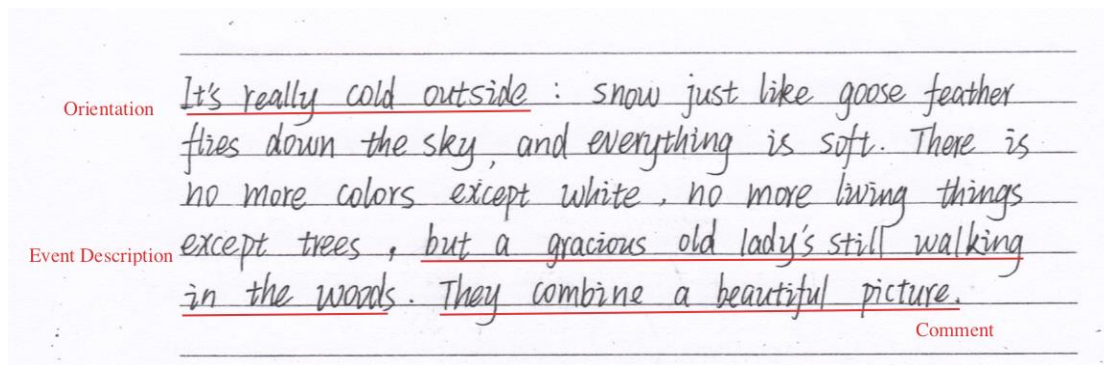


Figure 6. An observation written by EW1G3S3 and its staging

Arguments

Among *arguments*, on the other hand, the writing practice was overwhelmingly concentrated on *expositions*, comprising 25.36% of the sub-corpus, which was also the highest in the overall ranking. Yet, the occurrences of *challenges* and *discussions* were rather infrequent, accounting for only 1.07% and 0.36%, respectively. One factor leading to this dissonance within arguments was perhaps the writing prompts, in which certain propositions were provided for the students to argue for or against. As shown in the data set, the students were apt to support or adopt the same position in developing their own claims, rather than to challenge or discuss from different angles what was already alluded to in the original prompt. Figure 7 is an illustrative example of *exposition* entitled ‘My Idea of Reducing Stress’, which unfolds through Orientation ^ Thesis ^ Arguments ^ Reiteration.

My ideas of reducing stress.

It is true that people in modern times experience great stress in their lives. However, as to the ways to cope with the stress, different people have different opinions. Some insist on traveling, while others argue for listening to the music or even playing computer games. In my opinion, an effective solution to reduce stress is to do physical exercise. My reasons are as follows. Orientation

Argument 1 First and foremost, exercise not only helps to release our ~~emotional~~ emotional breakdowns but also improves our mental state. Live in a modern society, we concentrate on our body movement all day long, thus we become tired and begin to escape from the reality. When we feel tired, take a break or go for a walk with friends will ease our stress greatly. Kant, a German philosopher who researched, lectured, wrote on philosophy and anthropology during the Enlightenment at the end of the 18th Century. He was an awesome man in people's eyes. He worked very hard, at the same time he also took exercise punctually. He got up in 5 o'clock every morning, after two hours' work, he would go for a walk on time. Exercise ~~played~~ ^{played} a positive role in his life and helped him a lot.

Argument 2 Second, physical exercise moulds people's character. 第 页

and promotes a more optimistic attitude towards life. It is reported that men who used to take exercise are happier than people who regard work as the only thing in the world. Last but not least, Argument 3 physical exercise is benefit to our health, with which people can face up to the stress and difficulties they meet more readily and easily. proper ~~amount~~ amount of exercise can help us build a strong body, which is regarded as the foundation of solving all problems.

In a word, physical exercise plays an important role in killing stress. Live in such a busy world, Reiteration we do need to work hard to improve our life standard, meanwhile, we should remember to take exercise regularly. Just as the saying goes: All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. We are supposed to learn balance work and life wisely.

Figure 7 An exposition written by EWG1S3 and its staging

Reports: Exclusive focus on descriptive reports

Reports were also taught and practiced in this course, amounting to 17.14% of all cases in the sub-corpus, with *descriptive reports* as the only genre that appeared in this genre family. It is probably because the Chinese female instructor, who taught 2 groups in her session, invested a lot of efforts in teaching how to write a description of a person, an object or a place and assigned writing tasks accordingly, giving rise to the high frequency of *descriptive reports* in the corpus. Figure 8 is an example.

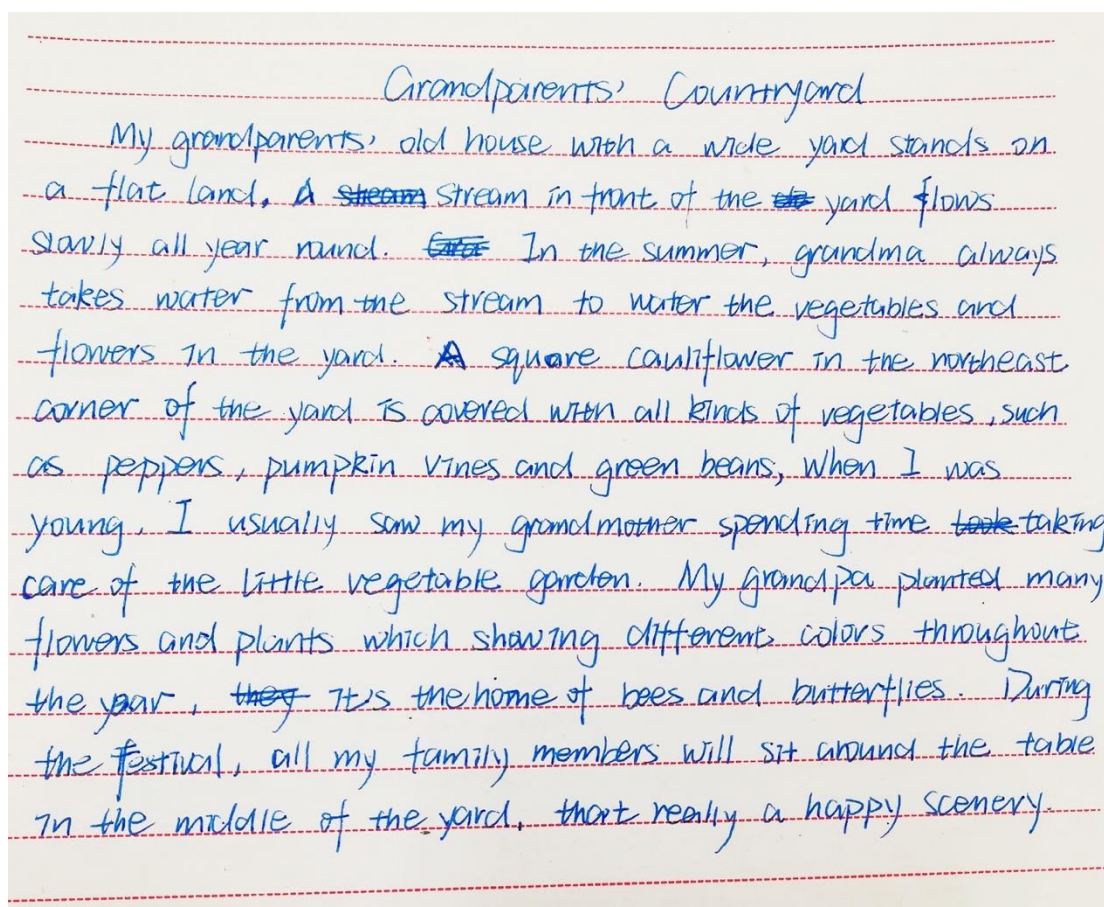


Figure 8. A descriptive report written by EW1G4S5

Genres performed in English Writing II in the Spring of 2018

In the spring term of 2018, the 40 students engaged in *English Writing II* accomplished 231 assignments both in and out of class, instantiating 253 genres altogether. Similar to those in *English Writing I*, the students in *English Writing II* wrote on a wide range of either instructor-prescribed or self-selected topics; such as, 'Students Should Not Rely

on the Internet to Do Their Homework’, With the Intelligent Machines to Do the Thinking, Will Our Brain Gets Lazy?’, Today is a Happy Day’, ‘The Benefits of Volunteering’, ‘The Trade War between America and China’, ‘American Gun Culture’, to list but a few, as well as some exercises and a resignation letter. *Table 4* shows the distribution of genres and genre families within this sub-corpus, followed by graphic representation in *Figure 9* and *Figure 10* below.

Table 4

Frequency of genres in the sub-corpus of English Writing II

Genre family	Genre	Count of instances		Percentage	
Stories	anecdote	9	23	3.56	9.09
	observation	6		2.37	
	recount	4		1.58	
	narrative	4		1.58	
Chronicles	historical account	1	1	0.40	0.79
	historical recount	1		0.40	
Explanations	factorial explanation	10	11	3.95	4.35
	consequential explanation	1		0.40	
Reports	descriptive report	25	25	9.88	9.88
Procedural genres	procedure	16	16	6.32	6.32
Arguments	exposition	106	113	41.90	44.6
	challenge	5		1.98	
	discussion	2		0.79	
Practical genres	resignation letter	24	24	9.49	9.49
Exercises	exercises	39	39	15.42	15.42
Total		253		100.00	

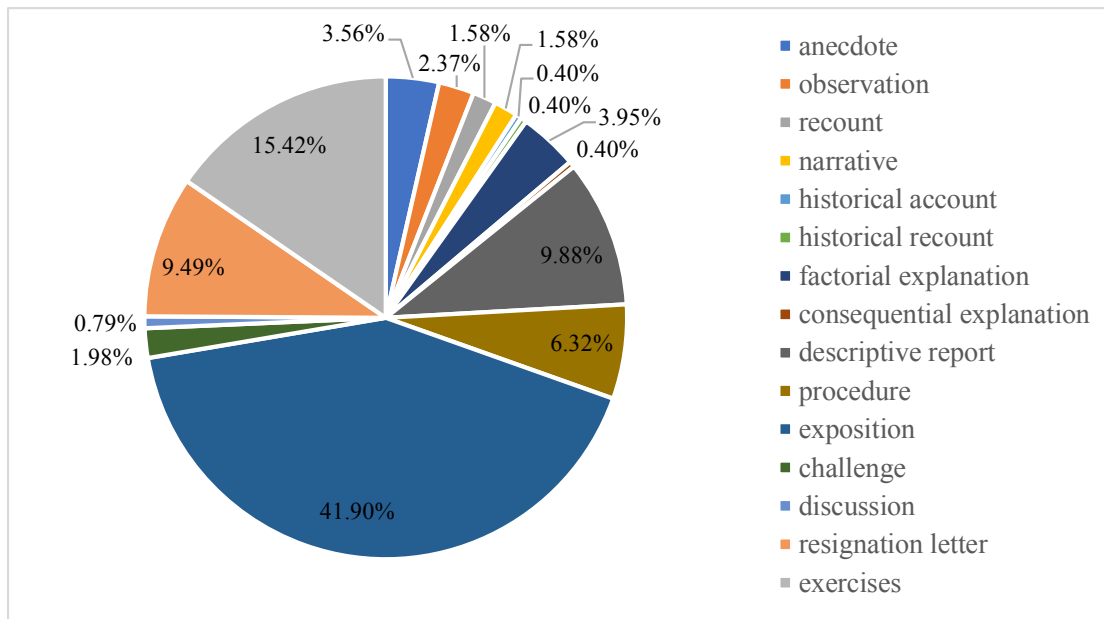


Figure 9. Distribution of genres in the sub-corpus of English Writing II

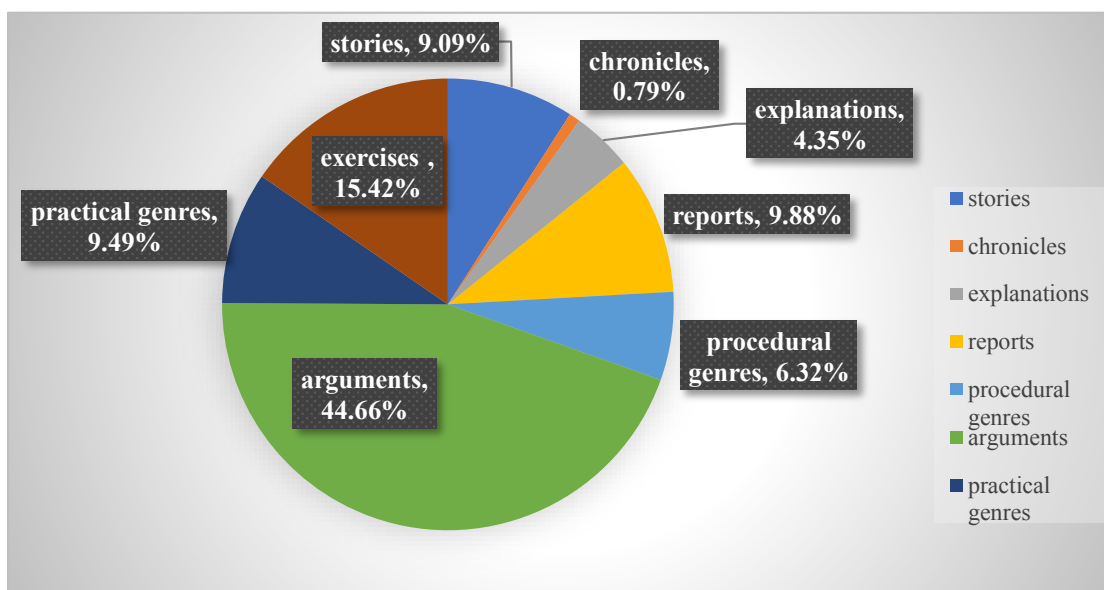


Figure 10. Distribution of genre families in the sub-corpus of English Writing II

Arguments: A Significant Increase

Compared with *English Writing I*, the proportion of *arguments* increased significantly, taking up nearly half (44.66%) of the whole sub-corpus. *Expositions* remained the predominating genre in this family, accounting for 41.90%, while *challenges* (1.98%) and *discussions* (0.79%) were still low in frequency. Figure 11 and Figure 12 below represent examples of *exposition* and *challenge*. Both were responses to the writing

prompt 'With the Intelligent Machines to Do the Thinking, Will Our Brain Gets Lazy?'.

With intelligent machines to do the thinking, will our brains get lazy?

Orientation Nowadays, intelligent machines seem to have had great influence on our daily life. Not only do they take over human jobs but also they can already outperform humans. As machines get smarter, people come to realize that these challenging technologies will do more of our thinking, thus they may give rise to the fact that our brains will regress. So will our brains get lazy in a world run by intelligent machines? From my perspective, I think the answer should be 'yes'.

Thesis

Argument 1 Firstly, we are likely to lose our ability of independent thinking and problem-solving. Since we know intelligent machines make fewer mistakes than us, we may always turn to them for help to solve problems instead of finding solutions by ourselves. For example, many students now like to search the answers on the Internet for their school assignments without spending time thinking by themselves.

Argument 2 Secondly, some brain functions, such as positioning function and memory function, may be affected. According to research, as we use GPS more frequently, the positioning function can be damaged or even be lost. Also, our memory decline. We are more dependent on mobile phone contacts so we can hardly remember people's phone number.

Reiteration In conclusion, I think with the intelligent machines to do the thinking, our brains will get lazy.

Figure 11. An exposition written by EW2G5S3 and its staging

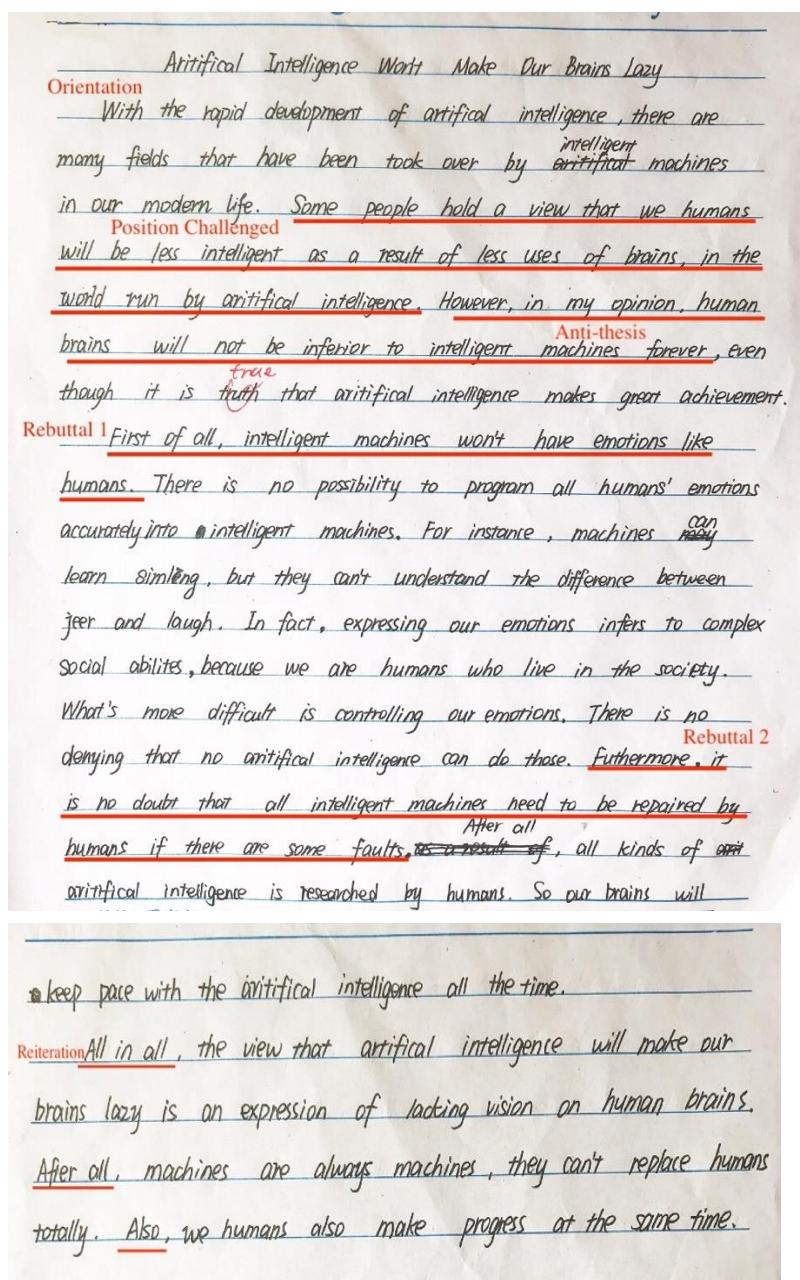


Figure 12. A challenge written by EW2G4S3 and its staging

Stories: A Sharp Decrease

Unlike the *arguments* which were rising remarkably, *stories* shrank sharply from 26.76% in *English Writing I* to only 9.09% in the current course; yet, the 4 types of *story* genres were somehow evenly employed (with the exemplum absent from this course). *Anecdotes* (3.56%) were slightly more frequent than the others, which gives the impression that in the teaching and learning of writing *stories* in this course, the students' attention was redirected to the human emotions aroused by the incidents being

recounted. To illustrate, Figure 13 below presents a typical example of *anecdote*, staged as Orientation ^ Remarkable Event ^ Reaction.

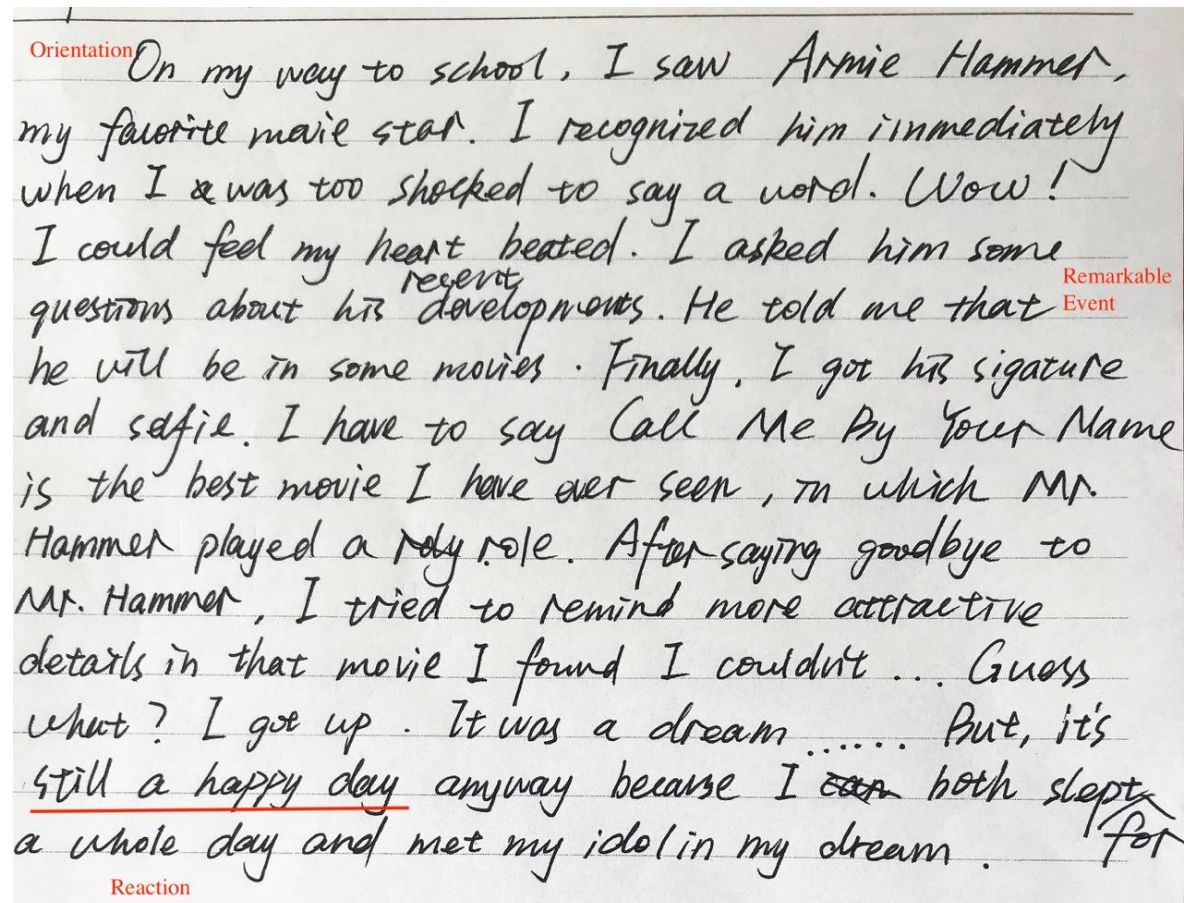


Figure 13. An anecdote written by EW2G5S8 and its staging

Procedural Genres: An Emerging Case

Procedural genres, which were absent in *English Writing I*, were addressed in this course by the American female instructor, who taught two groups of *English Writing II* students the writing of what she called 'how-to essays'. As an after-class assignment, the students composed an essay explicating the steps and processes of how to get something done, in this case instantiating the genre of *procedures* that constituted 6.32% of the sub-corpus.

Explanations and chronicles: Infrequent cases

The frequency of *explanations*, as shown in Table 3, was slightly higher (4.35%) in this

course than in *English Writing I*, especially *factorial explanations* (3.95%) which were not used at all in the latter. Table 5 below is an abridged exemplar of *factorial explanations*. At the same time, *chronicles* remained as inactive, but an interesting case of *historical account* (See Table 6), absent from *English Writing I*, was found in this sub-corpus. It is worth pointing out that neither *explanations* nor *chronicles* received proper treatment throughout the teaching agenda, so they were largely employed in essays on self-selected topics in which the students had more freedom to decide what to write and how to write it.

Table 5

A Factorial Explanation Written by EW2G3S4 and Its Staging

factorial explanation	Text ' <i>An Invisible Killer to College Students</i> '
Phenomenon	Currently, the proportion of college students having psychological problems experienced dramatic increase... Besides, one of the most dangerous aspects of depression and other mental health concerns is suicide. That is to say, a mental health problem is like an invisible killer, which can end someone's life anytime. There are numerous causes accounting for the phenomenon.
Factor 1	<u>The first is that students in the modern world are being confronted with great pressure from study.</u> The burden of the curriculums and exams is too heavy. Being depressed for a long time, people will face some problems in mental health.
Factor 2	<u>Secondly, growing students are addicted to the Internet.</u> Many college students desire to find psychological satisfaction in the virtual world for lack of communications in reality. Thus, some college students indulge in the virtual world, close the doors of their hearts and become isolated in the real world.
Resolution	<u>Besides, due to the intensification of social competition and the depression of the job market,</u> it is more and more difficult for college students to find desirable jobs. This has put great mental pressure on many students, which triggers them to lose the sense of security and to be of anxiety and inferiority.

Genres Performed in Academic Writing in the Spring of 2018

It is noticeable that in the course of *Academic Writing*, the generic profile was much simpler. As previously mentioned in Section 3.2., the lessons in *Academic Writing* were delivered mainly in the form of lectures or in-class reading/discussion, and only 2 written assignments were given out throughout the course. One of the assignments contained 5 sentences or paragraphs, which were highly decontextualised and so disparate with each other, thus was categorised as *exercises*, and the other contained a short passage that instantiated the genre of *factorial explanation*. However, that the

writing prompt for the latter assignment was a semi-completed text which was highly structured and readily scaffolded, leaving only a few blanks for the students to fill in based on the clues given in Chinese; by doing this, the instructor's emphasis was more on the taught vocabulary, syntactic forms and the appropriate use of voices, rather than on the genre itself.

Table 6

A historical account written by EW2G4S4 and its staging

Historical Account	Text ' <i>American gun culture</i> '
Orientation	American gun culture does have a long history.
Account Sequence	As early as the 1600s, when the first Europeans came to the continent of the North America, what they had to face were the cruel battles, the frequent conflicts with the local Indians. At that time, the government did not have the power to provide necessary defense, the people could only rely on themselves. Thus, gun played a significant rule in self-defense. In many states, the local governments encouraged people to own and carry guns to protect themselves as well as the public. So no wonder, when it came to the Independent War, the armed people enhanced the importance of owning guns privately. Because it was the people with private guns who first opened fire to the Lexington, which led to the beginning of the war, and the independence of America. In the views of many Americans, <u>the victory of the Independent War was largely determined by the fact that most Americans own and carry guns with them.</u>
Deduction	Therefore, during the long process of history, the gun culture has been fully formed and developed in the US. As a result, the right of owning guns has been considered <u>as a right</u> that cannot be derived. <u>They share a belief</u> that guns provide some level of protection <u>against crime and tyranny</u> , and guns were a <u>powerful symbol of their identity and freedom.</u>

Discussions, Implications, and Conclusions

A Dynamic Learner Pathway' in Instructional Reality

The findings from this study unveiled the generic diversity that characterised the instruction-based writing that Chinese EFL undergraduate students underwent, which manifested itself, quantitatively via the number and qualitatively via the variety, of genres that those students were actively engaged in inside (or outside) the actual writing classrooms. Drawing on the conceptual tool of genre from SFL, we have in this paper sketched out the 'learner pathway' (Martin, 2009) along which the Chinese EFL students gradually developed control over a mélange of genres in the writing-related classrooms, outside the stereotypically solemn site of test venues. Apparently, the

pathway surfacing from the present study did not follow a typically linear route, as often depicted by genre practitioners and in many EFL writing textbooks, as moving straightforwardly from simpler, more entertaining genres, such as *stories* and *chronicles*, to intermediate, informative genres like *reports*, *procedural genres*, and *explanations*, to, at a more advanced level, evaluative genres, namely, *arguments*, which are increasingly complex in their structures and cognitive demands. Instead, if viewing the 3 writing-related courses as representing 3 stages of the students' literacy trajectory, then we can find that 6 key genre families, i.e., *arguments*, *reports*, *stories*, *chronicles*, *explanations*, and *practical genres*, were continuously spread out in the first 2 stages, though to varied degrees. More specifically, the progress from the first stage to the next was characterised by a sharp cutdown in *stories*, *reports*, and *practical genres*, and a remarkable increase, simultaneously, in the number of arguments, while *chronicles* and *explanations* were steadily sparse in both stages. It is also worth mentioning that *procedural genres* were first (and only) introduced into the classroom in the second stage, and even more surprisingly, that *explanations* – *factorial explanations* in particular – crowned the learner pathway by being the sole genre highlighted in the last and most advanced writing course.

One thing inferable from our findings is that the learner pathway in reality might be far more complex and dynamic than what the national syllabus, with its unitary list of expected outcomes regarding genre learning, would demand. In other words, it is interesting to see how the national syllabus can be, and has been, translated into a multitude of 'legitimate' versions by individual instructors in their classrooms, which in turn affect the diversity in student performance in the writing assignments. We are hesitant, however, to fully embrace any assumptions that L2 writing teachers across institutions should all adhere rigidly to the national syllabus, or any 'universal' route, as fixed and neatly staged. Instead, we profoundly value and appreciate the teacher agency, as demonstrated in our study, in responding to the nation-wide expectations with idiosyncratic interpretations that feed into varied implementations in their local contexts. It is such learner dynamics and teacher agency that we may happily see in the future developments of L2 writing instruction.

We also have to note that the students' choice of genres in fulfilling the writing assignments was definitely neither random nor unrestricted, but circumscribed by the design of course syllabus, the prompts of the writing tasks (usually certain writing prompts tend to invite one genre more than the other), and how the writing tasks were communicated, understood, negotiated and eventually performed (Prior, 1998). Thus, to better understand how and why the students chose and performed within the genres as they did, we need to look beyond the texts as the end-products of writing, and then, taking on wider theoretical and methodological lenses, move our gaze into the national, institutional, and pedagogical contexts, within which the actual practice of writing and the teaching of it was happening. To address this issue, however, goes beyond the scope of this paper, but it is an objective we have attempted to pursue in a related study in the larger research project.

Implications for L2 Writing Instruction and Assessment

What has been reported in this paper, concerning how Chinese EFL undergraduate students performed variably in the instruction-based settings, partly supports the previous scholars who argued that the 'argumentative essay' is the most common genre that undergraduate students have to write (Wu, 2006; Hewings, 2010; Lee & Deakin, 2016), given its highest frequency in the corpus. However, as the students were ushered into a broader range of genres, as evidenced from the corpus data, they were also made increasingly aware of the need for a holistic grasp over a more diverse set of genres in their writing. In the post-study informal talks, we held with some of the students, two students in *English Writing I*, for instance, articulated that they conceived of the narrative writing as equally important, if not more so, as the argumentative. In their perception, and also in their own words, the former opens up opportunities for more 'vivid, artistic play with language' and 'is more widely used in daily-life writing', while the latter 'lays stress on the logic'. Another student in *English Writing II* attributed their continued engagement with the argumentative writing to the exigence of TEM-4 but regarded all types of writing (genres) as 'of equal value in their own right'. Such views as openly stated by the student writers, coupled with the variability and diversity of

genres observed in the students' written texts, cast doubt on the common practice in many standardised tests to rely too heavily, if not exclusively, on argumentative writing to tell us how well students write academically. It might be true that the capacity to write effective argumentative essays is an important marker of L2 writing ability (Hirvela, 2017), but there is certainly more 'beyond the *argument*' that can be held accountable for the literacy success of EFL students.

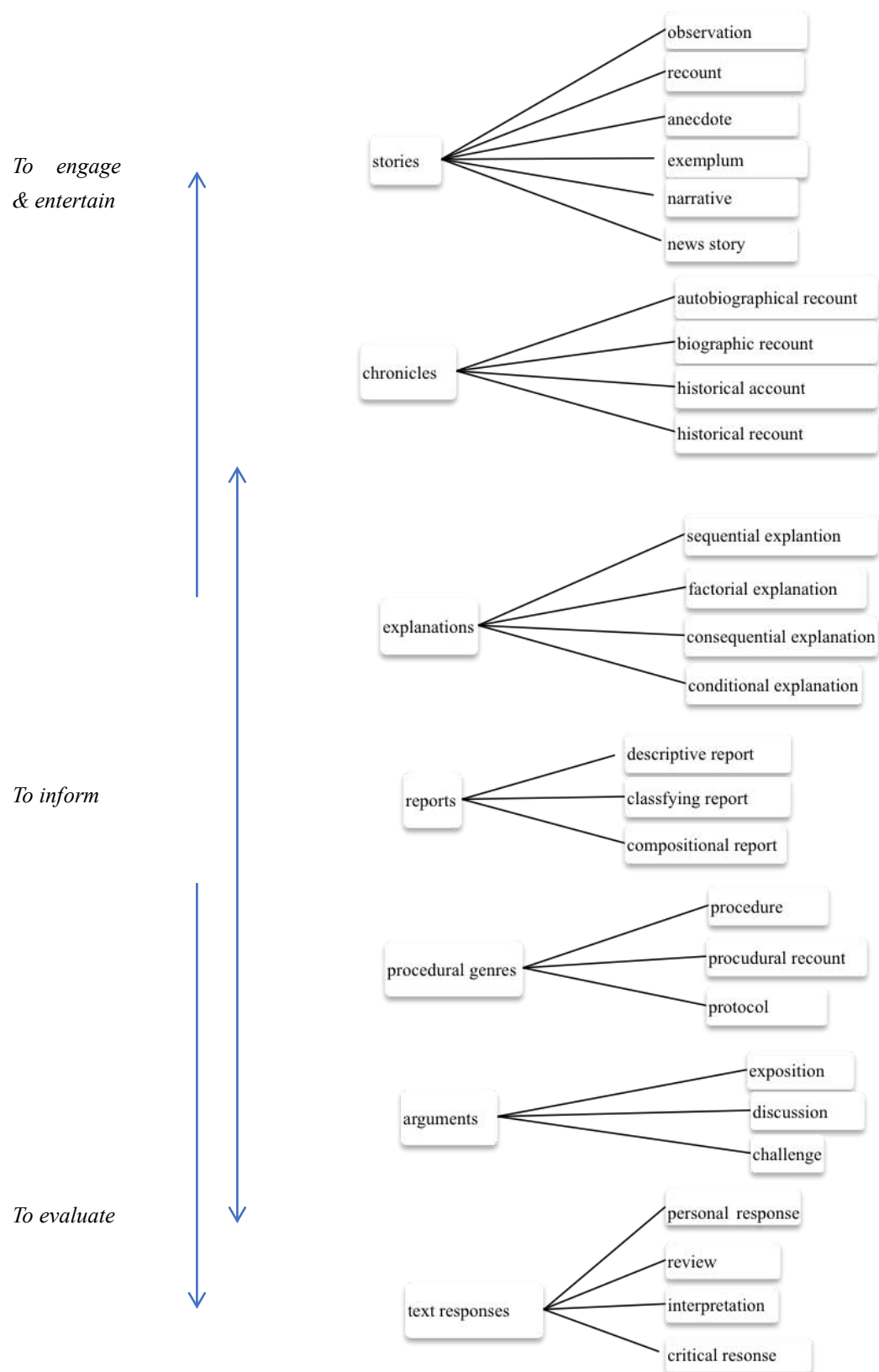
Limitations and Future Directions

Because we only analysed the written assignments by a group of EFL students at one institution in China, we are mindful of the fact that our findings may not be generalisable to the diversity of settings in which English writing is taught, learned, and composed. However, due to the fact that similar writing curriculums, as informed by the national syllabus, remain the common practice in most of Chinese universities offering English-major programme, it is hoped that the findings generated from this study can benefit large numbers Chinese L2 learners and writing teachers in wider institutions. Also, future research may consider expanding the data sources to include larger groups of students from a multitude of institutional backgrounds, allowing for more insights from comparative analysis on EFL instruction-based writing across national, educational, and sociocultural environments. In addition, due to the limited time span, our data was collected cross-sectionally, instead of longitudinally, from the 3 writing-related courses offered in the curriculum. Future studies may take the longitudinal approach, if possible, to follow the same group of students throughout the curriculum and draw a more accurate sketch of their literacy journey.

Finally, we join with Bazerman et al. (2017) in the claim that EFL students should be supported in expanding their rhetorical and generical repertoire by being exposed to a wide range of genres. L2 writing and rhetoric scholars who have their research interests in the EFL undergraduate student writing — its macro or micro linguistic features in particular (for example, the use of lexical bundles, interpersonal grammatical metaphor, or theme-rheme structures, as reviewed in *Section 2.2.*), may look beyond the timed, test-oriented argumentative essays (e.g., Wang & Sui, 2006; Ma,

2009; Wang, 2010; Shi & Liu 2016), into a broader range of generic options available and accessible to these students. With such an enhanced effort, we, as writing teachers and researchers, may gain a deeper understanding of how EFL undergraduate students perform rhetorically across the generic spaces in the classroom-based instructional settings.

Appendix A Taxonomy of key written genres in SFL (adapted from Rose, 2010)



References

- Bazerman, C., Applebee, A. N., Berninger, V. W., Brandt, D., Graham, S., Matsuda, P., Murphy, S., Rowe, D. W., & Schleppegrell, M. (2017). Taking the long view on writing development. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 51(3), 351-360.
- Coffin, C. (2006). *Historical discourse: The language of time, cause and evaluation*. London, England: Continuum.
- Gao, J. (2007). Teaching writing in Chinese universities: Finding an eclectic approach. *Asian EFL Journal*, 20(2), 285-297.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London, England: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1989). *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective* (2nd ed.). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *An introduction to Functional Grammar* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hasan, R. (1977). Text in the systemic-functional model. In W. Dressler (Ed.), *Current trends in textlinguistics* (pp. 228-246). Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter.
- Hasan, R. (1984). The nursery tale as a genre. (Special issue on Systemic Linguistics). *Nottingham Linguistics Circular*, 13, 71-102.
- Herrington, A., & Moran, C. (2005). The idea of genre in theory and practice: An overview of the work in genre in the fields of composition and rhetoric and new genre studies. In A. Herrington, & C. Moran (Eds.), *Genre across the curriculum* (pp.1-18). Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Hewings, M. (2010). Materials for university essay writing. In N. Harwood (Ed.), *English language teaching materials* (pp. 251-278). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Hirvela, A. (2017). Argumentation & second language writing: Are we missing the boat? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 36, 69-74.
- Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing

- instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16(3), 148-164.
- Lee, J. J., & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and SL undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 33, 21-34.
- Liardét, C. L. (2018). 'As we all know': Examining Chinese EFL learners' use of interpersonal grammatical metaphor in academic writing. *English for Specific Purposes*, 50, 64-80.
- Ma, G. (2009). Lexical bundles in L2 English majors' timed writing. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 41(1), 54-60.
- Martin, J. R. (1984). Types of writing in infants and primary school. In *Reading, writing, spelling: Proceedings of the Fifth Macarthur Reading/Language Symposium* (pp. 34-55).
- Martin, J. R. (1994). Macro-genres: The ecology of the page. *Network*, 21(1), 29-52.
- Martin, J. R. (1997). Analysing genre: functional parameters. In F. Christie, & J. R. Martin (Eds.), *Genre and institutions: Social processes in the workplace and school* (pp.3-39). London, England: Continuum.
- Martin, J. R. (2002). From little things big things grow: Ecogenesis in school geography. In R. Coe, L. Lingard, T. Teslenko (Eds.), *The rhetoric and ideology of genre: Strategies for stability and change* (pp. 243-271), Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Martin, J. R. (2009). Genre and language learning: A social semiotic perspective. *Linguistics and Education*, 20(1), 10-21.
- Martin, J. R., & Plum, G. (1997). Construing experience: Some story genres. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7(1), 299-308.
- Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2008). *Genre relations: Mapping culture*. London, England/Oakville, Canada: Equinox.
- Moore, J., Schleppegrell, M., & Palincsar, A. S. (2018). Discovering disciplinary linguistic knowledge with English learners and their teachers: Applying Systemic Functional Linguistics concepts through design-based research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 52(4), 1022-1049. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.472>

- Nesi, H., & Gardner, S. (2012). *Genres across the disciplines: Student writing in higher education*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Prior, P. (1998). *Writing/disciplinarity. A sociohistoric account of literate activity in the academy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Ravelli, L., & Ellis, R. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Analysing academic writing*. London, England: Continuum.
- Rose, D. (2010). Genre in the Sydney School. In J. P. Gee, & M. Handford (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 209-225). London, England: Routledge.
- Rose, D. (2015a). Genre, knowledge and pedagogy in the Sydney School. In N. Artemeva, & A. Freedman (Eds.), *Genre studies around the globe: Beyond the three traditions* (pp. 299-338). Ottawa, Canada: Inkwell.
- Rose, D. (2015b). New developments in genre-based literacy pedagogy. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of writing research* (2nd ed., pp. 227-242). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Rose, D. (2017). Building a pedagogic metalanguage II: Knowledge genres. In J. R. Martin (Ed.), *Applicable linguistics and academic discourse*. Shanghai, China: Shanghai Jiao Tong University.
- Rothery, J., & Stenglin, M. (1997). Entertaining and instructing: Exploring experience through story. In F. Christie, & J. R. Martin (Eds.), *Genre and institutions: Social processes in the workplace and school* (pp.231-263). London, England: Continuum.
- Rothery, J., & Stenglin, M. (2000). Interpreting literature: The role of appraisal. In L. Unsworth (Ed.), *Researching language in schools and communities: Functional linguistic perspectives* (pp. 222-244). London, England: Cassell.
- Shi, Y., & Liu, X. (2016) Recontextualizing writing proficiency: An investigation of model argumentation texts for IELTS preparation. *TESOL International*, 11(2), 57-69.
- Tardy, C. M. (2006). Researching first and second language genre learning: A comparative review and a look ahead. *Journal of Second Language*

Writing, 15(2), 79-101.

Teaching Advisory Committee for Tertiary English Majors. (2000). *English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors. English Teaching Syllabus for English Majors.*

Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Researching Press.

Veel, R. (1998). The greening of school science. In J. R. Martin, & R. Veel (Eds.), *Reading science: Critical and functional perspectives on discourses of science* (pp. 114-151). London, England: Routledge.

Wang, H., & Sui, D. (2006). Measuring coherence in Chinese EFL majors' writing through LSA (Latent Semantic Analysis). *Asian EFL Journal*, 11(6), 1-24.

Wang, X. (2010). TP pattern and coherence in English writing: Analysis of TEM-4 writing papers. *Foreign Language Research*, 153(2), 103-106.

Wu, S. M. (2006). Creating a contrastive rhetorical stance: investigating the strategy of problematization in students' argumentation. *RELC Journal*, 37(3), 329-353.
