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Foreword

The *TESOL International Journal*'s current issue includes a selection of research articles focusing on different socio-educational contexts bringing a relevant contribution to the field of teacher cognition that Borg (2003) defines as “(...) the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching (...)”, and its impact on the language classroom.

Roya Araghian and Afsaneh Ghanizadeh's study explores teacher resilience identifying its causes and how it affects their teaching. The study stresses the importance of a systemic web of interacting factors such as educational context, stress, and organisational policy, among others, to develop resilience. The study concludes that teachers' personality is fundamental to develop resilience.

Pariwat Imsa-ard's study focuses on teaching practices in the context of English language teaching in Thailand. The study examines the washback effects of the English National Examination (O-NET) on teaching practices. The findings suggest that the national examination has a significant impact on teaching practices since teachers “teach to the test” and usually neglect the development of communicative skills.

Vocabulary acquisition and development in children is the focus of **Xiao-lei Wang and Raquel Plotka's** study. The experimental study assesses whether the spontaneous gestures produced by children when narrating a story may provide clues to help in acquiring and developing new words. The findings show that when adults use the hand gestures produced by children while teaching new words, vocabulary retention increases. The results also revealed that metaphoric gestures provided the best clues for the acquisition and development of new vocabulary.

Thi Thuy Loan Nguyen's study concentrates on pre-service teachers' beliefs on teaching EFL writing in Thailand. The results that stemmed from the analysis of semi-structured interviews reveal that pre-service teachers in Thailand tend to rely on course content related to their prior learning experiences.

Shu-Chen Huang's paper addresses EFL writing from the perspective of the learners. The study examines the effects of a training period on peer feedback on the development of feedback literacy, fostering peer interaction and interpersonal communication, and group cohesiveness. The findings show that student exchanges when giving feedback to their peers helped in building relationships among them.

Ikmi Nur Oktavianti and Astry Fajria's developed a corpus-based study analysing the use of modal verbs in an EFL textbook in Indonesia. The authors compare the corpus of the textbook with that of the *Corpus of the Contemporary American English* (COCA). The main objective was to analyse modal verb use frequency in the textbook in order “to find out the similarities and the mismatches of modal verbs usage.” and provide textbook writers useful information on the use of modal verbs.

Yi-chen Chen's paper examines public speaking anxiety by EFL learners. The participants' level of anxiety was measured through the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety scale (PRPSA). The main objective was to identify the factors that contribute to anxiety also through metaphor analysis. The study took gender, nationality and language proficiency as the main variables. The findings reveal that language proficiency and good presentation skills are essential to reduce

anxiety when speaking in public. The results also show that gender does not impact public speaking anxiety, but nationality does. The metaphor analysis revealed that the participants define public speaking as “taking on challenges” and “performing on stage”. The metaphors that describe public speaking anxiety are “committing a crime” and “waiting for a verdict”.

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Contents

Foreword	1
Teacher Resilience: Capturing a Multidimensional Construct <i>Roya Araghian</i> <i>Afsaneh Ghanizadeh</i>	4
Choices of Teaching Practices: Does the English National Examination Cause Thai EFL Teachers to Teach to the Test? <i>Pariwat Imsa-ard</i>	56
Using English Language Learners' Gestures as Clues to Enhance Vocabulary Development <i>Xiao-lei Wang</i> <i>Raquel Plotka</i>	87
An Exploration into Thai Pre-service Teachers' Views, Challenges, Preparation and Expectations in Learning to Teach EFL Writing <i>Thi Thuy Loan Nguyen</i>	112
Relationship-building and Language-oriented Peer Feedback—Fostering Positive Dynamics and Feedback Literacy in an EFL Writing Classroom <i>Shu-Chen Huang</i>	143
Modal Verbs in a Curriculum-Based EFL Textbook of Senior High School in Indonesia: A Corpus-Based Study <i>Ikmi Nur Oktavianti</i> <i>Astry Fajria</i>	171
Examining EFL Learners' Public Speaking Anxiety through Metaphor Analysis <i>Yi-chen Chen</i>	205

Teacher Resilience: Capturing a Multidimensional Construct

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Abstract

The present study aimed at exploring teacher resilience and developing a multidimensional understanding of the construct among English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers. By employing a triangulated qualitative research design integrating interviews, diaries, and open-ended questions, the researchers attempted to illuminate the process of resilience from the retroactive and proactive perspectives. The former concentrated on explaining the causes and reasons behind the resilience phenomenon, and the latter delved at the effect of resilience on teachers' functioning. These act as either resource which may help the teachers maintain their courage in the face of adversities or as the challenges they meet. The retroactive and proactive dimensions were then categorized into three resources of teacher, learner, and organization, each associated with a number of sub-codes. Taken together, it was concluded that teachers' personal and internal attributes play a fundamental role in the process of resiliency.

Keywords: resilience, EFL teacher, retroactive dimension, proactive dimension

Introduction

Humans throughout their life are being exposed to difficulties, challenges, risks, threats, changes, limitations, and differences. The question is to what extent one tries to adapt to these conditions, to recover from them, to demonstrate flexibility, and to solve and respond to problems. These issues are all within the domain of a psychological attribute called resilience. It is a concept that refers to “a set of conditions that allow individual adaptation to different forms of adversity at different points in the life course” (BITC, 2009). In fact, it is in the presence of a significant threat to the development of individuals that the resilience process comes into being (Doney, 2013, p. 660). Teaching is a profession which challenges teachers physically, intellectually, and emotionally (Hargreaves, 1994; Kyriacou, 2000; Zembylas & Schutz, 2009). Teachers are continuously exposed to demands, control, support, relationships, responsibilities, and changes leading them to experience stress and burnout (Ghanizadeh &

Ghonsooly, 2014), which requires them to respond differently concerning their psychological conditions and contextual factors. “Teacher resilience is a *dynamic quality* which enables teachers to maintain a sense of moral purpose and commitment to help students learn and achieve in their everyday world of teaching” (Gu, 2014, p. 503). Resilient teachers “withstand the ebbs and flows of the educational sector” and “keep on teaching despite all the negative factors” (Ebersöhn, 2014, p. 573). Whether they leave, thrive, or survive depends on their level of resilience (Beltman et al., 2011).

Research into teacher resilience revolves around investigating the impact of resilience on teachers’ lives and career and better understanding of its connection with growth, learning, and development. The focus of these studies has been on the relationship between teacher resilience and self-efficacy (Castro et al., 2010; Kitching et al., 2009), social and emotional competence (Cefai & Cavioni, 2014), identity development (Chong & Low, 2009; Kirk & Wall, 2010), commitment and effectiveness (Day, 2008; Gu, 2014; Gu & Day, 2007; Nolan et al., 2014), well-being (Gibbs & Miller, 2014), burnout (Dworkin, 2009; Richards et al., 2014; Richards et al., 2016), attrition or retention (Beltman, et al., 2011; Castro et al., 2010; Doney, 2013; Hong, 2012; Tait, 2008), job satisfaction (Cheung et al., 2011; Roman-Oertwig, 2004) and so forth. As shown above, a substantial body of research examined the construct of resilience in the field of teaching in general. To the researchers’ best knowledge, it appears that no documented study to date has delved into EFL teacher resilience. By its very nature, English Language Teaching (ELT) places excessive demands on language teachers as it deals with teaching another language to the learners, which requires first of all in-depth knowledge of English as well as knowing the cultures of the two languages.

To present a vivid portrait of EFL teacher resilience, the motivation behind the current

study was to conceptualize and capture a deeper understanding of the difficulties and challenges language teachers encounter as well as the resources available to them to undertake their work, from the perspective of retroactive and proactive dimensions. Retroactive implies exploring the conditions, factors, and reasons which pave the way to the process of resilience development. On the other hand, proactive dimensions have to do with the consequences and outcome that resiliency may have on teachers' performance. These, all together, can function as either protective resources facilitating resilient behavior or as serious challenges debilitating resiliency.

The following section presents the review of the related literature on teacher resilience. In so doing, resilience is first defined followed by the historical movement in conceptualizing resilience in educational domain. Then, teacher resilience and its impact on various aspects of teaching profession are briefly discussed. Due to the succinct volume of this section, most of the studies are not explored in detail, but are just mentioned or listed based on the area of study or relevant contributions.

Review of the Related Literature

Resilience, by definition, implies “the capacity to bounce back, to withstand hardship, and to repair yourself” (Wolin & Wolin, 1993, p. 5). In essence, this concept specifies “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Masten et al., 1990, p. 425). In this regard, three dimensions can be specified in the resilience phenomenon: the first one refers to a change and adaptation, the second one is flexibility and restoration, and the last one includes keeping on believing in one's capability to improve and succeed (Schelvis et al., 2014). Therefore, at the core of being resilient is a threat

or risk or adversity with adaptation to or coping with the unwanted situation (Baggio et al., 2015; Ghanizadeh et al., 2019; Hazel, 2018).

Early studies on the construct of resilience involved children at risk and their developmental problems acquired or inherited (Masten, 2011). These studies explored the reason for their coping successfully while confronting adversities (Garmezy, 1985; Werner, 2005), which addressed the significance of individuals' internal characteristics in understanding resilience and acting upon it. Such an approach to resilience considers it a psychological construct employing personal characteristics like self-efficacy in order to help individuals remain resilient when exposed to adversities (Gu & Day, 2007). In fact, this is a traditional perspective on resilience that regards the individuals and their environment as unrelated. According to this view, resilience constitutes a personal trait essential for people's well-being (Presch et al., 2012). Such an extreme view turned out to be inadequate as resilience by its very nature comes into being in human relationships in every aspect of their life, so, it is unreasonable to put the whole responsibility of being resilient on the person alone.

With this said, the social perspective on resilience refers to a multifaceted and dynamic process "within a social system of interrelationships" (Gu & Day, 2007, p. 1305), where people employ effective strategies to tackle challenges and find their way toward success (Mansfield et al., 2014; Castro et al., 2010). More to the point, both protective and risk factors within the individual or the context are at work in the process of this interaction (Beltman et al., 2011; Benard, 2004). Again, here the person is responsible for his/her resilience since the type of strategies adopted is a strong determinant of his/her capability to be and remain resilient.

Another perspective on resilience that puts much emphasis on the given context suggests a dynamic and variable nature for resilience (Beltman, 2020). Concerning this, personal

resources together with contextual resources are defined and identified based on the social, cultural, and physical aspects of the context, and one's resilience is under the influence of one's ability to negotiate these resources (Ungar, 2012) through one's agency (Ebersohn, 2012; Gu & Li, 2013) to overcome the external challenges. Taken together, the new perspectives take a systematic approach whereby multiple systems, both within and outside the individual, operate in an ongoing interaction (Masten, 2014), so in this manner, resilience which is an amalgam of personal characteristics, strategies, context, and systems should be examined in the light of individual, interpersonal, and cultural facets (Tudge & Putnam, 1997). In line with this, Kangas-Dick and O'Shaughnessy (2020), more recently, investigated resilience and its relation to burnout and attrition, taking the framework of internal and external systems which act as a facilitator or a debilitator in the development of resilience. These systems consist of the individual, microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem. Microsystem, is understood as the interpersonal relationship with the people in the environment such as friends, family, colleagues, and mentors. The mesosystem covers two or more microsystems. The exosystem deals with several contextual settings but only one setting makes no association to the target individual. What this study implies is the necessity of considering both personal and contextual factors when analyzing resilience to better understand it.

Resilience is a construct that has been investigated in diverse domains and recently has found its way into education (Najafzadeh et al., 2018). It is well acknowledged that education and its quality have knock-on and long-term effects on humans' life and society and its goals (Allahdadi & Ghanizadeh, 2017). Moreover, numerous individuals, factors, agents, organizations, and institutions are involved in this enterprise. Meanwhile, what is more evident than anything else in education concerns the work and quality of teachers. In effect, the main

director and the core of education are the teachers as they have direct relationships with students (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020). Regardless of the necessity of the collaboration and coordination of all factors in education for the purpose of pursuing educational goals, teachers are the major manifestation of training and education. In this way, a hot debate in education centers around an ideal teacher and teacher effectiveness. According to Boldrini et al. (2018), resilience in teachers rests upon adaptation as a result of their sense of engagement with the profession as well as perceived effectiveness. For the most part, teachers' practices in classrooms exert a profound effect on student learning and achievement (Leithwood, 2018; Nolan et al., 2014; Leithwood et al., 2006; Hallinger, 2005; Rivkin et al., 2005). Accordingly, recognition of what helps promote teachers' practice or in reverse demote their work will be key to effective and efficient education.

Admittedly, teaching is a challenging social profession. Teachers experience difficulties, risks, threats, and limitations every day in their job, which put increasing demands on their commitment, health, and well-being (Day & Gu, 2007). To put it another way, teachers' lives and work are fraught with huge demands of the profession and because of the critical role they play in education and students' development, it is of utmost importance for teachers to be equipped with resilience. The concept of teacher resilience basically introduces "a quality that enables teachers to maintain their commitment to teaching and teaching practices despite challenging conditions and recurring setbacks" (Brunetti, 2006, p. 813). Likewise, resilience in teachers is characterized by an adequate response to stresses and vicissitudes, employing successful strategies to manage students' behavior, and getting a personal sense of satisfaction (Gu & Day, 2007; Tait, 2008). Actually, what distinguishes teaching from other professions is the sense of vocational commitment teachers take on (Hansen, 1995). In addition, teacher

resilience deals with not only “the capacity to bounce back or recover from highly traumatic experiences and events” but also “the capacity to maintain equilibrium and a sense of commitment and agency” in their teaching (Gu & Day, 2013, p. 26).

There is a substantial body of research into teacher resilience that revolves around the conceptualizations of this construct. As Masten et al. (1990), as well as Mansfield et al. (2016) put it, positive and successful adaptation to any change or threat described in resilience can be formulated through a process, a capacity, or an outcome. On this point, resilience as a capacity pursues it as a personal trait that is somehow fixed but can be nurtured (Boon, 2020). Related to this, Bozgeyikli (2017) examined the relationship between resilience and personality traits. He concluded that resilience was positively connected to extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness while there was a negative relation between resilience and neuroticism.

Resilience as a process encompasses the interplay between the protective and risk resources and challenges whether in the individual or the given situation. That is, the person and the context are involved together in a dynamic and complex way (Beltman et al., 2011). Personal protective factors include strong intrinsic motivation (Chong & Low, 2009; Hong, 2012; Kitching, Morgan & O’Leary, 2009), empathy (Jennings et al., 2011; Tait, 2008), perseverance (Stanford, 2001; Sumsion, 2003), emotional competence (Ee & Chang, 2010), problem-solving (Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2006; Patterson, Collins, & Abbott, 2004), flexibility (Kent & Davis, 2010; Sumsion, 2003), sense of humour (Bobek, 2002), optimism (Gu & Li, 2013; Stanford, 2001; Tait, 2008; Day, 2014), sense of agency (Castro et al., 2010), self-efficacy (Kitching et al., 2009), effective teaching and time management skills (Bobek, 2002; Gu & Day, 2007; Mansfield et al., 2012), a sense of purpose (Day, 2014),

commitment to students (Gu & Li, 2013; Stanford, 2001), social and emotional competence (Cefai & Cavioni, 2014), resistance (Reinders, 2018) and self-reflection (Wosnitza et al., 2018). Likewise, Reivich and Shatte (2002) posited that emotion regulation, impulse control, empathy, optimism, causal analysis, self-efficacy, and reaching out are key to the development of resilience, which can be measured, taught, and improved. As for challenges at the individual level, whatever causes stress can be claimed as the main source of distress, worry, exhaustion, and discomfort feelings. Self-efficacy is one of them (Day, 2008; Kitching et al., 2009). Teachers who lack self-beliefs of efficacy perceive themselves incapable of, say, dealing with disruptive behavior of students or handling effectively their classrooms. The others entail the reluctance of teachers in searching for help (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009) and the mismatch between their vocational expectations and actual practices (Flores & Day, 2006; McCormack & Gore, 2008).

Teaching and learning do not occur in a vacuum. Teachers' workplace is a kind of social organization developed from a series of interactions among teachers, students, colleagues, managers, parents, and many others, to name just a few. Such a multi-layered relationship makes a positive or negative contribution to the resilience building process (Gu & Li, 2013). Indeed, resilience is considered as the manifestation of the dynamic interaction of risk and protective factors within the teachers and within the environment (Benard, 2004). Contextual protective resources include supportive networks, appraisal and harmony (Doney, 2013; Gu & Day, 2013; Kutsyuruba et al., 2019; Morettini, 2016;; Van Breda, 2011), positive relationships (Doney, 2013; Le Cornu, 2013; Luthar & Brown, 2007), family support (Mansfield et al., 2014; Stanford, 2001), peer/colleague support (Castro et al., 2010; Mansfield et al., 2014; Stanford, 2001), and support and leadership (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Peters & Pearce, 2012). As

Beltman et al.'s (2011) review of resilience research shows, the role of supportive trusting networks of peers, colleagues, school and administration, and family and friends as a kind of positive contextual resource is integral in the resilience operation, especially for the teachers at the beginning of their profession (Gu & Day, 2013; Mansfield et al., 2018; Morretini, 2016; Oswald et al., 2003; Sammons et al., 2007;) since receiving approval and backing from the people around make the beginning teachers feel accepted even when they find themselves unready to start the profession (Moretтинin et al., 2020). More specifically, this transactional dimension helps the teachers improve their motivation and develop resilience even though they experience disagreeable, undesirable conditions such as unemployment, salary cuts, uncertain future outlooks, and other work-related problems (Flores, 2018). The same holds true in a more recent study by Ainsworth and Oldfield (2019) that support from management, family, friends, colleagues, and also school culture can determine teacher resilience development which in turn leads to the teachers' senses of well-being and job satisfaction and the prevention of burnout.

With these in mind, context can pose challenges for teachers as well. Such difficulties may arise from school organization and administration including fulfilling the career expectations and dealing with different parents (Goddard & Foster, 2001), heavy workload, limited time and lack of support (Flores, 2006; Helker et al., 2018), responsibility (Johnson et al., 2014), and dealing with social and psychological problems of students, interpersonal relationships, policies, and prior knowledge and preparation (Mansfield et al., 2014). Commenting on government policy reforms as a contextual challenge, Gu (2018) argues that this can add up to teachers' emotional burden of work, accountabilities, and work complexity, all which affect the process of building resilience. It can be said that teachers' perceptions of work complexity relate to their inexperience which in turn can contribute to their lack of

preparation. As Loughran and Hamilton (2016) point out, “learning to teach is far more about an educative experience rather than an approach to training” (p.4). Experience helps teachers become familiar with the factors that promote or restrict their functioning (Drew & Sosnowski, 2019). Further, teachers face difficulties in the classroom, which encompasses the way to manage students’ disruptive behavior (Demetriou et al., 2009), teaching assignments and lack of educational facilities (Stallions et al., 2012), and the establishment of friendly relationships with colleagues and students (Le Cornu, 2013). Following this, the inclusion of teacher preparation programs in educational policy and agendas can be of great help. Much evidence indicates that such programs serve a vital function for teachers when confronting problems and risks (Durksen et al., 2017; Mansfield et al., 2014; Silva et al., 2018;).

As far as resilience as an outcome is concerned, the construct of resilience both can be considered an outcome on its own and also can lead to numerous outcomes. It means that certain characteristics, behaviours, and underlying factors have to do with building and developing resilience and besides that being resilient can lead to beneficial results and provide positive advantages. As for the former, the literature above has dealt with that in the discussed issues; however, some of them can be regarded as the outcome of being resilient, too. Besides, one of the most important consequences of being resilient is the development of the sense of well-being (Brouskeli et al., 2018; Pretsch et al., 2012; Svence & Majors, 2015). The reason for well-being is that the teachers who enjoy the quality of being resilient, i.e. positive adaptation to challenges and difficulties, more probably may not experience destructive stress and in the long run burnout, so they may not intend to leave their job (Flores, 2018; Pocinho & Perestrelo, 2011). On the other hand, as they practice resilience, they cultivate the sense of positive engagement as well as the sense of effectiveness (Boldrini et al., 2018), which improve

their beliefs of self-efficacy, as well. Overall, resilient teachers can develop mindfulness, stress tolerance, non-reactivity, and effectiveness (Deborah et al., 2018).

All things considered, the aforementioned studies and discussions actually present and highlight the need for resilience to be approached as a complex and multifaceted construct generally defined as “the ability to change and adapt when necessary”; “to be ‘elastic’ and recover quickly from changes, difficulties or constraints”; and “the ability to be and remain confident and vigorous after changes have occurred” (Schelvis et al., 2014, p. 623). Resilience is a critical and fundamental concept in the teaching profession and teachers’ practice. Teachers encounter a plethora of difficulties, risks, threats, and restrictions, all of which influence their performance and even their teaching competence. Resilience is regarded as a merit that can immunize teachers in the face of any pressure, challenge, and disappointment. The teachers who are not resilient probably are not able to nurture resilient students. The teachers who do not cultivate resilience for the most part will not be able to deal with their students’ learning problems and to enjoy their teaching. They may even perceive their job as a burden, so they may lose the ability to transfer the subjects, then they may not establish a close friendly relationship with students as well as with colleagues and the personnel, and finally they may fail to fulfill their vital role in teaching.

Exploring teacher resilience is important for several reasons. It provides substantial benefits to teachers’ performance and effectiveness as well as students’ learning and achievement. Likewise, it sheds light on the constraints, problems and concerns teachers face in their jobs and lives. More importantly, by preparing the mechanisms for and including the programs on nurturing and enhancing resilience in teacher education, pursuing and attaining the higher educational goals and objectives would be facilitated. It seems that the challenges

and difficulties language teachers encounter are to some extent more than other teachers. The reason may be that language is a complicated phenomenon interwoven in different issues including identity, culture, norms, and ethics, which add up to the pressure language teachers experience. Teaching another language means teaching skills including reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, vocabulary into a language other than the mother tongue, which first of all requires that the teacher him/herself gain a complete mastery over the subjects, otherwise this can exert a mounting pressure on their work. On the other hand, cultural differences may serve a function. Sometimes, textbooks, materials, curriculum, organizational policy and planning like the government support of foreign language teaching, parental force for learning another language as well as their children's disinclination to learn it, and the necessity of learning a foreign language as a subject included in the entrance examination all can cause real pressing problems in foreign language education and consequently may lead teachers in this field into the experience of serious difficulties.

In this way, the current study was designed to explore teacher resilience, to investigate the conditions under which EFL teachers work with respect to their capacity to vigorously resist adversities and to attempt to adapt positively, as well as to develop a multidimensional understanding of the construct among EFL teachers. By employing a triangulated qualitative research design integrating interviews, diaries, and open-ended questions, the researchers attempted to illuminate the process of resilience from the retroactive and proactive perspectives. In so doing, this study addressed these questions:

1. What are the challenges EFL teachers face that prevent the development of resilience?
2. What resources are available to EFL teachers that enhance their resilience capacity and, ultimately, their functioning?

Method

The present study focused on the conceptualization of EFL teacher resilience. It employed a qualitative approach and utilized the triangulation of data via semi-structured interviews, open-ended questions and diaries to enrich the quality and validity of the research. By its very nature, the qualitative approach offers a great opportunity for teachers to freely express and discuss their perceptions and experiences without being limited by predetermined questions (Patton, 2002).

Participants

The participants of the interview phase were 12 teachers (10 females and 2 males) with the age range of 24 to 46. 3 teachers had a doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) and the 9 others had a Master of Arts (MA) in TEFL, Translation Studies, and English Literature. All were non-native language teachers with 6 to 23 years of teaching experience at universities, institutes, and schools in Mashhad, a city in Iran. Table 1 shows participants' age ranges, gender, the number of years teaching at the time of the interview, and their work context. For confidentiality purposes, pseudo names were used.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Year of Teaching	Degree	Employment Status	Workplace
A	Female	37	10	PhD	Part-time	University
B	Female	43	20	PhD	Full-time	University
C	Female	24	6	MA	Part-time	Institute
D	Female	40	14	MA	Full-time	University
E	Female	45	23	MA	Full-time	School
F	Male	22	6	MA	Full-time	School/Institute
G	Male	30	8	MA	Full-time	Institute
H	Female	27	10	PhD	Part-time	University
I	Female	35	10	MA	Full-time	School
K	Female	25	4	MA	Full-time	School
L	Female	45	18	MA	Full-time	School
M	Female	46	20	MA	Full-time	School

Instrumentation

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with each participant in their mother tongue so that they would be able to feel secure in stating their beliefs and sharing their experiences. First of all, the participants were assured that their responses would be treated confidentially. They were asked to reflect on their career, to express their opinions about resilience in teaching, and the challenges and rewards they experience. Before that, the researcher delineated the concept of resilience to the participants. Each interview began with a series of questions generated from the research literature as a reference guide as well as some early impressions gained during interviews, which helped the researcher in preliminarily theorizing about resiliency in the context of foreign language education. During interviews, probing questions were also posed based on their responses. In the end, the participants were asked to add any comment on resilience. Sample interview questions included “what is your opinion regarding the concept of resilience in language education?”, “describe the personal

factors as well as other factors that help you develop resilience”, and “what has been the outcome of resiliency for you?” The interviews lasted from 45 to 90 min. All interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and used for analysis.

Given that the type of interview employed in this study was semi-structured, a limited set of pre-prepared initial questions were first asked (see appendix for the initial interview guide). The questions elicited information about the broad categories of teacher resilience. The interviewees were then encouraged to elaborate on each questions, while follow up questions were raised and posed, making the interview dynamic and productive.

In the second phase which took place rather simultaneously, 12 other teachers were asked to answer two open-ended questions. The questions were: “I am a resilient teacher, because...” and “I am not a resilient teacher, because...”. The participants were reassured that the interviews would be confidential so they could express their opinion comfortably. And last, three experienced teachers were asked to keep a diary to delineate their experiences during class time of the situations that demanded them to behave in a resilient way. The diary entries were generated based on an event-contingent model over the whole semester. They participants were asked to generate a self-report each time they believed they were displaying resilience in their profession. Depending on the experience of each participant, different entries were produced. For example, participants one and three reported seven events, and participant two reported six events. One of them created paper and pencil diary, while two produced electronic format.

Procedure

Data Analysis

This study made use of MAXQDA 10 software to analyze and evaluate the collected qualitative data. It is a powerful tool which enables the researcher to systematically organize, estimate, and construe various kinds of data and finally to visualize the findings. In so doing, first, the interviews were transcribed verbatim and entered into the software together with the data collected from the open-ended questions and diaries. Then the transcripts were read through several times so that the researcher could be immersed in the probe. This led to creating some primary encoding through which the key issues in the protocols were retrieved and categorized. Having been coded and clustered, the data were set for inductive analyses and further interpretations. For each cluster, a theme name was proposed, which reflected the essence of the interviewees' comments on the given concept.

Results

The data collected from interviews, open-ended questions, and diaries in this study were categorized into core codes and subcodes. The rationale behind this research was that resilience is a bilateral construct, meaning that the resilience process is the manifestation of the relationship between causes and effects in individuals' behavior and performance, thus taking the retroactive and proactive perspectives in conceptualizing, describing, and illuminating resilience. To answer research questions, both resources and challenges regarding the retroactive and proactive dimensions were investigated and separately represented in several graphs.

Based on the results, the retroactive dimension encompassed several resources and

challenges in terms of Teacher, Learners, and Organization/Context. Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the codes and sub-codes of resources in the retroactive dimension.

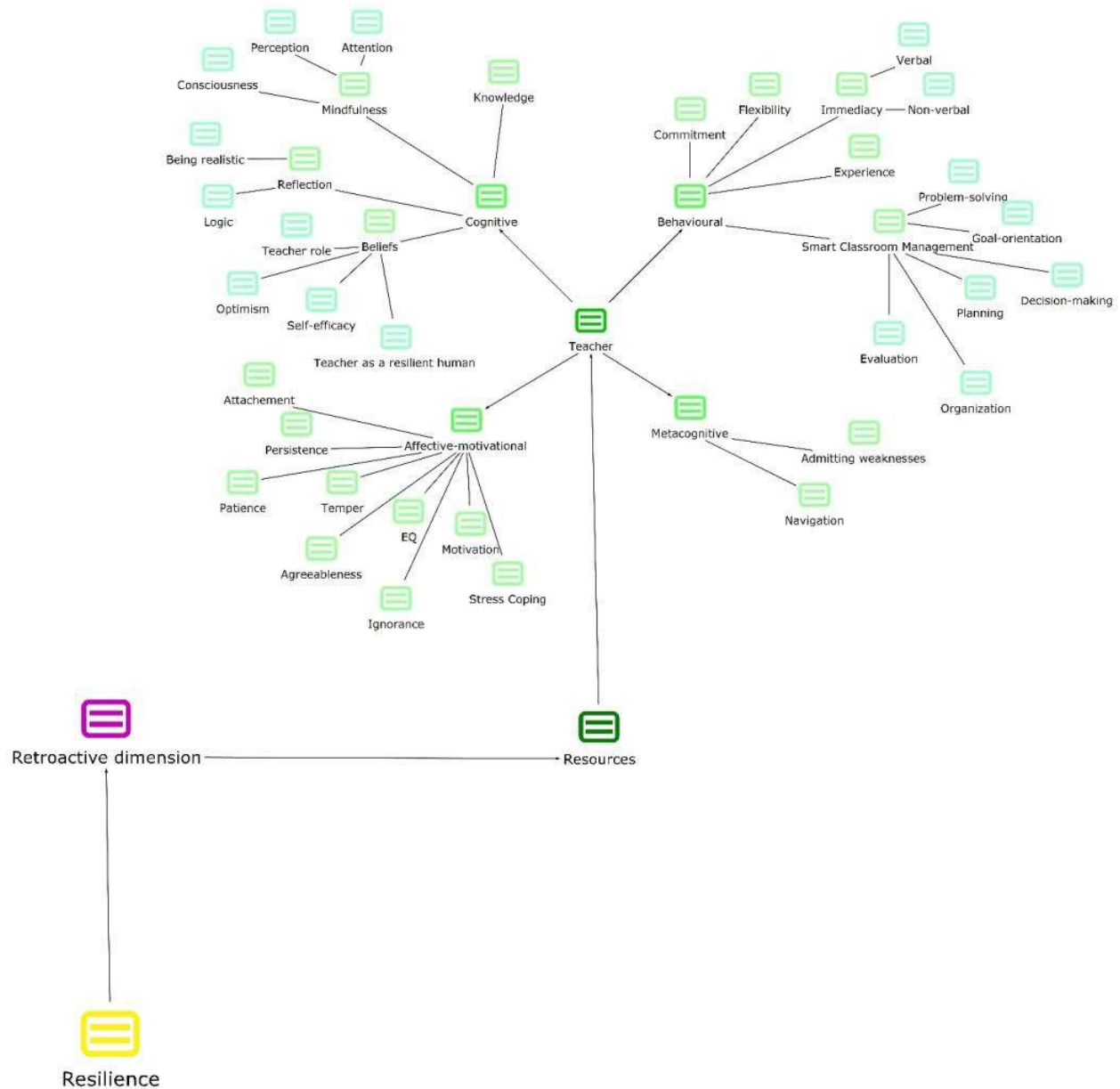


Figure 1 The teacher resource of resilience in the retroactive dimension

As indicated in Figure 1, Teacher resource encompasses cognitive, metacognitive, behavioral, and affective-motivational sub-factors. The cognitive domain entails conscious mental and intellectual processes involving thinking, understanding, learning, and

remembering. It was categorized into knowledge, mindfulness, reflection, and beliefs. Mindfulness explains the teachers' ability to be cognizant of what happens in the class on a moment-to-moment basis. It is in the form of perception of the environment, paying attention to students, and being conscious of the learning process. Reflection helps teachers think about their teaching and the reason for what they do during class time. Reflective teachers try to see the logic behind the events and to be realistic. In fact, an integral part of cognition is constructed by the way one thinks and in what one believes. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief in the ability to execute behaviors "required to deal with prospective situations" (Bandura, 1982). Concerning this, self-efficacious teachers tend to judge themselves as capable of controlling the situations and remain confident facing difficulties; for example, one of the participants declared, *"I have learned what to do to comply with the conditions."*

The other said, *"I know what to do in what situation to control and overcome the challenges."* More to the point, some teachers ascertained their belief about their critical role in teaching and attempted to be a model for their students. The way teachers look at issues can reflect their thoughts and beliefs. One experienced teacher said she tried to pay more attention to the positive side to deal with the problems better. This is exemplified in an experienced teacher participant's quotation: *"I do my best to look on the bright side to tackle the problems."* Another teacher held teaching itself requires teachers to be resilient, which indicates his mindfulness and reflection.

Turning now to the behavioral code, it addresses the behavior of teachers in the classroom such as smart classroom management, experience, immediacy, flexibility, and commitment. Smart classroom management has to do with planning, organization, goal-orientation, problem-solving, decision-making, and evaluation. To be resilient, teachers more

probably need to set goals based on which they organize class time, draw up clever plans for teaching, come up with a solution for almost everything, make decisions on the spot, and evaluate the situation. All participants accepted that experience is vital for resilience. An example can be found in this quotation of a participant who said, *“after so many years of teaching, now I know how to handle it.”* As to commitment resources, committed teachers are likely to set their top priority on students’ learning and achievement. One of the teachers stated that *“without commitment, resiliency is impossible.”*

Another resource necessary in developing resilience is flexibility. The ability to be flexible can help teachers adapt themselves to changes and to resist. A well-example for it is a participant’s expression that *“I am willing to get along different things for my students to learn effectively”*. And finally, immediacy as physical and psychological closeness between teachers and students is defined as “people are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer” (Mehrabian, 1971, p. 1). A participant declared her use of this by *walking in the class or pointing to the students and calling them by their first name*. In effect, immediacy can help improve relationships which pave the way for resilience.

The metacognitive sub-category of teacher resources consists of navigation and admitting weaknesses. Navigation relates to teachers’ capacity to resort to and use resources to solve the problems they encounter. It happens when teachers identify possible defects, they may tend to find a solution to remedy them. The last teacher resource is affective-motivational. It is subdivided into persistence, patience, temper, agreeableness, ignorance, EQ, stress coping, attachment, and motivation. Teachers of this study mentioned, *“in their job, they needed to be patient with the students and to persist with the challenges.”* They also added, *teacher mood*

affects most of their performance and especially their students. Further, they pointed out that when they feel attached to their work, it is clear that they become motivated, try to ignore less important issues, cope with the stressors, and are amiable to their students.

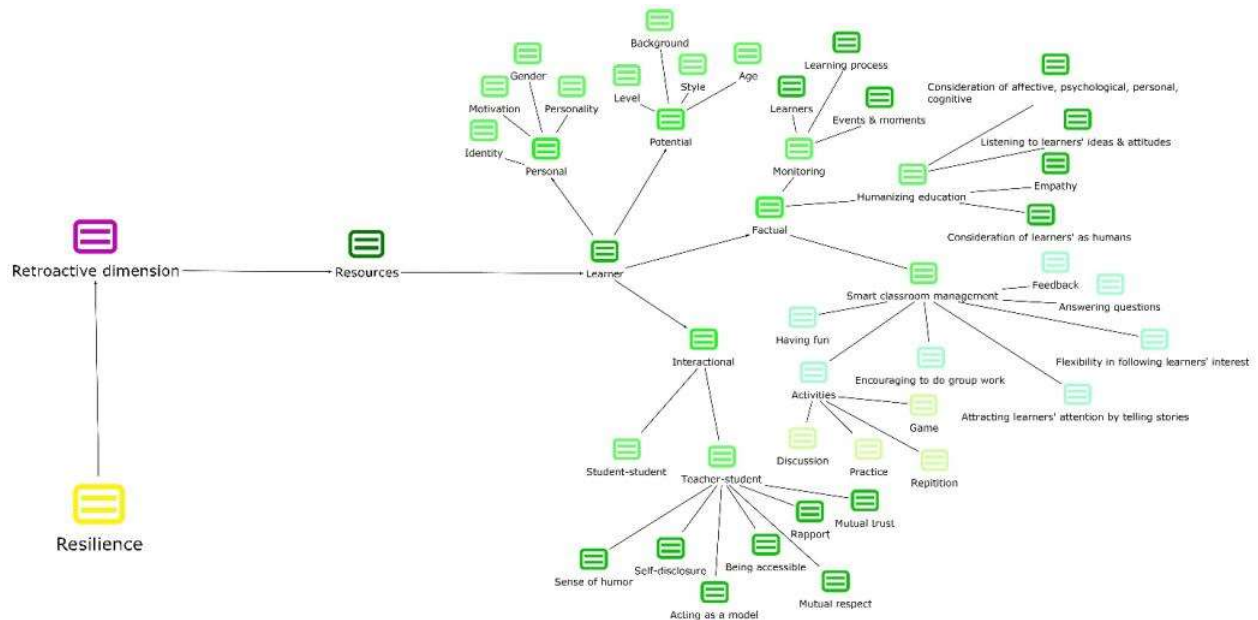


Figure 2 The learner resource of resilience in retroactive dimension

The learner resource (Figure 2) is classified as personal, potential, factual, and interactional. Personal factors entail the motivation of students, their gender, personality, and identity, which can be considered relevant to resilience to some extent. The potential factors are grouped into the level, background, style, and age of learners. The learners' factual resource takes monitoring, humanizing education, and smart classroom management as the main parts. Resilient teachers likely manage their class so that the students enjoy their time, receive feedback and their questions answered, be encouraged to take part in group work and activities like games, repetition, practice, and discussion, and find their expectations fulfilled. Besides, resilient teachers tend to monitor learners and the learning process and moments frequently.

They may also try to humanize education by listening to learners' ideas and attitudes, considering their affective, psychological, personal, cognitive variables, and considering them as humans. In fact, there is a strong possibility that resilient teachers establish a close and supportive relationship with their students by adopting such strategies, namely sense of humor, self-disclosure, acting as a model, being accessible, mutual respect and trust, and rapport. Teacher self-disclosure is defined as what teachers state and reveal about themselves in the classroom regardless of the subject content (Sorensen, 2009). The participants indicated their practice of self-disclosure by *telling memories, talking about their experiences, or showing their happiness*. One teacher argued that “*self-disclosure helps the students to start speaking in English in class especially for those who are afraid of it*”. And last, teacher empathy has to do with the way teachers try to understand students' personal and social conditions, take into account their different emotions, and show their compassion while focusing on the learning (Meyers et al., 2019).

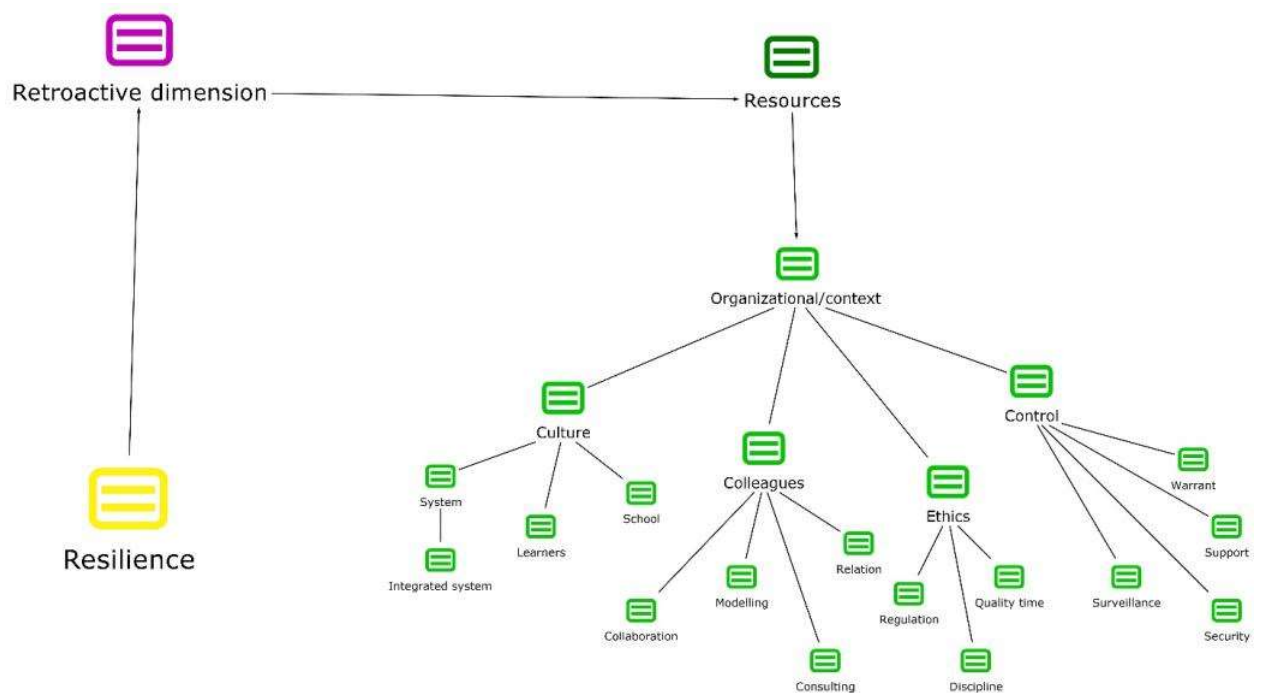


Figure 3 The organizational resource of resilience in retroactive dimension

As can be seen in Figure 3, the last resource in the retroactive dimension is the Organizational/Context factor. It is categorized into the culture of the system, school, and learners; colleagues about their collaboration, relationship, modelling, and consulting; ethics about quality time, regulations, and discipline; and control in the form of surveillance, support, warrant, and security. The participants all expressed their agreement on the influence of the quality of the relationships among colleagues and the value of consulting and collaborating on the cultivation of resilience in teachers. Another point to remember is that of culture, i.e., the set of values, customs, beliefs, and behavior shared by the system, school, and learners that affect teacher resilience in many cases. One of the participants emphasized the place of an integrated system in the culture of education and also made criticism and said, *“it’s wrong to put all responsibilities on the teacher alone.”*

Before proceeding to discuss the challenges, among the sub-factors of Teacher resource, the highest frequency was for flexibility (26), motivation (25), self-efficacy (23), consciousness (23), commitment (23), experience (20), organizing the class (18), navigation (14), patience (14), agreeableness (14), perception (13), being realistic (12), problem-solving (11), and decision-making (11). The paramount sub-factors of Learner were rapport (17), feedback (8), and consideration of students’ affective, psychological, personal, and cognitive variables (8). In the Organizational factor, the resources of consulting (10), support (9), and relation (7) were of utmost importance, respectively.

In the retrospective dimension, the challenges are the Teacher, Learner, Educational, and Organization. Teachers confront difficulties concerning their age, level of knowledge, performance, and beliefs or perceptions. *“Getting older, teachers may lose or improve their*

ability to be resilient", as said by some teachers. One problem for the teachers is their knowledge. Students may pose a challenge to the teachers with a low knowledge level. Inflexibility, authoritative teaching, learning results, seriousness, aggression, and inexperience can result in poor performance. An authoritative teacher sets strict limits and standards on the students. *Some teachers expressed "their anxiety about student learning, more importantly when they behave in a way as if they have learned, or when they do their best in teaching lessons, but the outcomes are against their expectations."* Sometimes teachers refuse to display aggression in that it would worsen the situation. A teacher believes, *"individuals with aggressive behavior are not suitable for teaching."* Furthermore, lack of experience is a key problem for teachers, since, as one declared, *"the inexperienced teachers cannot anticipate problems."* Experienced teachers feel confident in the face of difficulties or uncertainties. More to the point, teachers' perceptions have a role in between. *"When they are not satisfied with their job or look at the dark side or are picky, they feel detached and consequently suffer from enormous stress."*

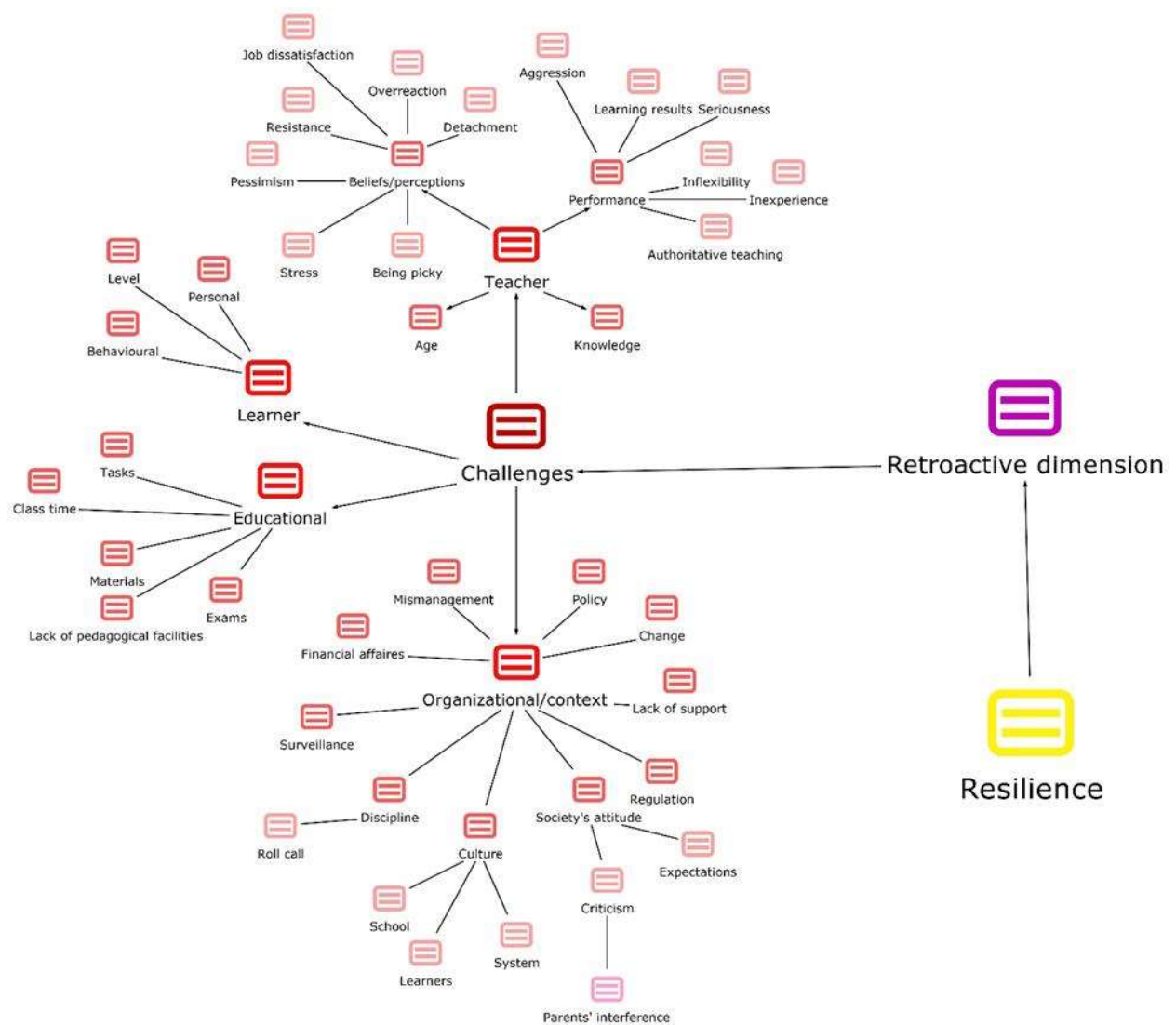


Figure 4 The challenges for resilience in the retroactive dimension

The challenges for learners are related to their level, behavior, or personality. Education-related challenges for teachers are limited pedagogical facilities, materials, exams, tasks, and class time. The teachers explained, “*the organization-related challenges are lack of support, policy, the culture of system, school, or learners, surveillance, discipline (roll call), regulation, mismanagement, financial affairs, social attitudes (criticisms and expectations), and changes.*” Sometimes an organization fails to support teachers and even follows a policy that is not supportive to teachers. Or maybe the organizations exercise strict control over the

teacher performance and push them to pursue what they want them to do. Also, *“mismanagement can reduce teacher tolerance,”* as expressed by a teacher. Similarly, teachers may be the subject of unfair criticism, e.g., *parental interference or unreasonable expectations.*

Concerning the challenges in the retroactive dimension, Aggression (8), overreaction (6), inexperience (6), and stress (5) constituted the most challenges for teachers. The learners' behavior (7) was the main cause of the problem. And the education-related challenges included the class time (4), then lack of pedagogical facilities (2) and materials (2). Finally, the organizational policy (7), regulations (6), culture (4), and surveillance (4) also played a critical role in presenting difficulties for teachers.

Now turning to the proactive dimension of resilience, the gathered factors were conceptualized and categorized as Teacher, Learner, and Organizational facets (Figure 5). The benefit of resilient behavior can be seen in teachers' behavior, attitude, affect, and motivation. A teacher believes one of the resilience factors is happiness. *“Being resilient, teachers can save their energy and remain healthy. On these grounds, teachers can outperform in their job, demonstrate their full commitment, meet with success, and reach their goals”*, as stated by a teacher participant. They also agreed that *“resilient teachers can take many benefits from the feeling of job satisfaction. Their motivation is going to be boosted. They feel engaged in their work; therefore, they would cope with stress and not experience burnout.”*

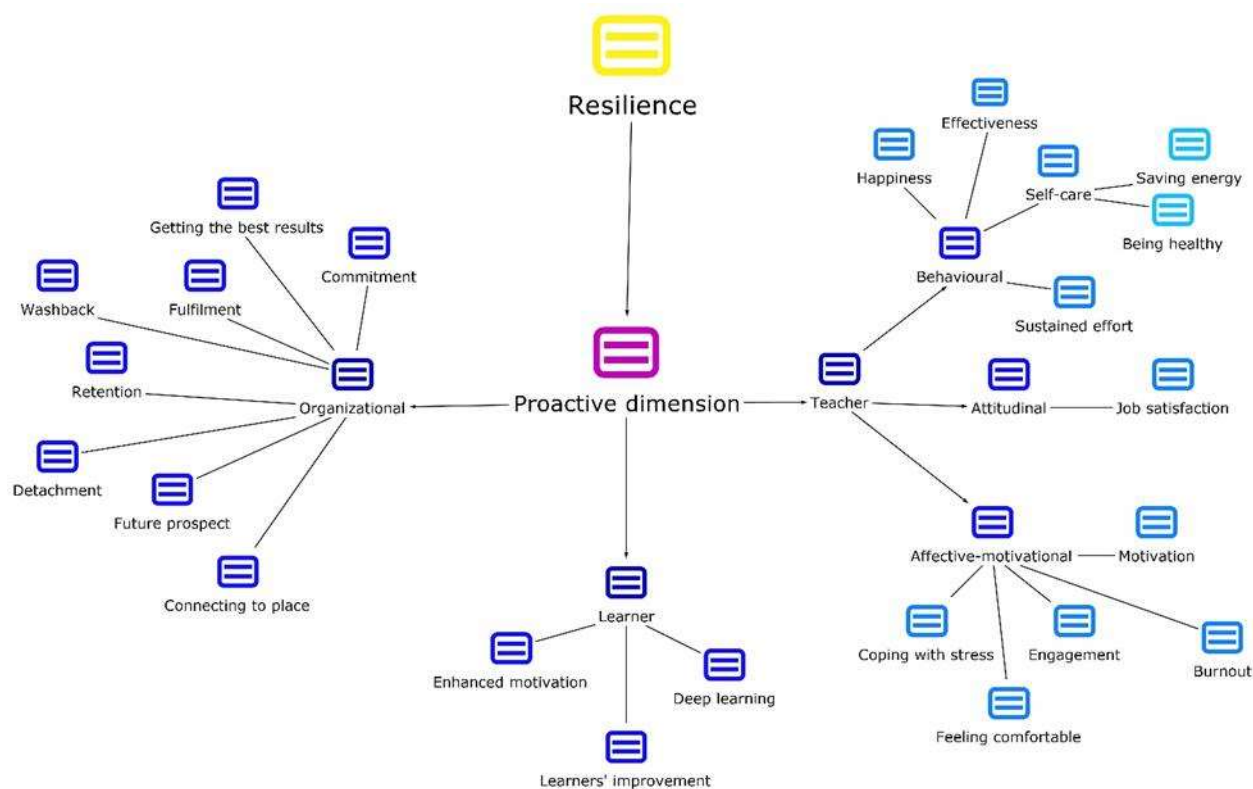


Figure 5 The proactive dimension of resilience and its sub-factors

On the learner side, *they made positive comments about students' deep learning, improvement, and enhanced motivation due to teachers' resilient behavior.* At the organizational level, promising results would be attained. The rate of retention would be lower. They would feel connected to their job and find a deep sense of fulfilment.

Resilience in teachers brought about job satisfaction (13) for the most part and effectiveness (7) in performance. This suggests that resilient teachers could be successful in coping with stress (3), feeling comfortable (3), and experiencing active engagement (3). Suffice it to say that being a resilient teacher implied overcoming or preventing burnout (3). To put it another way, burnout was associated negatively with resilience.

Discussion

This study set out to scrutinize the construct of teacher resilience in 3 contexts of school, institutions, and university. It was an exploratory probe to draw an all-inclusive and wide-ranging map of the concept of language teacher resilience and develop a more comprehensive scheme for it. In so doing, the data from the transcripts were categorized into two core categories of retroactive and proactive dimensions, each with related subdivisions.

At first glance, the results indicated that the most important resources for language teachers in the retroactive dimension were flexibility, motivation, self-efficacy, commitment, and experience, respectively. These findings are in line with previous studies which demonstrated that teachers' motivation, efficacy beliefs, commitment, and experience help them develop resilience (Castro et al., 2010; Chong & Low, 2009; Day, 2008; Drew & Sosnowski, 2019; Flores, 2018; Gu, 2014; Gu & Day, 2007; Gu & Li, 2013; Hong, 2012; Kitching et al., 2009; Nolan et al., 2014; Stanford, 2001). The impact of motivation on building resilience is such that it keeps the teachers in their job despite whatever happens (Flores, 2018). When they are motivated, they grow a sense of connectedness to the profession, and they perceive themselves capable of making the best of their efforts in teaching as well as finding and practising useful strategies to cope with difficulties, all of which indicate the development of resilience.

Regrading Learner resource, the main contributory factor for building language teacher resilience was rapport. There exists much evidence in the literature that resilience and rapport are related, in that it paves the way to increase a sense of connectedness (Frisby et al., 2020), to enhance emotions (Ng et al., 2018), and to establish friendly relationships (Le Cornu, 2013). The same goes for Organization resource, in which relationship and their resultants in the forms

of support and consulting were declared to influence resilience. Simply put, resilience by itself is a kind of response in interactions, so the quality of the relationship between the individual and others can affect such a response (see Beltman et al., 2011; Dempsey et al., 2021; Doney, 2013; Kutsyuruba et al., 2019; Mansfield et al., 2014).

Moving on to discuss challenges for language teachers, the most reported ones were teachers' aggression, overreaction, inexperience, stress, students' behavior, organizational policy, regulations, and culture, all reviewed in the literature above to produce a cumulative effect on the development of resilience. To illustrate, stress can be claimed as the first sign when facing a difficulty or problem such as students' disruptive behavior or a new educational reform that oblige teachers to follow procedures such as changing the textbooks. If teachers are not able to control it by being and behaving in a resilient way, it may diminish teachers' effectiveness and well-being and end up with a sense of burnout and eventually attrition (Deborah et al., 2018; Flores, 2018; Pocinho & Perestrelo, 2011). All the same, stress alone seems not to be the main concern, but the way it is conceptualized matters (Deborah et al., 2018). Teachers' self-reflection and mindfulness help them gain a proper self-recognition and careful awareness of the events and situations to deal successfully with distresses and anxieties resulting from the encountered challenges (Deborah et al., 2018; McDonough & McGraw 2020). All in all, resilience mediates between a stressor and its product (Schelvis et al., 2013).

So far, the findings of the retroactive dimension of language teacher resilience were discussed and explained, i.e. what exists before that leads to the presence or absence of resilience. Now, turning to and contemplating on the proactive dimension of language teacher resilience concerning the consequences of resilience, the present inquiry postulated that resilient language teachers enjoyed job satisfaction and effectiveness, enhanced their learners'

deep learning and motivation, acquired the feelings of connection and engagement to their profession, and did not show any inclination to leave the job. It is worth remembering that the results of this study provided further evidence for the previous research that resilience has the inherent potential to provide substantial benefits to the area of teaching and education (e.g., Beltman, & Price, 2014; Boldrini et al., 2018; Brouskeli et al., 2018; Correia, 2020; Deborah et al., 2018; Kangas-Dick & O'Shaughnessy, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2015; Vance et al., 2015). In a nutshell, resilient language teachers, when encountering a risk or problem in students' learning, as they perceived themselves capable of dealing with challenges and obstacles, tried to find available resources or suitable strategies to solve them. When students, in this way, learned what they did not learn, their perception of their teacher was more likely to change, so mutual respect and rapport were formed, and their motivation increased. Likewise, teachers were satisfied by their profession since they find themselves effective in teaching; as a result, the retention rate went up.

What is particularly noteworthy is that teachers' attributes and characteristics occupied too much weight in the present study. Indeed, resilience offers substantial benefits for teachers themselves. The findings concur well with Mansfield et al. (2014), who maintain that resilience can be considered "a somewhat idiosyncratic phenomenon as each person brings his or her own experiences and characteristics to multiple, changing contexts" (p. 562). In this way, resilience can be hypothesized to have its roots mostly in the person him/herself. To put it another way, resilience originates in the individual him/herself. However, some disagree with this and claim that resilience in teachers is not individualistic but a combination of personal characteristics and contextual variables (Gu & Li, 2013; Masten & Powel, 2003; Ungar et al., 2013). As a justification, it can be argued that sometimes it happens to some teachers despite several

adversities and difficulties remain in their job and resist (Garmezy, 1985; Werner, 2005). Individual differences should have a say in-between, and there is an agreement that individual differences among humans are natural. Teachers start this profession with various motivations and mentalities. There are always some with a strong spirit. Accordingly, their behavior and performance make a difference compared to those without such a spirit. In practice, some are born teachers. This is the reason why some are and remain resilient irrespective of the situation they are in. In reality, teachers' internal conditions and intrapersonal characteristics have to do with the "what" and "how" of their perceptions as well as appraisals of the events and environment (Clara, 2016), based on which they would employ distinctive strategies. Resilient teachers' response to differing circumstances manifests itself in the type of strategies they employ to make most of their individual and contextual resources (Mansfield et al., 2014). Besides, the individual not equipped with certain personal features seems not to be and remain resilient even in ideal and agreeable conditions. So is it possible for the teachers who are not resilient to reach the ultimate goal of education?

The emphasis on personal internal features does not imply that socialization has no value (Day & Gu, 2010) but that the teacher's personal internal attributes are considered as the most determinant of resilience as in the present study. Moreover, if individuals' characteristics hinge on the contextual conditions, what will be the place for their agency? Overall, it may be concluded that there is always someone who behaves in a resilient way no matter in which situation s/he is, while there are a few whose resilience changes based on the given context, a type of resilience that can be named conditioned resilience.

Conclusions

This study demonstrated that language teachers' characteristics play a fundamental role in the process of resilience, thus highlighting the need for language teachers to be equipped with certain individualistic features such as flexibility and teaching vocational qualifications like knowledge or experience. Besides, the results indicated that teacher resources contribute more than the resources that the working context provides. Yet as for the challenges, this proportion is somehow similar. From the constructivist point of view, resilient teachers exert significant influences on the environment, which in turn develops the potential for building resilience. Concerning the proactive dimension, the capacity of resilience empowers teachers to cope with and adapt to various difficulties and adversities with their unique characteristics, profound knowledge, and invaluable experiences.

It is not uncommon that the challenges teachers face have their roots in their lack of teaching preparation. Teachers start their job while having little or even no experience of formal education training (Sikma, 2020). As teachers become familiar with teaching theories, they also need to be trained regarding their psychological and emotional capacities. That is to say, the teaching profession is not just limited to teaching books and contents. Teachers indeed can influence all aspects of students' lives, including emotional, motivational, and attitudinal dimensions (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2017). This in turn, necessitates resilient teachers who can appreciate individual differences and adapt themselves constructively with these differences.

Accordingly, the inclusion of resilience development training in teacher education programs has received particular attention in the literature (e.g., Mansfield et al., 2018), which specifies its knock-on effect on teachers' readiness for dealing with challenges and adversities

through practices of learning collaborative skills, problem-solving, coping with stress, and self-efficacy (Durksen et al., 2017; Mansfield et al., 2014; Silva et al., 2018) as well as on teachers' increase of job satisfaction, self-efficacy, well-being, and performance (Griffiths, 2013). Suffice it to state that resilience constitutes one of the dimensions of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) together with hope, self-efficacy, and optimism. PsyCap (Luthans, 2006) is the outgrowth of positive psychology (Seligman, 2002) which focuses on the development of positive characteristics in individuals and organizations to help them flourish and prosper. With this said, resilience-building makes a significant contribution to teachers' success and improvement in their performance, particularly when exposed to hurdles and adversities. Furthermore, extant research corroborates that higher levels of PsyCap are associated with greater teacher motivation (see Viseu et al., 2016), and that motivated teachers are more likely to enjoy well-being, which in turn provides teachers with boosted performance, high engagement, and improved relationships (Keyes, 2005). Alternatively, resilience correlates with the sense of well-being in teachers (Brouskeli et al., 2018; Svene et al., 2015), and well-being in teachers equals well-being in students (Roffey, 2012). By and large, resilience development training brings mutual benefits to teachers and students as well.

From another perspective, the role of teacher educators and mentors in improving teachers' self-impression of their profession (Morettini et al., 2020) and in developing self-efficacy and managing stress (Gratacós et al., 2020) has received much emphasis. Meanwhile, teacher education courses should emphasize the strategies that can empower teachers with skills and abilities conducive to endurance and persistence, e.g., teachers' thinking dispositions (Ghanizadeh, 2017; McDonough & McGraw, 2020) or appraisals, i.e. the way they interpret unfavorable conditions, which can influence their well-being, commitment, and psychological

equilibrium (Clara, 2016; Yoo, 2011).

The present study can be of great benefit in the field of foreign language teaching. Language teachers need to be equipped with the capability to face language education-related problems, challenges, adversities, troubles, fears, deficiencies, and whatever that obstructs their path to fulfil their commitment and achieve the goal of teaching. This capacity in the psychological term is called resilience. In effect, resilience conveys the meaning of recovering from immense hardship and the ability to revive oneself. Resilience causes the language teacher to triumph over the undesired events and to enhance his/her social, professional, and intellectual competencies despite being exposed to increasing tensions. Language teachers need to cultivate their resilience. In a word, resilience is a necessary condition for the teaching profession but not sufficient. It is the resilience potentiality that determines the extent to which a language teacher withdraws from his/her job, survives, or thrives. Since individual differences are undeniable, teachers vary in their level of being resilient. Moreover, although resilience capacity appears to be innate, it can be developed in different situations (Beltman, 2020; Ebersohn, 2012; Gu & Li, 2013; Masten, 2014; Ungar, 2012).

It seems that resilience is a bilateral construct. It means that a series of conditions and factors, internal or external, constitute resilient behavior and performance. In reverse, the presence of resilience in itself develops the optimal outcome in pedagogical issues. By diagnosing the present circumstances and the difficulties of language teachers, it may be possible to eliminate or provide a remedy through meticulous planning and implementing effective policies. For example, if the problem is related to the materials, professional committees can be formed to develop textbooks or course books that produce satisfactory results. Moreover, creating the appropriate culture or improving the cultures of teachers,

students, schools, and other related individuals and sectors can be a step toward building a resilient environment and progressive education. Sometimes there is a need to provide social and financial support to increase the quality of teaching in teachers or teacher training institutes. To put it in a nutshell, teacher training from the scientific, practical, and experiential perspectives can improve their power to predict the events and ameliorate their psychological well-being, which all help language teachers to withstand the difficulties arisen from the job demand, exhaustion, changes, stress, meeting educational needs and expectations to achieve their objective which is students' learning of another language.

There were some limitations in the current study, which can be addressed in future research. First, this study was of a qualitative type of research whose results cannot be generalized to all other contexts. Next, it was done among the teachers in a city in Iran. This study should be replicated to find out whether similar results can be obtained elsewhere. Last, more objective methods like observation are required to gain a much more comprehensive picture of the construct of resilience.

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Appendix. Initial Interview Guide

1. This study is about teacher resilience. How would you define teacher resilience?
2. What challenges do you face frequently in your profession? Describe them.
3. How do you respond to these challenges?
4. How is your relationship with the students in your class?
5. Which factors sustain you in teaching?
6. What are your beliefs about teaching?
7. What are your interests in working as a teacher?
8. What are the potential outcomes of being a resilient teacher for you?
9. What are the potential outcomes of being a resilient teacher for your students?

Choices of Teaching Practices: Does the English National Examination Cause Thai EFL Teachers to Teach to the Test?

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Abstract

This study aims to explore Thai EFL teachers' choices of teaching practices in response to the English test in the national examination. A mixed-methods approach was employed. One hundred EFL teachers teaching at the upper secondary school level participated in this study. First, questionnaires were administered to the 100 participants to obtain preliminary data, and then follow-up interviews were conducted with 10 informants to gain insights regarding the issues investigated. The findings revealed that there was mixed but comparatively negative washback. Despite the goal of English language teaching in Thailand to build students' communicative competence, the participants were found to be test-oriented, mainly focusing on test content and holding the belief that a rote-learning approach is the most effective way to help students achieve high test scores. The findings provide significant implications for teachers as well as test developers in the EFL context.

Keywords: English national examination, teaching practices, Thailand, washback

Introduction

Over the past few decades, language testing has played a pivotal role in providing students' knowledge and performance indicators. Moreover, testing has been extensively used as a means to evaluate the standard and quality of language education. Due to the fact that functions of testing are crucial, all educational stakeholders such as teachers are encouraged to exert themselves to facilitate students to gain high scores and to help raise the quality of education (Hayes & Read, 2004) as such high-stakes tests (e.g., university entry and school exit exams) are used to make crucial decisions. To elaborate, such tests' results are used as a gatekeeper to filter and eliminate students who are deemed unqualified. Accordingly, students try to obtain as high scores as they can. Moreover, it is well established that high-stakes tests can have an impact on teaching and learning. This impact is known as “washback”, one of the most prominent concepts in the area of language testing.

In Thailand, one of the high-stakes tests is the Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET). The O-NET has been administered since 2008 and was developed by the National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS) (NIETS, 2013). This standard-based achievement test was developed in accordance with the Basic Educational Core Curriculum and is used to evaluate students' academic proficiency and thinking ability (Ministry of Education, 2009; NIETS, 2013). Generally, the O-NET is tested in the final years of primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school levels. Concerning its significance, Lunrasri (2014) demonstrated that “the Ministry of Education prescribed the O-NET scores for exit examination by using 20% of the O-NET scores as part of the students' GPAX, or overall accumulated GPA” (p. 38). Furthermore, O-NET scores can be used as one of the required components for university entry (Tonboot & Pannarunothai, 2016). Not only does the O-NET

play an important role for students, but it also has an impact on teachers. To illustrate, teachers can use O-NET scores to enhance the quality of their teaching based on their students' high-stakes test scores. Teachers may also receive career advancement and earn a higher rate of pay when their students get high or higher scores (Ministry of Education, 2009).

As aforementioned, the O-NET, as a high-stakes test, is increasingly important for students and teachers as its scores can be used to evaluate both parties' performance. In light of the significance of the O-NET, it is becoming difficult to ignore the existence of its potential washback effects on teaching. To date, there have been few empirical investigations into the washback effects of the national examination in Thailand, especially the exam's impact on teaching. Thus, this study aimed to examine the washback effects of the English test in the national examination on Thai EFL teachers' teaching practices.

Literature Review

Washback Effects

Washback is a generic term in language assessment. A number of washback definitions can be found in language testing literature. For instance, Alderson and Wall (1993) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) have defined the term washback as the impact of language testing on teaching and learning. In addition, Andrews (2004) and McNamara (2000) used the term 'test impact' to describe the impact of tests on individuals or educational systems. Moreover, Green (2013) indicated that the washback effect refers to "the impact that a test has on the teaching and learning done in preparation for it" (p. 40). In short, the washback effect can impact more narrowly on individuals or on a wider scale on schools or even educational systems. Also, it is a widely held view that washback can be analysed and categorised into two directions: positive

and negative (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1999; Hughes, 2003; Taylor, 2005). When washback is positive, it has a beneficial impact on education. Conversely, negative washback provides harmful effects. In brief, researchers can evaluate washback based on how much it helps or harms the educational process.

Since washback is considered a multiplex phenomenon, it is important to discuss washback models in order to demonstrate its concept. In this study, Spratt's (2005) position on washback on teaching was adopted. Spratt proposed teaching areas affected by washback by reviewing empirical studies that focused on external tests in the field of ELT and discovered that there are five areas affected by washback: curriculum, materials, teaching methods, feelings and attitudes, and learning. In terms of curriculum, the washback effect was found to narrow the curriculum. Several studies have also pointed out that time allocation and class size are parts of the curriculum. In relation to materials, these deal with test-related textbooks and old test papers, including the content of materials used in the classroom. Several studies have demonstrated that teachers rely heavily on test-oriented materials because they want to fulfil students' expectations. Regarding teaching methods, these include teaching approaches or techniques and teacher talk. Negative washback causes a teacher to teach test-taking skills or test-wiseness strategies, to teach content, which is likely to be on the test, and to emphasise test preparation, aiming to improve the performance in target constructs that are on the test. For feelings and attitudes, this is considered rather negative, which is engendered by the tests. More specifically, it involves tests generating a high level of anxiety and fear regarding test scores. In terms of learning, this refers to teachers' viewpoints of how students learn, learning outcomes, and students' motivation to learn English.

Washback of High-Stakes Tests on Teachers

According to Yan (2012), the role of the English language teacher in the classroom is a significant one. In a learner-centered classroom, for instance, the teacher should organize different kinds of activities such as groupwork, discussions, roleplays, and oral presentations. It is important, moreover, that such activities should be effective and suitable for learners' needs and interests. Importantly, testing and assessment are one of many factors that mediate the role of teachers and how they teach.

Tests have a number of functions in educational settings, ranging from measuring learners' performance to encouraging higher levels of knowledge (Wall, 2013). Washback has been evidenced as being connected with high-stakes tests, which are used as a means to make important decisions. There is a broad agreement that high-stakes tests plausibly yield strong washback effects (Luxia, 2005). Correspondingly, Alderson and Wall (1993) demonstrated that high-stakes tests have a profound influence on language teaching and learning. Also, Stobart (2003) illustrated that high-stakes testing "is never a neutral process and always has consequences for its stakeholders" (p. 140).

High-stakes tests are exams that have scores which are crucial for test-takers. This sort of test may be, for instance, a test that students need to pass in order to graduate, to attend higher education or to attain proficiency for application for further study or work. A national examination is considered a high-stakes test, as it is used as a means to make decisions concerning students, teachers, and schools (Lorenz et al., 2016). Wall (2013) highlighted that the influence of testing is mainly associated with high-stakes tests, the consequences of which are used to make crucial decisions regarding test-takers. Accordingly, such tests are thought to result in washback effects in educational settings (Luxia, 2007; Wall, 2013). Although there

are many stakeholders in the washback phenomenon (e.g., students, teachers and parents), this study concentrates on the teacher, who is considered one of the most significant stakeholders affected in the process (Shohamy et al., 1996). Concerning test-preparation practices, teachers and students set a high value on students' scores. As such, there is an emphasis on the mastery of the content domain or what is likely to be on the test rather than on broader language skills and abilities. Such practices lead a teacher to teach to the test. To elaborate, a teacher tailors classroom practices to meet the test requirements and improve students' scores by providing techniques to eliminate the distractors—wrong answers in the multiple-choice questions—and to do well on the test. Accordingly, the scores students obtain may provide a deceptive picture of their actual achievement. Moreover, such practices can distort the curriculum and trivialise essential facets of language learning and thus lead to the impairment of educational quality (Cheng & Curtis, 2004; Shohamy, 2005).

The English Test in the National Examination (O-NET) in Thailand

English is one of five subjects tested in the O-NET. The English test is worth 100 points and is composed of 80 multiple-choice questions. Concerning its test format, the structures of the test in the academic years 2016-2018, which can be downloaded from the NIETS's website, were analysed. In addition to the test format, an analysis of the mean scores in the academic years 2014-2018 were analysed to compare the mean scores in each year. This is shown in Figure 1 (NIETS, 2019).

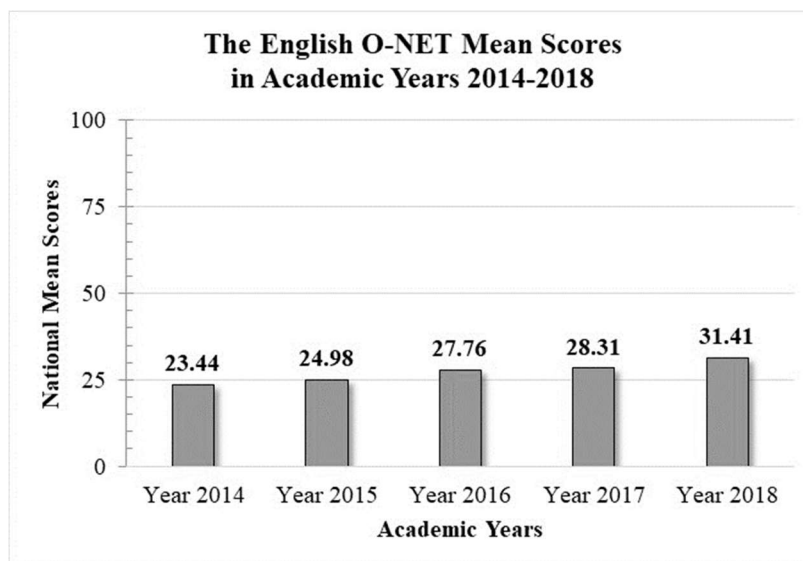


Figure 1 The English O-NET Mean Scores during Years 2014-2018
(NIETS, 2019)

As shown in Figure 1, the mean scores were below 50. However, the figures show that there has been a slight and gradual increase in national mean scores each year. What is interesting in this figure is the continual growth of the national mean scores, which can be somehow implied that the O-NET has been rising in importance. Despite the fact that Thailand has invested plenty of resources and incentives in education (Kirkpatrick, 2012), the mean scores of the English test in the O-NET were lower than 50 every year.

As aforementioned, the O-NET is used to evaluate students' academic proficiency and thinking ability as a part of the university entrance exam and to evaluate teaching quality. Consequently, all educational stakeholders, such as students, teachers, and even school principals, are encouraged to find ways to help students get high scores on the O-NE. Teachers, for instance, are encouraged to teach test-wiseness strategies to their students. Despite adopting the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach and the goal of English language teaching in Thailand to build students' communicative competence, language testing in

Thailand has not seemed to have kept pace with such theory. For example, the O-NET comprises only multiple-choice questions focusing on grammar, vocabulary and reading skills but lacks a communicative skill-testing component. Accordingly, students presumably attempt to achieve high scores by concentrating on drilling, memorisation, and test-wiseness strategies (Prapphal, 2008).

Based on previous studies (Lunrasri, 2009; Prapphal, 2008), controversial issues regarding the O-NET have been raised in relation to its substantial impact on education. The Ministry of Education in Thailand, for example, has established educational policies aimed at improving O-NET scores. For students, the test's scores are used as part of the central university admission score. When the test is critically important, "there is a natural tendency for both teachers [...] to tailor their classroom activities to the demands of the test" (Buck, 1988, p. 17). As a consequence, teachers tend to use teaching methods that assist students in reaching high scores by focusing solely on the paper-based examination, a practice that ignores communicative skills and fails to cover the curriculum range (Hoadjli, 2015; Tayeb, et al., 2018). This phenomenon is related to many contexts worldwide, including Thailand, as the O-NET is critically significant for both teachers and students (Nipakornkitti & Adunyarittigun, 2018).

Related Washback Studies

Over the past decades, there have been many research studies which have investigated the impact of tests on students and teachers in many contexts. For example, Sukyadi and Mardiani (2011) examined the washback effects of the English National Examination on teachers' classroom practices in the Indonesian secondary school context. Their findings indicated that

the national examination had a profound influence on teachers' teaching in the areas of activities, materials, content, methods, teaching strategies, and assessment strategies. Moreover, their results demonstrated that such negative washback was due to the students' learning preference which led the teachers to teach to the test.

In addition, Tahereen (2014) explored the impact of testing on language curriculum and teaching pedagogy in Bangladesh, aiming to answer whether testing-based teaching could promote language learning or not. In addition, this study focused particularly on the impact of testing on language curriculum, teaching pedagogy, students' learning, and students' affective factors. Her findings indicated that extreme reliance on testing shaped teachers' opinions about language teaching and that students' main goal was passing tests with a high score rather than language learning.

Moreover, Furaidah et al. (2015) examined how teachers teach when preparing students for the English national examination in the Indonesian context through in-depth interviews and non-participatory classroom observation. Their results indicated that there was negative washback related to teachers' attitudes towards their students' level of competence (e.g., ability to pass the exam) and the quality of schools. In brief, teachers' perception of students' competence was found to have an influence on the degree of washback.

Despite the fact that there are many studies that have investigated washback effects in various countries globally and in Asian contexts, scant attention has been paid to the impact of the English test in the national examination on how teachers teach in Thailand. To fill this gap, the following research questions were formed to guide this study:

- To what extent does the national examination have washback effects on English language teaching in Grade 12?

- a. Does the national examination influence how teachers teach with respect to teaching methods?
- b. What teaching practices do Thai EFL teachers report they use in class?
- c. What teaching practices do Thai EFL teachers actually use in class?

Research Methodology

Research Design

A mixed-methods approach was espoused in this study. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire provided preliminary information regarding teachers' teaching practices towards the national examination, and the qualitative data obtained from the teachers' self-reports offered in-depth information on particular issues

Participants

The participants in this study were upper secondary teachers in Thailand. A questionnaire was administered to one hundred Thai EFL teachers, selected by stratified random sampling as it can produce more valid and reliable results than random sampling. The participants were selected equally based on the stratum, schools' average scores of the English test in the national examination. Fifty teachers from schools where scores were higher than the national average and fifty teachers from schools that had scores lower than the national average were selected. After which, 10 informants were purposively selected from the participants who had responded to the questionnaire and consented to participate in the semi-structured interview.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire

The 32-item questionnaire was comprised of 4-point Likert scale items (from strongly agree to strongly disagree, without a neutral response option). The rationale for employing the four-point Likert scale is that it forced the participants to decide on one side or another. In contrast, an odd-numbered Likert scale could allow the participants to choose the average point comfortably. The questionnaire was constructed based on the teaching areas affected by washback proposed by Spratt (2005). The items in the questionnaire were adapted from previous washback studies on the basis of the test type (university entry exam, in this case) and its usage to match with the national examination in Thailand. Examples are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Examples of the Items in the Questionnaire

Area	Items	No. of Items
Curriculum	- I am driven by the test rather than the textbook or curriculum.	7
	- I teach my students the skills and content that are included in the O-NET during the academic year.	
	- I teach every section in the textbook although some sections are unlikely to be tested in the O-NET.	
Materials	- I mostly use my own teaching materials more than my school textbooks.	9
	- I offer information relevant to the O-NET in classrooms.	
	- I often use previous years' tests to review the drills and exercises.	
Teaching Methods	- I focus more on communicative skills rather than grammar and vocabulary.	16
	- I find my teaching styles aligned well with the format of the test.	
	- I would still use the same teaching methods if there was no O-NET.	

Semi-structured Interviews

Unlike the structured or unstructured interviews, the semi-structured interviews provided a balance between flexibility of the pre-determined questions and the focus on the topic investigated. The interview was first constructed in English and subsequently translated into Thai to avoid any misunderstandings. The interviews took no longer than 15 minutes. The interview questions were constructed based on teaching areas affected by washback, as identified by Spratt (2005) and adapted from previous research studies.

The examples of the pre-determined interview questions included:

1. What language skills do you teach most?
2. What kind of teaching activities do you use most?
3. What about teaching any special techniques in terms of test preparation? If so, how does the teacher teach?
4. What do you think of the O-NET?
5. If you could change the way O-NET tests, what would you change and how would you change it?

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the research instruments, the statements in the questionnaire and interview schedules were validated by three experts in the field of English language teaching. All three experts provided useful guidance on how to revise questions to reduce ambiguity and match the measured constructs of the study. A pilot study was also conducted to ensure the reliability of the research instruments.

The pilot study for the questionnaire was administered to examine the clarity and

reliability of the questions with regard to effective practice. Convenience sampling was employed to check the reliability and to identify problems in the statements of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three main parts: perceptions towards teaching, perceptions towards the national examination, and background information. The questionnaire (i.e., Thai version) was administered with a pilot group of Thai upper secondary school EFL teachers. Concerning the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used. The results indicated that the reliability of the questionnaire was at a high level. The follow-up interview portion of the study was also piloted. For this portion of the pilot study, two Thai EFL teachers were purposively selected from the ones who previously responded to the questionnaire. The aim of the pilot study of the interview was to assure the correctness of the questions and to reduce confusion and ambiguity raised in the questions.

Data Collection and Analysis

Prior to data collection, the participants were assured confidentiality and anonymity. The questionnaire was first administered to each participant and completed within fifteen minutes in the presence of the researcher in case clarification might be needed. After the administration of the questionnaire, teachers who consented to take part in the follow-up interview were interviewed and audio-recorded during the interview to help transcription.

For the quantitative analysis, the data was computed in SPSS 23.0 to provide descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, mean, mode and median. The interpretation of the data provided by the Likert scales was on the basis of the frequency of what teachers declared. Moreover, the mode indicated which scale was selected most for each item, while the median indicated which scale was the middle value when all frequencies of

scales were sorted. In addition, the mean scores for each statement in the questionnaire were interpreted as follows:

3.26 – 4.00 means “strongly agree”.

2.51 – 3.25 means “agree”.

1.76 – 2.50 means “disagree”.

1.00 – 1.75 means “strongly disagree”.

For the qualitative analysis, content analysis and thematic analysis were adopted. To elaborate, transcriptions were read several times to develop themes and summarise key findings. After the analysis, two main themes have emerged in this study. Each theme was described, and the key findings were summarised using content analysis.

Results and Discussion

As the data was gathered utilising a mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data is reported, with both questionnaire and interview data compared, integrated and interpreted based on themes in accordance with the research questions. The data from the questionnaire is presented and analysed with the help of tables. The main themes and two sub-themes reported are:

- Methodological Beliefs and Practices

- 1. Washback on Teaching Methods

- 2. Washback on Teaching Activities

Methodological beliefs and practices

Washback on Teachers' teaching methods

To understand washback, looking at what goes on in the classroom is significant. As shown in Table 2, what stands out is that the majority of teachers (88%) believed that the goal of their English classes was to develop the ability to use language in real-life situations. Moreover, 70% of the teachers reported that they used English most of the time when speaking in the class, while 39% reported mainly using Thai. In addition, about three-quarters of the teachers (76%) agreed that they applied a student-centred approach in their classes. Nevertheless, this result appears to contradict the fact that, surprisingly, 65% reported that they mainly emphasised the contents that were expected to be on the test. Additionally, 73% reported that their teaching styles aligned well with the format of the test, and 63% reported using test papers from previous years in their classes. With such conflicts, it seems that the test yielded negative washback on what teachers taught in the class as teaching focused on the content of the test. To resolve the conflicts, Teachers A, C, D and H were asked to elaborate on this issue. This is discussed after Table 2.

Table 2

Results from Teachers' Teaching Methods

Statement	Mean	Mode	Median	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Meaning
I mainly focus on the contents that are examined in the O-NET.	2.85	3	3	26%	39%	29%	6%	Agree
I teach my students the skills and contents that are included in the O-NET during the academic year.	3.04	3	3	28%	49%	22%	1%	Agree
I offer additional information relevant to the O-NET in classrooms.	2.86	3	3	19%	54%	21%	6%	Agree
I use the old O-NET papers from the previous years in my class.	2.68	3	3	21%	40%	25%	14%	Agree
I find my teaching style align well with the format of the O-NET.	2.79	3	3	11%	62%	22%	5%	Agree
I mainly use Thai in my classroom instruction.	2.30	2	2	8%	31%	44%	17%	Disagree
The goal of my English classes is to develop the ability to use the language in real-life situations.	3.26	4	3	45%	43%	5%	7%	Strongly Agree
I use English most of the time when speaking in the class.	2.90	3	3	25%	45%	25%	5%	Agree
I always try to adopt new teaching methods in my class.	3.04	3	3	33%	42%	21%	4%	Agree
I use the student-centred approach in the classroom.	3.00	3	3	27%	49%	21%	3%	Agree

The results of the follow-up interviews demonstrated that most teachers were fully in

agreement that their goal of teaching English was to build students' communicative competencies, but that school policies and pressure from both school principals and students forced them to focus on the exam. Teachers A and D stated:

The O-NET seems to be important to my students, and even my school principal. I understand that our school principal wants our school to be at the very first place or higher rank so that the O-NET school average score should be high as well. The principal asked teachers to teach students what is on the test and teach them some test techniques. I have no choice. When students get low scores, we [teachers] are blamed. (Teacher A)

Some of my students do not like to participate in the communicative activities, because they think that it is useless and does not help them get high scores. They wanted me to teach some test techniques and test-wiseness strategies [...] In the monthly meeting, the school principal mentioned that our school needs to get a higher score this year. The problem goes to us, teachers. We need to help students get higher and higher scores; otherwise, we will be blamed. It is really useless if we study English just to get high scores in the test. (Teacher D)

Moreover, some teachers reported that they employed a student-centred teaching approach, but that they still focused on drilling grammar and vocabulary and taught to the test, as Teachers C and H reported:

I made students do a lot of pair work. It is somehow better than that I am the only one who speaks. I let students work in pairs and asked them to identify what is wrong with the sentences which were excerpted from the old test papers. I think students could learn from each other, and then, at the end of the activity, I would explain the concepts to them. (Teacher C)

I like having students work in a group rather than having them study individually. It could be boring if they only learn from me speaking in front of the class, so they could have a chance to learn from each other in groups. I gave them handouts, and I tried to teach them inductively by showing pictures or sentences. Everyone in the group discussed with each other and tried to come up with the grammar rules. I think it focused more on students. (Teacher H)

As the goal of English language teaching in Thailand stated in the Basic Core Curriculum is to construct communicative competence and to build students' ability to use English for communicating in various situations, the majority of the teachers reported that their intention was to develop students' ability to use English in real-life situations. They also reported that they used English most of the time when speaking in class, and, at the same time, only two-fifths of them reported mainly using Thai. These findings seem to corroborate the goal of English language teaching indicated in the Basic Core Curriculum and also the educational trend that suggests the increasing importance and role of English as the language of instruction in Thailand. However, these findings are contrary to previous studies (e.g., Fujiwara, 2011; Inprasit, 2016; Vibulphol, 2004), which suggested that Thai is still the primary medium of instruction in most educational institutions at all levels in Thailand. Tayjasanant and Barnard (2010) revealed that teachers spoke more Thai than English. Inprasit (2016) also illustrated that Thai EFL teachers believed that they lack confidence in speaking English, that their students had low English proficiency, and that the O-NET, which is primarily based on linguistic competence, "affected effective achievement" of using English as a medium of instruction (p. 1). These results may be explained by the fact that Thai is the language that is shared by teachers and students and that teachers needed to use Thai to accommodate students'

ability levels. Despite the findings presented in this study, additional studies through, for instance, observations, need to be conducted to develop a full picture of a language of instruction, explore how teachers actually teach, answer questions regarding whether Thai EFL teachers genuinely use English most of the time in class, and determine whether students' English language abilities are developed.

Washback on Teachers' teaching activities

As shown in Table 3, over half (58%) indicated that they focused more on communicative skills, 78% reported focusing on language skills development, and 76% reported focusing more on integrated skills than on individual skills. Surprisingly, 84% encouraged their students to use English as much as possible. Additionally, 76% reported that they often organised group work or discussions in class. At first glance, this seems to yield positive washback as teachers emphasised enhancing students' language skills. However, 74% reported spending time solely on areas that help students do well on the test, such as vocabulary and grammar. This is in conflict with how teachers focused on communicative skills mentioned earlier. When teachers focused more on the test, it is likely that there were few chances to conduct communicative activities. This conflict was further explored during the follow-up interviews.

Table 3

Results from Teachers' Teaching Activities

Statement	Mean	Mode	Median	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Meaning
I encourage my students to use English language as much as they can.	2.98	3	3	46%	38%	6%	10%	Agree
I spend time on classroom activities that help students perform well on the O-NET such as vocabulary and grammar activities.	2.82	3	3	16%	58%	18%	8%	Agree
I focus more on integrated skills than on individual skills.	3.12	3	3	38%	38%	22%	2%	Agree
I focus on language skill development in my students.	3.14	4	3	40%	38%	18%	4%	Agree
I often organise groupwork or discussion.	3.06	3	3	34%	42%	20%	4%	Agree

During the interviews, most teachers reported that they wanted to conduct communicative activities but that they experienced impediments such as time allocation, school textbooks, and class size. For instance, Teachers C, E, and F reported:

Obviously, there are a lot of holidays during an academic year which makes teachers try to complete the course in time. The simplest way is to teach what is important to our students. It is undeniable that grammar and vocabulary is the most important aspect, as our students have to know and understand it for the exam. (Teacher C)

Due to limited time during an academic year, my colleagues and I teach students by following a textbook. I am sure that textbooks used in schools are tailor-made for covering all indicators in the curriculum. I have tried to follow them all and put more emphasis on language functions and essential vocabulary, because it helps students perform well on the exam. (Teacher E)

The problem I, as well as my colleagues, usually face when conducting the communicative activities is that there are too many students in one class, especially the one I teach. It is quite difficult to manage the class that consists of about 50 students. It is not easy to make sure that everyone is involved and that I do not leave anyone behind. Sometimes, students get bored and do not want to do any activities but test preparation. However, I try to conduct communicative activities for at least 5-10 minutes a week. It is better than nothing. (Teacher F)

The data illustrated that most teachers experienced some problems with time allocation, textbooks, and class sizes and that these challenges restricted their ability to conduct communicative class activities. Moreover, most of the informants reported that they needed to conduct activities that helped their students to reach high scores in the O-NET by focusing on grammar and vocabulary.

Concerning teaching activities, most teachers reported that they mainly applied a student-centred approach in their classes. Moreover, almost four-fifths of them often organised group work or discussions in classes. Surprisingly, these findings seemed to contradict other reports in this study, specifically that teachers reported that they mainly focused on the contents that were examined in the O-NET and found their teaching styles aligned well with the format of the test by focusing on grammar and vocabulary and using old O-NET test papers during

lessons. The latter findings echo and are in line with other studies (e.g., Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018; Gebril & Eid, 2017; Gashaye, 2012; Lunrasri, 2012; Tahereen, 2014), which found that teachers were exam-oriented and mainly focused on contents related to the test. When teachers spent most of their classroom time dedicated to exam-related activities, it was deemed an adverse consequence concerning the ultimate goal of English language teaching as indicated in the Basic Core Curriculum and thus yielded negative washback.

Moreover, the findings that indicated applying a student-centred approach in class, which yielded positive results, are contrary to Tayjasanant and Barnard's (2010) study in Thailand, which highlighted that teacher talk dominated the lesson and students had little opportunity to use English extensively in class. However, teachers in the present study claimed that they organised a great deal of group work and attempted to apply a student-centred approach by having students work in groups, learning from each other, and coming up with the concepts intended to be taught, although the main content focused on grammar and vocabulary and lacked communicative activities. At the same time, over half of the teachers reported that they focused more on communicative skills, which seemed to result in positive washback. In this case, it is difficult to explain the results. Still, an explanation might be related to the teachers' lack of a clear understanding of CLT and insufficient support for effective training development programmes (Inprasit, 2016). Moreover, this discrepancy could be attributed to a lack of correspondence between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual practices. This interpretation seems to be consistent with Powers and Butler (2006), who found that teachers' beliefs and practices were often inconsistent due to several factors such as school policies. Another possible explanation for this inconsistency is that teachers' "responsibility beliefs may moderate the relationship between [teachers'] beliefs and teaching practices as they attempt to

support their student outcomes” (Buehl & Beck, 2015, p. 75).

In addition, the finding showed that teachers were likely to be blamed by school principals if their students got low scores. The school principals’ reaction is against the goal of English language teaching as stated in the Basic Core Curriculum, which aims at improving students’ abilities to use English and build communicative competence rather than focusing solely on test scores. Additionally, Kwon (2017) illustrated that learning English means more than memorising and understanding lexicon and structural rules. It requires learning “to communicate [...] with the language” (p. 116). Another interesting finding is that the teachers wanted to conduct communicative activities, but they faced impediments such as time allotment and class size. This finding broadly supports the work of Spratt (2005), demonstrating that one of the factors influencing washback on the curriculum is class time allocation and class size.

The findings presented in this study have shown that there were clear washback effects of the English O-NET on teachers. With respect to teachers’ teaching practices regarding the English O-NET, the majority of teachers reported that the test had an impact on their teaching practices. Because of its status as a high-stakes test, the O-NET led to negative washback as the teachers were subsequently requested to teach to the test rather than to focus on communicative skills.

Conclusion

Overall, this study has provided abundant evidence that washback is important in terms of how it affects teachers’ teaching practices. The findings of this research study provide insight into the national examination and its impacts on teachers’ choices of teaching practices. The status

of the English O-NET mediated the influence of washback on how and what teachers taught, which led to aligning their teaching styles with the test format.

Thus, the findings in this study suggest that the O-NET had an impact, to a significant extent, on the instructional practices as teachers carried out their teaching practices by teaching to the test and neglecting communicative skills. Since the O-NET is one of the high-stakes tests in Thailand, students were encouraged to perform well and better on it, causing teachers to teach to the test to help students get higher scores so that the O-NET yielded more negative than positive washback. It is encouraging to compare these findings with those of Alderson and Wall (1993), which substantiate that “tests that have important consequences will have washback” (p. 120). It can, therefore, be seen that the O-NET influenced how the participants taught and brought about mixed washback rather than negative washback.

Implications

For EFL teachers, it is important to thoroughly analyse the items in the O-NET to understand the equivalence and correspondence between the test and curriculum so that they will be able to plan courses to match with the content based on the curriculum and promote positive washback. As communicative teaching is believed to increase learners' communication proficiency, instead of focusing on drilling grammar and vocabulary exercises, teachers need to focus more on communicative methods to promote students' English language ability and attain communicative skills (Huang & Yang, 2018). Given that the ultimate aim of English language teaching in Thailand is to build students' communicative skills, teachers should be encouraged to establish meaningful and authentic English learning environments and practices for their students. Once students receive good quality language input, they have access to

encyclopaedic knowledge essential for target language use through a meaningful and authentic English learning environment. Moreover, putting students' declarative knowledge into action through meaningful and authentic language practices can lead to more proceduralised knowledge (Lyster & Sato, 2013) so that students can apply their knowledge to both communicative purposes and the test.

For school principals, some of the findings suggested that Thai EFL teachers still lack a clear concept of CLT. To elaborate, most teachers believed that employing groupwork or discussions and having students discuss grammar and vocabulary together are a kind of CLT practice. To address this issue, school principals should support teachers by providing them with adequate training development courses in areas such as teaching communicative activities and promoting communicative skills in English. Teacher training is possibly the most significant factor for bringing up teachers' English proficiency and pedagogical knowledge, such as how to teach effectively. For test developers, it is also advised that test developers should facilitate changes to the test that would match well with the curriculum to promote productive skills performance and positive washback.

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Using English Language Learners' Gestures as Clues to Enhance Vocabulary Development

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Abstract

Vocabulary is the building block of language, literacy, and cognitive development. Vocabulary proficiency is critical to children's academic success. Research has suggested that hand gestures can help with vocabulary attainment for both L1 and L2 learning children. Moreover, research has also indicated that children's spontaneous hand gestures accompanying speech manifest their cognitive transitional status and can thus be used as clues for optimal adult scaffolding. Grounded in the premises of past studies, the current project explores whether adults can supply L2 learning children with target language word learning by using their spontaneous hand gestural clues. Forty 5-year-old English language learners with Chinese L1 background participated in the study. Twenty children were randomly assigned to the control group and 20 to the experimental group. The results suggest that when adults used the children's spontaneous hand gestures as immediate prompts to teach corresponding English words to the children in the experimental group, the children were able to learn and retain these words better than those in the control group who did not receive adult support. Additionally, iconic and metaphoric gestures appeared to provide the best cues for adult vocabulary scaffolding among all the different gestural types. Finally, those children who produced more speech-gesture mismatches in their narratives tended to benefit most from adult vocabulary assistance. Educational implications are discussed.

Keywords: Hand gestures; L2 vocabulary learning; gesture cues

Introduction

Hand gestures have long been recognized as a powerful means of facilitating learning (Wakefield et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2001). Research has consistently shown that hand gestures, both spontaneously produced and induced, play an important role in the teaching and learning process.

First, hand gestures that are spontaneously produced during speech convey

considerable information about a learner's mental process (e.g., Goldin-Meadow, 2003; Macedonia et al, 2011, & Rowe et al, 2013), knowledge (e.g., Novack & Goldin-Meadow, 2015), problem-solving strategies (e.g., Masson-Carro et al, 2015), and emotions (Vallotton, 2008). In other words, gestures are a concrete manifestation of a learner's ideas (Goldin-Meadow, 2003) and thus can serve as a window onto a learner's thoughts (Goldin-Meadow & Alibali, 2012).

Second, gestures produced by teachers can capture students' attention and make learning more dynamic (e.g., Sime, 2008). Students are able to glean cues from teachers' gestures, model them, and then recast them into their own problem-solving strategies (e.g., Cook & Goldin-Meadow, 2006; Goldin-Meadow et al., 1999). For example, school-aged children who incorporated the gestures they learned from their teachers in solving an arithmetic problem were able to benefit from instruction on the task more than children who did not incorporate such gestures into their problem-solving routines (e.g., Broaders et al., 2007; Cook & Goldin-Meadow, 2006).

Third, gestures have a greater impact on memory than pure verbal information (e.g., Macedonia & Klimesch, 2014) and can aid information recall (e.g., Wing et al., 2012). Seeing gestures, especially gestures like iconic gestures, can provide a more elaborate memory trace in one's mind and thus, facilitate recollection (e.g. Goldin-Meadow et al., 2012). For instance, researchers in an old study from the 1980s asked a group of adults to watch videos in which the narrator recited a list of verbs with and without gestures. The participants recalled more words that were accompanied by gestures than those that were not (Riseborough, 1981). Similarly, a later study has shown that children had better long-term retention of mathematics strategies when they were instructed with the speech-gesture modality, as compared to being

instructed with the speech-only modality (Cook et al., 2008).

Moreover, not only can seeing gestures enhance memory but producing them can also help with recall. In a study, researchers asked one group of children to use iconic and pointing gestures while retelling an unfamiliar story and another group to hold their hands still. The group who used hand gestures retrieved more information about the story than the children who did not (Cameron & Xu, 2011). Similar findings also indicated that children recalled more words when encoding new words with gestures than when encoding them verbally alone (Tellier, 2008; Wing et al., 2012).

Fourth, a seminal study by Goldin-Meadow and colleagues found that children who produced more speech-gesture mismatches on a given task were particularly ready to learn that task (Goldin-Meadow & Singer, 2003). When children say one thing while at the same time producing a conflict gesture in a problem-solving situation (speech-gesture mismatch), they are usually in the state of cognitive transition and are ready to benefit from adult instruction (Goldin-Meadow, 2004). This is a teachable moment for teachers to use the gestures produced by their students as clues to scaffold learners to learn new information. Some studies have shown that when children were asked to explain their beliefs about concepts related to conservation (Church & Goldin-Meadow, 1997) and mathematical equivalence (Perry et al, 1992), those who produced a large proportion of speech-gesture mismatches (50% or more) in their explanations of the concepts (“discordant” children) were more likely to gain from teacher instruction in the concepts than the children who produced few gesture-speech mismatches (“concordant” children). Therefore, speech-gesture mismatch serves as an index of transitional knowledge, which can reliably predict children’s readiness to learn (Goldin-Meadow, 2011). Appropriate adult scaffolding in this transitional state of learning can help children acquire a

concept faster (Goldin-Meadow, 2003).

Finally, research has consistently demonstrated the positive impact of adult gesture input on children's first language (L1) vocabulary development in both the typically developing population and the population with special needs. For example, when parents of typically developing children (Goldin-Meadow et al., 2007) and children with special needs (Dimitrova et al., 2016) translated their children's gestures into words, the children tended to acquire these words more quickly. Similarly, research has also highlighted the positive impact of teacher gestural input on second language (L2) learners' vocabulary acquisition in the classroom context (e.g., Huang et al., 2019; Tellier, 2008). For instance, teacher instruction with gestures was found to be more effective in helping children learn new words (Kelly et al., 2009), new expressions (Allen, 1995), and novel idioms (Wang & Plotka, 2016).

Taken together, hand gestures have been proven to be an effective tool for facilitating learning. A recent study using Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) has shed light on the underlying reasons for gesture's effectiveness. The researchers of the study explained that gestures benefit learners, at least in part, because they involve the motor system in the learning process. Children who learned through gestures showed significantly greater activation in a large region of the parietal cortex bilaterally, extending into frontal motor regions, than children who learned without gesture. For instance, children who learned a math task while gesturing seemed to incorporate that gesture into their lasting understanding of how to solve problems by associating a motor representation with the form of the problem and/or with the spoken strategy (Wakefield et al., 2019).

Purpose of the Study, Research Questions, and Hypotheses

Given the many benefits of hand gestures in the learning process, the purpose of this study is to determine whether the spontaneous gestures produced in narratives by L2 learners can serve as hints for adults to help them learn new target language words, and if so, what types of gestures produced by children offer the best clues. Moreover, the study explores whether there is an optimal moment in which L2 learners tend to benefit most from adult scaffolding.

The reason to focus on L2 vocabulary learning is that vocabulary is critical to subject content learning and academic success (e.g., Yopp et al., 2009). Students who know a lot of words are more likely to better grasp what they are hearing or reading than those with a low vocabulary level (Heidari, 2015). L2 learners are likely to face more challenges while they are learning an L2 and simultaneously learning subject contents (Tai & Khabbazzbashi, 2019). Many L2 learners may still face considerable difficulties with vocabulary even when they proceed to advanced levels (e.g., Meara & Milton, 2003). Thus, vocabulary instruction for L2 learners in the classroom environment is fundamental for them to move ahead, both in the area of L2 learning and in academic advancement. However, learning vocabulary is a challenging task primarily because of the arbitrary nature of the assignment of symbols to spoken words, lacking any inherent relationship to their referents. Hand gestures may be an important tool for teachers to consider in helping L2 learners develop the necessary lexicon for academic success and beyond.

The study focuses on exploring the following research questions.

- Can English language learners' gestures be used as clues to scaffold their vocabulary

acquisition?

- If so, which types of gestures provide the best clues for adult scaffolding?
- Do L2 English learners produce speech-gesture mismatches? If so, what is the tipping point for L2 learners to benefit most from adult vocabulary scaffolding?
- Are there any gender differences in the above areas?

Given the significant role gestures play in the teaching and learning process reported in the literature, we hypothesize that adults can also use L2 learning children's gestures as clues to scaffold them to learn new vocabulary. In addition, we expect that those children who produce more speech-gesture mismatches are likely to gain most from adult scaffolding.

Method

Participants

Forty typically developing 5-year-old children learning English as an L2 ($M = 5$ years, 0 months; $SD = 3.5$ months) participated in the study. The participating children were recruited through seven regional Chinese language schools on the east coast of the United States (5, 6, 4, 5, 7, 5, and 8 students in each of the seven schools, respectively). The first language of all these children was Chinese, and the average time they had spent in the English-speaking environment outside of home was 2.3 years ($SD = 6$ months). The participants' genders were balanced, with half of them being male and the other half being female. Consent letters were obtained from the children's parents.

Procedure

The children were randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group, each consisting of 20 children with gender balance. The project consisted of two studies. In the first part of the study (Study 1), each child in the experimental group was asked to look at a wordless book, *Frog, Where Are You?* (Mayer, 1974), and then to tell a story in English about what they saw in the book to an adult (a graduate assistant under the pseudonym Ms Smith). The adult was trained to observe spontaneous gestures.

The adult observed each child's narration carefully while listening to him/her. When the adult noticed that ideas were being expressed through gestures (e.g., via an upward movement of the right hand to the right) in the absence of any corresponding English words, the adult assisted the child by translating his/her gestures into English words (e.g., *climbing up*). Similarly, when the adult noticed that a child's speech and gestures mismatched (for example, saying "fall" while moving the hand upwards to signify "climbing up"), the adult supplied English words such as "Oh, the frog *climbs up*."

The children in the control group were also asked to look at the same wordless book and to tell a story in English about what they saw to the same adult. However, in this case, the adult simply listened without providing any scaffolding.

In the second part of the study one week later (Study 2), all children in both groups were asked to look at a different wordless book, *Frog Goes for Dinner* (Mayer, 2003), and to tell a story about what they saw to the same adult. No adult intervention was carried out for either group. The purpose of Study 2 was to determine whether the children in the two groups exhibited any differences in vocabulary production and especially whether the words scaffolded by the adult a week earlier persisted in the experimental group.

Data Collection, Transcription, Coding and Reliability

All the interactions between the children and the adult in the two studies were video recorded. The video recordings were first transcribed verbatim. To address our research questions, the children's narratives were then identified and coded in lexical categories: nouns, pronouns, possessive nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions. Next, the types of gestures produced in their narratives were identified and coded according to McNeill's gestural taxonomy (McNeill, 1992): *deictic* (literal and nonliteral pointing gestures), *iconic* (gestures that mimic motion or shape), *metaphoric* (gestures that express abstract ideas), *beat* (gestures that were used to emphasize), and *emblematic* (conventional gestures). Additionally, the context in which gestures occurred were also coded into three categories: 1) gestures that matched the semantic meaning of words (e.g., moving two hands up while saying "climb up"); 2) gestures that did not match speech (e.g., a child said "climb up," but moved his/her hand down meaning "climb down"); and 3) gestures that were produced alone without any accompanying words (e.g., moving the right hand down to indicate "the beehive falls down" without using words).

The data were transcribed and coded by two additional research assistants who did not participate in the data collection. Inter-coder reliability was conducted by randomly choosing 15% of the coded data. Cohen's Kappa (where 1.0 indicates complete agreement decreasing values indicate decreasing agreement) was used to measure the agreement between the coders:

- Identification of word types: nouns = 1.0, pronouns = 1.0, possessive nouns = 1.0, verbs = 1.0, adjectives = 1.0, adverbs = 1.0, prepositions = 1.0, and conjunctives = 1.0;
- Identification of gesture types: deictic = 1.0, metaphoric = .83, iconic = .87, beat = .80, and emblematic = .97; and

- Identification of the context in which the gestures occurred: gesture-word match = 1.0, gestures alone = 1.0, gesture-speech mismatch = .96.

Results

Results from Study 1

Table 1 compares the words produced by the experimental and control groups in narrating the first wordless book. The multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) indicates that the children in the control group produced significantly more words than the children in the experimental group (Wilks' $\lambda = .06$, $F(9,30) = 49.19$, $p = .0001$). No gender differences were found (Wilks' $\lambda = .96$, $F(9,30) = .13$, $p = .99$). This finding indicates that the children in the control group tended to have more English vocabulary than the children in the experimental group.

Table 1

Words Produced by Children in Study 1

Word Type	Experimental		Control		F
	M	SE	M	SE	
Nouns	20.65	.30	22.55	.30	19.18***
Pronouns	15.00	.20	18.00	.20	114.21***
Possessive nouns	9.25	.21	11.00	.21	34.81***
Verbs	18.01	.17	20.20	.17	72.86***
Adjectives	7.05	.23	11.00	.23	144.78***
Adverbs	8.00	.17	8.05	.17	.04
Prepositions	15.20	.34	17.20	.34	16.81***
Articles	7.95	.19	8.90	.19	11.92***
Conjunctives	11.20	.32	13.00	.32	15.16***

*** $p < .0001$

Table 2 indicates the distribution of the types of gestures produced by the experimental and control groups. The MANOVA suggests that the control group also produced significantly more gestures than the experimental group in narrating the first wordless book (Wilks' $\lambda = .26$, $F(4,35) = 24.72$, $p = .0001$). No gender differences were found (Wilks' $\lambda = .97$, $F(4,35) = .24$, $p = .91$). This result also suggests that the children in the control group tended to produce more gestures than the children in the experimental group.

Table 2
Gestures Produced by Children in Study 1

Gesture Type	Experimental		Control		F
	M	SE	M	SE	
Deictic	29.30	.38	31.37	.38	20.27***
Iconic	27.30	.29	29.25	.29	21.91***
Metaphoric	9.20	.24	10.85	.24	22.61***
Beating	3.05	.20	4.10	.20	13.62**
Emblematic	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

*** $p < .0001$, ** $p < .001$.

Table 3 compares the context in which gestures occurred in the two groups (i.e., gestures that matched the semantic meaning of words, gestures that did not match speech, and gestures produced alone without any accompanying words). The MANOVA indicates that the control group produced significantly more speech-gesture matches and gestures alone than the experimental group and significantly less speech-gesture mismatches than the experimental group when narrating the first wordless book (Wilks' $\lambda = .25$, $F(3,36) = 35.58$, $p = .0001$). There

were some gender differences found in the control group. General Linear Models (GLM) were conducted to analyze the multivariate analysis of variance. The results show significant multivariate differences as Wilk's $\lambda = .423$, $F(3,16) = 7.26$, $p = .003$. Univariate follow up comparisons show that girls in the control group produced more speech-gesture matches and boys in that group produced more gesture alone. No gender differences were found in speech-gesture mismatch in the control group. No significant gender differences were found in any of the three circumstances in the experimental group. This result implies that the children in the experimental group produced more speech-gesture mismatches, and they may be more susceptible to adult scaffolding (as suggested in previous literature) than the children in the control group. See Table 7 for this prediction.

Table 3

Context in Which Gestures Occurred in Study 1

Context	Experimental		Control		F
	M	SE	M	SE	
Gesture-speech match	23.30	.84	28.25	.84	17.24***
Gesture-speech mismatch	22.30	.94	19.00	.94	6.15**
Gesture alone	22.95	.71	29.20	.71	38.04***

*** $p < .0001$, ** $p < .01$

Results from Study 2

In Study 2, we first compared word production in the second wordless book by the experimental and control group. The MANOVA indicates significant multivariate differences [Wilk's $\lambda = .02$, $F(9,30) = 113.92$, $p = .0001$]. Since the MANOVA was found significant,

univariate follow-up comparisons were conducted and are presented in Table 4. The experimental group used more words (i.e., in the use of nouns, possessive nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and articles) than the control group. There were no significant differences between boys and girls for both groups [Wilk's $\lambda = .92$, $F(9,30) = .17$, $p = .99$]. This result shows that the experimental group benefited from the adult vocabulary scaffolding in Study 1, and they used (sustained) the English words supplied by the adult (in Study 1) in narrating the second story (Study 2).

Table 4

Words Produced by Children in Study 2

Word Type	Experimental		Control		F
	M	SE	M	SE	
Nouns	38.95	.80	21.95	.80	226.01***
Pronouns	19.25	.63	19.30	.63	.003
Possessive nouns	10.75	.23	9.27	.23	9.98**
Verbs	32.10	1.5	19.70	1.5	33.85***
Adjectives	20.25	.77	9.55	.77	96.53***
Adverbs	11.30	.36	7.90	.36	43.92***
Prepositions	16.60	.58	15.50	.58	1.74
Articles	10.60	.39	8.00	.39	21.93***
Conjunctives	12.50	.47	12.85	.47	.27

*** $p < .0001$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5 compares the gesture production by the two groups in Study 2. As a group, the children in the experimental group had more gesture production than the control group across the board [Wilk's $\lambda = .11$, $F(5,33) = 33$, $p = .0001$]. No gender differences were found in both

groups [Wilk's $\lambda = .96$, $F(5,33) = .25$, $p = .93$]. This finding indicates that gesture production is linked with word production. There are two possibilities: Either the increased word production among children in the experimental group led to an increase in their gesture production or vice versa. This phenomenon is also true with the control group in Study 1.

Table 5

Gestures Produced by Children in Study 2

Gesture Type	Experimental		Control		F
	M	SE	M	SE	
Deictic	38.10	1.65	28.70	1.61	16.62***
Iconic	44.52	1.61	26.90	1.57	60.85***
Metaphoric	21.47	.93	9.50	.91	84.21***
Beating	5.42	.40	2.60	.39	15.29***
Emblematic	.84	.14	.00	.14	17.59***

*** $p < .0001$

Table 6 shows that iconic and metaphoric gestures produced by the experimental groups in narrating the first book provided the best clues for the adult to scaffold. A bivariate Persons Product-Moment Correlation shows significant relationships between iconic and metaphoric gestures produced by children and the clues for adults to supply words.

Table 6

Types of Children's Gestures Provided Clues for the Adult in Experimental Group

Child Gestures Providing Clues	<i>r</i>
Deictic	.37
Iconic	.69**
Metaphoric	.80**

** $p < .01$

Table 7 analyzes who benefited more from the adult scaffolding in the experimental group. It shows the 11 children who produced 25% or more speech-gesture mismatches in the experimental group (6 boys and 5 girls) profited more from the adult word scaffolding than those who produced less than 25% speech-gesture mismatches [Wilk's $\lambda = .04$, $F(9, 10) = 24.15$, $p = .0001$]. There were no gender differences [Wilk's $\lambda = .33$, $F(9, 10) = 2.20$, $p = .11$].

Table 7

Word Increase in Speech-Gesture Mismatches in Experimental Group

Word Type	25% or more		Less than 25%		F
	M	SE	M	SE	
Nouns	40.18	.82	34.11	.91	24.40***
Pronouns	21.00	.69	16.44	.76	19.62***
Possessive nouns	10.81	.20	10.11	.22	5.22*
Verbs	37.18	1.4	23.44	1.5	41.63***
Adjectives	22.81	.61	15.66	.67	61.84***
Adverbs	11.90	.33	9.11	.36	32.00***
Prepositions	18.18	.68	13.11	.75	24.76***
Articles	10.54	.50	8.33	.56	8.59**
Conjunctives	10.36	1.1	9.55	1.2	3.23

*** $p < .0001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Discussion

The present study supported our hypotheses on the positive effects of hand gestures on vocabulary learning. Although the children in the control group initially happened to produce significantly more vocabulary and gestures than the children in the experimental group (see Tables 1 and 2), the children in the experimental group surpassed the control group both in word and gestural production after their gestures were used as clues by the adult in scaffolding (see Tables 4 & 5). Moreover, the findings suggest that the iconic and metaphoric gestures produced by the experimental group provided the best clues for the adult to supply the corresponding English words (see Table 6). Most importantly, although all children in the experimental group increased their vocabulary with the adult scaffolding, only those children who produced 25% or more speech-gesture mismatches in the experimental group benefited more from the adult vocabulary scaffolding than those who produced less than 25% speech-gesture mismatches (see Table 7). In other words, the children who produced 25% or more speech-gesture mismatches were the most receptive to adult vocabulary instruction.

Several practical implications can be drawn from the findings of the study. First, reminiscent of the language acquisition process of infants, who initially communicate using gestures several months before they say their first words (e.g., Iverson & Goldin-Meadow, 2005), L2 English learners also use gestures to express ideas before they are able to use English words (e.g., Wang & Eberhard, 2006). Thus, when detecting signs sent through students' gestures, teachers can seize the moment by providing immediate feedback and using the gestures as clues to maximize the teaching effectiveness (e.g., Wakefield & James, 2015). As shown in our study, when the adult detected the missing vocabulary that was indicated by the children's gestures in the experimental groups and supplied the English vocabulary

immediately, the children gained more vocabulary.

Second, the results of this study imply that teachers may want to deliberately use more iconic gestures in their instructions since these gestures are pantomimic in nature (Wang & Eberhard, 2006), and the motor image associated with iconic gestures match an underlying representation of words' semantics (Macedonia et al, 2011). Thus, iconic gestures are particularly useful in supporting word learning and retainment in both L1 (e.g. McGregor et al, 2009) and L2 vocabulary learning (Huang et al, 2019; Tellier, 2008; Wing et al, 2012). Research has repeatedly shown that students who have seen iconic gestures used by adults have a more robust and abstract representation of words (e.g. McGregor et al. 2009). Therefore, when teachers interact with students, pairing iconic gestures with words is likely to promote word learning (Singeton & Saks, 2015).

Third, teachers may also want to encourage L2 learners to use their own gestures in learning vocabulary. As suggested in previous research, gestures can bring out learners' implicit knowledge and lead to learning (Flood et al, 2015). In fact, when children were told to gesture, they increased the number of gesture meanings, leading to larger spoken repertoire later on (LeBarton et al, 2015).

In addition, carefully observing L2 learners' spontaneous gestures can help teachers find out their students' current learning status. As suggested before, children (both typically developing and with special needs) express emerging knowledge via gesture before they are able to express this knowledge explicitly in their speech (Evans, Alibali, & McNeill, 2001). In particular, teachers may want to pay attention to L2 learners' speech-gesture mismatches, use them as an index to assess the learners' readiness to learn new vocabulary, and determine the optimal time for vocabulary scaffolding.

Fourth, since gestures can promote dual interaction in preverbal children and their parents (Vallotton, 2012), it is likely that gestures can also encourage interactions between teachers and L2 learners. When L2 learners are adjusting to their new linguistic and cultural environment, such interactions will promote learning, including vocabulary learning.

Fifth, teachers can use gestures to support L2 learning by directing students' attention to the relevant aspects of communication (Sime, 2008). For instance, a study shows that when L2 learners were asked to learn a recipe in the presence of a cook, learners benefitted from several non-verbal cues and gesture interventions (Kida, 2008).

Sixth, gestures can provide feedback for teachers on the effect of their instruction; that is, gestures can help teachers understand whether an L2 learner is following instructions, completing a task correctly, or understanding information correctly in the absence of the ability of clear expression through words (Inceoglu, 2015).

Finally, since gestures have a greater impact on memory for verbal information compared to pure verbal encoding (e.g., Macedonia & Klimesch, 2014), teachers may want to use more gestures to help their students recall information (e.g., Wing, et al., 2012). Many L2 teachers who use gestures as a teaching strategy confirmed that gestures can help learners in the process of memorizing the L2 lexicon. Some of these teachers also noticed that learners can retrieve a word easily when the teacher produces the gesture associated with the lexical item during the lesson. L2 teachers in general, have observed that learners, especially young learners, spontaneously reproduce the gesture when saying the word (e.g., Engelkamp & Cohen, 1991).

Conclusion

Consistent with previous studies on gestures, our study has demonstrated the positive effects of hand gestures on L2 learners' vocabulary acquisition. There are three major takeaways in terms of vocabulary instruction in classroom settings. First, careful observation of L2 learners' spontaneous hand gestures accompanying speech (especially of the speech-gesture mismatches) can help teachers understand their students' current vocabulary learning status and respond with adequate scaffolding. Second, the intentional use of gestures by teachers during vocabulary instruction can help boost the effectiveness of verbal instruction. Third, encouraging students to use more gestures can aid information recall and facilitate a deeper understanding of word meanings. In summary, taking advantage of hand gestures in vocabulary instruction can help maximize L2 learning students' vocabulary learning potential and prepare them well for academic success.

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An Exploration into Thai Pre-service Teachers' Views, Challenges, Preparation and Expectations in Learning to Teach EFL Writing

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Abstract

Teachers are the greatest contributors to the success of education, and teacher-education programs are essential for enabling pre-service teachers to achieve that success. In Thailand, despite the commonly reported problems regarding Thai students' English writing abilities, a few studies have been conducted on how pre-service student teachers learn to teach this specific language skill. This study aims to explore the views of 47 Thai pre-service teachers on the importance of teaching English as Foreign Language (EFL) writing and factors leading to their feelings of successful and unsuccessful writing lessons, their challenges in learning how to teach EFL writing, their preparation, and their expectations of their teacher-educator in learning how to teach this skill. Employing open-ended questions and focus group semi-structured interviews, the present study found a strong influence of previous learning experiences on their beliefs of the necessity to teach EFL writing, their commitment to the profession, their considerable dependence on the course content and the course instructor, and their contextual and personal challenges. These findings could provide teacher-educators and curriculum designers, in both Thailand and other educational settings with similar teaching and learning

cultures, with a preliminary picture of what to revise in terms of proper support, instructional methods, and materials in order to produce quality teachers in their teacher-preparation programs.

Keywords: teaching writing, Thai student, teacher education, difficulty, perception

Introduction

Teachers have long been considered the greatest assets of any education system, and pre-service teacher training plays a vital role in reforming and strengthening the education system of any country (Jiang et al., 2020; Priestley et al., 2013). As Kim and Corcoran (2017) stated, although alternative certification and graduate education programs have been developed, undergraduate pre-service teacher-education programs remain the most dominant channel through which teachers are prepared. Several previous studies also claim that teachers with strong subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge gained from their teacher-preparation programs improved student learning (Bedir, 2019; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2009; Corcoran & Tormey, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2007). However, teaching is a multi-faceted human activity, which is relatively influenced by a wide range of variables, including each individual teacher's motivation and disposition, government policies, mandated curricula, and test practices at their school contexts. Research of novice teachers has identified the challenges they faced in transforming knowledge learned in teacher-preparation programs to teaching at schools (Perkins & Salomon, 2012; Pomerantz & Condie, 2017; Siwatu, 2011). Also, several studies reported that pre-service teachers' perceptions and prior learning experiences influence their instructional practices (Fullan, 2007; Jiang et al., 2020; Nguyen & Hudson, 2010; Velez-Rendon, 2006).

Besides these common influential aspects, in Thailand, where English is taught as a

foreign language, cultures have been described to affect the teaching practices and training for prospective teachers to teach English in Thai local contexts (Baker, 2008; Foley, 2005; Nguyen, 2019, 2020; Scholz, 2014). As Thai education has preserved a hierarchical and social order based on Theravada Buddhist values (Baker, 2008; Foley, 2005; Scholz, 2014), it is inappropriate for student teachers to share, express or question their mentors. In fact, mentors in Thailand are viewed as knowledge givers, and students with less experience are not in the position to have direct discussions with their mentors. Additionally, because of the high status given to teachers in Thai society, the concept of learner-centeredness has not been well-accepted among Thai teachers of English despite the Thai government's push for continuous lifelong learning and a change from teacher-centered to learner-centered approaches (Baker, 2008; Hallinger & Lee, 2011; Nguyen, 2019; Phompun et al., 2013; Wongsothorn et al., 2002). Furthermore, despite the government's continuous and extreme efforts to develop Thai students' communicative competence in all four language skills (Ministry-of-Education, 2008), writing has not been taught as a skill at most elementary and secondary schools in the country, resulting in Thai students' low writing ability (Nguyen, 2018, 2019). Hayes (2010) also indicated that most teacher-preparation courses were conducted in Thai due to Thai pre-service teachers' low levels of English proficiency, and they were not subject-specific. Acknowledging these contextual constraints and responding to the government's calls for reforming pre-service teachers' training (Chanwaiwit, 2018; Hayes, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2007; Scholz, 2014), this study explores 47 Thai pre-service English teachers' views on the importance of teaching EFL writing and successful and unsuccessful writing lessons, their challenges in learning how to teach English writing, their preparation and expectations of their teacher-educators when they learnt teaching EFL writing in English through a reflective teaching approach.

Literature Review

Studies on factors affecting pre-service teachers' development

Achinstein and Ogawa (2011) reported that school conditions and government mandates were likely to prevent new teachers from implementing the knowledge gained in teacher-preparation when making instructional decisions. Similarly, in their research on knowledge transfer, Perkins and Salomon (2012) also noted that teachers' commitment to the acquired knowledge is halted in the face of counterforces. Their school contexts gradually destroy the mindsets and behaviors developed from the teacher-training programs (Perkins & Salomon, 2012). Pomerantz and Condie (2017) also asserted that school contexts and curriculum were stronger influences on novice teachers' instructional decision-making than what they learned during their teacher-preparation programs. Liu (2005) and Scholz (2014) showed that pre-service EFL teachers in Taiwan and Thailand tended to follow their school-based mentors' examination-oriented English teaching methods, focusing on vocabulary and grammar, respectively. However, Perkins and Salomon (2012) emphasize that novice teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions gained in teacher preparation have not disappeared. Still, they can be revived through reflections, peer teaching, or role-playing. This suggests that the pre-service teachers' education programs should be well-constructed to "prepare prospective teachers for the unique challenges that each context may present" (Siwatu, 2011, p. 364).

In addition to the contextual conditions, Fullan (2007), Jiang et al. (2020), Nguyen and Hudson (2010), and Velez-Rendon (2006) also reported that pre-service teachers' perceptions and prior learning experiences influence their own instructional practices. Findings indicate that prior learning experiences are pivotal in shaping prospective teachers' beliefs, determining their teaching methods. Perkins and Salomon (2012) claimed that the transference of

knowledge is affected by an individual's motivation and disposition. In fact, in their investigation on how two pre-service teachers learn to teach writing in renovative ways modelled by their two mentors, Wang and Odell (2003) discovered that these teacher-students' teaching did not move towards the ways of teaching displayed by their mentors. This incident was accounted for by the conflict between these pre-service teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching and those of their mentors. The finding indicates that pre-service teachers' initial beliefs and mentors' teaching influenced pre-service teachers' conceptual development. In her interpretive and single-case study of a German pre-service teacher's prior learning experiences, beliefs, and contextual and cognitive factors that affect the teaching development, Velez-Rendon (2006) found that previous learning experiences, subject knowledge, commitment levels, and effective mentoring relationships contribute to novice teachers' successful, meaningful and productive experiences of learning to teach a foreign language. Similarly, in their study on Vietnamese pre-service teachers' views, expectations, and preparation for learning to teach EFL writing before their practicum, Nguyen and Hudson (2010) employed ten open-ended questions. Their findings showed that these Vietnamese student teachers were motivated to teach EFL writing, expected their mentors to model effective teaching practices, and provided constructive feedback. Their results tend to suggest that teacher-educators must link pre-service teachers' needs to their training to effectively motivate and develop their mentees' teaching practices. In general, these previous studies tend to indicate the profound effects of school contexts, curriculum, teacher-educators, and pre-service teachers' perceptions and prior learning experiences in providing structures and support to promote prospective teachers' attainment of effective teaching skills and sound pedagogical knowledge in a specific school context (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Jiang et al., 2020; Pomerantz & Condie, 2017).

English language teacher education in Thailand

Thailand has prompted calls for reforming pre-service teachers' practices in order to raise the standard of English learning and teaching (ELT) (Chanwaiwit, 2018; Hayes, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2007; Scholz, 2014). These calls respond to the fundamental problems within Thai teacher-education programs. Research by the Board of Teacher Education Review from 2009 to 2011 found the absence of theoretical, pedagogical knowledge, and critical thinking skills in teacher-education programs (Phompun et al., 2013). In a comparative study of teacher-preparation and qualifications in six nations: United States, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and Thailand, Ingersoll et al. (2007) found that the requirement for English teacher-education programs in Thailand "lacks adequate rigor, breadth, and depth" (p. 2). This could account for the high levels of under-prepared teachers and students' low levels of language proficiency widely represented in ELT literature in Thailand. As reported by Wongsothorn et al. (2002, p. 114), Thailand has "inadequate supplies of trained teachers" of English." Similarly, Hayes' (2010) study on ELT and educational reform in rural Thailand revealed that teachers were poorly prepared, and there were shortages of appropriately qualified teacher-educators. Additionally, Thai prospective teachers are reported to lack critical thinking and reflection skills to assist themselves in organizing, teaching, observing, and evaluating their own teaching in response to students' needs and are not open to current teaching methodologies (Baker, 2008; Nguyen, 2019, 2020; Nicoletti, 2015; Scholz, 2014). This problem is accounted for by the influence of rote-memorization teaching styles heavily employed in the Thai educational system (Darasawang, 2007).

EFL writing in Thailand

Thai students' writing ability has been reported to be problematic because EFL writing is not widely taught (Darasawang, 2007; Franco & Roach, 2018; Nguyen, 2018). This reality challenges the national objectives of improving Thai students' writing skills as stated in the Basic Education Core Curriculum (BEC) (Franco & Roach, 2018; Kaur et al., 2016; Ministry-of-Education, 2008). In fact, Thai students are required to be fluent in all four language skills to ensure that Thais are able to actively participate in the global economy rather than to serve as a source of cheap labor in multinational corporations (Franco & Roach, 2018; Kaur et al., 2016). However, despite the continuous efforts by BEC, Thai students' writing ability tends to be far from satisfactory, and several reasons could account for this failure. Besides the old teaching approaches, national tests, such as O-NET (Ordinary National Education Test) and General Aptitude Test, designed to measure Thai students' English proficiency levels, are formatted in the multiple-choice style. These tests aim to measure grammar and writing skills through error identification and/or sentence completion with the correct form of words. Thai students thus have very few actual opportunities to represent their ideas and knowledge through the written mode (Nguyen, 2018; Stone, 2017). Studies also showed that Thai university students often planned their essays in the Thai language, and then translated them into English using online translation tools and Thai-English dictionaries without noticing the different nature of each language (Nguyen, 2018; Stone, 2017). These difficulties are likely to hamper the national objectives of improving Thai students' writing skills stated in BEC (Ministry-of-Education, 2008).

Acknowledging these serious problems, Thailand has made great efforts to improve the quality of English teachers through its calls for reforming pre-service teacher-education in

order to raise the standard of ELT in the country (Chanwaiwit, 2018; Hayes, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2007; Scholz, 2014). Despite these calls, only a handful of studies have been conducted on how to improve the teaching profession in English teacher-education in Thailand (Chanwaiwit, 2018; Loima, 2016; Nicoletti, 2015; Wongwanicha et al., 2014). In her study on the effect of understanding sociocultural learning theory in designing materials and instructional strategies, Nicoletti (2015) found that when Thai teachers of English understand theory, they are better positioned to design and facilitate learner-centered classrooms. Chanwaiwit (2018) examined the effectiveness of teacher-educators feedback in improving the general teaching competence of student teachers. In exploring teacher professional development trends in Thailand, Loima (2016) suggested that student teachers and teacher-educators should be encouraged to perform in a more innovative and creative way. A couple of studies were conducted on how to help pre-service English teachers in Thailand become more reflective (Nguyen, 2019, 2020; Wongwanicha et al., 2014). As a result, a model for being a reflective teacher in Thailand was proposed by Wongwanicha et al. (2014), and a group of Thai student teachers' negative attitudes and misled mindsets on learning by doing, observing, analyzing and reflecting were shifted, and their reflective attributes were encouraged (Nguyen, 2019, 2020). Similar to previous studies (Hibbert & Foncha, 2019; Loima, 2016; Wongwanicha et al., 2014), Nguyen (2019, 2020) argued that in the culturally-based teaching and learning contexts in Thailand, the reflective teaching approach, in the long run, would develop Thai teachers' reflective habits and make them more aware of their teaching actions.

In general, these studies investigated different approaches teacher-educators in Thailand employed in training EFL pre-service teachers. Still, there seem to be few studies on Thai EFL pre-service teachers' learning to teach the four language skills (i.e., reading, writing,

speaking, listening) (Chanwaiwit, 2018; Nguyen, 2019; Scholz, 2014). Also, little has been documented about how these prospective teachers view teaching these skills, difficulties they have in learning to teach them, and what they prepare and expect from their teacher-educators when learning to teach them. With the documented problems in EFL writing in Thailand and within the small scope of this study, the views, challenges, preparation, and expectations of a group of 47 Thai pre-service teachers in learning how to teach EFL writing are investigated and reported. In particular, the study explores their views on the importance of teaching EFL writing and successful and unsuccessful writing lessons, their challenges in learning how to teach English writing, their preparation, and expectations of their mentors for teaching EFL writing. The questions posited for this study are as follows:

1. How do Thai pre-service teachers perceive the importance of teaching English writing and the success of English writing lessons?
2. What challenges do Thai pre-service teachers have when learning to teach EFL writing?
3. What do Thai pre-service teachers report to prepare to teach EFL writing?
4. What do Thai pre-service teachers expect from their teacher-educator who teaches them how to teach EFL writing?

The answers to these questions are expected to partly provide an insightful understanding of what Thai prospective teachers think, expect, and prepare themselves to teach EFL writing. It is generally accepted that students will learn better when teachers meet their expectations (Kostiainen et al., 2018). The findings of this study would thus be significant to teacher-educators, both in Thailand and in other educational settings with similar teaching and learning contexts who plan to facilitate meaningful learning for their teacher-students and

produce quality teachers in their teacher-preparation programs.

Method

Context and participants

This study was conducted with 47 fourth-year prospective English teachers (39 females and eight males) after their Writing Instruction course, which equipped them with key theories, approaches, and techniques in teaching EFL writing at a university in Thailand. These students were following the five-year bachelor's degree program with a minimum of 24 credits in pedagogy courses and one year of practicum as set by the Teachers Council of Thailand (Ingersoll et al., 2007; Scholz, 2014). In their third year of study, these teacher-students were required to have a two-week practicum (or Practicum 1) to observe the teaching and learning at primary or secondary schools. Before their one-year full-time practicum at lower and/or upper secondary schools in the fifth year of study (Practicum 2), the students were required to take four pedagogy courses on teaching the four macro skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing). Each course lasted 15 weeks, meeting for 180 minutes weekly. Based on the course objectives provided by the university, the book *How to Teach Writing* by Jeremy Harmer (Longman, 2004) was selected as the main material. The course was taught by a seasoned foreign teacher with a BA in ELT, an MA in TESOL, and a PhD in English Language Studies, and she has had nine years teaching English in Thailand. Following the reflective teaching approach in studying the course (Nguyen, 2019, 2020), the students were randomly divided into groups of four or five, and they worked with their groupmates during the course. The reading chapters were assigned before the class for them to read and discuss in their groups at home. In class, instead of lectures, the discussion on each teaching point was conducted in

English with the teacher-educator's questions and students' answers. Sometimes, the teacher-educator demonstrated a certain teaching technique in class to facilitate students' understanding of the theory and how it is practiced. Also, students were at times required to show their understanding of a teaching approach through their mini-teaching (2-5 minutes). At the end of the course, each group was required to do the micro-teaching of their writing lesson selected from secondary or high-school English textbooks in about 25 minutes, and their teaching was video-recorded. The purpose of this teaching activity was to give the students an opportunity to put the knowledge and skills learned in the course into practice. When students performed their teaching, feedback on their instructions, gestures, and class management was also provided by the teacher-educator and peers.

Research Instruments

To answer all of these four research questions (RQs), six open-ended questions adapted from Nguyen and Hudson (2010) were employed (see Appendix A). These questions cover 1) these Thai pre-service teachers' views about the importance of teaching EFL writing (Question 1) and their views on successful and unsuccessful writing lessons (Questions 2 & 3), 2) their difficulties related to learning to teach EFL writing (Question 4), 3) their preparation for learning to teach EFL writing (Question 5), and 4) expectations of their teacher-educator who helped them learn how to teach EFL writing (Question 6). The questions were delivered to the students in the Google Classroom platform at the end of the course. The students were allowed to write their answers in Thai to express themselves fully. To clarify and provide an insightful understanding of the findings from the questionnaire, the focus group semi-structured interview was also conducted in Thai in about one hour with 21 volunteering students after their answers

to the questionnaire were analyzed (Appendix B).

Data analysis

The participants' answers to each RQ in the questionnaire were repeatedly read and coded into themes and categories. Descriptive statistics (percentages) were used to quantify the instances of themes in the data. According to Creswell (2007), this coding method allowed for the analysis of the data in this research. For example, words with similar meanings were grouped (e.g., challenge, problem, and difficulty became difficulty). The interview was videotaped and transcribed verbatim, but only relevant information is included in the manuscript. To ensure the reliability of the data categorization, an inter-rater who holds a PhD in English Language Studies was employed to categorize the data. The inter-rater and researcher first classified all data into themes independently, and discussions on differences were then conducted until agreements between the two coders were reached.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion presented in the following sections center on the answers to four RQs on 1) pre-service EFL teachers' views on the importance of teaching EFL English writing and perceptions of factors leading to successful and unsuccessful feelings of a writing lesson; 2) potential challenges in learning to teach EFL writing, 3) preparation for EFL writing teaching and 4) expectations of their teacher-educator who guided them on how to teach EFL writing. As various pre-service teachers had more than one response, the percentages in the following section indicate how many pre-service teachers reported that item as a reason.

Thai pre-service teachers' views on the importance of teaching EFL writing

Table 1 summarizes eight main factors these Thai prospective teachers claimed as their reasons for teaching EFL writing. “English writing is difficult” was indicated by almost all of these participants (87.2%), accounting for the highest percentages of these reasons. This finding is consistent with the commonly reported problems that Thai students have in the literature. In fact, as stated by previous studies on Thai students’ EFL writing (Nguyen, 2018, 2019), the writing ability of Thai students is of particular concern because extended writing has not been widely taught. Most writing programs are still taught using the traditional model, which emphasizes the accuracy of grammatical structures and vocabulary. Furthermore, the formative tests in most writing programs focus on sentence completion, reordering sentences, reordering words, and error correction. Thai students hence have very few actual opportunities to represent their ideas and knowledge through the written mode. These contextual factors could also explain why much lower percentages of these Thai pre-service teachers saw “Writing is a means of expression and communication” and “Writing helps students think logically and critically by organizing their ideas in English-thinking ways” (34% & 31.9%, respectively). The findings are likely to confirm the strong influence of the previous learning experiences on their beliefs on the necessity of teaching EFL writing to students (Fullan, 2007; Jiang et al., 2020; Nguyen, 2018; Velez-Rendon, 2006). Also, these views tend to indicate the possibility that these Thai prospective teachers would employ traditional teaching approaches in the future. This suggests that it takes great efforts for educational changes to happen as such changes require a comprehensive implementation of both testing systems and teaching approaches at all educational levels (Fullan, 2007; Hallinger & Lee, 2011).

Table 1

Thai Pre-Service Teachers' Views on The Importance of Teaching EFL Writing

<i>Views</i>	<i>%</i>
English writing is difficult	87.2
Writing is a required subject at school	63.8
Writing helps students improve their ability to use English	59.6
Writing supports students to learn other skills	57.4
Writing is important for jobs	53.3
Writing is a skill	51.1
Writing is a means of expression and communication	34.0
Writing helps students think logically and critically by organizing their ideas in English-thinking ways	31.9

Besides, this study also found other evidence to assert the influence of previous education on teachers' beliefs. In the interview with these Thai teacher-students, it was known that their learning experience of English writing as a compulsory skill subject at university made them understand the importance of teaching EFL writing to students. In fact, more than half of them claimed: "Writing is a skill" (51.1%), "Writing supports students to learn other skills" (57.4%) and "Writing helps students improve their ability to use English" (59.6%). They also added that when they learned this skill, their vocabulary and grammar was also improved, and with the newly gained knowledge, they felt motivated and more confident to use English. Additionally, as revealed in the interview, they also reported that they knew "writing is a required subject at school" (63.8%) and "writing is important for jobs" (53.3%) from their analysis of the English curriculum prescribed in BEC (Ministry-of-Education, 2008), which was part of the assignments required for a core subject they took at the teacher-preparation program. This finding tends to confirm the claim by previous scholars (Jiang et al., 2020; Priestley et al., 2013) that teachers' understandings of an intended curriculum, the contextual realities, and learning and training experience would positively impact the implementation of

the curriculum.

Thai pre-service teachers' perceptions of factors about a successful and unsuccessful writing lesson

In answering the questions on what would make them feel successful and unsuccessful in teaching EFL writing (Questions 2 & 3, Appendix A), these Thai prospective teachers had various answers (Table 2). In particular, around a third of them reported that "students' writing products" (70.2%), "students' progress in writing" (63.8%), "students' active engagement and interest in learning writing" (63.8%), and "students' understanding" (61.7%) would make them feel successful as writing teachers. 57.4% of them mentioned positive comments from teacher-educators as a factor that would make them feel successful about teaching EFL writing. While factors related to students were reported as their reasons to have successful feelings by more pre-service teachers, "negative feedback from teacher-educators" was claimed to be the main cause that would make 85.1% of these Thai pre-service teachers feel unsuccessful (Table 2). This difference could be explained by Thai cultural features in which complaints from their trainers, who are given the high status in the society, are considered serious offenses committed by younger professionals (Baker, 2008; Foley, 2005; Gunawan, 2016; Wisadavet, 2003). In fact, according to Thai-Buddhist views, teachers in Thailand are expected to use soft, gentle, and polite words; their negative comments on student teachers' performances signal the novices' severe problems. Besides their mentors' negative comments, more than half of these Thai pre-service teachers claimed several factors related to students ("students fear of learning English writing," "students are bored and don't concentrate," "students don't understand the lesson," "students' writing is not of good quality" and "students cannot express their ideas" with

70.2%, 70.2%, 63.8%, 57.4% & 53.3%, respectively). Almost three-quarters of them indicated that they would feel unsuccessful if they "don't have enough teaching strategies." Their concerns over students' achievements and their lack of pedagogical knowledge tend to show their commitment to the profession, which promises a substantial reform in the future of teaching EFL writing in Thailand.

Table 2

Thai Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Factors Leading to Successful and Unsuccessful

Feelings of a Writing Lesson			
<i>Successful</i>	%	<i>Unsuccessful</i>	%
students' writing products	70.2	have negative feedback from teacher-educators	85.1
students' progress in writing	63.8	don't have enough teaching strategies	74.5
students' active engagement and interest in learning writing	63.8	students fear of learning English writing	70.2
students' understanding	61.7	students are bored and don't concentrate	70.2
positive comments from mentors about my teaching	57.4	students don't understand the lesson	63.8
		students' writing is not of good quality	57.4
		students cannot express their ideas	53.3

Thai pre-service teachers' difficulties in learning to teach EFL writing

Table 3 shows ten challenges these Thai pre-service EFL teachers reported facing when they learnt how to teach EFL writing. Almost three-quarters of them were anxious after learning this pedagogy course by stating that they had "no sufficient knowledge about how to teach English writing." As revealed in the interview, it was known that they were not taught this skill at their secondary school levels, and their first time learning English writing was in their second year at university. Therefore, it was difficult for them to visualize and thoroughly understand theories on different teaching sequences, activities, and techniques and selecting appropriate

approaches to teach a specific writing task or genre. The interviewed information could also account for 53.3% of them who reported that they had "no confidence for teaching writing," and "making writing lessons interesting" was their challenge (Table 3). Their concerns over their lack of confidence are understandable because it is generally accepted that acquiring something completely new would take neophytes time. However, the educational context in Thailand would account for their worry about making their writing lessons interesting. In fact, as Thai classroom behaviors include having fun or enjoyment (Baker, 2008; Foley, 2005; Nguyen, 2019, 2020), organizing appropriate “sanuk” learning activities when teaching a brand-new skill could create a great sense of frustration in these novices.

Table 3

Thai Pre-Service Teachers' Difficulties in Learning to Teach EFL Writing

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>%</i>
have no sufficient knowledge about how to teach English writing	74.5
not understanding English reading materials	63.8
not understanding teacher's explanations	61.7
being confused about different teaching methods	55.3
making writing lessons interesting	53.3
no confidence for teaching writing	53.3
lack of materials for teaching writing	51.1
no opportunities to practice teaching writing	31.9
no time to do the reading in advance at home	27.7
my laziness to do the reading at home	25.5

In addition to their worry about learning to teach this very new skill, these Thai prospective teachers expressed their anxieties over their understanding of the materials and teachers' explanations, which were reported by 63.8% and 61.7%, respectively. Their low level of English proficiency could be the main reason for the concerns. Indeed, the interview information uncovered that they were worried because this Writing Instruction course was

taught by a foreign lecturer whose teaching materials and instruction were in English. These Thai pre-service teachers' negative feelings when learning something completely new with foreign lecturers were similar to those reported by Nguyen (2019) when she applied reflective teaching approaches to teach a pedagogical course to her Thai prospective teachers. Because her approaches required them to discover the knowledge through their prior reading of English materials and use English for group discussion and mini-teaching performance to demonstrate their understanding of the theories, they requested to replace her with a Thai lecturer who would teach the course in Thai. Such expectations and negative feelings were accounted partly by Thai students' low levels of language proficiency (Hayes, 2010; Wongsothorn et al., 2002). Moreover, their difficulties in not understanding the teacher-educators and English materials were likely to lead to more than half of them "being confused about different teaching methods" (55.3%). Besides their personal reasons ("my laziness to do the reading at home" and "no time to do the reading in advance at home," accounting for 25.5% & 27.7%) (Table 3), these teacher-students also indicated difficulties from their own contexts, namely "lack of materials for teaching writing" (51.1%) and "no opportunities to practice teaching writing" (31.9%). As shared in the interview, these teacher-students found it hard to have books (preferably in Thai) guiding them to teach EFL writing. Also, it was said that from their Practicum 1 observation, English writing was not taught at school, depriving them of the chances to learn and practice teaching EFL writing. The lack of teaching resources and teaching ideas could prompt the student teachers to recycle the strategies and methods they learned during the many years of schooling. In general, all of their reported difficulties fell into either the inadequacy of their contexts and previous learning experiences or their language and personal limitations. These can intrigue teacher-educators in the process of improving the quality of pre-service teacher-

education in Thailand.

Thai pre-service teachers' preparation for teaching English writing

Table 4 summarizes what 47 Thai pre-service teachers reported to prepare themselves for teaching EFL writing. Besides, 4.3% of them wrote they did nothing, 74.5% indicated doing the Writing Instruction course well as their preparation for teaching EFL writing.

Table 4

Thai Pre-Service Teachers' Preparation for Teaching English Writing

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>%</i>
study Writing Instruction course well	74.5
improve writing skills	66
observe my writing teachers' teaching	63.8
practice different teaching techniques	57.4
practice teaching writing with friends	55.3
prepare lesson plans to teach writing	36.2
read more books about teaching writing	25.5
do nothing to prepare for their teaching of writing	4.3

As discussed in the previous section, these teacher-students were aware of the shortage of resources for teaching writing at their local settings, so they concentrated on gaining knowledge to teach this brand-new skill from this pedagogical course. The information from the interview with them confirmed this assumption. This finding suggests that their teacher-educators should construct the course in a way that could meet their desires to teach EFL writing. Besides, relevant and sufficient materials should also be provided to these Thai prospective teachers because 25.5% wrote that they would "read more books about teaching writing." Moreover, more than half of them claimed that they would "practice different teaching techniques" and "practice teaching writing with friends" (57.4% & 55.3%,

respectively), while more than a third of them noted that they "prepare lesson plans to teach writing." These Thai pre-service teachers' reports on what they prepared for teaching EFL writing are likely to show that the Writing Instruction course was their main resource for learning to teach this skill. Furthermore, their writing instructors were also reported to be models in teaching EFL writing since almost two-thirds of them (63.8%) mentioned to "observe my writing teachers' teaching." Finally, improving their writing skills was also reported by 66% of them as what they prepared for teaching EFL writing. In the interview, they stated, "a writing teacher should be good at writing"; they should improve their writing skills themselves in order to be good writing teachers. Although these Thai prospective teachers' claims for what they prepared for teaching EFL writing are similar to those Vietnamese counterparts in Nguyen and Hudson (2010), their reported preparation tends to focus on the pedagogical course they were going to take, their writing instructor, and themselves. In contrast, Vietnamese EFL teachers' preparation for learning to teach writing varied considerably, including teaching writing in schools, preparing teaching resources, and consulting with their mentors. Their difference could be due to the limited resources, the complete absence of teaching EFL writing at secondary school levels, and the power-distance cultures in Thailand.

Thai pre-service teachers' expectations from their teacher-educator

Table 5 summarizes the attributes this group of Thai prospective teachers expected their teacher-educator who taught how to teach EFL writing. Similar to their reported preparation, a majority of them (85.1%) tended to believe that teacher-educators should be good at writing and show them effective teaching techniques to teach EFL writing. Moreover, 89.4% expected

their teacher-educators to "have significant experience in teaching writing." More than three-quarters of them regarded having "a good command of English" as another quality that their mentors should possess in teaching them this pedagogical course. Their expectations are likely to indicate the connection between trainers' subject knowledge ("being good at writing") and practice ("significant experience in teaching writing" and "modelling effective teaching writing practices"), which were advocated by previous studies (Nguyen & Hudson, 2010). Furthermore, due to the lack of qualified English teachers in Thailand, the trainers' subject matter and pedagogical knowledge have also been the country's goals in English language education (Chanwaiwit, 2018; Hayes, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2007; Scholz, 2014). However, in the interview, these Thai teacher-students stated that from their experience as learners at basic education, they noticed that the better teachers' English was, their lessons were more effective.

Table 5

Thai Pre-Service Teachers' Expectations from Their Teacher-Educator

<i>Expectations</i>	<i>%</i>
should have significant experience in teaching writing	89.4
should be good at writing	85.1
should model effective teaching writing practices	85.1
should have a good command of English	78.7
should provide critical and constructive feedback	53.3
should be enthusiastic	46.8
should be friendly and supportive	31.9
should be strict	19.1

Besides trainers' knowledge and experience, more than half of these Thai prospective teachers (53.3%) expected them to "provide critical and constructive feedback". As acknowledged in the interview, they learnt a lot from their teacher-educator's comments on their mini-teaching performances in the course. The trainer's feedback made them better

understand the abstract theories of teaching EFL writing in the materials and improve their teaching practices. Additionally, enthusiasm was also regarded as a quality for the teacher-educator teaching this course by 46.8% of these novices. Although almost a third of them reported that their trainer should be “friendly and supportive”, 19.1% expected their teacher to be strict. As being strict tended to contradict Thai students’ general beliefs of being quite flexible and pragmatic in their study, as claimed by previous scholars (Foley, 2005; Gunawan, 2016; Wisadavet, 2003), clarifications were sought in the interview. As shared by these prospective teachers, it was known that they would like the trainer to “drive their laziness away” in learning this pedagogical course which was believed to be difficult for them. Otherwise, they would not develop the necessary skills to teach this brand-new skill.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current study attempted to explore Thai pre-service teachers' views on the importance of teaching EFL writing and factors leading to their successful and unsuccessful feelings of writing lessons, challenges in learning how to teach EFL writing, and preparation and expectations of their teacher-educators for teaching EFL writing. Open-ended questions and focus group semi-structured interviews were conducted with 47 prospective teachers at the end of the pedagogy course on how to teach EFL writing. Besides asserting a strong influence of the previous learning experiences on their beliefs of the necessity to teach EFL writing (Fullan, 2007; Jiang et al., 2020; Velez-Rendon, 2006), the findings indicate these Thai pre-service teachers’ commitment to the profession, considerable dependence on the course content and the course instructor, and contextual and personal challenges. In particular, based on their prior learning experience, a majority of these prospective teachers believed that EFL writing

should be taught due to its difficulty without recognizing the important role of writing as a means of expression and communication. However, their commitment to the profession was reflected through their report to take students' achievements and failures as factors making them feel successful or unsuccessful, respectively, as writing teachers. Moreover, because of their awareness of the shortages of resources and environment for teaching EFL writing in their local contexts, they planned to gain knowledge for teaching this skill mainly from this pedagogical course and the trainer. Besides a good command of English, writing competency, teaching writing experience, the trainer was expected to be their models who demonstrated effective teaching strategies and provided critical and constructive feedback on their teaching performance. Despite their reported engagement in this pedagogy course and learning from their trainer, the findings also suggest that their limited language ability tended to challenge them the most, especially when they were taught by foreign teacher-educators.

Despite its small sample size and limited data from one teacher-preparation program in Thailand, the findings in this study could provide teacher-educators and designers of teacher-education programs in Thailand a preliminary insight of what to reconstruct in terms of support, instructional methods, and materials to ease the challenges and meet the expectations of EFL student-teachers. The study also suggests that comprehensive implementation of comparable testing systems and teaching approaches at all educational levels in the country is crucial for pedagogical changes. In the local settings like Thailand, where there are limited resources for teaching EFL writing, a complete absence of teaching EFL writing at basic school levels, and the power-distance cultures, teacher-educators should construct the training course in a way that could meet their pre-service teachers' desires to be able to teach EFL writing. As pre-service teacher-education is the most important stage of having qualified teachers (Jiang et al.,

2020; Priestley et al., 2013), it is advisable for future researchers to employ a wider sample from all English language teacher-education programs in Thailand in order to yield more comprehensive, valid, and reliable findings. Furthermore, as stated by previous scholars (Lan & Lam, 2020; Pomerantz & Condie, 2017), there are the convergences and discrepancies between an EFL teachers' reported beliefs and observed classroom practices. Studies on how pre-service teachers in Thailand carry out their theoretical understandings of the field through their teaching EFL writing would be necessary. The findings of such studies could provide teacher-educators, program directors, and decision-makers more insights into ways of improving the quality of pre-service teacher-education in Thailand. Besides their significance to Thai teacher-educators, the results from such studies would be of significance to stakeholders in other educational settings with similar teaching and learning cultures who plan to produce quality teachers in their teacher-preparation programs.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

- 1) Why do you think teaching English writing is important?
- 2) What would make you feel successful in teaching writing in English?
- 3) What would make you feel unsuccessful in teaching writing in English?
- 4) What difficulties did you have when you learnt how to teach English writing?
- 5) How would you best prepare yourself for teaching writing in English?
- 6) What do you expect from your teacher who taught you how to teach English writing?

Appendix B: Focus-Group Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- 1) How would writing help you learn other skills and improve your ability to use English?
- 2) What did you mean when you wrote you had “no clue about teaching English writing”?
- 3) Why did you think that you could not understand the reading materials and teachers’ explanations?
- 4) What did you mean when you wrote “lack of materials for teaching writing” and “no opportunities to practice teaching writing as your difficulties in learning to teach EFL writing”?
- 5) Why did you think you would do the Writing Instruction course well as your preparation for teaching EFL writing?
- 6) Why do you expect your educators to have a good command of English, be good at English writing and have experiences in English writing in order to teach the Writing Instruction course?
- 7) What would your trainers provide critical and constructive feedback on?
- 8) Why would you like your trainer to be strict?

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Relationship-building and Language-oriented Peer Feedback—Fostering Positive Dynamics and Feedback Literacy in an EFL Writing Classroom

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Abstract

While peer feedback has been widely implemented in classrooms, learners are usually not well prepared for giving and receiving peer feedback. In this study, such preparation was designed and implemented at the first six weeks of an eighteen-week EFL essay writing course offered to college students in Taiwan. The procedures and rationale of the design were first explicated. Learners posted their responses to writing prompts on an electronic discussion forum and provided feedback to each other. After three such iterations, 98 peer feedback entries were collected. These peer feedback entries were analyzed on both their social-affective and linguistic aspects. In terms of interpersonal interaction, nine social-affective interactional moves were found and classified into three main categories: peer-directed, self-directed, and relationship building, with seemingly ascending involvement extended by the feedback giver to the receiver and deeper relationship developed in the latter categories. In terms of the linguistic focus in these peer exchanges, learners followed teacher models, identified problems, offered concrete suggestions and, in half of the cases, explained why. Interview data suggested positive learner attitude toward this peer feedback design. Finally, limitations of the study and implications for future research on the affective-interpersonal aspects of peer feedback are discussed.

Keywords: English as a foreign language (EFL), EFL writing, peer assessment, peer feedback,

group dynamics

Introduction

Formative assessment is seen as a crucial part of teaching and learning because it, based on the work being assessed, detects the discrepancy between the current and the desired learning outcome (Black & Wiliam, 1998, 2009). With such assessment as a precursor, feedback thus generated can be focused specifically on the identified gaps, so it turns into a kind of assessment or diagnosis-driven and customized instruction that has better potential, as compared to pre-assessment curriculum-based instruction, in guiding learners to meet their learning goals (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). However, despite scholarly and pedagogical efforts, teacher feedback has often failed to live up to expectations and become the target of student complaints (Bailey & Garner, 2010; O'Donovan, Rust, & Price, 2016; Price, Handley, Millar, & O'Donovan, 2010; Orsmond & Merry, 2013; Perez-Amurao, 2014). Studies into this problem have repeatedly shown that the remedy does not lie in more comprehensive, meticulous, or carefully worded and delivered teacher feedback; rather, it is learner engagement in feedback that matters most (Nicol, 2010; Orsmond & Merry, 2013; Reinholz, 2016).

To solve the problem, many teachers resort to having learners provide feedback to each other as an important means to engage them in the feedback process (Boud & Molloy, 2012; Williams, 2018). Although some research evidence shows that peer feedback does engage and benefit learners (Nicol, Thomson, & Breslin, 2014; Smith, Worsfold, Davies, Fisher, & McPhail, 2013), there exists counter-evidence of ineffective peer feedback and learner resentment (Liu & Hansen, 2002; Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Wilson, Diao, & Huang, 2015).

Indeed, peer feedback does not just happen and work right away under the instructor's command; it needs a new mindset and some preparation. To expect learners to benefit from peer feedback, we need first to ensure that learners understand why they engage in peer assessment and feedback, convince them that they are equipped with the necessary strategies and tactics, and help them feel comfortable and confident giving and receiving peer feedback. All these require careful planning. The literature abounds in peer feedback training with teacher modelling (e.g., Chang, 2015), conferencing (e.g., Min, 2006), video demonstration (Allen & Mills, 2014), rubrics (Wang, 2014) and so on, but most of such preparation caters exclusively to the cognitive aspects, despite calls for attention to the psychological, emotional, affective, and interactional aspects of learner peer feedback (Lee & Schallert, 2008; Xu & Carless, 2017). Yang and Carless (2013) specifically proposed to view assessment feedback from its socio-affective dimension in addition to cognition because assessment and feedback, if not done by oneself on his/her own work, inevitably comprises interpersonal communication. For learners to benefit from engaging in peer feedback, they need a cohesive, friendly, and supportive group where members feel confident and secure in providing, receiving, and improving from comments on each other's interim work. More importantly, individual members have to be willing contributors in the first place.

This research is based on a college writing teacher's effort in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) context to prepare her students before they engaged in peer feedback on formal essay assignments, with the hope that learners become enculturated to the basic *what* and *how* of peer feedback and that positive group dynamics and healthy attitudes toward peer feedback are fostered. The first few weeks before formal written assignments and peer feedback activities could be ideal for warming up learners with feedback practices that cater to their

social and cognitive needs. With this background, the current study was expected to analyze such preparatory peer feedback and answer the following questions.

1. Was there a pattern in peer feedback that facilitated relationship building?
2. To what extent could peer feedback address linguistic aspects of EFL writing?

Literature Review

Factors affecting peer feedback have been investigated in recent years. Wang (2014) did this by looking into Chinese EFL students' perceived usefulness of peer feedback. The five factors she uncovered include two on cognition (knowledge on assigned topics and English proficiency), one on logistics structure (class time), and two on the affective and social-interaction aspects. Among the latter two, one is attitude. Students claimed that they would not treat peer feedback seriously if their peers were not in a good mood or did not shoulder their share of the responsibility. Having the same partner for repeated practices also made peer feedback a formulaic routine and increased boredom. The other affective-interactional factor is students' concerns with interpersonal relationship. They reported avoiding direct criticism of their peers' work for fear that it might harm their friendship or the harmony among classmates. In a more recent case study, Yu and Hu (2017) indicated that peer feedback practices are socio-culturally situated. In addition to learners' beliefs, goals, and past experiences, learner feedback practices are mediated by group dynamics and the group's learning and assessment culture. In particular, friendships developed among members "apparently made them feel less inhibited in offering criticisms and showing disagreement" (Yu & Hu, 2017, 32). Good intentions to assist each other in learning, although in the form of direct critical peer feedback, did not risk being misunderstood, and there was no risk of group

members hurting their peers because they had mutual trust and healthy mindsets.

By its nature, assessment and feedback are inherently face-threatening. That is why affect and personal interaction matter. Interpersonal communication in assessment feedback could easily become judgmental if not cautiously managed. One study pointed to the trust learners had in their teacher who provided assessment feedback (Lee & Schallert, 2008). Receiving feedback from the same teacher, one learner who trusted the teacher benefited from her feedback and improved; yet the other learner who doubted the teacher's capability did not. In peer feedback, such trust in the feedback provider is just as necessary. Moreover, when assessment and feedback happen in a course within a group of learners, it is more than two-way interpersonal communication. It has to do with group dynamics.

Specifically on group dynamics in language teaching, Dörnyei (1997), in his review concerning the psychological processes of cooperative learning in a broader sense, manifests the importance of and the teachers' role in group dynamics. As Dörnyei states, cohesive groups tend to be more productive, but cooperation does not happen simply by putting students in a group. There is a lot that teachers can do to foster cohesive learning groups and create positive interdependence. Group members who are initially strangers, such as those assigned in the same class to learn with the same instructor, need to spend time together to develop inter-member ties. The crucial way, according to Dörnyei, is "to help students learn about each other by sharing genuine personal information" (p. 485) so that hostility can be removed and acceptance can occur. As leaders of these groups, teachers' responsibilities are "to create the right conditions for development, in particular a safe and accepting climate, and to enable the group to do away with any emerging obstacles"(p. 486). In such groups, members understand each other's needs, interests, and abilities on a personal level.

With similar concerns on the socio-affective side of learning, Värlander (2008) reviewed the literature on the relationship between emotion and feedback. Her focus is specifically on classroom feedback situations. Like Dörnyei, Värlander highlights the importance of constructing a positive climate. She pinpoints the concept that for feedback to help, learners should first be free from fear, anxiety, and low self-esteem, which often result from power asymmetry in the classroom between learners and teachers, with the latter usually playing the dual and somewhat conflicting roles of learning facilitator and assessor. To solve the problem, she suggests using peer assessment to a greater extent so as to move power from the tutor to the learners. In addition, she advocates “feedback preparation activities,” a rare practice that may help prepare learners for giving and receiving feedback. In such activities, Värlander emphasizes that tutors should “make clear *what* students are to give feedback on” (152) to make the dimensions of assessment transparent. More importantly, the issue of “*how* to give and receive feedback” should be raised (153).

On the one hand, students are to be shown that emotions of joy, frustration, anxiety and confidence are legitimate, with demonstrated examples of how such emotions can be handled. On the other hand, the manner and language in which feedback is forwarded should be discussed with students, including politeness, constructiveness, and a focus on the work rather than on the individuals. Provocative questions on feedback examples (e.g., *Is this good feedback? Why? What could have been done better? How would you feel in the same situation?*) and discussions may prepare students for real feedback scenarios. Finally, Värlander proposes reserving space for these feedback preparation activities in the curricula and placing them at the beginning in the course timeline to equip learners with a technical and emotional “feedback toolbox.”

Studies documenting learners' social interactions and emotions in a course group are sporadic, let alone in feedback situations. Among them, Kehrwald (2008) looks at learning interactions within the framework of social presence theory. He notes that in order to benefit from virtual learning communities mediated by computers, students need the ability, opportunity, and motivation to formulate and understand social presence cues embedded in the messages they exchange. Members of a discussion group exhibit supportive behaviors once they know each other through interactions. This, in turn, nurtures a sense of security and encourages less active members to participate. To build such trust and rapport, Kehrwald also proposes introductory activities that help learners get to know each other, an approach resonating with Dörnyei (1997) and Värlander (2008). Çelik (2013), in the same vein, examines the social dynamics in online discussion activities among student members through their forum posts in the digital course platform. His students were required to answer questions related to assigned readings and respond to each other on a weekly basis. He found seven types of affective and social interactions, including greetings and introductions, messages of encouragement, requests for information, emotional catharsis (such as humor, discouragement, objections and apologies), information sharing, criticisms, and sharing of experiences. Among them, humor ranked first, accounting for 36%, followed by encouragement (23%), sharing of experiences (12%), and criticism (11%). To mitigate negative attitudes and emotions and facilitate learning, Çelik, citing Kehrwald (2008), also suggests designing introductory activities to help learners get to know each other to build rapport and trust.

Background of the Study

This research took place in an elective *Essay Writing* course taught by the author researcher at a university in Taiwan. Seventeen students from different years and disciplines enrolled in this two-credit, 18-week-semester course to learn English essay writing. These ten female and seven male learners, average age 20.1, had previously finished the university's required one-year College English courses and demonstrated proficiency level at around B2+ by the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) standard. Written consents to participate in this study were solicited and obtained during the first two weeks.

Based on the above literature review, a peer feedback induction was designed for the first third of the semester to prepare learners before a series of formal writing assignments. This feedback design had three objectives. First, it served as an ice-breaker when, initially, class members barely knew each other. Learners were given the opportunity to socialize and get to know each other as individuals who had identities and unique personalities and who would become comrades in assessment and feedback activities that would soon occur. Secondly, it took advantage of the time in the first few weeks when learners did not have much of a workload and allowed them to exercise their existing writing skills. Although most learners had not yet learned much about essay writing at this point, they could write something to warm up. By engaging learners in some smaller-scale writing tasks, it was hoped that writing skills were practised and relevant background knowledge activated. Thirdly, through this induction, learners could start experiencing peer assessment and feedback through models and trials, thereby being encultured and ready for a supportive assessment and feedback climate. This induction was hoped to pave the way for the core activities in the latter two-thirds of the semester when learners were to assess each other and give/receive feedback to/from one

another.

Research Methods

Procedure

Learner feedback activities were carried out using the digital discussion forum in the course e-platform—Moodle. Since all class members were registered in the course on Moodle and had to visit it on a regular basis for information, documents, and homework upload, the Moodle discussion forum provided a convenient venue for asynchronous communication that was made public to all. Topics, decided after short in-class discussions, aimed for learners: 1) to express themselves on things they were familiar with, 2) to help other class members get to know them as individuals, and 3) to exchange information their peers may be interested in. It was suggested that learners write between 150 and 300 words for each topic. The course instructor and a teaching assistant (TA) modelled with their own posts each time before learners started. The three topics were *A photo to help us know you*, *A course experience you would share with us*, and *A restaurant/café you would (or would not) recommend*.

Original student posts under these three designated topics served as springboards for feedback. Alternating with the writing of each post was peer feedback provision in the immediate following week. First, for administrative purposes and to allow for a variety of authentic readers and assessors, each post was randomly assigned to two peers. Each learner had his/her post commented on by two others each time and, in turn, did the same thing for two other peers. The pairing was made to ensure each learner received comments from six different peers in three iterations. This arrangement exposed learners to different peers and made room for variety and comparison.

As with the posts themselves, feedback to posts was modelled by the teacher and TA before learners started, so learners had two different samples to refer to when they took on their tasks. Each modelled feedback consisted of three elements. First, it reacted to the content by either commenting on the post or bringing up something relevant. By way of an *ad hoc* analysis, the modelled feedback contained compliments, personal opinions, relevant personal experiences, and influences felt. Secondly, the peer assessor would choose at least two complete sentences and rewrite them in an effort to improve them in terms of language, such as better grammar and word choice. Finally, peer assessors would explain why the particular sentences were chosen and how the rewrites improved on the originals. It was a deliberate decision on the part of the teacher-researcher to limit the second and third parts of the required feedback within the intra-sentential level. However, comprehensive feedback for writing would usually include comments on ideas, organization, coherence, and reasoning etc. For one thing, this induction was positioned at the beginning when learners had not learned about these inter-sentential-level concepts. For another, framing the language-related feedback this way made it easy to follow and practice and avoid the risk of overwhelming learners or making a social warm-up activity less fun.

The Underlying Rationale

The three parts of required peer feedback (i.e., comments on content, rewrites, and explanations for rewrites) served different purposes. First, the feedback on content initiated interpersonal connections. Through writing the posts, learners expressed themselves as individuals. By reading the posts, learners learned more about their peers, such as their experiences, opinions, and behaviors. Having to write responses made it a two-way communication. With their posts

being read and responded to and with them reading and responding to others on three pieces of writing with at least two different peers, learners got to know each other much better through ideas exchanged in the language they were learning. And hopefully, such developed acquaintance made the more serious peer assessment and feedback in the second and third phases of the course smoother and less threatening.

The second part of the response drew the learners' attention to writing, which was the objective of the course. A common form of writing in these learners' previous EFL education was a timed piece of 120 words or more on the national college entrance examination. Before having passed the joint entrance examination and entering this university, these learners' EFL training in senior high school involved lots of such writing with different prompts in similar formats. These learners had been taught to use their lexical and syntactic knowledge to monitor their developing writing skills to various extents. Therefore, rewriting a sentence to improve on it was not a task that needed much explanation and could be expected of most students. When they were not yet ready to perform a comprehensive assessment of complete essays, rewriting someone else's sentences gave them a chance to exercise existing knowledge and demonstrate skills learned in the past. Moreover, to most of these learners, the novelty of this task was that they did for their peers what their high school teachers used to do for them. This power redistribution sent them the message that they could and were expected to rewrite for the better.

Finally, an important closure of the feedback response was for learners to justify the rewrites. So, relying on intuition alone was not enough. The learner needed metacognitive knowledge to articulate why he/she chose to rewrite those particular sentences and how the rewrites were better. This, hopefully, raised learner awareness on discrepancies between the

ideal and current performances and consequently prepared them for subsequent learning and assessment.

Results of Data Analysis

To understand learner peer feedback, posts and feedback comments during this period were collected and analyzed. Although the focus was on feedback, posts on which the feedback was based were reviewed and descriptively reported first. Feedback comments were treated in two parts: those on content and those on language. Content feedback was examined using a discourse analysis approach for language-in-use (Gee, 2011), focusing on interpersonal interaction. Language feedback was scrutinized for the sentences being chosen, the number of rewrites, the rewrite quality and the justifications. End-of-term individual learner interviews helped supplement the feedback data with learners' reflective narratives.

During weeks 1, 3, and 5, there were a total of 15, 16, and 17 original posts. The three topics of *Photo Description*, *Course Experience*, and *Eatery Recommendation* each had average word/sentence counts of 248/15, 277/16, and 248/16, respectively. More detailed figures are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Learners' Three Posts

	Round 1 (n=15)	Round 2 (n=16)	Round 3 (n=17)	Grand Average
Average Word Count	248.41	276.82	248.00	257.74
Paragraphs	3.41	3.41	3.24	3.35
Sentences	15.41	16.24	16.00	15.88
Sentences/paragraph	4.72	5.75	5.92	5.46
Words/sentence	16.95	17.56	15.54	16.68

For *Photo Description*, the photos provided were mostly group photos of the learner author with his/her

friends; some involved the author with one other friend or family member; others were of the author alone. Others were posters or scenes without any person in the photo. What they wrote most about were travels, cultural exchange experiences, or extracurricular activities. Other topics included the author's family member, the author himself/herself, and the author's favorite movie or band.

For *Course Experience*, each of the 16 posts identified one particular course, described the experiences, and commented. Six were courses in their majors; five were in general education, two in language, and others included service learning, lifeguard training, and elementary school memories. These experiences were described as interesting, stressful, inspiring, unforgettable, and impressive.

For *Eatery Recommendation*, nine authors recommended eateries in popular downtown areas or tourist spots, five were around the neighborhood of the campus, and three were in the authors' hometown. Food being recommended included main dishes, snacks, and desserts. Reasons for recommendation consisted of taste, price, portion, service, location, décor, and popularity.

Understanding Interpersonal Interactions in Peer Feedback

In weeks 2, 4, 6, the number of peer feedback comments posted were 33, 34, and 31, respectively. With a few omissions on the learner side, there was a total of 98 feedback comments. Looking at the feedback on content, the average word counts in the three rounds were 68, 56, and 51, respectively, making a grand average of 58 words per feedback item. After two rounds of initial reading, each meaning unit was identified, coded, compared with other similar units, and labelled for its interpersonal functions as the types surfaced. With three

iterations of coding and recoding, the entire data set fell into nine feedback moves under three major themes. The occurrence of each type of move in a response, if not present, was marked 0; and if present, was marked 1. These 1s were then summed up and divided by the total number of posts, resulting in percentages of occurrences in each of the three feedback rounds and further calculated for the average of the three rounds as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Percentage of Each Feedback Type in Three Feedback Rounds

Types of Feedback Moves		Round 1 (n=33)	Round 2 (n=34)	Round 3 (n=31)	Average
Peer-directed	Greetings	15.20%	20.59%	25.81%	20.53%
	Thanks	9.10%	8.82%	22.58%	13.50%
	Compliments	27.30%	44.12%	45.16%	38.86%
Self-directed	Paraphrasing	12.10%	2.94%	3.23%	6.09%
	Interpreting	27.30%	14.71%	6.45%	16.15%
	My opinion	30.30%	44.12%	9.68%	28.03%
Relation-building	My experience	60.60%	47.06%	51.60%	53.09%
	Your impact on me	24.20%	0.00%	61.29%	28.50%
	My wish for you	21.20%	20.58%	9.68%	17.15%

Peer-directed Feedback

Many feedback comments started with greetings such as “hello”, “hi”, etc. Some began with thanks like “Thank you for sharing this wonderful experience!” Still, others offered compliments with exclamations like “wow”, “cool”, “awesome”, “nice”, “great”, or used adjectives like “interesting”, “beautiful”, “special”, “attractive”, “stunning”, “intriguing” to show their responses to the posts they commented on. These were all considered a way for the feedback provider to express courtesy directed toward the feedback receiver. Among the three subcategories, compliments were most common, occurring almost 40% of the time, followed by greetings about 20% of the time. Thanks were rarer in the first two rounds at below 10%

but increased to more than 20% by the third round. A possible reason was related to the nature of the third topic, which was for the writer to recommend an eatery and the reader to receive practical information.

Self-directed Feedback

Another type of move was for the feedback provider to show what they understood from the original posts. Some paraphrased what they had read without involving themselves, as “It seems that...”, in which they were trying to make sense of the message or to confirm with the author. Other similar comments got the respondents themselves involved in this sense-making move by saying “I can image...”, “I can feel...”, “I can discover...”, “I could feel...”, “I realize...”, “I believe...”, “I understand...”, etc. These two types of understanding were labelled as “paraphrasing” and “interpreting.” The figures in Table 3 showed average occurrences of 6% and 16% in these two ways of showing understanding, with interpreting occurring more than twice as often as paraphrasing.

Relationship Building Feedback

In the third type of move, the feedback providers did not simply express courtesy or show understanding; they built a relationship with the person receiving this feedback by various means, each with attempts to involve the receiver in joining the provider at a deeper level of interaction. They offered their opinions on the subject matter being discussed, such as in saying, “I think it is truly a valuable and precious memory with your favorite band”, or “And just as you said, it is quite difficult to find such a beautiful place in a city”, or “I'm glad that you passed the first stage exam!” Students voluntarily mentioned their own relevant

experiences or lack thereof. Another type within this category was showing to the person on whose writing was being commented how his/her posts influenced the feedback provider or what kind of impact the original posts had made on the feedback provider. Examples of this type were prefaced with phrases such as “I also want to...”, “I feel encouraged...”, “It makes me...”, “...I’ll give it a try...” Still another type of comment in this category was to encourage the peer or show empathy by saying “I love your post. It touched my heart, too” or “I hope you can learn more and more in your internship.” This move accounted for 61%, 47%, and 52%, respectively, in the three rounds of feedback, resulting in an average of more than 50%. The overall average use of “my opinion” and “your impact” was close. The use of “in my opinion” fell in feedback on the topic of a recommended eatery. “Your impact” was a zero for the topic of a course experience but became 61% when feedback providers read about a recommended eatery. This obvious discrepancy is interesting and may be related to topics, but further studies are necessary to ascertain the causes.

This third type occurred much more often than the other two types of peer-directed and self-directed feedback. Unlike the other two types, which in terms of relationship building, were more at the surface level and not as engaging, this type was usually more extended and longer. This could be considered authentic writer/reader exchanges that learners experienced. Such feedback became evidence to the authors of the original posts that their writings could make others feel, think, reflect, and respond, or even have an impact on the readers. Writing of this kind was an authentic way to express and to communicate, even in a learned foreign language.

Understanding the Linguistic Aspects of Peer Feedback

The language-specific feedback was not calculated for the number of words and sentences, etc., because it involved copying the original sentences and rewriting them. Instead, each rewrite was calculated as one unit. There were a total of 100, 94, and 72 sentences chosen and rewritten in the three rounds of feedback from the 33, 34, and 31 responses. In Table 3, the average number of rewrites was around 3. Some students voluntarily gave overall comments on the language of the post, which was not part of the feedback modelled. Such overall comments occurred, on average, in 10% of the feedback. Most of the rewrites improved the original sentences or at least did not make them worse. There was only one case in which the rewritten sentence was obviously not a better version. Since the requirement for feedback was to rewrite sentences, most revisions were within the sentential level, indicating local errors related to grammar, sentence structure, or word choice. More than 50% of feedback providers gave explanations for their rewrites. An average of 3% cited sources such as an online dictionary or a corpus to justify their rewrites.

Table 3

Occurrence of Language-specific Rewrites in Three Feedback Rounds

	Round 1 (n=33)	Round 2 (n=34)	Round 3 (n=31)	Grand Average
Overall Comments	22.60%	0%	6.45%	9.68%
Number of Rewrites	3.03	2.76	2.32	2.70
Explaining Rewrites	61.10%	44.68%	50.72%	52.17%
Providing Resources	4.20%	4.26%	1.45%	3.30%

As can be seen from Table 3, the number of rewrites decreased steadily from the first round to the second and then to the third round. One reason may be that learners gradually became more careful in writing their posts and consequently decreased the number of obvious

mistakes for their peers to identify. It may also have to do with the coming up of other assignments in the latter weeks within this period such that learners had to spare time for their other homework.

In the models given to them before they started responding to their peers, it was made clear to the students that they should explain their revision. The data, however, showed just slightly more than half of the feedback comments did this. In looking more closely at the data, I saw that many of the linguistic problems identified were straightforward, such as verb-noun agreement or tense, and an explanation was not absolutely necessary. That was probably why some explanations were absent. A further, although rare, step observed in the rewrite was citing or providing resources. Some feedback providers referred to resources such as the online Oxford Dictionary or Collocation Dictionary to explain or justify the rewrite.

A further issue was related to the setup of the forum discussion format. It was hoped that all feedback would be made public so that learners would be able to view others' feedback and learn from each other. This happened as one learner, in her response, said that "since the grammatical mistake I spotted was already corrected by the other classmate assigned to respond to this same post, I would try to point out a slightly less serious problem." Yet, there was exact counter-evidence to show that this was not always the case. Another student, although giving her response right below another respondent's feedback and later, identified exactly the same language problem and posted an identical rewrite.

Learner Reflection on the Peer Feedback Experience

As part of the researcher's course routine, three months after the termination of the course, learners were invited through email to come back for a one-on-one, face-to-face interview

conducted in their mother tongue, Mandarin Chinese. The interviews mainly asked learners to reflect on their learning experiences, compare them to other EFL learning experiences, and point out what they remembered best. Four semi-structured interviews of 25, 28, 17, and 21 minutes were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. Although the interview prompts did not specifically focus on this induction happening during the first third of the semester, all four interviewees unanimously brought it up when they were asked to reflect on the overall learning experience or to point out what they still remembered. The results were discussed from two aspects, self-expression in writing the posts and responding to peer posts. Selected excerpts were translated into English.

Interviewees were generally fond of writing the posts in the induction phase. They liked it because the topics were more open-ended and related to their daily lives. Writing the posts at the beginning of the semester was not as painstaking as dealing with the later, more serious essay assignments. It allowed learners to express themselves and communicate on a personal level to the rest of the class. As indicated by one interviewee, "...like at the beginning, we were asked to write about a restaurant we liked. It's this stuff that I enjoyed. It's an opportunity to tell. It's a good warm-up, lighter and less stressful."

Interviewees mentioned that by reading and responding to peers, they got to know each other better, especially at the beginning when they were strangers. The topics mattered as well, as one said, "it easily struck a chord when we read about others' interests." One learner said, "I remember there's this assignment of posting a photo and getting responses below the post. I liked this a lot. It's like writing my journal. It's great. And I enjoyed responding to others." Another interviewee brought up an issue related to learning from peers. She felt that this feedback task allowed her to see how her peers wrote and learn from them. She said, "Reading

others' posts was a way to train myself, to allow myself to think from a different perspective... I liked it because I could spy on others' thoughts and it was a way of exchanging ideas." When talking about their overall peer feedback experiences throughout the semester, interviewees demonstrated a healthy welcoming attitude, as exemplified in "...we all have blind spots. I am happy my peers pointed them out to me. I became more aware of my writing after having given and received peer feedback."

Another issue brought up by interviewees unrelated to either writing or responding to the posts was about the mechanism of the peer feedback induction. Even though learners enjoyed reading their peers' posts, it was the fact that peers were assigned to respond to specific peers that made sure the procedure ran smoothly. As one learner said, "we were assigned to respond to certain posts, so it wouldn't happen that someone posted and got no response. If you had been really busy, you would still have read the two assigned posts and provided some feedback for sure."

Discussion

In summary, the reported peer feedback met the major criteria suggested in the literature for building a supportive learning environment. First, the three topics for the original posts provided opportunities for learners to express themselves as individuals with unique experiences and opinions. Having learners respond to these expressions further allowed these voices to be heard, made communication among course members bi- and multi-directional, and made interpersonal relationship building possible. These are all essential conditions in the formation of cohesive groups as they allow members to increase acceptance and decrease hostility. These dynamics have been pointed out by Dörnyei (1997), Värlander (2008), and

Kehrwald (2008). Such group dynamics, although subtle, were observed in the three rounds of peer feedback. Analysis of content-specific feedback showed that learners intended to communicate to their peers how they had made sense of what they had read and tried to build a relationship with their peers by involving themselves through contributing their own relevant thoughts and experiences in the written exchanges. The spectrum of interactional moves ranged from the more surface-level peer-directed feedback to the sense-making self-directed feedback to more mutually engaging, relationship building feedback. The distribution of types of feedback moves varied from one round to the other, probably due in part to the nature of the topics being discussed. For example, there was 0% of Your Impact on Me with the topic of course experiences but 61.29% of it with eatery recommendations. Put together, as a whole, relationship building feedback outnumbered peer-directed feedback, which in turn outnumbered self-directed feedback. This suggests that attempts by feedback providers to engage their peers were taking shape at that initial stage of group formation.

More specifically, the nine sub-moves identified in this study were somewhat similar to the seven affective and social aspects of interactions found in Çelik's (2013) despite the different context and nature of student interaction (feedback directed to specific peer posts in this study vs answers to teacher questions and comments to other students' answers in Çelik, 2013). While criticism as a feedback move ranked fourth in Çelik (2013) and may not be considered a sign of support, it has always been more conventional and critical in the peer feedback in writing classes and was deliberately built-in in this study in the second part of peer feedback as rewrites and therefore did not surface as a category in peer interaction here. This rewrite requirement made finding problems and correcting them a legitimate responsibility for all learners and lessened its threat as criticism. Furthermore, moves found in this study such as

Compliments (38.86% occurrence of all feedback) and My Wish for You (17.15%) resembled Çelik's (2013) Encouragement (ranked 2nd), and My Experience (53.09%) here resembled Çelik's Sharing of Experiences (ranked 3rd) moves. More empirical studies on the nature of peer interaction are needed to expand our understanding of the affective-interpersonal aspects in learning groups and their influences on learning outcome. Results from this study and those of Çelik (2013) may serve as reference points for such future endeavors.

In addition to serving as an ice-breaker and getting class members to know and accept each other, the peer feedback induction's mission was to get learners ready for peer feedback. This involved Värlander's (2008) *what* to give feedback on and *how* to give and receive feedback. For the *what*, learners followed the samples and directions and worked on sentences to correct grammar and improve lexis. They almost all did it. The framework provided made it easy for learners to follow and served its purpose. Although there was more to this *what*, such as comprehensive criteria for good writing, such aspects had yet to be covered by class lectures, marking exercises and later peer feedback on formal assignments. For the *how* part of it was embedded in the first half of the required feedback on content. That is, by reacting to each other's posts, learners followed teacher models to greet, compliment, and show empathy by drawing themselves into the written exchanges. On the other hand, the format of rewriting sentences ensured a focus on sharpening the language being learned by having learners trying to identify a performance gap (choosing sentences to rewrite) and bridging that gap (rewriting), all of which centered around the concepts of assessment for the purpose of learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998, 2009). The rewrite by the feedback providers allowed learners to not just point out others' problems but to solve problems as if they were their own, making the task more problem-based rather than individual-oriented and the feedback provider more empathetic with

the receiver. As with the *what*, there are, in fact, a lot more aspects to the *how* of giving and receiving feedback, and these need to be covered by other activities in the course as the learners progress.

There was an average of three sentences rewritten by peers for each original post of about fifteen sentences in length on the language-specific responses. This sent important messages for these learners who had been trained to do timed writing and submit their work right afterwards for undisputable grades from the teacher. This said that writing could and should be revised for the better, that revision can be done in multiple ways, and that revision does not always have to be done by the teacher for the students, but rather it is something that responsible writers take care of. Learners' attention to the syntactic and lexical features of writing was raised in contexts of authentic communication, and this prepared them for follow-up learning. The kind of learner resentment caused by peer assessment as described in Wilson et al. (2015), however, was not observed in this study.

Limitations and Implications

This study explored peer feedback preparation in higher education and tried out an intact class approach by considering both learners' affective-interpersonal and cognitive needs. Although results were positive, more direct evidence indicating the effect resulting from peer feedback preparation was lacking in this study. The small sample size in an EFL setting also made the generalization of results difficult. However, building on previous research, this study added empirical findings by bringing peer feedback preparation to the forefront. In future studies, control groups could be included in the design to allow comparisons between situations with and without such preparation for peer feedback. Examining group cohesiveness or peer

interaction through quantitative, qualitative, or a combination of both approaches should be identified and explored. At the pedagogical level, learners need to be properly prepared for peer feedback activities. Based on the results, choosing topics that have informational value to learners may facilitate relationship-building among them. This could lower hostility and resentment related to feedback. Teachers should also consider learners' existing knowledge and ability to ask for specific elements in peer feedback. Furthermore, it will help learners engage in peer feedback if teachers provide clear, imitable, and courteous models.

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**Modal Verbs in a Curriculum-Based EFL Textbook of Senior High School in Indonesia:
A Corpus-Based Study**

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Abstract

Modality is ubiquitous among language users, and its use is highly necessary to qualify a proposition (Perkins, 1982). Interestingly, modal verbs as the prototype manifestation of modality are said to be among the most problematic grammatical unit among non-native students (Holmes, 1988; Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Römer, 2004). It is then appealing to examine the use of modal verbs in an EFL textbook as EFL textbooks are designed to equip the learners with sufficient linguistic knowledge to be communicatively competent (Gilmore, 2007). In an EFL context, corpus might assist the design of teaching materials since it can provide the closest representation of actual language use (Römer, 2004). Regarding the condition in which corpus consultation in EFL textbooks in Indonesia is unknown, given that corpus is not widely recognized and used in Indonesia (Crosthwaite, 2020), it is important to revisit the language content in Indonesian EFL textbooks. This study focuses on the analysis of modal verbs in conversation sections in a curriculum-based EFL textbook, *Bahasa Inggris*, for grade XII as comparison with the spoken sub-corpus of a general reference corpus, *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA). The study analyzes the frequency of use of modal verbs in the textbook and the corpus to find out the similarities and the mismatches of modal verbs usage. The results show that both textbook and COCA use core modals (e.g. *must*) and quasi-modals (e.g. *have to*) and the use of *have to* are more frequent than *must* in both of the data sources. Despite the similarities, there are some mismatches of modal verbs usage in textbook and COCA. In COCA, modal verbs *would*, *can*, *will*, *be going to* occupy the highest position, while modal verbs *can*, *will*, *have to*, *should* are most frequently used in the textbook. In terms of variants, there are limited numbers of quasi-modals and contracted forms of modal verbs used in conversation in the textbook that do not correspond to the nature of spoken language. Besides, textbook conversations lack the reduced form of modal verbs (e.g. *'ll*) and modal verb *would* is absent (while *would* is the most frequent in COCA), making it unnatural for spoken context. Pedagogically speaking, these findings should be taken into account by ELT materials writers in Indonesia to enhance the quality and authenticity of the language input for the learners.

Keywords: *corpus, modal verb, EFL textbook, Indonesia*

Introduction

In language use, speakers talk about the truth-value condition and something that is possible or necessary. This expression is known as modality (Collins, 2009; Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1990) and is manifested through numerous linguistic realizations, including modal verbs (Collins, 2009; Palmer, 1990; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985). Hence, the use of modal verbs is important and as dynamic as a society (Collins, 2014). Moreover, modal verbs are inevitably important since each of them might refer to different meanings (Coates, 1983), and they even pragmatically differ; for example *may* have six different (pragmatic) meanings (Huddleston, 1971: 297). Even though modal verbs usage is declining in written corpora and there is a modality deficit—the gap between declining use of core modal verbs and limited use of new modal verbs (Leech, 2013), but modal verb decrease was not significant in spoken corpora, and the modality deficit was unproven in spoken corpora (Leech, 2013). Thus, the use of modal verbs in spoken language is still important to study.

In English language teaching and learning, it is then also crucial to consider the use of modal verbs since they are one of the most problematic grammatical units (Holmes, 1988; Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Römer, 2004). Teachers and textbook writers should present the modal verbs in teaching materials (e.g., textbooks, to equip the learner with the real use of English, the kind of English the speakers actually use in daily life). This aims to support the learners to be communicatively competent. Gilmore (2007) states that what teachers are trying to achieve with classroom materials is to prepare learners to be able to communicate effectively in the target language. Modal verbs, however, are problematic among native English speakers. In expressing doubt and certainty in English, there are modal verbs *may* and *might*, but *may* is

also used to express other modal meanings (permission) and can serve as a politeness device (Holmes, 1988). In the EFL context, the teaching of modal verbs becomes one of the grammatical problems (Römer, 2004). Therefore, non-native speakers of English should not rely on their intuition in writing materials on modal verbs or in using modal verbs in teaching materials. Consultation to the corpus as the representative of the English language is thus compulsory in terms of writing EFL teaching materials because corpus provides a large collection of texts showing the authentic use of language, which can be beneficial for designing teaching materials (Burton, 2012; Timmis, 2015).

Interestingly, other researchers (Collins, 2006; A Gilmore, 2004; Holmes, 1988) have found some mismatches between the language used in textbooks and the ‘real’ use of English. In other words, the language used in textbooks does not correspond to how English is actually used; for instance, the textbook conversations do not represent the actual English conversation. The mismatches of textbook language and real use are identified commonly through the comparison of language in textbooks and the results of corpus investigation. Some corpus-based studies on textbooks (Arellano A., 2018; Burton, 2012; Cheng & Warren, 2007; Leung, 2016; Norberg & Nordlund, 2018; Phoocharoensil, 2017; Yoo, 2000) prove that ELT textbooks lack what it is used in real English. Focusing on modal verbs, they have been specifically studied by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012), claiming that the presentation of modal verbs in Malaysian textbooks is not in accordance with the real use of modal verbs, as recorded in the corpus. Although the study of modal verbs using corpus is not totally new (see Hardjanto, 2016; Orlando, 2009; Qian, 2017; Yang, 2018) and there are numerous modal verbs studied in language teaching (ESL or EFL) in Japan, Malaysia, Iran (Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Nozawa, 2014.; Talati-Baghsiahi et al., 2018; Yamamoto, 1999), but little is known in the use

of modal verbs in Indonesia EFL textbook. Although studies on textbooks have been carried out in Indonesia, they mostly focus on the discussion of the task and cultural value (Ayu & Indrawati, 2018; Mayangsari et al., 2018; Rahmah et al., 2018; Widodo, 2018), and the representation of gender role (Ena et al., 2016). Apart from the Indonesian context, studies on English textbooks also focus more on the utilization of the textbook (e.g., Mede' & Yalçin (2019), the comparison of textbook and national exam (Aziez & Aziez, 2018) or literature and literacy perspective on the textbook (e.g., Raquitico, 2014), while the linguistic aspect of the textbook (e.g., the use of modal verbs) is not widely discussed. Therefore, this study investigates the use of modal verbs in a curriculum-based EFL textbook for grade XII compared to the 'real' use of modal verbs represented in a corpus.

To discuss the problem comprehensively, the study delimits the analysis to the conversation section of the textbook because, in some cases, it is not an example of natural English conversation (Carter, 1998; Cheng & Warren, 2007; Gilmore, 2004). Since spoken language has its own characteristics and features (Halliday, 1990), it is important to consider this point in designing spoken language materials (e.g., conversations) in textbooks. The textbook under study is *Bahasa Inggris Kelas XII* (Widiati et al., 2015), a curriculum-based EFL textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia for grade 12 of senior high school. The textbook was selected because it is the textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which means it is widely used in schools. Moreover, this study focuses on the 12th grade English textbook, the last grade in senior high level, indicating that the level of complexity is higher than that in the lower grades. Thus, the collocational knowledge at this level should be more complex, and thus it is interesting to investigate. The textbook is investigated compared to a general reference corpus, COCA, one of the largest

English corpora containing contemporary English, which is relevant to the language used in 2010s textbooks. COCA comprises more than one billion words of various English usage from 1990—2019 (Davies, 2008), showing that it is a huge and updated corpus. It is, hence, valid to represent ‘real’ English use. This study is expected to pedagogically inform materials writers in relation to the presentation of modal verbs in the textbook. In order to achieve this, this study attempts to answer the following questions: (1) what are the most frequent modal verbs used in the conversation section of the textbook *Bahasa Inggris* for grade XII of senior high school in Indonesia, (2) what are the most frequent modal verbs used in the spoken sub-corpus of COCA as the representation of ‘real’ English use?, and (3) to what extent the use of modal verbs in the textbook and corpus is similar and/or different?

Corpus and Teaching Materials

Corpus (*plural* corpora) derives from the Latin word that means ‘body.’ Corpus is defined as a digital or computerized collection of texts (Crawford, 2015; T. McEnery & Hardie, 2012; Sinclair, 1991; Timmis, 2015) and the study which bases the analysis on corpus is called corpus linguistics (T. McEnery & Hardie, 2012; T. McEnery & Wilson, 2001). Practically, it is used to assist linguistic studies because it comprises a large scale of qualitative and quantitative data, which enables more comprehensive and more accurate analysis (Burkette & Kretzschmar Jr., 2018). Corpus can be labelled as big data (in the linguistics field) since it consists of extremely large data, has a high speed of velocity, and is taken from various sources, for example, newspapers, novels, academic texts, blogs, etc. (Burkette & Kretzschmar Jr., 2018; Hurwitz et al., 2013).

The use of corpus, nevertheless, is not extensively used in ELT. Regarding materials design, corpus linguistics might benefit from exposing the students to native speakers' intuition in using chunks, collocation, and other multiword combinations and in dealing with what should be prioritized or emphasized in the teaching materials. In terms of providing sufficient information on collocation, chunks, it is nearly impossible to use the writer's intuition merely. This challenge can be overcome by consulting corpus in designing teaching materials. However, corpus consultation is less recognized in textbook writing due to some reason (Burton, 2012; Shin & Chon, 2011). Since corpus can provide frequency information on the use of a particular linguistic unit drawn from a large scale of data, it is plausible to rely on corpus investigation in considering what should be taught and/or what should be prioritized in teaching (Jones & Waller, 2015; T. McEnery & Xiao, 2013; Szudarski, 2017; Timmis, 2015). As an example, teachers cannot teach or cover all materials in grammar class, so principled decisions about the materials are crucial (Conrad, 2000). According to Conrad (2000), these principled decisions can be based on corpus information as done by Conrad & Biber (2009), who developed a corpus-based grammar book, providing grammar teaching and learning materials that are more relevant to the daily use of English. Not limited to a grammar book, there are also some coursebooks designed by using a corpus-based or corpus-informed approach, such as *In Focus* (Browne et al., 2013), *Touchstone* (McCarthy et al., 2014), *Unlock* (Ostrowska et al., 2014), among others. These books were designed by consulting the language aspect to corpora (e.g. Browne et al., 2013; McCarthy et al., 2014; Michael McCarthy, 2004).

In spite of the fact that not many teachers consider corpus to consult their materials, McCarthy (2004) says that corpus-informed materials are special. They are different from intuition-based materials since corpus-informed materials are based on actual use. Although

the results are adjusted to the teaching needs, the materials are not invented, and the contexts are authentic because the data sources are from empirical usage of language (e.g., newspapers, magazines, talk shows, fiction, academic texts, and so on). In terms of authenticity, it is also argued by Römer (2004) which claims that corpus can contribute to pedagogical aspects in terms of its authenticity. Apart from the debate of the term *authenticity* (see Widdowson, 1978), Gilmore (2007) emphasizes that what matters in teaching materials is their ability to equip learners to be communicatively competent. On top of everything, the main idea of being authentic is the text is not specifically designed for teaching purposes (Timmis, 2015). Thus, following this definition, a corpus is obviously authentic and might be able to provide as real language data as possible to achieve the aim of materials design in language teaching.

Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are the members of the auxiliary category in the English language (Payne, 2011; Warner, 2009), expressing modality (Palmer, 1990) in the dichotomy of non-modal auxiliaries (i.e., *do*, *have*, *be*). Classified as auxiliaries, modal verbs are the complement of verbal composition in which it semantically adds up the proposition or qualifies the proposition. As for the member of modal verbs category, this study refers to those listed by Quirk, et al. (1985) and other classification of modal verbs (e.g., Collins, 2009; Leech, Hundt, Mair, & Smith, 2009), so the modal verbs in this study include central (or core) modals and quasi-modals (the *quasi-modals* term refers to that described by Collins [2009] or equivalent with semi-modal (Leech, Hundt, Mair, & Smith, 2009). Thus, in a complete version, table 1 lists the 35 modal verbs. This set of modal verbs was selected since they are the complete list of modal verbs found from the body of literature which is also used by English speakers based on the

representation in COCA.

Table 1

List of English modals and quasi-modals

Modal Verbs	
Core/Central Modals	Quasi-Modals
<i>must, shall, should, will, would, can, could, may, might</i>	<i>ought to, dare, had better, would rather, need, need to, want to, have to, have got to, be going to, be able to, be supposed to, be willing to, be about to, be allowed to, be likely to, be due to, be bound to, be meant to, be obliged to be apt to</i>

Core modals differ from quasi-modals in terms of morphosyntactic and syntactic characteristics since core modals are likely to be in non-finite forms; the preterite forms do not necessarily indicate finiteness (Coates, 1983; Warner, 2009). Unlike core modals, quasi-modals agree to the subjects. Thus they have finite forms indicating past tense (Warner, 2009). Semantically, quasi-modals are less likely to express modality, different from the core modal counterparts. Diachronically, core modals are the “ancient” members of modal category since the earlier periods of English (Lightfoot, 1979; Warner, 2009), originating from lexical verbs (Brunner, 1970; Quirk & Wrenn, 1960). This set of modal verbs (i.e., core modals and quasi-modals) is recorded in COCA and some other corpora, such as *British National Corpus* and *Global Web-based English*, which indicates that these modal verbs are used by English speakers across the globe. Thus they are important to be mastered by English learners.

In regard to the presentation of modal verbs in textbooks, much work has proved that there are discrepancies in the use of modal verbs in textbooks and real use of English. Nozawa (2014) investigates the use of modal verbs in EFL textbooks to express politeness. The research results show that the proportion of politeness requests using modal verbs in two EFL textbooks

is only 11% which is not sufficient. As this happened in the EFL context, it cannot support the need of the learners to get as much exposure as possible from the teaching materials. Relevant to Nozawa's study, Durán et al. (2007) examine modal verbs in textbooks and grammar books. The results of this study indicate that the presentation of modal verbs in both textbooks and grammar books is not sufficient to cover the complex semantic and pragmatic aspects of the modal verbs. Another relevant research was carried out by Orlando (2009). Orlando (2009) analyzes the collocations of modal verbs in textbooks in comparison with Standard English corpora. This study shows that the frequency of modal verb patterns in the textbooks is different from those in the *British National Corpus*. In another context, in Finland, Nordberg (2010) explores the modality portrayed in Finnish upper secondary school EFL textbooks. It is found that the presentation of modal verbs expressing modality in school textbooks differs from the real use of English. EFL upper secondary school textbooks seem to offer a one-sided representation of the way the modal verbs are used. In the Asian context, two studies conducted by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012) and Mukundan & Khojasteh (2011) show that there are discrepancies between modal verb presented in Malaysian textbooks and real English use. Prior to those studies, Römer (2004) has identified that the way modal verbs are presented in teaching materials in Germany differs from the use of those modal verbs in contemporary spoken British English. She suggests that the results of this corpus investigation can be used to design the proper teaching materials as the non-empirically based teaching materials can be misleading.

Methodology

This study collected data of modal verb use from *Bahasa Inggris XII* (Widiati et al., 2015), an English textbook for 12th grade of senior high school used in Indonesia based on Curriculum

2013, and a general reference corpus, COCA (Davies, 2008). The textbook and corpus comparisons were made to identify language used in textbooks compared to language data recorded in the corpus (Cheng & Warren, 2007; Molavi et al., 2014; Tsai, 2015). The corpus of the textbook was collected from the conversation sections in the textbook, and the size of the corpus is 4,734 words. The data (i.e., frequency of modal verbs) was collected by identifying the occurrence of modal verbs in the conversation section of the textbook by using the *AntConc* corpus tool (Anthony, 2019). In *AntConc*, the concordance feature was used for the textbook corpus to determine the frequency of the modal verbs (i.e., the token frequency). From COCA, the data was collected by keyword entries, i.e., the 35 modal verbs. Since COCA is a general reference corpus consists of eight sub-corpus or text genres such as fiction, academic, newspaper, blog, movies, web, magazine, and spoken. To solve the problems in this study, this research used the spoken sub-corpus of COCA comparable to the textbook conversations. There are more than 127 million words in the spoken sub-corpus of COCA (Davies, 2008). The keyword search was conducted by inputting the keyword into the search column in the *List* feature and sorting the part of speech (PoS) into the modal verbs (verb.MODAL), as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1 Keyword search in COCA

In the analysis stage, the frequency of modal verbs in the corpus is normalized (nf) per one million words (see Brezina [2018]), while the frequency of the textbook is the raw frequency (rf) due to its small number of occurrences. The data analysis focuses on interpreting the frequency of modal verbs both in the textbook and COCA. In this study, the term token refers to the raw frequency since it focuses on the head-form. The interpretation relates the numerical data with relevant theories, such as sociolinguistics, since it is about language use and register analysis (Biber & Conrad, 2009) because this study deals with spoken language (e.g., conversation section of the textbook and spoken sub-corpus of COCA) as a mode of communication.

Results and Discussion

This section discusses the frequency of modal verbs in the textbook in comparison with that of COCA. To begin with, the analysis focuses on the frequency of modal verbs used in conversation in the textbook.

Frequency of Modal Verbs in Textbook

In the textbook *Bahasa Inggris* for grade XII, there are some modal verbs used to express modality, such as core modals *can*, *will*, *may*, *might* as well as quasi-modals *have to*, *need to*, *be going to*, *be supposed to*, and *want to*. Below is the complete list of modal verb frequencies found in the conversation sections of the textbook.

Table 2

Frequency of modal verbs in textbook Bahasa Inggris for grade XII

Modal Verbs (rf)	Frequency
can	12
will	11
have to	8
should	7
need to	3
be supposed to	2
must	2
want to	1
be going to	1
may	1
might	1

Table 2 shows that there are 11 modal verbs found in the conversation sections of the textbook, with 6 core modals (out of 9 core modals) and 5 quasi-modals (out of 26 quasi-modals). The findings show that modal verb *can* occupy the highest position, followed by *will*, *have to*, and *should* respectively, as illustrated in figure 2.

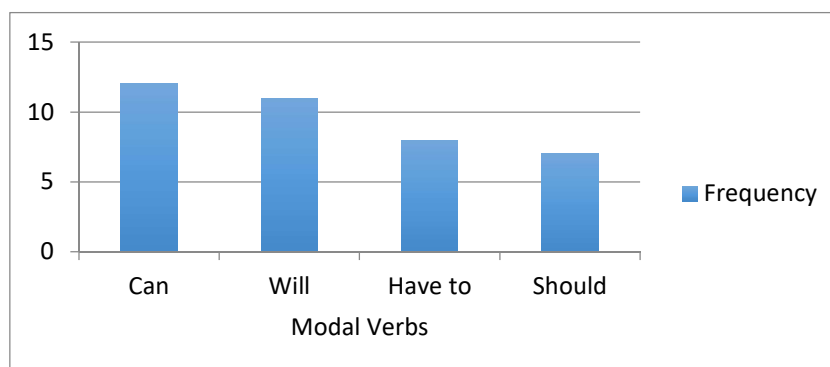


Figure 2 Modal verbs with the highest frequency in the textbook conversations

Figure 2 presents the most frequent modal verbs in the conversation parts of the textbook, clearly showing most of them belong to the core or central modals; they are *can*, *will*, and *should*. And there is one quasi-modal occupying the third most frequent modal verb, *have to*. It is compelling to see both core modals and quasi-modal occupying the four highest modal verbs in the textbook. As for the least frequent modal verbs used in the textbook, there are *want to*, *be going to*, *may*, and *might*; each modal verb is used once in the conversation sections. There are two core modals (*may*, *might*) and two quasi-modals (*want to* and *be going to*) occupying these positions. All of those verbs (*may*, *might*, *want to*, *be going to*) can be categorized as *hapax legomena* because they only appear once in the conversation of the textbook (Brezina, 2018).

Frequency of Modal Verbs in COCA

This section investigates the frequency of modal verbs as found in the spoken sub-corpus of COCA. Below is the complete list of the usage frequency.

Table 3

Frequency of modal verbs in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

Rank	Modal verb	(nf)	Freq	Rank	Modal verb	(nf)	Freq
1	would		2,768	19	be supposed to		81
2	can		2,527	20	be willing to		62
3	will		2,211	21	be about to		59
4	be going to		1,903	22	be allowed to		29
5	have to		1,508	23	wanna		25
6	could		1,435	24	be likely to		22
7	want to		1,119	25	shall		21
8	should		936	26	gotta		11
9	need		652	27	dare		10
10	may		632	28	would rather		9
11	might		466	29	be meant to		7
12	be able to		335	30	be due to		6
13	need to		334	31	be bound to		4
14	must		212	32	be inclined to		2
15	have got to		175	33	had better		2
16	used to		172	34	be obliged to		0.8
17	gonna		132	35	be apt to		0.7
18	ought to		99				

Table 3 presents the complete frequency of modal verbs in COCA and marks that there are four highest modal verbs in terms of their frequency of use; they are *would*, *can*, *will*, and *be going to*. The modal verb *would* occur 2,768 times per one million words, *can* occurs 2,527 times per one million words, *will* occurs 2,211 times per one million words, and *be going to*

occurs 1,903 times per one million word. The four most frequent modal verbs in spoken sub-corpus of COCA are presented in figure 3.

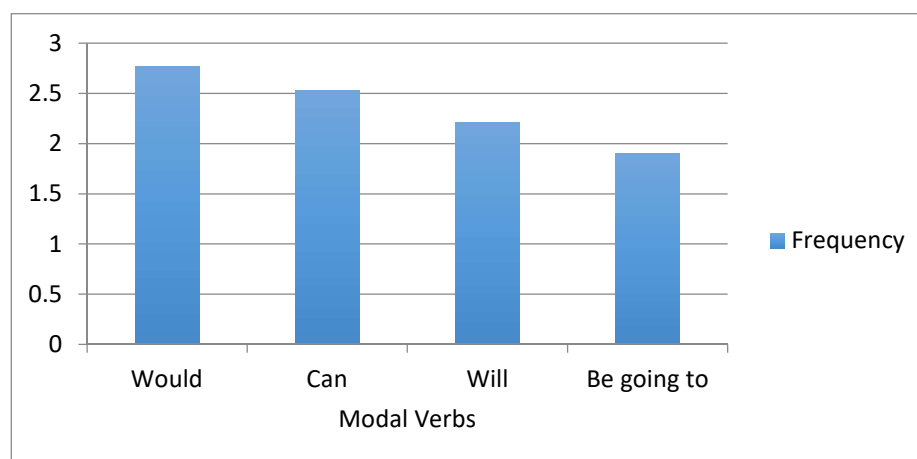


Figure 3 Modal verbs with the highest frequency in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

Considering that the data source is taken from spoken registers, it is obviously acceptable to see the use of *be going to* in the fourth highest. The first three most frequent modal verbs (*would*, *can*, *will*) belong to central or core modals, the prototype of the modal verb category. Hence, it is not surprising to find them in the highest use. The fourth position, intriguingly, is occupied by a quasi-modal *be going to*. This quasi-modal, based on Leech et al. (2009), tends to be more colloquial compared to its counterparts (e.g., *will*). In addition, the use of modal verb *have to* and *want to* also strengthen the characteristics of spoken language in the corpus, proving the hypothesis that both quasi-modals are likely to occur in spoken registers. Meanwhile, for the least frequent modal verbs, there are *be inclined to*, *had better*, *be obliged to*, and *be apt to* respectively, as shown in figure 4.

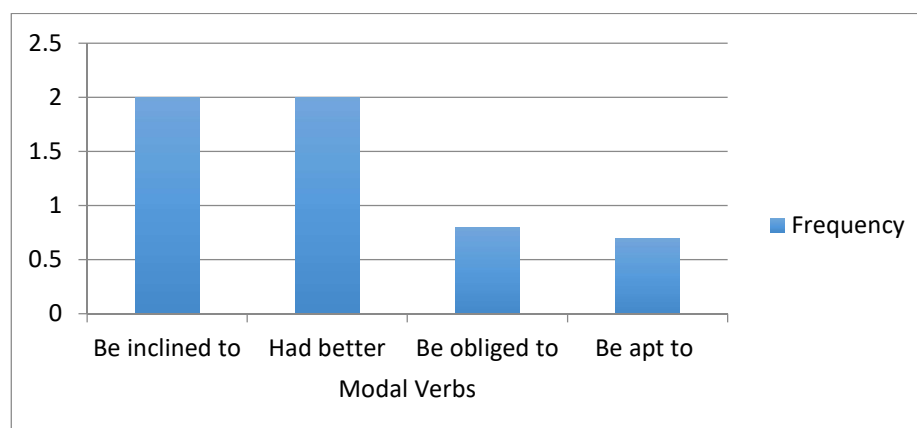


Figure 4 Modal verbs with the lowest frequency in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

Figure 4 presents all the lowest frequency modal verbs investigated in COCA, and all of them are quasi-modals. These results are not surprising due to the nature of the modal verb category. Core modals, albeit the decline (Leech et al., 2009), are *locked words* and relatively used more frequently than quasi-modals (Baker, 2011; Leech, 2013; Leech et al., 2009). It is interesting then to see how dynamic modal verb is, especially in spoken context, in which we can see the use of quasi-modals both in the highest and the lowest position. This underlies the reason for presenting modal verbs in the textbook.

Comparison Between Textbook and COCA

Based on the frequency of use of modal verbs, there are some discrepancies of the frequencies, as illustrated in figure 5.

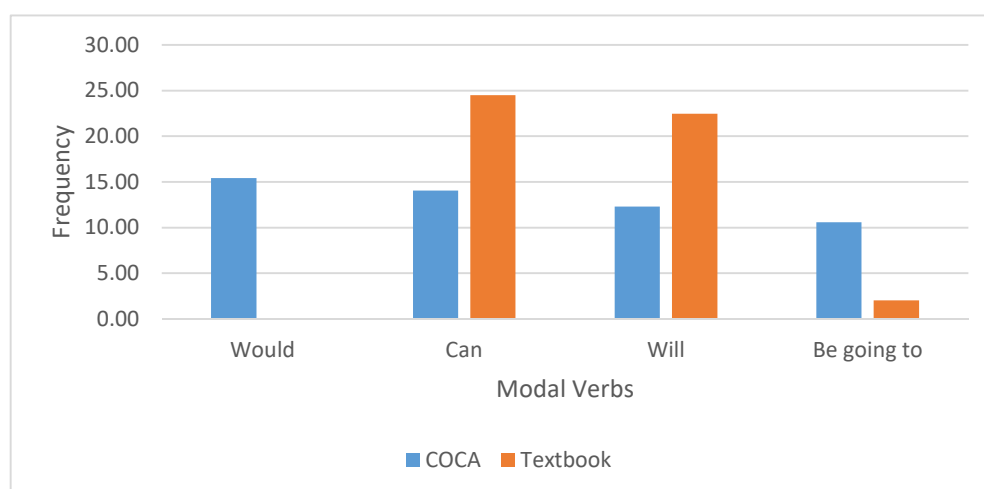


Figure 5 The most frequent modal verbs in COCA in comparison to the textbook (in percentage)

Given the results of frequencies both in the textbook and in the corpus, it is evident that there are some interesting points to highlight, either the similarities or the differences. As for the similarities, both textbook and COCA have presented core modals and quasi-modals altogether. Although core modals are the prototype of modal categories and belong to *locked words* (Baker, 2011; Brezina, 2018), the presentation of quasi-modals in the company of core modals is definitely complementary and able to equip the learners with more variants of modality realization. There is also the use of contracted form *'ll* (from the full form *will*) in the textbook, indicating that basically spoken language deals with efficiency, hence reduced forms are more preferable to minimize articulation (Crystal, 2008; Rogerson, 2006). It shows that some aspects regarding the use of modal verbs in the textbook do correspond to that in COCA.

Similarities and Differences of Modal Verbs in the Textbook and COCA

Regarding another similarity, it can be observed that the use of *have to* in the textbook is alike that in COCA. The use of *have to* is also more frequent than *must* either in the textbook

and COCA, showing that both are in accordance with the nature of spoken language, allowing for the use of more colloquial forms. The result of the investigation in COCA showing that *have to* is increasing is not surprising since it is part of the phenomena of Americanization; as stated by (Leech et al., 2009, p. 253) that increasing use of some quasi-modals is the colloquialization in American English. This marks two points: (1) quasi-modal usage is increasing, and (2) language change is moving to a speech-like style. Further discussion on these points, nevertheless, should be written in a different paper as it needs more space. Regardless, textbook language in terms of core modals and quasi-modal general usage, the existence of contracted form *'ll*, and the use of *have to* do correspond to that in real English use.

Despite the similarities in regard to the use of modal verbs in the textbook and in COCA, there are some differences to note, including the use of *be going to*, *would*, the variants of modal verbs, and the use of colloquial forms. In the conversation parts of the textbook, the use of quasi-modal *be going to* is surprisingly low (rf = 1). In COCA, *be going to* occupies the fourth most frequent modal verb, while the same position in the textbook is occupied by *have to*. Compared to the modal verb *will* (rf = 11), the gap between *will* and *be going to* is quite significant, indicating that in the conversation of the textbook, *be going to* is less prominent. According to (Biber & Conrad, 2009), following the results of corpus investigation, quasi-modals (or semi-modals) are used frequently in conversation. Quasi-modal *be going to* is one of the quasi-modals experiencing sharp increase (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Leech et al., 2009).

Another distinct frequency investigation is on the use of *would* as shown in COCA and textbook. In COCA, the modal verb *would* is the highest, but it is absent in the textbook. Perkins (1982: 265) claims that the use of preterite counterparts of modal verbs marks more

hypothetical, more tentative, more polite, more indirect, and more formal. This also holds for the use of *would*. As prediction is one of the basic human needs (related to *time*) (Rehm & Gadenne, 1990) and speakers do pay attention to semantic and pragmatic needs in real practice of language, thus it does make sense that *would* is of the highest. Moreover, *would* can also refer to ‘habitual past’ (McWhorter, 2018; Perkins, 1982). This fact is ignored or abandoned by the materials writer by not using *would* at all in the conversation section in the textbook. In textbook conversations, the modal verb *would* is absent (Table 1), but it is the most frequent modal verb in spoken COCA with 2,768 occurrences per one million words (table 2). The absence of *would* in the textbook should be taken into account because it might result in unfamiliarity in using *would* in conversation among learners, while it is actually used so frequently in spoken English as recorded in COCA (table 3 and figure 3).

Observing the findings, it is also intriguing to discuss the least frequent modal verbs in the textbook and COCA. All of the least frequent modal verbs in COCA are from the quasi-modal category (*be inclined, had better, be obliged to, be apt to*), not the core modal category. In the textbook, the least frequent modal verbs are *may, might, want to, and be going to*, both from core modals and quasi-modals. This is actually interesting since core modals occupying the least frequent positions in the textbook. The two quasi-modals *want to* and *be going to* are listed as colloquial modals of which they occur more frequently in conversation or other spoken registers as described by COCA and Leech et al.’s investigation (Leech et al., 2009). In the textbook, unfortunately, these quasi-modals are not well presented and become the *hapax legomena*, indicating the minimum presentation of the modal verbs. The overlook of quasi-modals in textbook conversations is not in line with the frequent use of quasi-modals in spoken corpora.

The Variants of Modal Verbs in the Textbook and COCA

Although both textbook and COCA use core modals and quasi-modals in terms of variants, the number of variants is different. COCA obviously provides all modal verbs, while the textbook merely uses a limited number of modal verbs—although it is understandable due to more limited space. For core modals, there are *can*, *will*, *must*, *should*, *may*, *might* (six out of nine core modals), and there are five quasi-modals (out of 26 quasi-modals), such as *have to*, *need to*, *be supposed to*, *want to*, *be going to*. Although textbook definitely has more limited space, the representativeness of modal verb variants should be considered quite well by the writers. As quasi-modals are typical to a conversation (Leech et al., 2009), they should also be presented well in the textbook conversations. In contemporary English, including spoken English, the use of quasi-modal is increasing (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Leech et al., 2009). Compared to other registers, the use of quasi-modals is the highest. Hence, the unequal use of core modals and quasi-modals in conversation, as shown in the textbook, is a mismatch that should be revisited. The core modals, however, remain the most frequent ones, indicating that, basically, modal verbs, in general, are important linguistic characteristic in conversation (Biber & Conrad, 2009; Biber & Quirk, 2012) since frequency indicates the usefulness and importance of the linguistic units (Baker, 2010; Bybee, 2007). In other words, the presentation of both core modals and quasi-modals in the textbook should be quite equal to achieve the communicative goal.

Another point to consider is the use of the contracted modal verb. In the textbook, there is only *'ll* (from *will*) used while there are some other contracted forms in relation to modal verbs, e.g., *'d* (*would*), *can't*, *won't*, etc. The contracted form *'ll* in the textbook is only found twice, and no other contractions are used.

(1)

Anita: May I help you?

Fatah: Yes, please. I need a book entitled “Visiting Seattle.”

Anita: Sure. We have one copy left. I’ll get it for you.

Fatah: Thanks.

(Widiati et al., 2015, p. 7)

(2)

Made: We have to submit the report of our visit to Lake Toba tomorrow, but I think there are still a lot of problems with the grammar, spelling, and so on.

Hilda: What if I take half of it, and I’ll edit the rest after I finish this one.

Made: That’s very thoughtful of you. Thanks a lot.

(Widiati et al., 2015, p. 7)

Conversation 1 takes place in a bookstore, and the conversation involves the buyer and the shopkeeper, so the context is casual and informal. Conversation 2 happens between friends discussing their report assignment. In regard to the context, the use of ‘ll, thus, is acceptable.

There are other informal conversations in the textbook, but contraction is not used, as in conversation (3).

(3)

Roni:? Our favorite singer Maher Zain is touring again next month.

Ida:! That

Roni: We *will* get a discounted price for the concert tickets in the news agency
if we can show our student ID card

Ida: Let's do it.

(Widiati et al., 2015, p. 47)

Conversation (3) happens between friends with casual context, so the use of contracted form normally happens, although it is not, and there is the full form *will* instead, preceded by the pronoun *we*. In COCA, on the other hand, the use of *will* in the spoken register is 144.720 per one million words (in this study, it is counted as *will*). The pronoun *we*, based on COCA investigation, co-occur with *will* quite frequently, as shown in figure 6.









Corpus of Contemporary American English																	
SEARCH				FREQUENCY				CONTEXT				OVERVIEW					
92	1990	SPOK	CNN_NewsSun	A	B	C	FRANKEN We need to take a break right here . We				'll	be back with more in just a moment . Commercial break FRANKEN					
93	2011	SPOK	CNN_Behar	A	B	C	? LONGORIA: Ok . All right . BEHAR: Ok . We				'll	have more with the lovely Eva when we come back . BEHAR:					
94	2010	SPOK	NBC_Dateline	A	B	C	out who did this , we will arrest them , we				'll	convict them , MORRISON : You really believe that yourself at					
95	2017	SPOK	Fox: Fox News Sunday	A	B	C	. Is repeal and replace in trouble ? (voice-over) : We				'll	ask Republican senator , Dr. Bill Cassidy . Plus , as North					
96	1994	SPOK	Ind_Limbaugh	A	B	C	led by Democrats had nothing to do with politics . We				'll	be back after this with midnight basketball leagues . Wait till					
97	1991	SPOK	CNN_King	A	B	C	Sandy Shaw and include more of your phone calls . We				'll	be back in Washington on Monday . Hugh Hefner is going to					
98	1993	SPOK	ABC_DayOne	A	B	C	PrimeTime on Thursday and 20/20 on Friday , and then we				'll	be back next week . I'm Forrest Sawyer . For all					
99	2016	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A	B	C	country . And if we ca n't do it , we				'll	get them in . KELLY# So you -- (APPLAUSE)					
100	2017	SPOK	ABC: The View	A	B	C	what ? We 're going to go prepare , and we				'll	be right back with the story of Joy . You guys ,					
101	2007	SPOK	Fox_OReilly	A	B	C	bigotry and outrages like the San Francisco church invasion ? We				'll	find out . And later , the ever controversial Ann Coulter					
102	2014	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A	B	C	it again . TERRY-GROSS# Charlie Haden recorded in 1983 . We				'll	continue our tribute to him after we take a short break .					
103	2015	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A	B	C	want an -- and we have a discussion . WILLIAMS# We				'll	see how it goes . PERINO# Well , thankfully France is on					
104	2009	SPOK	CNN_Dobbs	A	B	C	took years to make it to the Supreme Court . We				'll	tell you why , next . PILGRIM : More questions tonight about					
105	2012	SPOK	CBS: This Morning	A	B	C	ten , nine Central with all the highlights . And we				'll	talk to the night 's big winners . That 's Friday here					
106	2009	SPOK	NPR_TellMore	A	B	C	next day they said if anybody comes to school , we				'll	kill you : The headmaster got on his bicycle . He pedaled					
107	1991	SPOK	PBS_Newshour	A	B	C	a compassionate , caring way . MS-WOODRUFF : Well , we				'll	certainly have to see what happens with the vote and what happens					
108	2014	SPOK	NPR: Fresh Air	A	B	C	originals . Let 's take a short break and then we				'll	talk some more . This is FRESH AIR . (MUSIC) TERRY-GROSS# If					
109	1993	SPOK	ABC_20/20	A	B	C	know what we 're going to do , but we'll we				'll	for sure get her to America SHERR You 're convinced you can					
110	2007	SPOK	NPR_TellMore	A	B	C	MORE from NPR News . Later in the program , we				'll	talk about whether South Africa is at a political crossroads ,					
111	1991	SPOK	ABC_Brinkley	A	B	C	then Kuwait will not longer have to import gasoline . We				'll	be back with all the rest of today 's program in a					
112	1990	SPOK	CNN_King	A	B	C	and it 's way up on the best-seller list . We				'll	be right back . Commercial break KING : Our guest is former					
113	2017	SPOK	Fox: The Five	A	B	C	and the police are now investigating what happens next . We				'll	show it to you when " The Five " returns . GUTFELD#					

Figure 6 Contracted forms of we'll

The materials writers then can consider contracting pronoun *we* and modal verb *will* (conversation 3) into *we'll* to create a more natural dialogue in a colloquial context. This is ignored as in other parts of conversations in the textbook. More example of a contracted form related to the modal verb is *'d* (full form *would*) that is not found at all in the textbook. More importantly, the spoken register is known for its efficiency, thus allows for shortened or reduced forms, including modal verbs (Nesselhauf, 2014). Nonetheless, there is no phonetically reduced modal verb at all (e.g., *gonna*, *gotta*, *wanna*) used in the textbook. Meanwhile, one of the linguistic characteristics of conversation (and other spoken registers) is the use of contracted forms (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 90). It is plausible since, in conversation, the speakers often take shortcuts to make the communication effective and efficient. As exemplified in COCA, *gonna* (reduced form of *be going to*) is used 132 times per one million words. This corresponds to the need for spoken language to be spontaneous and be produced as fast as possible as a response to the interlocutors. Besides, naturally human will minimally use the effort to get the maximum result as stated by Zipf (1949) that is known as the *principle of least effort* which means that human tends to produce fewer words by contracting or reducing the words. In language practice, speakers are more likely to reduce the words or pronounce two words into one to minimize the articulation effort (Crystal, 2008; Rogerson, 2006). According to Nesselhauf (2014), contracted or reduced forms of modals can be found more frequently in spoken language. Hence, the absence of phonetically reduced modal verbs in a conversation of the textbook is not in accordance with the nature of spoken language.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that there are mismatches of modal verb use in the textbook and in the corpus. These results are in accordance with the results of the previous work on corpus investigation toward modal verbs in textbooks. This study confirmed

the results of the study conducted by several previous studies (Durán et al., 2007; Nordberg, 2010; Orlando, 2009; Römer, 2004), which emphasize that the modal verbs presented in textbooks are not in accordance with the use of modal verbs in the real use of English. In terms of the Asian context, this study corresponds to the studies carried out by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012) and Mukundan & Khojasteh (2011), which also exhibit the discrepancies between modal verb presentation in textbooks and real use. This means that this study contributes to strengthen the scientific justification toward the quality of textbooks and to emphasize the significance of corpus in designing teaching materials, especially in presenting the language content (McEnery & Wilson, 2001).

Conclusion

The findings discussed in this study present some significant points to take into consideration. In regard to modal verb selection used in conversation sections of the textbook, there are some mismatches, including the absence of *would* as the most frequent modal verb in spoken sub-corpus of COCA, the absence of phonetically reduced modal verbs (i.e., *gonna*, *gotta*, *wanna*), the less various example of contracted forms, the less frequent use of *be going to* and *want to*, lack of colloquial modal verbs, and the limited variants of core modals and quasi-modals used in the textbook. It is evident that, although it is a conversation (i.e., spoken register), because it is written in/for textbook, the language used in the conversation is inevitably influenced by the written register. Meanwhile, conversation naturally involves participants producing language in real-time with limited time, so the speakers produce language by taking shortcuts, therefore allows the use of contractions and reduced modal verbs. Moreover, the use of *would* should be emphasized since it is the most frequent modal verb in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

due to its various pragmatic functions. The results of this corpus investigation, however, do not purport to claim correctness. Instead, it aims to map the probabilistic of language use, in this case, is modal verb use.

Based on the findings of this study, the textbook writers should consider how to present modal verbs in the textbook conversations, e.g., by looking at the most frequent modal verbs in a spoken corpus. As linguistic units may differ in particular genres or registers, it is also important to notice the language used in conversations, especially the modal verbs. For instance, the modal verb *would* in spoken sub-corpus of COCA is the most frequent one, but it is absent in the textbook conversations. The absence of a very frequent linguistic unit should be avoided in designing teaching materials. By consulting a corpus, materials writers can recheck their materials and pedagogically adjust them to meet the need of teaching and learning practice. This study can also contribute as a reference for other relevant studies within the Asian or EFL context, and this study can provide empirical basis in terms of modal verb discrepancies in textbooks and real use of English in the EFL context. As for future studies, it is expected that the studies can be carried out by analyzing more textbooks for other grades of senior high school level.

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Examining EFL Learners' Public Speaking Anxiety through Metaphor Analysis

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Abstract

Speaking is the most anxiety-provoking language skill, and it is regarded an obstacle to L2 learning achievement. However, the abstract nature of anxiety has led to a gap in existing research, specifically about measuring perceived anxiety levels and identifying causes. To address this gap, the current study proposed a new method to examine English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' public speaking anxiety (PSA) from a cognitive perspective. A total 300 EFL university students were recruited. The study investigated the participants' level of PSA through the quantitative Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) scale and identified the main factors leading to their PSA through qualitative metaphor analysis. Three learner variables were taken into consideration: gender, nationality, and English proficiency level. The results showed that the EFL learners had a moderate level of PSA in public speaking. Nationality and English proficiency level significantly predicted the participants' anxiety levels, while gender did not. The results of the metaphor analysis indicated that being judged by others was the greatest factor in the participants' PSA. The results also indicated that the key to confidence in public speaking is professional training and constant practice. The implications of this study will add to existing findings on PSA with its new method of metaphor analysis to help teachers and curriculum planners improve the pedagogy of public speaking for learners in the EFL context.

Key words: *Public speaking anxiety, Metaphor analysis, EFL, Speaking, Conceptual metaphors*

Introduction

The trend of globalization has driven institutes of higher education to internationalize their curricula by setting English language ability as the main curriculum objective (Boromisza-Habashi, Hughes, & Malkowski, 2016) and to regard communicative competence as important as subject-specific knowledge in academic fields (Jiang, 2010; Yeh, 2013). The development of globalization has also changed the means of communication. Frequent international contact and the expanding global market have led to a strong demand for direct and prompt communication. However, speaking is regarded as the most anxiety-provoking language skill for foreign language learners (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Luo, 2014). Studies have shown a strong correlation between speaking anxiety (SA) and foreign language anxiety (FLA) (Horwitz et al., 1986), indicating that an unsatisfactory oral performance may lead to FLA and consequently negatively influence L2 learning achievement (Aida, 1994; Basic, 2011; Liu, 2006; Said & Weda, 2018).

Among the various types of speaking activities, public speaking is one of the greatest challenges for all English learners (Chan & Wu, 2004). Public speaking refers to the act of performing a speech in front of a live audience in a structured, deliberate manner to inform, influence, or entertain them (Public Speaking, n.d.). Aside from the factors that cause general L2 speaking anxiety, such as unhappy first language learning experiences, apprehension about high-stakes tests, fear of negative evaluations, or fear of failing the class (Horwitz & Young, 1991; Mak, 2011), more sensitive factors are involved in L2 public speaking anxiety, including being uncomfortable speaking to an audience of strangers (Gkonou, 2011; Suleimenova, 2013) and cross-cultural differences in communication patterns (Barker, 2016; Boromisza-Habashi

et al., 2016). Moreover, learners' gender (Luo, 2014), nationality (Woodrow, 2006), and language proficiency (Liu, 2016) can result in different levels of PSA. Since PSA is attributed to both physical and mental aspects, internally and externally, personally and socially, it is a complicated topic for educators and researchers to deal with (Genard, 2015; Griffin, 2009).

Anxiety is a subjective feeling involving self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors (Horwitz et al., 1986) in cognitive, social, and personal aspects (Young, 1990). The abstract nature of anxiety has led to a methodological gap, which has consequently become an obstacle to interpreting survey results. In previous research, instruments adopted to measure the intensity of anxiety include questionnaires, interviews, and self-reports.

Although these instruments assisted researchers in identifying variables of anxiety, they failed to reveal cause and effect relationships. Moreover, quantitative methods such as questionnaires that rely on the measurement of scales cannot precisely illustrate cognitive influences, while qualitative methods like interviews and self-reports may be too subjective to reflect real causes. To address this gap, the current study developed the new method of metaphor analysis from a cognitive perspective to examine English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' PSA to find the causes of their PSA and to reveal cause and effect relationships.

Metaphor analysis is a method of discourse analysis that stems from the contemporary view of metaphors. The contemporary theory of metaphor deems a metaphor as a way of conceptualizing the world, and thus it manifests what people think of in everyday life (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Moser (2000) argued that metaphor analysis is useful for accessing tacit knowledge and exploring "social and cultural processes of understanding" (p. 5). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) also suggested that searching for appropriate personal metaphors can be useful for self-understanding. Such analysis has been used as a valid analytical tool in the field of

language learning to explore teachers' and students' beliefs about learning (e.g., Nagamine, 2012; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008; Wan, Low, & Li, 2011). Adopting metaphor analysis to investigate abstract emotions such as anxiety may provide insights into this complicated psychological phenomenon.

The present study explored EFL learners' public speaking anxiety using the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) scale (McCroskey, 1970) and metaphor analysis. 300 EFL university students took part in the study, the majority of whom were from the Asia Pacific region. To confine the environmental variables to the language-learning paradigm, this study limited the occasion of public speaking to academic situations, such as delivering oral presentations in class, at conferences, or in public lectures. The study aimed to identify the causes of public speaking anxiety in EFL learners, compare the causes that resulted in high-level and low-level anxiety, and associate the causes with various learners' variables.

Literature Review

Studies on Public Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety can increase in public speaking scenarios. Factors that cause PSA, in addition to those identified as related to SA in a general sense, include unfamiliarity with the type of communication, lack of necessary skills, insufficient preparation, self-consciousness about being conspicuous in front of people, perception of being "subordinate" to the audience, uncomfortable talking to strangers, and fear of appearing nervous, among others (Genard, 2015; Griffin, 2009).

Learner variables, such as gender, proficiency level, and cultural background, also play an important role in determining levels of PSA. Luo (2014) found that gender significantly

affected the PSA of undergraduate Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) learners, but not proficiency level. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) posited that “as experience and proficiency increase, anxiety declines in a fairly consistent manner” (p. 111), implying that language proficiency may be associated with PSA in some way. For instance, Liu’s (2006) study with Chinese EFL undergraduates found that the more proficient students tended to be less anxious. In addition to gender and language proficiency, Woodrow (2006) found that EFL learners from Confucian Heritage Cultures such as China, Korea, and Japan were more anxious than other ethnic groups, suggesting that cultural background may be involved in the magnitude of PSA. Sovicheth’s (2017) study involving Cambodian university students found that their beliefs about the use of the target language significantly predicted their foreign language anxiety, indicating that the ideology of the EFL learners affected their anxiety levels.

Researchers have drawn on self-reported scales to measure learners’ perceived anxiety levels in response to the subjective nature of anxiety. For instance, Woodrow (2006) developed the second-language-speaking anxiety scale (SLSAS) for CFL learners in Australia. Williams and Andrade (2008) adopted a questionnaire to compare differences in emotional responses between Japanese and Americans. Hsu (2012) used the PRPSA scale to particularly target Taiwanese EFL learners’ public speaking anxiety. Factors leading to PSA also include cognitive, social, and cultural aspects, which may not be revealed through questionnaires. These issues highlight the importance of finding new measures to facilitate a more comprehensive investigation of L2 learners’ perceptions of anxiety, such as the cognitive-oriented method of metaphor analysis proposed by the current study.

Metaphor Analysis

Metaphor analysis is rooted in the contemporary theory of metaphors, which regard metaphors as ordinary language that manifests what people think of in daily life (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Metaphors make explicit how people think about things, make sense of reality, and solve problems (Schön, 1998). In the same vein, metaphor analysis has been deemed a useful tool for investigating people's opinions, beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes (Moser, 2000).

A metaphor is a conceptual mechanism “by which we understand and structure one domain of experience in terms of another domain of a different kind” (Johnson, 1987, p. 15). The conceptual domain that requires explanation is called the target domain, and the one that is applied to explain it is called the source domain. Each conceptual domain is structured by an image schema that is constructed from the cognitive typology of daily life experiences, and the structures are invariant (Lakoff, 1993). Through analyzing the image schema of the two domains and matching corresponding traits, an abstract concept can be understood in terms of the prototype of a concrete one. This cognitive association between the target and source domains is presented as a conceptual metaphor. For example, the abstract concept of life can be explained by the concrete idea of a journey, forming the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. The matching of the correspondences includes ontological correspondences—mapping the entities in the source domain onto those in the target domain—and epistemic correspondences—mapping knowledge about the source domain onto the target domain. The two types of correspondences can be explicitly displayed as metaphoric mappings. Example (1) shows the mappings of the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

Example (1)*Metaphoric Mappings of the Conceptual Metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY*

Source: JOURNEY	↔	Target: LIFE
Travelers	↔	People
Journey	↔	Lifetime
Destination	↔	Life goals
When commencing a journey, travelers may lose their direction and miss their destination.	↔	When living a life, people may lose their direction and miss their life goals.
Travelers need to choose in which direction to go.	↔	People need to choose which way to live.

Metaphors are viewed as an important tool of communication. The cognitive operations that human beings use to make sense of experiences are also used to make sense of language (Kövecses, 2005). The creation of metaphors enables people to express their insights as well as to solidify their understanding. Metaphors have proved to be of high instrumental value; for instance, using metaphors in psychological therapy is believed to improve therapist-client communication (Kopp, 1995). Metaphors are often used as an instrument to describe reality, from concrete to abstract, from simple to complex objects (Wang, Jia, & Lacasella, 2005). During the process of mapping, abstract and complex things inherit partial attributes of other simple things that help people understand the world they live in. Metaphors also empower speakers to freely express ideas in a way they are comfortable with, such as therapists explaining sensitive situations and clients giving feedback (Miloni, 2007).

The communicative function of metaphors in metaphor analysis has drawn the attention of educators and educational psychologists in the field of education. Metaphor analysis has been applied to various paradigms, such as discourse in classroom interactions, teachers' perceptions of teaching, and learners' beliefs about learning. For instance, Mouraz et al. (2013) observed and analyzed conversations in a doctoral-level course conducted in Portuguese and found that the use of metaphors in class was synonymous with greater attention by students

and served as intellectual “food” (p. 109). Nagamine (2012) investigated Japanese pre-service EFL teachers’ beliefs by asking them to complete sentences with metaphors, such as “Teaching English in Japan is like...” and “A good English teacher is like...”, and found that their beliefs were greatly influenced by their practicum experience and the importance of teacher education. Students’ perceptions of teachers’ roles have also been found through metaphor analysis. For instance, Nikitina and Furuoka (2008) analyzed Malaysian students’ metaphors in the sentence “A language teacher is like...” and found that teachers as nurturers and entertainers were the two roles that the majority of the students perceived. These studies not only proved the linkage between metaphors and thought but also indicated the potential of using metaphors to understand educational issues.

In summary, metaphors are a cognitive instrument that creates a path to understanding new concepts. Metaphor analysis can be a useful instrument for delving into an unconscious mindset, shaping or adjusting existing presumptions and finding and resolving emotional issues that cause anxiety. The results of these studies on teachers’ beliefs and students’ perceptions have provided evidence proving the methodological value of metaphor analysis. However, previous studies ended their analyses at the stage of showing conceptual metaphors. Source domains should be properly elaborated so that deeper conceptions of the target domain can be concretized. In the present study, metaphor analysis met the requirements for the investigation of public speaking anxiety, and metaphoric mappings embodied abstract feelings accordingly.

Rationale and Research Questions

In light of the nature of speaking anxiety in EFL learners and the potential for metaphor analysis in language education, the present study aimed to investigate the public speaking

anxiety of EFL learners to identify the main factors that influenced their levels of anxiety in public speaking and to propose pedagogical suggestions for decreasing their PSA. Three learner variables, including gender, English proficiency level, and nationality, were taken into consideration for their correlations with EFL learners' PSA. Metaphor analysis was adopted to investigate the causes of public speaking anxiety from cognitive aspects. The research questions are as follows:

1. Do EFL learners feel anxious when speaking English in public? How anxious are they?
2. What are the factors that lead to EFL learners' public speaking anxiety? In what ways do the factors affect their perception of anxiety?
3. Do gender, English proficiency level, and nationality influence EFL learners' public speaking anxiety? If so, in what ways do each of them affect anxiety?

Methodology

Participants

The participants in the study were 300 EFL learners who fulfilled three criteria: (1) they were from places in which English is learned as a foreign language; (2) they were currently enrolled university students in their junior year or above, a stage at which they were advanced in their majors and had more opportunities to make academically-oriented public speeches; and (3) they had a general English proficiency level above the low-intermediate level (i.e., B1, the third level of English proficiency, which is "intermediate") in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), and they could "produce simple connected text on topics" (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 24) in performing public speaking.

In addition, three independent variables were taken into consideration: gender, nationality, and English proficiency level. It is worth noting that, since the venue for the research was in Taiwan, two-thirds of the participants (200) were from Taiwan, while the remaining one-third (100) were from 14 EFL countries, including Vietnam (23), Japan (20), China (14), Indonesia (8), the Philippines (8), Tajikistan (5), Korea (4), Malaysia (4), Thailand (3), Turkmenistan (3), Turkey (2), Russia (2), South Africa (1)¹, India (1), and Cambodia (1). However, the number of participants from each EFL country was rather small compared with the number of Taiwanese participants, making direct statistical comparisons between Taiwanese participants and the counterparts from each region invalid. For this practical reason, the nationalities of the participants were divided into two groups: the Taiwanese Group that includes those from Taiwan ($n = 200$), and the Non-Taiwanese Group that includes those from other EFL countries ($n = 100$). The distribution and number of participants in each group are listed in Table 1.

The Taiwanese participants filled out the survey on paper, while the non-Taiwanese EFL participants completed the survey through an online questionnaire form. The Taiwanese participants were currently enrolled university students from five universities in northern and southern Taiwan. The non-Taiwanese group were recruited from Taiwanese universities and universities in America as overseas students. An informed consent was provided first for the

¹ Though English is listed as one of the eleven official languages in South Africa, it is limitedly used in public domains; the defines English as “the working language” in spoken and written communication regarding intradepartmental and interdepartmental administration (Statistics South Africa, 2016). According to the Government of South Africa (2021), “English was spoken by 8,1% of individuals at home, making it the sixth most common home language in South Africa.” Judging based on these conditions, plus the fact that the participant was taking ESL classes at an university in America as being surveyed, the participant was included in the present study as an EFL learner.

participants to read. Once they agreed to participate by signing or ticking on the consent form, the survey continued. The average age of the Taiwanese participants was 21 years old, while for the non-Taiwanese group it was 25 years old.

Table 1

Distribution and Number of Participants

		Gender			
		Male		Female	
Nationality		Taiwanese	Non-Taiwanese	Taiwanese	Non-Taiwanese
English proficiency level ¹	CEFR B1	17	5	23	13
	CEFR B2	36	7	57	17
	CEFR C1	17	11	31	24
	CEFR C2	8	5	11	18
N of participants (<i>N</i> = 300)		78	28	122	72

Note. ¹The participants reported their scores on various language proficiency tests; the scores were then converted to the corresponding CEFR levels.

Instruments

The instrument used in the study was a survey comprised of three parts: (1) a survey to collect background information on the participants; (2) self-reported public speaking anxiety to measure the EFL learners' anxiety level during public speaking; and (3) metaphor analysis to explore the learners' concepts of public speaking using metaphors (see Appendix A for the complete survey).

Background Survey

The survey on the participants' background information included age, nationality, mother tongue, gender, and English proficiency level. The participants were assigned ID numbers in order to retain their anonymity throughout the study.

Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety

To measure the PSA of the participants, the study adopted the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) scale developed by McCroskey (1970), which is a validated scale strictly tailored for public speaking anxiety. The PRPSA scale was found in McCroskey's (1970) study holding high internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$) with 1434 college students as well as sufficient test-retest reliability ($\alpha = 0.83$) with 769 university students over a 10-day period, and such reliability maintained high in the subsequent research (e.g., McCroskey, 1997, 2009). In addition, the PRPSA scale has been used in EFL contexts (e.g., Chen, 2009; Hsu, 2012), and thus it was deemed suitable for the present study. The PRPSA scale consists of 34 statements concerning feelings related to giving a speech in a public context. The statements describe conditions that a speaker may perceive throughout the speaking event; some statements are about emotional feelings (e.g., statement 3: "My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.") and some are about physical conditions (e.g., statement 32: "My heart beats very fast while I present a speech."). Each statement is accompanied by a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The participants were asked to read each statement and indicate their level of agreement.

Metaphor Analysis

To approach the causes of PSA from a cognitive perspective, metaphor analysis was developed for this study. The participants were asked to complete a sentence in English based on the given prompt: "Making a public speech in English is like... because...". The prompt was composed of two parts. The first half of the prompt followed the form of conceptual metaphors (i.e., X is Y) listed MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH as the target domain and

left the source domain open for the participants to elaborate. However, to facilitate the metaphor-creating process and to avoid difficulties in writing grammatical sentences, the prompt purposefully made explicit the conjunction “like.” Though the explicit conjunction “like” deviates from the common metaphor construction, it was added to facilitate the metaphor-creating process and to avoid difficulties in writing grammatical sentences. The second half of the prompt used the subordinating conjunction “because” to encourage the participants to explicate the cognitive mappings between the source and target domains.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the PRPSA Scale

To reiterate, the PRPSA scale uses a five-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree). McCroskey (1970; 2013) states the scoring steps listed below:

Step 1. Add scores for items 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34

Step 2. Add scores for items 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 24, and 26

Step 3. Complete the following formula: $PRPSA = 72 - \text{Total from Step 2} + \text{Total from Step 1}$

Calculating the total points following the formula, the PRPSA scores range between 34 and 170. According to McCroskey (1970), PSA is considered high if the total score is above 131, low if it is below 98, and moderate if it is between 98 and 131. Richmond and McCroskey (1998) further specified scores on the PRPSA scale to discriminate very low (34 to 84), moderately low (85 to 92), moderate (93 to 110), moderately high (111 to 119), and very high

(120 to 170) levels of public speaking anxiety. In order to facilitate straightforward comparisons, the present study used McCroskey's (1970) interpretation in categorizing the participants into three levels of PSA.

The mean PRPSA scores of the 300 participants were first calculated to provide descriptive statistics. Comparisons were made between the groups regarding gender, nationality, and language proficiency level. Independent sample t-tests and multiple regression models were adopted.

Metaphor Analysis Process

The process of metaphor analysis consisted of the following five stages:

Stage 1. Naming and labeling collected metaphor samples. In this stage, the metaphor samples supplied by the participants were collected, organized, and typed into an Excel spreadsheet. Each metaphor sample was divided into two parts and inputted into two separate columns: one column for "Making a public speech in English is like..." and the other for "because...". The first column represented the target domain, and the second column displayed the source domain.

Stage 2. Clarifying and eliminating invalid metaphor samples. In the second stage, the typed raw data of the metaphor samples were scanned to identify invalid metaphor samples. According to Saban et al. (2007), metaphor samples are regarded as invalid under the following conditions: (1) plain description or no mention of a metaphor at all; (2) metaphor with inconsistent comparisons or an incomprehensible relationship between the target and the source; (3) idiosyncratic metaphors; and (4) incomplete response. However, if a sample contained grammatically inaccurate phrases or sentences, such as incorrect verb tenses or

imprecise wordings, as long as the metaphor was understandable and the conceptual metaphor was recognizable, the sample was still included for consideration.

Stage 3. *Sorting and categorizing conceptual themes.* The remaining valid metaphor samples were analyzed and put into categories according to the conceptual themes revealed through the sources. The least number of metaphor samples required to constitute a category was decided to avoid bias of extreme cases: a category could only be established with no fewer than three metaphor samples; metaphors that were mentioned by a single participant were categorized as “other.”

Stage 4. *Establishing conceptual metaphors.* The categorized conceptual themes were compiled and listed in the form of conceptual metaphors, such as MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH IS TAKING ON CHALLENGES. Note that since the target, MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH was listed as a gerund expressing a state of being, the source was also presented in the form of a gerund, as in TAKING ON CHALLENGES.

Stage 5. *Developing ontological and epistemic mappings.* Once the conceptual metaphors were established, the corresponding ontological and epistemic mappings were developed based on linguistic instantiations. The two metaphoric mappings were meant to illustrate the structure—the image schema—of each conceptual domain involved in a conceptual metaphor.

The data were formatted for analysis (Stage 1) by research assistants. Then, two experts in the field of English language teaching, including the researcher of the study, cooperated on the metaphor analysis of all 300 metaphor samples. These two experts first performed Stage 2 together, screening and finalizing the metaphor samples for analysis. No invalid metaphor samples were identified, perhaps owing to the prompt, which highlighted the necessary

elements of metaphors with the key transitions “like” and “because.” Subsequently, the two experts together worked on the 30 metaphor samples in Stage 3 to Stage 5 to ensure consistent understanding in the analyzing process, and then they individually analyzed and categorized the rest of the metaphor samples (Stage 3). Upon completion, they compared the conceptual themes they had identified to create conceptual metaphors accordingly (Stage 4). Once the list of conceptual metaphors was finalized, the two experts collaborated on developing metaphoric mappings for each conceptual metaphor (Stage 5).

Results and Discussion

EFL Learners’ Self-perceptions of Public Speaking Anxiety

Table 2 reports the results of the PRPSA scale for the 300 EFL learners. The mean PRPSA score was 109.07, with a standard deviation of 20.12, which indicates a moderate level of anxiety according to McCroskey’s (1970) interpretation (i.e., a score of 98 to 131). However, if interpreting the number by Richmond and McCroskey’s (1998) finer specification, the score was closer to a moderately high level of anxiety (i.e., a score of 111 to 119) on the anxiety continuum.

Table 2

PRPSA Scores of the Participants

<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
300	46.00	153.00	109.07	20.12

The results showed that the EFL learners had a moderate level of anxiety when making public speeches in English. McCroskey (1970) offered a benchmark for PRPSA scale users:

the mean score of 945 American university students was 114.62 ($SD = 17.21$). Judging solely by the numbers, the mean score of the 300 EFL learners in the present study ($M = 109.07$, $SD = 20.12$) was relatively lower, suggesting that the EFL learners were less anxious than McCroskey's native-speaker sample in making public speeches in English. However, considering the differences in generations across time, the EFL learners in the present study, who live in a globalized world and are exposed to the frequent need to communicate in English, were expected to be rather accustomed to the scenario of using English for public speaking. Thus, any simplistic interpretation of the PRPSA mean score should be avoided without further evidence about the EFL learners' perceived anxiety levels.

Predictability of Learners' Variables in Public Speaking Anxiety

Multiple regression analysis was used to test whether gender, nationality, and English proficiency level may have predicted the participants' PRPSA scores. Table 3 reports the results of the regression analysis. Two predictors out of the three explained 13.5% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.14$, $F(3, 296) = 16.61$, $p < 0.001$), and the effect size for the regression model was medium ($f^2 = 0.168 \geq 0.15$) according to Cohen (1988), suggesting a moderate level of interpretability. It was found that nationality significantly predicted the PRPSA scores ($\beta = -0.14$, $p < 0.05$), as did the participants' English proficiency level ($\beta = -0.31$, $p < 0.001$). Gender, however, did not show a significant prediction effect on the PRPSA scores ($\beta = 0.09$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 3

Coefficient Variables Resulting from Multiple Regression Analysis

Source	B	SE B	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Nationality	-5.76	2.41	-0.14	-2.39	0.02*
Gender	3.97	2.27	0.09	1.75	0.08
Language proficiency	-7.66	1.38	-0.31	-5.56	0.00**
R^2			0.144		
Adjusted R^2			0.135		
Cohen's f^2			0.168		
$F(3, 296)$			16.607**		

Note. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

The results of the multiple regression analysis confirmed the influence of the two learner variables, namely nationality and proficiency, on the EFL learners' perceived PSA. Further analyses of how each variable affected the EFL learners' perceptions were conducted to explore PSA in the EFL context.

Gender and Public Speaking Anxiety

To examine the differences in the PRPSA scores between males and females, an independent t-test was conducted, and the results are reported in Table 4. In terms of the Taiwanese group, the test was found to be statistically non-significant ($t(200) = -0.88, p > 0.05; d = 0.12$). The effect size for this analysis ($d = 0.12$) was found to be smaller than Cohen's (1988) convention for a small effect ($d = 0.20$), suggesting that the difference between the two groups was insignificant. Accordingly, the results indicated that male Taiwanese students evaluated their own public speaking anxiety ($M = 110.68, SD = 20.84$) similarly to that of the female Taiwanese students ($M = 113.07, SD = 17.30$). In terms of the non-Taiwanese group, the results were not statistically significant ($t(100) = -1.53, p > 0.05, d = 0.33$). The effect size

suggests that the difference of means between the two gender groups was not significant enough. In other words, gender as a learner variable did not play a significant role in determining the EFL learners' public speaking anxiety.

Table 4

Comparisons of the PRPSA Scores between Males and Females in the Taiwanese and Non-Taiwanese Groups

	Taiwanese Group				Non-Taiwanese Group			
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
Male	78	110.68	20.84	-0.88	28	97.71	23.81	-1.53
Female	122	113.07	17.30		72	104.97	20.23	

Nationality and Public Speaking Anxiety

In terms of the effect of the EFL learners' nationality on their perceived levels of public speaking anxiety, a comparison between the Taiwanese group and the non-Taiwanese group was conducted, which is reported in Table 5. On average, the Taiwanese group had higher and rather consistent PRPSA scores ($M = 112.14$, $SD = 18.75$) compared with the non-Taiwanese group ($M = 102.94$, $SD = 21.42$); the convergent results of the Taiwanese group suggested a general tendency of being more anxious. The comparison also showed that the Taiwanese group's PRPSA scores were statistically higher than those of the non-Taiwanese group ($t = 3.82$, $p < 0.001$), and the effect size ($d = 0.46$) was between small ($d = 0.20$) and medium ($d = 0.50$). In sum, nationality as a learner variable had medium practical significance over the EFL learners' perceived public speaking anxiety.

Table 5

Comparisons of PRPSA Scores between the Taiwanese and Non-Taiwanese Groups

	<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Taiwanese	200	46	153	112.14	18.75	3.82***	0.46
Non-Taiwanese	100	49	141	102.94	21.42		

Note. *** $p < 0.001$ ***English Proficiency Level and Public Speaking Anxiety***

A one-way ANOVA was conducted in terms of the influence of language proficiency on the EFL learners' perceived PSA. Table 6 reports the results. Regarding all 300 participants, there was a significant effect of English proficiency level on the EFL learners' perceived PSA ($F(3, 296) = 17.12, p < 0.00; \eta^2 = 0.14$). Post hoc analyses using the Scheffé post hoc criterion for significance indicated that the mean PRPSA scores of the participants at the CEFR C2 level were significantly lower than those at the B1, B2, and C1 proficiency levels, whereas the mean PRPSA scores of the participants at the C1 level were significantly lower than those at the B2 level. The mean PRPSA scores of the participants at the B1 and B2 levels did not differ significantly.

The post-doc analysis indicated that the participants at the highest proficiency level (i.e., CEFR C2) were the least anxious EFL learners, as their mean PRPSA scores were significantly the lowest compared with those at the other three proficiency levels. On the other hand, those at the lowest proficiency levels (i.e., CEFR B1 and B2) were more anxious than those at the other proficiency levels, judging from their high mean PRPSA scores. These results are in line with existing literature (Liu, 2006; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994), which found that language proficiency level plays a critical role in determining EFL learners' perceived PSA.

Regarding the Taiwanese group, the differences between language proficiency levels were also significant ($F(3, 196) = 8.02, p < 0.001; \eta^2 = 0.11$). However, the post hoc test showed

that the PRPSA scores of the participants at the C2 level were significantly lower than those at the B1 and B2 levels, except for those at the C1 level. As for the non-Taiwanese group, significance was indicated among the four proficiency levels ($F(3, 96) = 5.75, p < 0.001; \eta^2 = 0.15$), but only the participants at the C2 and B2 levels showed a significant difference.

Table 6

One-way Analysis of Variance of PRPSA Scores among the Four Proficiency Levels

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Post hoc
All Participants (Total N = 300)					
Between groups	3	17890.2	5963.40	17.12***	B1>C2, B2>C1, B2>C2, C1>C2
Within groups	296	103117.33	348.37		
Total	299	121007.53			
Taiwanese Group (N = 200)					
Between groups	3	7644.10	2548.03	8.02***	B1>C2, B2>C2
Within groups	196	62299.26	317.85		
Total	199	69943.36			
Non-Taiwanese Group (N = 100)					
Between groups	3	6915.68	2305.23	5.75**	B2>C2
Within groups	96	38511.96	401.17		
Total	99	45427.64			

Note. ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Interestingly, for all the EFL learners, a critical gap between the B level groups and the C level groups was observed. The differences in the oral ability between these two-level groups may have been the result of the level descriptors in the CEFR: people at the B2 level are defined as independent users who can “give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail” (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 58), and those at the C1 level are proficient users who “give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-

themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion” (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 58). The distinction was not in their ability to speak but in their ability to fully organize their thoughts and completely develop their speech. That is to say, the “effective operational proficiency” of the C level group (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 36) led to more confidence and less anxiety in public speaking. An elaboration of the EFL learners’ perceived threshold for making good public speeches was further approached from a cognitive perspective, subsequently.

Cognitive Explanation of Public Speaking Anxiety Based on Metaphor Analysis

Metaphor analysis provided an in-depth understanding of the causes of PSA. Table 7 lists the source domains of the conceptual metaphors used by the Taiwanese and the Non-Taiwanese EFL learners, as well as reports the number of instances and its percentages. Of the 11 conceptual metaphors that were identified among the 200 Taiwanese EFL learners and 12 among the 100 EFL learners in the non-Taiwanese group, nine source domains overlapped in both groups, and five were used exclusively by either group, for a total of 14 conceptual metaphors identified among the 300 metaphor samples.

Table 7*Conceptual Metaphors Identified from the Metaphor Analysis*

Source Domains of Conceptual Metaphors “Making a public speech in English is...”	Taiwanese EFL Learners			Non-Taiwanese EFL Learners			
	Rank	Total # (%)	<i>M</i> of PRPSA	Rank	Total # (%)	<i>M</i> of PRPSA	Total # (%)
1. TAKING ON CHALLENGES	1	79 (39.50%)	110.56	1	41 (41.00%)	102.58	120 (40.00%)
2. PERFORMING ON STAGE	2	26 (13.00%)	108.85	2	10 (10.00%)	99.40	36 (12.00%)
3. ADAPTING TO SOCIETY	5	17 (8.50%)	112.05	2	10 (10.00%)	97.10	27 (9.00%)
4. UNDERGOING THE PROCESS OF DIAGNOSIS	3	18 (9.00%)	109.61	9	3 (3.00%)	130.67	21 (7.00%)
5. COMMITTING A CRIME AND WAITING FOR A VERDICT	4	18 (9.00%)	129.45	11	2 (2.00%)	137.50	20 (6.67%)
6. RECEIVING TECHNICAL TRAINING	8	8 (4.00%)	102.88	4	9 (9.00%)	99.89	17 (5.67%)
7. EXPERIENCING NATURE	6	11 (5.50%)	109.55	7	4 (4.00%)	93.25	15 (5.00%)
8. STAYING UP UNTIL MIDNIGHT	7	8 (4.00%)	115.13	8	3 (3.00%)	124.33	11 (3.67%)
9. TASTING VARIOUS FOODS	11	4 (2.00%)	111.50	6	5 (5.00%)	112.80	9 (3.00%)
10. LOOKING FOR TREASURE				5	8 (8.00%)	96.50	8 (2.67%)
11. TAKING A JOURNEY	9	6 (3.00%)	122.67				6 (2.00%)
12. DRIVING OR SITTING IN A VEHICLE	10	5 (2.50%)	105.00				5 (1.67%)
13. RUNNING A BUSINESS				10	3 (3.00%)	83.67	3 (1.00%)
14. OTHER ¹				12	2 (2.00%)	112.00	2 (0.67%)
Total #		200 (100%)			100 (100%)		300 (100%)

Note. ¹According to the coding criterion, source domains that occurred fewer than three times were counted as “other.”

Among those, TAKING ON CHALLENGES (39.50% and 41.00%, respectively) and PERFORMING ON STAGE (13.00% and 10.00%, respectively) were ranked as the top two in both groups, accounting for 52% of the 300 EFL learners' metaphor samples. Examples (2) and (3) illustrate the ontological and epistemic correspondences of these two conceptual metaphors.

Example (2)

Metaphoric Mappings of the Conceptual Metaphor MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH IS TAKING ON CHALLENGES

Source: TAKING ON CHALLENGES	↔	Target: MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH
Challenger	↔	Speaker
Outsiders/Observers	↔	Audience
The process of facing challenges	↔	The process of giving a speech
You need to prepare in advance. You must try your best because challenges are beyond your capability and control. If you overcome the challenge, you will have a sense of achievement. If you fail, you will feel depressed; you may give up, or you may try again.	↔	Speaking in public requires preparation in advance. You must try your best because the task is beyond your capability. If you speak well, you will have a sense of achievement. If not, you may fail and feel depressed; you may give up, or you may try again.

Example (3)

Metaphoric Mappings of the Conceptual Metaphor MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH IS PERFORMING ON STAGE

Source: PERFORMING ON STAGE	↔	Target: MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH
Stage actor	↔	Speaker
Audience/Watchers	↔	Audience/Listeners
The process of performing and acting	↔	The process of giving a speech
Standing on the stage to perform, you need to be brave because you are the focus of the audience's attention. You need to take time to practice. With sufficient practice, you will gain confidence. However, mistakes always happen. You will need positive comments from the audience to cheer you up.	↔	Speaking in public requires courage because you are the focus of the audience's attention. You need to take time to practice. With sufficient practice, you will act more confidently. However, mistakes always happen. You will need encouragement from the listeners to cheer you up.

Example (2) highlights the similarities between TAKING ON CHALLENGES and MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH. Public speaking is like a challenge that is beyond both the current capability and control of an agent, and advance preparations can help to overcome these challenges. Linguistic instantiations of CHALLENGES include riding on a roller coaster and bungee jumping off a cliff, and calling attention to a sense of achievement upon completion. EFL learners

who connect conceptual metaphors with public speaking may find that they are relieved and satisfied once the speech is complete.

Example (3) shows the similarities between PERFORMING ON STAGE and MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH. The major similarity is the attention of the audience. When making mistakes, only with encouragement from the audience can frustration be overcome. The highlighted point in this conceptual metaphor is the critical existence of the audience, including the attention given by the audience and the accompanying stress resulting from such attention.

These two conceptual metaphors and their metaphoric mappings revealed the major source of PSA perceived by all the EFL learners in this study: fear of making uncontrollable mistakes in front of the audience. Yet the epistemic correspondence also revealed the main way to lower their anxiety level: practice is definitely needed to complete the task. The emphasis on task completion may explain why the CEFR C level is commonly perceived as a threshold for giving a speech confidently. When speakers at the C level give a fully developed, well-organized presentation of their ideas, they have overcome challenges and show confidence in facing the audience on stage.

Regarding the mean PRPSA scores of the participants who chose the conceptual metaphor COMMITTING A CRIME AND WAITING FOR A VERDICT, it received the highest scores in both groups (Taiwanese: 129.45; Non-Taiwanese: 137.50), which implies that it was the main factor that led to the greatest anxiety. Example (4) demonstrates the metaphoric mappings based on the metaphor samples generated from the participants. The ontological correspondences suggest that the EFL learners perceived themselves as defendants in court; the epistemic correspondences showed that the scenario that triggered the highest anxiety level was thus being judged by others, which led to the feeling of losing control with no chance to defend themselves.

Example (4)

Metaphoric Mappings of the Conceptual Metaphor MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH IS COMMITTING A CRIME AND WAITING FOR A VERDICT

Source: COMMITTING A CRIME AND WAITING FOR A VERDICT	↔	Target: MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH
Defendant	↔	Speaker
Judge/Jury	↔	Audience
The process of being in a court trial	↔	The scene of giving a speech
Everyone focuses on the wrong things that you have done. You do not have privacy; all your behaviors are magnified. You know that you cannot run away from the punishment that you deserve. No matter how long the trial may last	↔	Speaking in public prevents privacy; all your actions are magnified. You know that you cannot run away from giving the speech. Despite the feeling that time moves slowly, you have no choice but to wait and complete your speech.

to reach a verdict, you have no choice but to
wait until the end.

The conceptual metaphors that received the lowest PRPSA scores were RECEIVING TECHNICAL TRAINING for the Taiwanese group (102.88) and RUNNING A BUSINESS for the non-Taiwanese group (83.67). The illustrated metaphoric mappings are shown in Examples (5) and (6). The detailed mappings suggest that making a public speech in English is a skilful task and that practice is the key to success. In sum, both groups of EFL learners believed that professional training and constant practice could lead to lower PSA and greater confidence.

Example (5)

Metaphoric Mappings of the Conceptual Metaphor MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH IS RECEIVING TECHNICAL TRAINING

Source: RECEIVING TECHNICAL TRAINING	↔	Target: MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH
Skillful work (e.g., cooking, swimming, surfing, rope walking, constructing, etc.)	↔	Public speaking
Technical training	↔	Speech training
The process of familiarity	↔	The process of practicing
Performing difficult work requires professional skills and knowledge. You cannot do well at the beginning because you are not familiar with it. However, practice makes perfect: after receiving technical training and practicing, you will succeed and enjoy the process at last.	↔	Speaking in public requires professional skills and knowledge. You cannot do well at the beginning because you are not familiar with the process. However, after receiving speech training and practicing, you will succeed and enjoy the process.

Example (6)

Metaphoric Mappings of the Conceptual Metaphor MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH IS RUNNING A BUSINESS

Source: RUNNING A BUSINESS	↔	Target: MAKING A PUBLIC SPEECH IN ENGLISH
Business work (e.g., sales, marketing, etc.)	↔	Public speaking
Ability to convince clients	↔	Skills of impressing the audience
Sincerity	↔	Sincerity
Running a business requires you to display the best of your product and pass the benefits on to your clients. To sell your products, you must be persuasive but sincere.	↔	Speaking in public means showing your best and giving your best performance to the audience. To convince the audience to agree with your perspectives, you need to be persuasive but sincere at the same time.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings based on the scores of the PRPSA scale and metaphor analysis support the identified causes of PSA in previous studies. For instance, the current study found that the

learners' English proficiency level and their nationality predicted their level of PSA, which was in line with the previous studies (Liu, 2016; Woodrow, 2006). Moreover, the present study found the major causes of the highest PRPSA scores were the fear of being judged by the audience, as illustrated in Example (4); on the other hand, the present study identified the causes that led to lower PSA—constant practice and advance preparations—which gave the EFL learners a sense of security, as illustrated in Example (5) and (6). Such findings are in line with previous research (Suleimenova, 2013), which claims that a lack of competency may lead to the feeling of helplessness, consequently resulting in anxiety to speak in front of people; yet with more practices and the mastery of speaking skills, the fear may be replaced by a sense of confidence.

The findings of this study offer implications and suggestions for pedagogy in the EFL context. First, the results of the present study demonstrate the importance of good language proficiency and effective presentation skills for successful public speaking, suggesting that English education should be skills-based as well as strategies-based, developing not only language ability in general but also metacognitive strategies. It has been found in the present study that the capability of delivering a fully-developed speech is important in boosting learners' confidence and reducing anxiety (see Example (5) and (6)). Therefore, strategies for preparing an effective speech, including techniques and practical guidelines for making a public presentation, should be instructed. For example, topic development (e.g., speech organization, transitions, attention grabbers, etc.), verbal skills (e.g., volume, speed, intonation, etc.), and nonverbal cues (e.g., posture, gesture, facial expressions, etc.) should be covered in a speaking class.

Second, the present study indicated that the main factor leading to higher PSA was judgement from the audience (see Example (4)); conversely, encouraging remarks may led to lower PSA (see Example (3)). That is to say, constructive feedback can scaffold better speaking skills, and constant feedback can familiarize EFL learners with the process of performing public speaking. To address this concern, EFL teachers should educate students on and cultivate their abilities in giving and receiving feedback in order to prepare them to face an audience in various public contexts. EFL teachers can also phrase their feedback through indirect comments (Lightbown & Spada, 1999), which should include information on what the learner did right, wrong, and why (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Ur, 1996). Moreover, form-focused recasting and elicitation can be used to indicate speech errors, while clarification techniques can be adopted to improve topic development.

In addition to giving feedback skillfully, the followings are some suggestions for EFL teachers in creating non-threatening learning environment and in encouraging EFL learners to

perform meaningful practices. First, EFL teachers could adopt multiple evaluation approaches (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002) to create a supportive and nonthreatening environment to encourage L2 learners' participation in speaking activities and to give them more autonomy (Knight, 2001). A suggested class activity is to form peer support groups for evaluation. Booth-Butterfield (1988) proposed forming "speech consultant teams" to perform task-centered activities focused on behavioral rehearsals and feedback on speech performances.

Second, EFL teachers are suggested to make practices as authentic as possible to accustom EFL learners to the watching audience. Communicative task-based instruction (CTBI; Nunan, 2004) could be beneficial in decreasing the PSA of EFL learners since communicative tasks create opportunities for meaningful interactions in which EFL learners can focus on expressing meaning rather than monitoring grammar, and they will be evaluated based on the completion of tasks rather than the performance on formative tests. A successful example of CTBI is the integration of theatrical performance in speaking classes. Tsiplakides (2009) used task-based instruction in a class with Greek EFL learners for one semester, and found that the students with a higher anxiety level were more willing to participate and had better quality eye contact while speaking. Atas (2015) incorporated drama training in a speaking class in a high school in Turkey and found reduced PSA after six weeks of training. Lee (2013) also adopts drama performing activities in a speaking class with Taiwanese university students, and reported similar results.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate EFL learners' perceived public speaking anxiety through a questionnaire survey and to identify possible factors for PSA using metaphor analysis from a cognitive perspective. In addition to identifying the effects of the learners' variables on PSA, three variables were taken into consideration: gender, nationality, and English proficiency level. Based on the survey results of the 300 EFL learners who participated, the findings suggest that the participants indeed perceived anxiety when making a public speech in English, and the level of anxiety was moderate. Further analyses showed that the EFL learners' nationality and English proficiency level significantly predicted anxiety levels, while gender did not. The participants in the Taiwanese group had a significantly higher anxiety level than that of the non-Taiwanese group. The critical difference in the mean PRPSA scores between the proficiency levels of both groups suggests that the participants considered the CEFR C1 level as the threshold for making a good public speech.

The metaphor analysis showed that over half of the participants compared English public speaking to TAKING ON CHALLENGES and PERFORMING ON STAGE; the conceptual metaphors

chosen suggest that the EFL learners in general considered public speaking a task that requires advance preparation and rehearsal, of which the final outcomes are unpredictable; however, upon completing the speech, a sense of achievement can make it a worthwhile task. The conceptual metaphor chosen by the participants in both groups with the highest level of PSA was COMMITTING A CRIME AND WAITING FOR A VERDICT, suggesting that being judged by others without a chance to defend themselves was the most anxiety provoking; on the other hand, the conceptual metaphors with the lowest level of PSA were RECEIVING TECHNICAL TRAINING chosen by the Taiwanese group and RUNNING A BUSINESS chosen by the non-Taiwanese group, showing that professional training and constant practice are the key to confidence in public speaking.

The present study was conducted under strict control and supervision. However, some limitations still yielded practical concerns. First, the research site was in Taiwan, and thus the recruited EFL learners were mostly Taiwanese. The difference between the numbers of participants in these two groups may have reduced the impact of the significance of the learners' backgrounds in terms of nationality. This uncertainty could have been avoided if the number of participants in both groups was equal.

Second, even though the study approached the abstract emotion of anxiety from both conscious self-reports through the PRPSA scale and subconscious cognitive concepts through metaphor analysis, it was difficult to thoroughly research and completely cover the complicated nature of anxiety. Other factors, such as cultural values, ethnic identity, and personality, may also be influential but were not taken into account in the present study. Psychological research (Hofmann & Hinton, 2014) has found that a person's cultural background, such as social norms (e.g., individualism vs collectivism) and personality characteristics (e.g., being adaptable vs being rigid), influence greatly the experience and expression of emotions. Future studies should investigate psychological aspects to understand emotional reactions more comprehensively.

Finally, considering the scope of the study, the demands of the time and effort required to conduct the research project were enormous. Thus, there was no chance to apply the insights in real EFL classrooms. For future studies, the suggested pedagogical implications should be incorporated to further consolidate the factors identified in the present study and to facilitate the development of EFL learners' speaking ability.

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Appendix A. The Survey of Public Speaking Anxiety

Part 1: Participant's Profile

Directions: This is an anonymous survey. However, to facilitate the analysis of the survey data, some basic information of the participant is needed. Please indicate or write down the answers of the following questions. Your answers will not reveal your true identity in the survey.

Please write your **age**: _____ .

Please indicate your **nationality**: _____ .

Please indicate your **mother tongue** (native language): _____ .

Please check the most appropriate response of you **gender**: Male _____. Female _____.

Please identify your **English proficiency**: (Answer **both** questions below)

(1) Indicate **names of English proficiency tests & scores**:

(2) Evaluate your English ability:

Excellent _____. Good _____. Fair _____. Poor _____.

Part 2: Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety

Directions: Below are 34 statements that people sometimes make about themselves. Please indicate whether or not you believe each statement applies to you by marking whether you:

Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5.

1. *While preparing for giving a speech, I feel tense and nervous.*
2. *I feel tense when I see the words "speech" and "public speech" on a course outline when studying.*
3. *My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.*
4. *Right after giving a speech I feel that I have had a pleasant experience.*
5. *I get anxious when I think about a speech coming up.*
6. *I have no fear of giving a speech.*
7. *Although I am nervous just before starting a speech, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable.*
8. *I look forward to giving a speech.*
9. *When the instructor announces a speaking assignment in class, I can feel myself getting tense.*
10. *My hands tremble when I am giving a speech.*
11. *I feel relaxed while giving a speech.*
12. *I enjoy preparing for a speech.*
13. *I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say.*
14. *I get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I don't know.*
15. *I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.*
16. *I feel that I am in complete possession of myself while giving a speech.*
17. *My mind is clear when giving a speech.*
18. *I do not dread giving a speech.*

19. *I sweat just before starting a speech.*
20. *My heart beats very fast just as I start a speech.*
21. *I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before my speech starts.*
22. *Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech.*
23. *Realizing that only a little time remains in a speech makes me very tense and anxious.*
24. *While giving a speech, I know I can control my feelings of tension and stress.*
25. *I breathe faster just before starting a speech.*
26. *I feel comfortable and relaxed in the hour or so just before giving a speech.*
27. *I do poorer on speeches because I am anxious.*
28. *I feel anxious when the teacher announces the date of a speaking assignment.*
29. *When I make a mistake while giving a speech, I find it hard to concentrate on the parts that follow.*
30. *During an important speech I experience a feeling of helplessness building up inside me.*
31. *I have trouble falling asleep the night before a speech.*
32. *My heart beats very fast while I present a speech.*
33. *I feel anxious while waiting to give my speech.*
34. *While giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know.*

Part 3: Metaphor Analysis

People sometimes make comparisons of one thing to another in order to explain or express difficult feelings and abstract concepts. For instance:

Words are like knives because once gossips are out, you can't take it back.

Life is like a book, because some chapters are sad, some happy, and some exciting. But if you never turn the page, you will never know what the next chapter holds.

Directions: Complete the following sentence to show your opinion of doing a public speaking in English: the first part of the sentence (*Doing a public speaking in English is like ...*) should state what you will compare *speaking in public* to, and the second part of the sentence (*because ...*) should state the reason.

**The situation of giving public speaking in English may include doing English presentation in class, or making English speech, etc.

"Making a public speech in English is like... because..."
