The Asian EFL Journal

June 2021

Volume 28 Issue 3.2

Senior Editor:
Paul Robertson

ASIAN
EFL
JOURNAL

The EFL Professional's Written Forum

Table of Contents

Foreword

Arif Ahmed Al-Ahdal, Professor of Applied Linguistics, Qassim University, Saudi

Arabia
(Leading Editor)
Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6747-0897

I welcome all readers to this issue of the EFL Journal, a journal that has been expanding the circle of authentic language research, and is always open to receiving research work from all over the world. Authors of the contributions in the current issue live and work in 8 different countries and cultures: Saudi Arabia, Jordan, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, United Arab Emirates, Thailand. But they all share the same philosophy of ushering in innovation to benefit language learners. As an Editor, my career with the journal has been dedicated to pursuing the vision of the founders of the journal. In keeping with this covenant, this issue has papers spanning four themes or subject areas, with each study opening a new vista in language teaching-learning.

The first theme is titled Bridging Online and Face-to-Face Teaching. The first study under this theme is Using Internet-Based Reading Activities to Enhance the Face-To-Face Teaching of Reading in Community College at the University of Tabuk by Mansor Habbash. The study explores the outcomes of online EFL education on Saudi learners' face-to-face reading ability since physical, on-campus education cannot be ruled out completely with the pandemic situation quietening down in many parts of the world. The results proved encouraging drills as opposed to the previously challenging reading drills were perceived as engaging by the learners after the brief intervention.

Computer and mobile assisted language learning have gained popularity since the pandemic first struck, and research on their role in EFL/ ESL has been prolific in this time. Carrying forward this theme is the second paper, Factors Affecting Mobile- Assisted Language Learning

(MALL) Adoption and Integration for ELL: A study based in a Saudi University by Saleh Alrasheedi. This design-based research with eighty-four teachers of English at Majmaah University reiterates that technology plays an essential role and has excellent potential as a tool in teaching and learning of languages.

The second theme in this collection is English in the Workplace, touching upon Applied Linguistics, one of the fastest developing language domains. The entry under this theme is Soft Skills: The Success Formula for the Newly EFL Hired Graduates in the Educational Workplaces During and Post Covid-19 by Hiba Abuzagha and Ahmad A.S. Tabieh, and the setting for this study comprises real-life occupational placements of EFL graduates. The study concludes that non-academic skills have become a fundamental standard for the selection process of candidates who plan to teach EFL.

The third theme that we touch upon is Linguistic Analysis to enrich EFL Practices with studies focusing on diverse learner base and pedagogies. The first paper under this theme is English Suprasegmentals for the EFL Learners: An Experimental Study with Shadowing Technique by Ayman Mohamed Nasr Eldien El-Esery. The study reports on engaging a group of EFL learners enrolled in the listening and speaking intensive course at Qassim University, KSA, in developing awareness towards and practicing suprasegmentals of the English language. The Shadowing Cycle is a comprehensive one built upon cognitive and technical norms. Results of the study show a systematic pattern of participants and endorsement for native speakers, improvement in their perceptions of suprasegmentals, and listening comprehension as well.

The following paper is titled Learning and Comprehension of English Tense Categories: Examining the Prevalent Patterns among Yemeni EFL Students by Badri Abdulhakim DM Mudhsh, Ghazwan Mohammed Saeed Mohammed and Nazrin B. Laskar. Apart from its findings, the study is also notable for the collaboration between Yemeni and Indian researchers. The study concluded that the category of English future tense is the most problematic among the other categories of English grammar for the Yemeni EFL students, and that Arabic negatively influences the processes of their learning and comprehension of English.

The next paper under this theme is titled Errors in the use of literary devices in English composition: A study of Saudi EFL learners' application of rhetoric and figures of speech by Mohammad Yahya Ali Bani Salameh. Differentiating between rhetoric and figures of speech

is often tricky for EFL learners of English since the latter are also classified under rhetorical devices in some grammar books. The study undertakes an analysis of the errors in Saudi EFL learners' essays to show clear generalization of rules and discernible transference from Arabic.

The next study is titled L1 as a Scaffolding Tool in Teaching of English as L2: A Study in the Malay Context by Noor Hayati Romli, Mohd Sallehhudin Abd Aziz and Pramela Krish N. Krish. The issue of using L 1 in L 2 classrooms is seen as a taboo and due to ongoing criticisms from proponents of the monolingual approach in second language (L2) learning. However, this qualitative study demonstrated that the English teachers were positive with the utilization of Malay to scaffold them to teach English, particularly when it involved the low proficiency students.

Both teachers and learners in EFL/ ESL classrooms often wonder at the unexpected surprises that English phonology throw up. Critical aspects of the language are a particular obstacle for the non-native learner who must scrouge through incessant grammar, reference and help books to get a grasp of the nuances of the phonology. These and other issues of English phonology are at the centre of the following study titled, English Phonology for the Non-native Learner: A Survey of the Hidden Challenges by Mohammed AbdAlla AbdAlgane Mohammed. The study is based in Sudan.

The next paper tilted, The Argumentative Essay: An Evaluation of Indonesian University Learners' Writing in English by T.Silvana Sinar, Liza Amalia Putri and Dian Marisha Putri. The study analyszes the argumentative essays written in English by Indonesian fourth-semester learners. The criteria are structure, organization and coherence; results indicate that only one out of the one hundred and twenty analysed essays demonstrate these features. Apart from these, the other errors that occur most frequently pertain to subject-verb agreement and punctuation.

The following paper focuses on a very pertinent domain of EFL: Langauge skills of pre-service English teachers in Saudi Arabia. The study is titled Langauge Learning Strategies: A study of their effectiveness in enhancing Preservice Teachers' proficiency in English by Wafaa A. Ghareeb and Kholoud A. Alwehebi. The study importantly notes that EFL learners' difficulties are magnified if their teachers are not well-entrenched in the language skills. The study investigates the effectiveness of language learning strategies to improve the writing and oral

skills of pre-service EFL teachers, and concludes that metacognitive and cognitive strategies are key factors to complete the EFL course.

The next study concerns adapted reading materials frequently used by ESL instructors to develop reading comprehension and elicit ideas for writing in view of the readability and suitability of reading materials used in reading-to-write tasks and to ascertain whether the assessed readability features relate to students' reading and writing performance. The study is titled Readability of Adapted Reading Passages and its relationship to Reading and Writing Performance by Besma Allagui. The study, placed in UAE, conclues that there are no associations between readability features and students' writing performance.

The last paper under this theme is titled, Higher Secondary ESL learners and English Conditional Sentences: An investigation of the efficacy of Corpus-Based instruction by Asmara Shaqfat, Najeeb us Saqlain and Khola Sara Amir. This small-scale experimental study investigates the role of corpus in teaching conditional sentences to higher secondary level ESL learners. Using the British National Corpus, the study concludes that students could learn better by using corpus-based activities compared.

Here we come to our next theme, Literature in EFL Classroom. The first submission under this theme is titled, Relevance of Short Stories in the   EFL/ESL Classrooms: A Critical Study of Literature by Mohammad Mujtaba Ahmad. Amidst conflicitng views and theoris on the use of target language literature in the L2 classroom, the study findings show that short stories enrich the learners' language repertoire while also giving them a sense of aesthetic fulfilment, and hence, they should be part of the L2 curriculum.

The following study is a quasi-experimental research to assess the effects of the jigsaw technique as a collaborative learning strategy on students' achievements in learning literature. The title of the study is Cognitive and Attitudinal Effects of Jigsaw Technique as a Collaborative Learning Strategy in Literature Teaching in the Philipines by Kanittha Charernnit, Alaa Q. Alhourani, Myla M. Arcinas and Lovella G. Velasco. Results indicate that using the jigsaw technique enhances students' attitudes towards collaborative learning apart from improving the achievement of students in a literature course, regardless of their ability level and gender.

A few more words before I take my leave of the reader. I take this opportunity to thank all contributors on behalf of the editorial board for making available these intellectual gems for the enrichment of the academic world and for serving as beacon lights for the L2 teaching-learning community. Working on a tight deadline, we have striven to bring out a flawless edition, but if per chance, any significant detail has been ignored or overlooked, the feedback of the readers would be welcome as our philosophy is to keep evolving and improving our best output. Finally, as always, we welcome language research from as diverse settings as possible as innovation is the best assurance for success and growth of the L2 teaching-learning milieu. With this I present this rich issue to our readers!

Using Internet-Based Reading Activities to Enhance the Face-To-Face Teaching of Reading in Community College at the University of Tabuk

Manssour Habbash

Department of Studies and Basic Sciences, Community collage
The University of Tabuk, Tabuk, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Bio-profile:

Dr. Manssour Habbash is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. He is currently the Dean of Community College at the same University. He has been working on TESOL, language policy, curriculum design and SLA.

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate how far internet-based reading activities can enhance learners' reading skills in face-to-face learning experience at the Community College, University of Tabuk in Saudi Arabia for the Academic Year 2020. Furthermore, the current study tried to find out the participants' learning preferences, experiences, and participation in two types of classrooms i.e., traditional and non-traditional as blended learning has come in vogue at the university due to Covid19 restrictions. This quantitative research consisted of 90 university EFL learners from the Community College at Tabuk University. The study employed descriptive statistics to analyze learners' responses. The findings showed that internet-based reading activities and peer moderated discussions can enhance learners' reading skills in the face-to-face EFL classes at the university. Internet-based reading activities also led to greater language output in the other three English language skills, viz. speaking, listening and writing when these are undertaken in the physical mode. While applying the reading activities to match students' learning preferences, some gaps emerged. Limited literature existed on following up internet-based reading activities with physical learning in traditional classrooms. The main research question can be drawn as: How far can the innovative method of internet-based reading enhance learners' reading in face-to-face learning environments. The results proved encouraging creative drills as opposed to the previously challenging reading drills were

perceived as engaging by the learners after the brief intervention. However, whether the results are temporal or reliable can only be ascertained with larger samples and varied learning environments.

Introduction

It is an old notion that reading is an activity that is valuable in itself as it adds a worthy dimension to every individual's personality and engages the reader in critical thinking. Yet, the solemn fact remains that it is seen as a dispensable activity in the second or foreign language classroom. The consequence is that few learners acquire any substantial amount of interest in this essential skill. We call it essential as it gives the status of English, as the most popular international and library language, academic and professional success in the higher echelons of knowledge where learners are more or less autonomous, and their deficiency in reading skills can seriously hamper learners' success. In other words, even in second or foreign language environments, English reading skills will actually be the most useful and enduring skill that learner ought to acquire. Educators play an important role as they have to encourage learners to practice reading much so that they can learn better and more rather than just read for the sake of learning. Reading in a foreign language requires the learner to be familiar with L2 phonology, vocabulary, morphology and grammar (Geva, 2006). Additionally, Geva and Siegel (2000) indicated that language-specific orthographic differences, growth of developmental pathways that have to do with development of reading are likely to follow different stages in different languages.

Broadly, three stages are perceptible in the process of reading amongst the university EFL learners in Saudi Arabia. The first of these is 'recognition stage' when the learners merely recognize the graphic form of the language. Being taught as a foreign language, English is introduced at upper primary grades in Saudi Arabia. This pushes the language acquisition stages further ahead for these learners. The second stage is 'interpretation stage' which is only peripherally acquired amongst these learners when they begin to appreciate the idiomatic or nuanced meanings in L2. In fact, achievement of this is not even a stated target of the Saudi curricula, it is only due to the widespread use of internet and smart apps which are highly popular with the young people that is a part of this is autonomously achieved by the learners. The last stage, and one which is rarely achieved in the Saudi EFL scenario is the 'structural

stage' when the learners move towards the attainment of mastery in English. It is important to note, here, that the administration encourages the student community to enhance their English skills by offering a large number of study sponsorships under the Study Abroad programs for which a pre-requisite is proficiency in English as the English-speaking countries are very popular amongst the students for higher education. Excellent reading skills under literacy skills and speaking under oral skills are thus highly desirable for academic success.

In any discussion on internet-based reading, one needs to consider the fact that the populations of the world in general, and the learner community in particular, access the internet many times in a day to seek information, establish communication or simply for entertainment. Since almost all of this content is available in English, some degree of facility with technology and language is already prevalent even amongst the EFL learner base. With Covid19 restrictions imposed on college campuses, now more than ever, students should be connecting to the internet for all learning materials.

College instructors, either for traditional classroom or those for online, may incorporate a number of teaching strategies for the traditional and online classroom in different ways. Various teaching approaches are essential for reaching every student in the school including the involvement of students in events that promote student engagement and sharing. Thus, at the end, it will lead to enhanced student learning outcomes (Cuthrell & Lyon, 2007).

The instructional methods used in the conventional classroom, where students and their teacher can interact physically within one classroom, are sometimes dissimilar than those used in the distance learning environment. In distance learning, learners often have the feeling of frustration as they find themselves isolated and not attending with their teacher in the same classroom (Ko & Rossen, 2017). If a teacher lectures face-to-face or online, their techniques are essential to stimulate student engagement in learning and engage students effectively in learning materials. In the classroom environments, the teacher's promotion for getting better learning output can be   recognized by elevating students' interaction. This technique helps display how students can bring about similar satisfactory learning outputs.

Research Objectives

The objective of this study was to inquire how far internet-based reading methods contribute to enhancing learners' reading skills in face-to-face learning environments. The idea is to make the learners autonomous readers by using internet resources since part of the learning process is still in the online mode in many countries all over the world, and use this autonomy in physical learning in the long run.

Research Question

The study is centered around a single point of inquiry: How does internet-based reading contribute towards face-to-face reading proficiency of EFL undergraduates in Saudi Arabia?

Review of Literature

Amid curriculum changes, Chiu and Kwan (2010) proposed that the environments for online learning could offer more significant chances for elementary teachers to teach learners on how to make the best of their academic strengths. Further, there was a study by Cho and Shen (2013 in which the researchers stated that involvement in IBC usage could supply the elementary faculty with varied chances that enable learners address the academic vulnerabilities through varied Internet-based learning programs.

Bennett and Monds (2008) examined the relationship between instructional design and student achievement. They came out with a recommendation which stated that interactive technology should be strategically chosen to improve student learning outcomes. In studying business education, Clark and Mayer (2016) discussed online programs' design to improve the skills of critical thinking and problem solving. The researchers concluded that online education is a useful tool for improving critical thinking skills, and blended learning offers an outlet for dialogue in face-to-face courses, which further improves learning outcomes. Mudau (2013) reported that while moving to blended learning, the skills teacher have in the classroom acts more importantly than the quality of technology used in teaching.

Transition to IBC requires commencement in lower grades by helping students to use online learning in higher grades effectively. Transition to IBC provides better-differentiated teaching as well as assessment based on an in-depth understanding of IBC by instructors. School officials are reviewing data on the application of the Internet-based programs as part of a reform initiative. Additionally, they provide faculty opportunities by developing various forms of authentic assessment to address instructional challenges, supporting students at different levels in two areas of concern to educators who concentrate on implementing IBC (Van de Vord & Pogue, 2012; Al-Ahdal, & Shariq, 2019; Howlett, 2019; Salayo,et al., 2020;). Continuing research on the IBC subject could promote more understanding and encourage the creation of quality measures for Internet-based curriculum use by releasing empirical analysis explorations on the Internet-based curriculum's overall efficacy (González-Marcos, *et al.*, 2016)

It is worth noted that many learners taking courses online are found quitting the courses in higher than those taking the courses in a traditional way (Christensen & Spackman, 2017)). Studies by Lee, *et al.* 2015; Bennett & Monds, 2008 suggested a way by which the rates of quitting the online courses can be reduced by sustaining sufficient engagement of students in online course and help them build self-regulatory skills. (Al-Ahdal, 2013; Lee *et al.*, 2015; Lee & Choi, 2011; Thompson & Jones, 2020; KABIGTING & Nanud, 2020). Sun and Rueda's (2012) findings showed that students who scored self-regulation at higher level are ready to be involved highly in online learning, proposing that independent learning is strongly associated with the interaction and involvement of the student in the online classroom. Student involvement along with utilization in learning opportunities are crucial in online classes as they can enhance learning output to great extent as well as minimize the probability of quitting (Finn & Zimmer, 2012; Lee *et al.*, 2015).

According to Lee *et al.* (2015) there are three forms of student involvement. They are very necessary to students' development in the online classroom environment. First, behaviorally involved students. They are featured as they do what is asked from them. Second, cognitively involved students. They are featured as those who can match information learned from the classroom to their course tasks and homework. Third, effectively involved students who are fully indulged in the process of learning. Students who are behaviorally involved log in to their classes, go through the course materials, interact, and make sure to do what is expected of them. Cognitive involvement occurs when students are able to identify and evaluate new material and then implement their insight appropriately to their classroom activities. Students who are fully involved are content with their academic progress and are eager to interact in classroom activities.

Students' motivation level can involve students successfully in online courses (Lee et al., 2015). Surely, motivated students want to take part in learning activities and to become fully indulged in the online classroom. According to Martin & Bolliger (2018), students' involvement is a crucial factor that influences the students' decision to either quit or carry on until graduation is gained. In order to achieve fruitful online learning outcomes, it is crucial to sustain students who are active in classroom and are motivated to learn so as they become able to upgrade their skills and learning strategies.

Methods

The current study evaluated the effect of internet-based reading activities on face-to-face, in-class reading skills enhancement. The participants were 123 undergraduate students from first

and second year EFL courses at University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. The median age of the participants fell at 20.6 years, with 68 female and 55 male respondents. All participants affirmed that they had access to an internet connection and computer to carry out the internet-based reading intervention. Learners' reading skills were evaluated at the beginning of the experiment. A five-component rubric was used for this assessment, consisting of the following: i. **Decoding** by reading words out of context; ii. **Phonology** or the ability to differentiate between words that similar sound; iii. **Semantics** by testing how far learners are able to explain the meaning of words, phrases and sentences; iv. **Syntax** by testing learners' ability to point out incorrect word in a sentence; v. **Cipher Knowledge** by asking learners to come up with words whose meanings they do not know. Once the intervention ended and learners resumed their face-to-face reading classes for about two weeks, the rubric was once again used to evaluate if they had benefitted via the internet-based reading training and could successfully transfer the gain to the face-to-face mode of learning. Table 1 in the following section summarizes these comparative values.

Data collection and Analysis

A total of 123 students from four blended classrooms at University of Tabuk were subjected to a reading skills assessment based on a five-item rubric as discussed in the earlier section. As mentioned, the assessment was administered twice: Once, at the beginning of the study, and again, two weeks after the intervention was over and learners had resumed face-to-face reading in a classroom setting. For the purposes of the study, only those scores were included that were more than the 50% mark.

Table1.

Reading assessment before and after intervention

	Before	After
Decoding	14	39
Phonology	27	63
Semantics	18	56
Syntax	22	35
Cipher knowledge	9	63

The data shows clearly noticeable trends with some parameters reflecting remarkable improvement such as 'decoding' where an improvement of 178% is perceptible when learners transferred reading skills acquired from internet-based intervention to face-to-face learning. In the post-intervention survey too, respondents reported greater confidence in ability to read words in isolation. Similar results are seen in the case of 'semantics' where more than 211% hike with the results corroborated by reverts from the questionnaire wherein respondents variously reported improvements in both receptive and expressive vocabulary which were the areas of highest enhancement and a better understanding of compound words.

Based upon the questionnaire responses, Table 2 below summarizes the percentages of reading enhancement experiences of respondents in face-to-face versus online reading in EFL, responses by students were derived from the total number of students who participated. The questionnaire items sought student response on seven themes, viz. hands-on reading experience, visual impetus, the opportunity for peer discussion/ interaction, availability of examples for reading correctly and coherently, teacher's lectures, group work opportunities, individual reading. Examples of practical activities explained include taking new information and introducing it to a fellow student, focusing on skills they have been taught, and working on new ideas. Table 2 below tabulates this data.

Table 2.

Responses to questionnaire comparing performance

	feature of reading experience	internet based reading performance	perceived improvement in face-to-face reading
1	hands-on	32%	19%
2	visual	27%	26%
3	discussions/interaction	25%	23%
4	examples	15%	23%
5	lectures	11%	6%
6	group work	9%	0%
7	reading	4%	6%
8	other responses	52%	55%

As is evident from the data, respondents indicated their perception of improvements in face-to-face reading as a result of internet-based reading practice claiming that they were pleased with the methodology of teaching as they become able to stay deeply involved in the teaching/learning process. Further, they can be encouraged to initiate more creative conversations, promote learning, and are in a status of understanding easily in the new reading method. Some students reported that their teacher effectively communicated and explained information clearly. They become in a status of eagerness to understand much more from the content. However, some students expressed that there were certain issues that could be improved by their teacher to facilitate learning.

A number of students revealed that teachers were not organized, and asked them to perform a few hands-on tasks. They suggested that their instructor should include more visual teaching aids such as videos or powerpoint presentations. Students in traditional courses stated that they wanted their instructor to teach the course in a clear and simple manner, that the course was insightful. However, more content needed to be applied, and that the instructor often over-explained the material. Students suggested that while the teacher gave good feedback, the task instructions were vague, that assignments were simple, but they did not retain much of the knowledge and preferred more hands-on practices. Students also pointed out a desire to get obvious communication from their instructors. Eighty-seven traditional classroom students provided answers to the questionnaire, whereas 48 gave extra replies. Additionally, students stated that the teacher encouraged them to lead the reading tasks as well as to follow up with discussions, encouraged interaction, and supported them. Table 3 below summarizes respondents' opinions about the reading strategy they most preferred

Table 3.

Reading strategy preferences

	Strategy	face-to-face	online
1	group work	27%	7%
2	no/none	20%	0%
3	interactive/discussion	12%	14%
4	hands-on work	8%	7%
5	other responses	55%	71%

The responses of the students either for face-to-face or online, as shown in Table 3, are presented in form of percentages. Further, they are calculated. The reading strategy preferences that were commonly listed include discussions, activities in groups, and other opportunities. They grant students a good opportunity to interact with each other. On the hand, there are a number of students who preferred mostly group discussions so that to interact and interact in the classroom. Another group of students revealed that they are satisfied with activities used in the classroom and these activities are well organized. The students also showed their satisfaction by declaring that activities used by their instructors were varied and helpful and the class discussions conducted helped them with understanding the content.

Referring to the only on research question, almost 50% of students in the traditional face-to-face learning environment attempted precisely the question whereas a third of those students elaborated on their answers. Students requested more tasks and opportunities that enable them to comprehend what is being taught. Furthermore, they mentioned that they need extra classroom time for note-taking as well as additional support in order to demonstrate their understanding in a better way. Regarding the online classrooms, 14 students responded to the research question differently. Some of the students provided different responses and some others declared that they would like more space to interact with their teacher by asking questions, receiving teacher's feedback, drilling as well as revision of course materials before exams.

Although 20% of students in the traditional classes (See Table 3) stated that there is no need for specific learning activities to enhance their learning, their fellow students in the online classrooms showed their discontent with the implemented activities in their classes. For both classes, almost all students preferred on task to include during classroom interaction.

Conclusion

This study is added to the limited literature on the transference of reading strategies from internet-based mode to face-to-face mode. Furthermore, the current study also contributes to further research on methods of engaging students in the classroom. The study outlines ways in which students' learning preferences could be incorporated into the classroom activities by engaging students in a variety of activities, encouraging greater involvement of students in the classroom. The existing literature related to the topic of this study appears to be limited as there were not enough studies on reading strategies to meet students' individual reading needs in

their studies. This research found that teachers facilitated their teaching by providing their students with different ways to help them understand their literature better. This is an indication of the priority and novelty of this research and it is a valuable addition to existing literature. Many students were pleased with the learning methods introduced in their classroom, yet it was not obvious if they were satisfied. The reason is that the classroom was made more accessible for them to learn best.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2013). Integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into the education system of Yemen: The need of the hour. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Education*, *3*(3).597-604.

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Shariq, M. (2019). MALL: Resorting to mobiles in the EFL classroom. *The Journal of Social Sciences Research*, *Special Issue*. 1, 90-96. https://doi.org/10.32861/jssr.spi1.90.96

Bennett, C. F., & Monds, K. E. (2008). Online courses the real challenge is motivation. *College Teaching Methods & Styles Journal (CTMS)*, *4*(6), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.19030/ctms.v4i6.5553

Chang, Y., Wong, S. F., & Park, M. C. (2014). Determinants of user satisfaction in internet use among socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged groups: The role of digital access and government policy. International Telecommunications Society Regional Conference

Chiu, C. Y., & Kwan, L. Y. Y. (2010). Culture and creativity: A process model. *Management and Organization Review*, *6*(3), 447-461. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-8784.2010.00194.x

Cho, M., & Shen, D. (2013). Self-regulation in online learning. *Distance Education*, *34*(3), 290-30. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2013.835770

Christensen, S. S., & Spackman, J. S. (2017). Dropout rates, student momentum, and course walls: A new tool for distance education designers. *Journal of Educators Online*, *14*(2), n2.

Clark, R. C., & Mayer, R. E. (2016). *E-learning and the science of instruction: Proven guidelines for consumers and designers of multimedia learning*. John Wiley & sons.

Cuthrell, K., & Lyon, A. (2007). Instructional strategies: What do online students prefer? *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, *3*(4), 357-362.

Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7_5

Geva, E. (2006). Learning to read in a second language: Research, implications, and recommendations for services. *Encyclopedia on early childhood development*, 1-12. https://www.child-encyclopedia.com/second-language/according-experts/learning-read-second-language-research-implications-and

Geva, E., & Siegel, L. S. (2000). Orthographic and cognitive factors in the concurrent development of basic reading skills in two languages. *Reading and writing*, *12*(1), 1-30. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1008017710115

Gist, M. E., & Mitchell, T. R. (1992). Self-efficacy: A theoretical analysis of its determinants and malleability. *Academy of Management Review*, *17*(2), 183-211. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1992.4279530

González-Marcos, A., Alba-Elías, F., Navaridas-Nalda, F., & Ordieres-Meré, J. (2016). Student evaluation of a virtual experience for project management learning: An empirical study for learning improvement. *Computers & Education*, *102*, 172-187. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.08.005

Howlett, G. (2019). How Thai Students Use Mobile Devices When Learning EFL and the Effect of Urban/Rural School Location. *Asian EFL Journal*, *23*(6.1), 96-114.

KABIGTING, R., & Nanud, J. A. (2020). English language classroom anxiety and performance of senior high school learners. *International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies*, *1*(2), 58-69. https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlts.v1i2.69

Ko, S., & Rossen, S. (2017). *Teaching online: A practical guide*. Taylor & Francis.

Lee, E., Pate, J. A., & Cozart, D. (2015). Autonomy support for online students. *TechTrends, 59*(4), 54-61 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-015-0871-9

Lee, Y., & Choi, J. (2011). A review of online course dropout research: Implications for practice and future research. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *59*(5), 593-618. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-010-9177-y

Martin, F., & Bolliger, D. U. (2018). Engagement matters: Student perceptions on the importance of engagement strategies in the online learning environment. *Online Learning*, *22*(1), 205-222.

Mudau, A. V. (2013). A conceptual framework for analyzing teaching difficulties in the science classroom. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, *4*(13), 125-131. http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n13p125

Salayo, J., Fesalbon, J. E. R. ., Valerio, L. C. ., & Litao, R. A. . (2020). Senior high school teachers' and students' engagements during the emergency remote teaching (ERT): Perceptions on readiness, attitude, and competence. *Studies in Humanities and Education*, *1*(1). https://doi.org/10.48185/she.v1i1.145

Stajkovic, A. D., & Luthans, F. (1998). Self-efficacy and work-related performance: A meta-analysis. *Psychological bulletin*, *124*(2), 240. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0033-2909.124.2.240

Sun, J. C. Y., & Rueda, R. (2012). Situational interest, computer self-efficacy and self-regulation: Their impact on student engagement in distance education. *British journal of educational technology*, *43*(2), 191-204. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2010.01157.x

Thompson, C., & Jones, C. (2020). Aims and outcomes: teachers' views of an oral interactive task. *Asian EFL Journal*, *66*, 28-42.

Van de Vord, R., & Pogue, K. (2012). Teaching time investment: Does online really take more time than face-to-face?. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, *13*(3), 132-146. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v13i3.1190

Factors Affecting Mobile- Assisted Language Learning (MALL) Adoption and Integration for ELL: A study based in a Saudi University

Saleh Alrasheedi

Department of English, College of Education, Majmaah University, Majmaah, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Department of English, College of Education, Majmaah University,

Majmaah 11952, Saudi Arabia

Bio profile:

Dr. Saleh A. Alrasheedi is an Assistant Professor in the English Department of the College of Education at Majmaah University in Saudi Arabia. He holds a Ph.D. in Computer Assisted Language Learning, an MA in TESOL, and an MA in Applied Linguistics. His current research interests are ELT via Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), eLearning, ELL through social media, and speaking performance of EFL learners. E-mail: s.alresheed@mu.edu.sa

Abstract

This study reiterates that technology plays an essential role and has excellent potential as a tool in teaching and learning languages. Besides, it is also evident that mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) considerably influences the learning process positively among EFL and ESL students. As an extension of this, the current study intends to investigate the factors affecting the adoption and implementation of MALL in the English departments at the colleges under Majmaah University. In this case, design-based research (DBR) is adopted to evaluate the entire program. The researcher used a survey as the main tool to collect data on the use of the mobile device in the EFL, EAP, ESP learning processes. The participants are eighty-four teachers of English at Majmaah University colleges. The findings of the study are very relevant to the EFL learning process and contribute to research in the field.

Keywords: *Mobile Learning Technologies in Education; MALL; Learner Attitudes; EFL Teachers' attitudes.*

Introduction

The emerging ICT trends have immensely influenced English language teaching and practices worldwide (Bai, et al, 2016). ICT which is now perceived as integral to teaching and learning has changed the face of education in many aspects. Technology-integrated teaching has facilitated language teachers and learners to achieve their academic goals and objectives effectively (Cheon, et al., 2012). There are several aspects of ICT that can be further explored and applied in education. One of these rapidly evolving technological tools which has dominated every sphere of life in general and education, in particular, is the mobile phone. Mobile technology has immense potential in developing knowledge at the tertiary level (Tan, et al., 2012). Though the mobile phone is largely seen as a tool for communication, it can also be used as a learning tool, especially to enhance language learning. Students utilize mobile technology to improve their learning and achieve academic success for several reasons including ease of, availability of additional materials, and interesting learning resources (Jung, 2015). Another reason is the notion of mobility that language learning can take place anytime and anywhere. The idea of using their smartphones to learn gives encouragement and motivation to the learners to independently pursue language learning at their own pace and in their individual learning styles.

Kukulska-Hulme (2016) noted that Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is greatly beneficial in improving language skills given a large number of mobile apps for learning vocabulary and studying grammar. As MALL is an 'in-class activity in which students can enhance vocabulary by creating their multimedia vocabulary glosses. Similarly, various mobile apps assist learners in improving their grammar through a variety of integrated activities. Moreover, when students engage with social media (Facebook, Twitter, wiki, and blogs) through their smartphones, it effectively develops their reading and writing skills. In addition, their listening and speaking skills are enhanced by watching podcast videos and via the use of various mobile features like text-to-speak in the native voice. Besides, the availability of vast numbers of audio contents in multiple languages can positively affect their listening skills.

Significance of the Study

The recent evolution of new trends in the field of technology has shifted the researchers' attention from the application of traditional technologies of computer-assisted languages (CALL) to the innovative technology of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MAAL) in teaching and learning a language (Kétyi, 2013; Al-Ahdal, & Alharbi, 2021; Zitouni, 2021).

Mobile technologies have facilitated teachers and learners to meet their objectives successfully across the world. There are several factors why students prefer the mobile phone as a tool to enhance their learning process. Mobile phones are portable, interactive, easy to use, allow easy internet access, are flexible, and highly adaptive for all learning situations. However, teachers sometimes have reservations about the use of smartphones in classrooms as they fear that it will lead to greater cause for distraction rather than learner engagement. Therefore, the current study explores the factors affecting MALL adoption and implementation of MALL by faculty members at Majmaah University. Students at Majmaah University create WhatsApp groups for interaction with their peers as well as the language instructors. They also use mobile phones for responding to the university portal (BlackBoard). The current study will explore the underlying factors for the adoption and implementation of MALL in the EFL context. The study's findings may imply useful pedagogical implications for language teachers using MALL in enhancing language teaching and learning.

Research Objectives

The current study sets out to investigate the factors rooted among the English (EFL, EAP, ESP) teachers that affect the adoption and implementation of MALL at Majmaah University. This study also aims to investigate the recently successful learning approach known as MALL. The primary focus is to discover how EFL learners of Majmaah University update themselves to utilize mobile devices to support their English learning and learn new lexical items using their mobile devices.

Literature Review

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

MALL assures teachers, learners of an available communication channel at all times, and places, which in turn, keeps the learning process active, even beyond the classroom. It helps both the teachers and students to fulfill their purposes through the online process of learning. The students get all the useful information about the respective topic, which helps them in the academic and professional context. On the other hand, the teachers also benefit from MALL in conducting online classes and exchange of feedback (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016; Al-Ahdal, 2020). Overall, Mobile Assisted Language Learning is an effective way to learn about the respective subject or topic with maximum efficiency and with the teachers' help. MALL is a fast-emerging research field that underwent rapid growth in the last few decades. Previous research studies indicated that MALL is a learning tool that provides learners with

opportunities to develop and practice their language in a flexible, collaborative adaptive, real-life experience and anxiety-free environment both inside and outside the classroom (Duman, et al., 2015). Klímová (2018) explored the effectiveness of using mobile phones and their apps for improving the English language at the University of Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic. In this quantitative study, MALL's benefits and limitations in the EFL teaching context were also highlighted. The study's findings revealed the positive effects of MALL on learning the English language and learners' attitudes towards it. Among the factors that affected learners' attitudes towards MALL, perceived ease to use and internet access received the highest mean score in the analysis. Personalized learning is one of the essential features of the MALL. Students can maintain and organize their knowledge by using mobile-enhanced tools in the learning process. Kukulska-Hulme (2016) conducted a study to examine MALL efficacies in improving language teaching and learning in terms of personalized learning from research and practice. The findings of the study revealed that mobile phone-based personalized learning had positive effects on the learners' knowledge and attitudes. Nalliveettil & Alenazi (2016) carried out a quantitative study to explore mobile phones' effectiveness in learning English in Saudi Arabia. The study utilized a survey questionnaire to collect data from the teachers and students. The findings of the study revealed a significant positive effect of mobile phones on learners' English language. The study also recommended innovative methods and useful materials for English teachers and learners in the EFL classroom setting. However, the study employed only a survey questionnaire as a data collection tool, but the present study will adopt a quantitative approach to collect data. Grimshaw et al. (2017) noted that the flexibility of devices like mobile phones is very useful in the e-learning process and can help in various ways for humans. Therefore, mobile learning has become very popular in the present day, and it can be used to learn in a very effective way to reduce conflicts in studies.

Advantages and disadvantages of mobile learning

Mobile learning is a matter of focus for the students and for this reason an evaluation of the pros and cons is pertinent.

The advantages of mobile learning can be summarized as follows:

- **Access anywhere and anytime:** As the mobile is a portable device, so it can be accessed from any place and at any time (Crompton et al., 2016). The best thing is it can be accessed via the internet from any kind of place. It makes it very effective for the students.

- **Covers a huge distance:** The connectivity of mobile devices is in the global context, and it makes the mobile learning very efficient. It can be connected to any place in the world to have a learning process. Mobile learning reduces the barrier of distance from the effective learning process.

- **Variety of content:** There are so many contents presented in the mobile learning process and they can be accessed via the internet. This facility increases the effectiveness of the learning process for the students (Schuck et al., 2017). The wide range of content is very helpful to the students to find appropriate knowledge in the relevant matters.

- **Encourages the students:** The students are also gets encouraged in the process as this process is very effective to the students. Many things get benefitted for the students including time, travelling cost and other important parts.

- **Tests the knowledge:** Sitting in the online exams via mobile or any other reliable devices helps the students to prepare for the real exam. It gives students an absolute idea about the structure, pattern, and quality of the studies.

However, there are also some disadvantages to consider:

- Designing learning material for mobile devices can be manpower and resource-intensive exercise.

- Security and privacy issues need a new level of thinking.

- Dealing with the connectivity and battery life of the device is an ever-present challenge.

- Measuring the result in the case of MALL based learning can be tedious for teachers.

- Software issues: Software is an effective matter in mobile learning environments and it needs to be in perfect condition to be used in the study-related matters. The IT systems of the devices need to be in proper shape to help the application run in the devices (Alrasheedi & Capretz, 2018).

- Hardware issues: The hardware in this case is referring to mobile or similar devices. Therefore, it is essential for the device to work perfectly to have a better condition for the learning process.

- Distraction: Distraction is one of the major issues in the mobile learning process and the students face it a lot. Social media attraction is one of them and it attracts students to be distracted in the process.

- Misuse: Misuse of the device is one of the big issues in the learning process and it affects the students.

- Poor internet connection: The internet connection needs to be in perfect condition to ensure optimization of the learning process. These are the possible advantages and disadvantages of the mobile learning process, and it needs to be focused on to have a better learning process.

Methodology

This is a design-based quantitative research (DBR) focused on the factors which make MALL in case of having a perfect mobile learning process. DBR is a very effective research tool in the realm of learning as it focuses on the real-world problems of the mobile learning process, be used to detect the problems therein, and find the appropriate solution to the problems (Rahman, 2019). It is an interactive, iterative, and flexible method of research in the mobile learning process. DBR follows certain steps, viz., gathering and elicitation of information, design of the process, finding the solution, and the development and testing of the application.

The survey questions in this study are designed around three axes defined below:

- The attitude of the teachers and students in the learning process via mobile phones
- Factors affecting the use of mobile phones to learn
- Problems related to mobile-based learning

The participants in the study were English teaching faculty members at the colleges under Majmaah University. The questionnaire was emailed to the entire faculty by accessing the official email database at the university. The total number of requests made was 113 out of which 42 were female and 71 male teachers. The respondents were asked to revert within three days of receipt of the questionnaire. However, out of the reverted questionnaires, as many as 29 had to be discarded for one or more of the following reasons: Incomplete responses; incompatible demographic information; late submission of the response. The remaining reverts were processed using descriptive statistics and SPSS 25.

Data Analysis

The survey was created using the online survey tool surveygizmo.com and data was extracted in an Excel datasheet then transformed into SPSS data file. Survey questions included queries to elicit information on teachers' professional profiles and their perceptions about the

adoption and integration of MALL in EFL education. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize teachers' information and perceptions. Means and standard deviations were also used to statistically describe teachers' perceptions. Independent samples T-test and one-way ANOVA were used to find significant factors affecting teachers' perceptions about the adoption and integration of MALL. Significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Moreover, data was also requested on the available ICT resources in the individual language and translation departments at the university colleges, these were later summed up under broad headings as depicted in Figure 1 below.

ICT Equipment Available in English Departments

Category	Percentage
Computer laboratories	89%
Internet access	89%
Wi-Fi	94%
Software	33%
Printers	89%
Computers in classroom	83%
Internet access in the English Lab	78%
Data projector in classroom	44%
Computers in the English Lab	83%
Laptops	28%
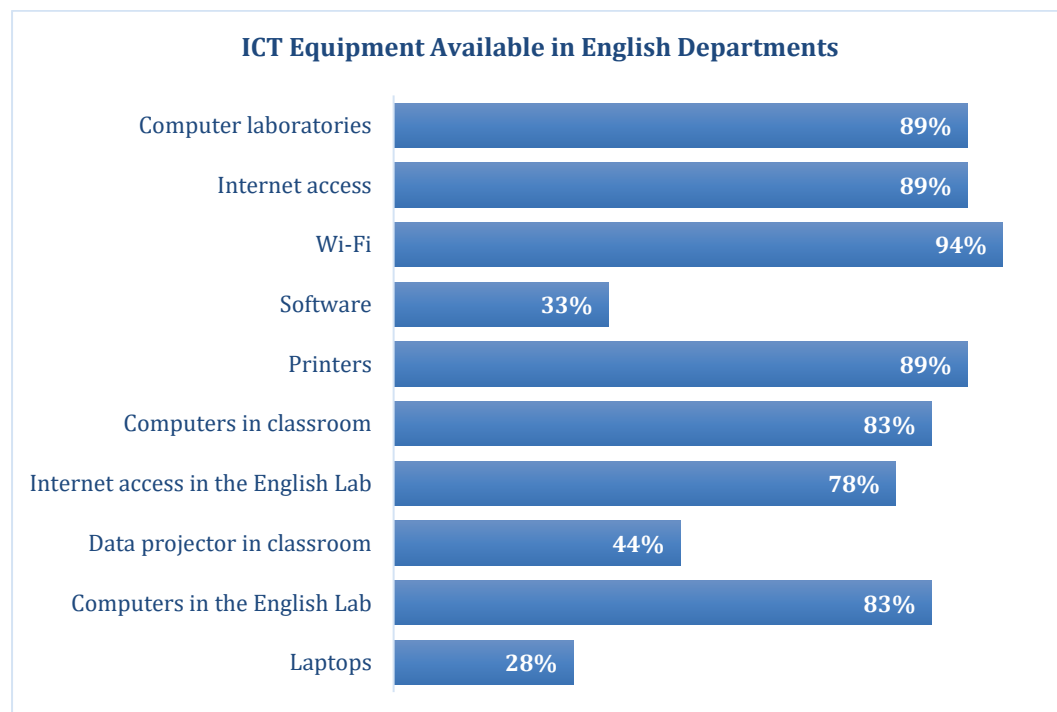
Figure 1. ICT Equipment Available in English Departments

Information about Teaching in EFL, EAP, ESP courses

Using mobile phones for preparing teaching materials	72%
Having internet access in classroom	100%
Students have access to MALL	83%
Ask students to use MALL in learning	83%
Taken ICT training programs before	78%
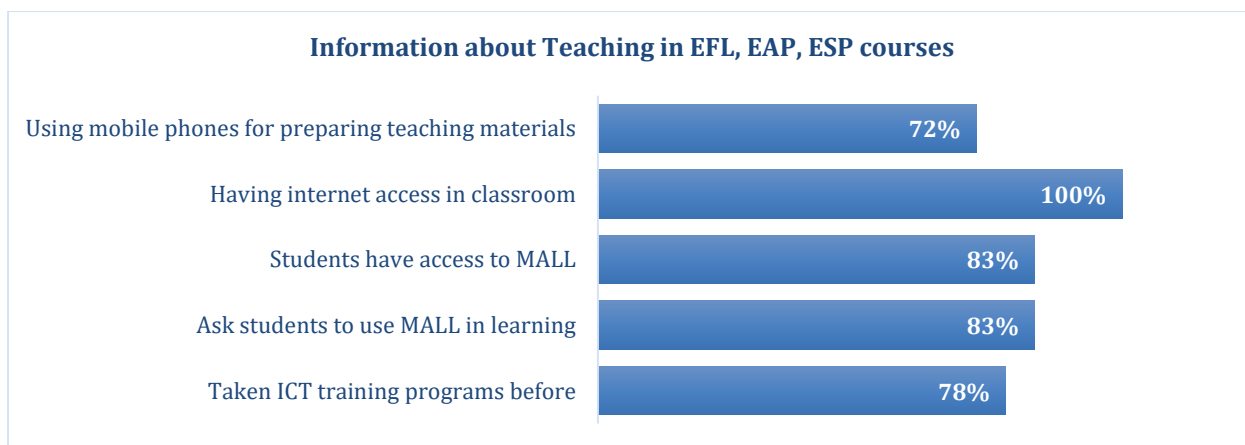
Figure 2. Information about Teaching in Classes

Other survey items loaded onto five components related to information about teaching practices currently adhered to by the respondents. These are depicted in Figure 2 above.

Factors that could affect the use of MALL from the Teachers' Point of View

Teachers were asked about the factors that could affect the use of MALL in their colleges, they provided the information shown in Figure 3. That is, the most affecting factor from teachers' perspective was lack of interest (61%), lack of training (56%), and lack of time (50%). One respondent added a new factor, which is that "MALL is basically self-learning tool that can be used outside classrooms".

Factors that could affect the use of MALL

Lack of interest	61%
Lack of time	50%
Lack of Management	22%
Lack of training	56%
Lack of financial support	28%
Lack of technical support	17%
Lack of clear plan and syllabus	39%
Other	6%
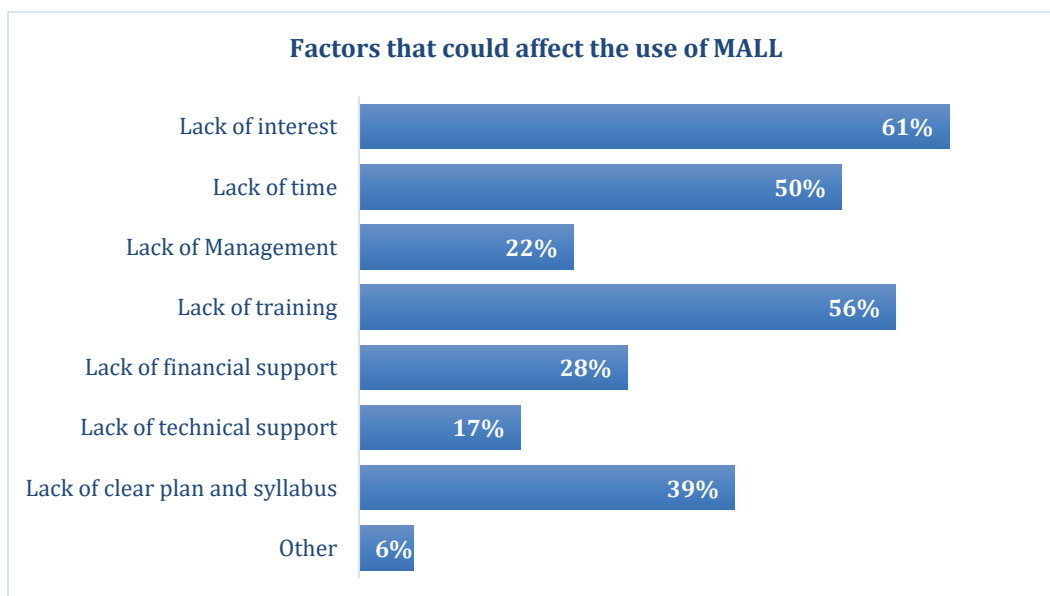
Figure 3. Factors that could affect the use of MALL from the Teachers' Point of View

Teachers' Perceptions about MALL

Overall, teachers' perceptions were positive; that is, the majority of teachers were more likely to agree with the statements measuring each dimension of the questionnaire. On average, 68.6% of teachers either agree or strongly agree with the questionnaire statements measuring their perceptions and attitudes towards the adoption and integration of MALL. Frequencies and percentages summarizing the scale scores given by teachers are reported in Table 2. Means and standard deviations are also reported. As plotted in Figure 4, the highest mean score was for Perceived Effectiveness (M = 4.14, SD = 0.597), with 78.9% of teachers agree or strongly disagree with the dimension statements and no teachers disagreeing with any of the statements. Teachers' attitude had the least mean score (M = 3.51, SD = 0.612), with 59.3% of teachers agree or strongly agree with the statements and 10.6% on the disagree scale. The other dimensions acted similarly. Figure 5 summarizes score percent distribution of all items.

Score Percent Distribution of Questionnaire Items

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

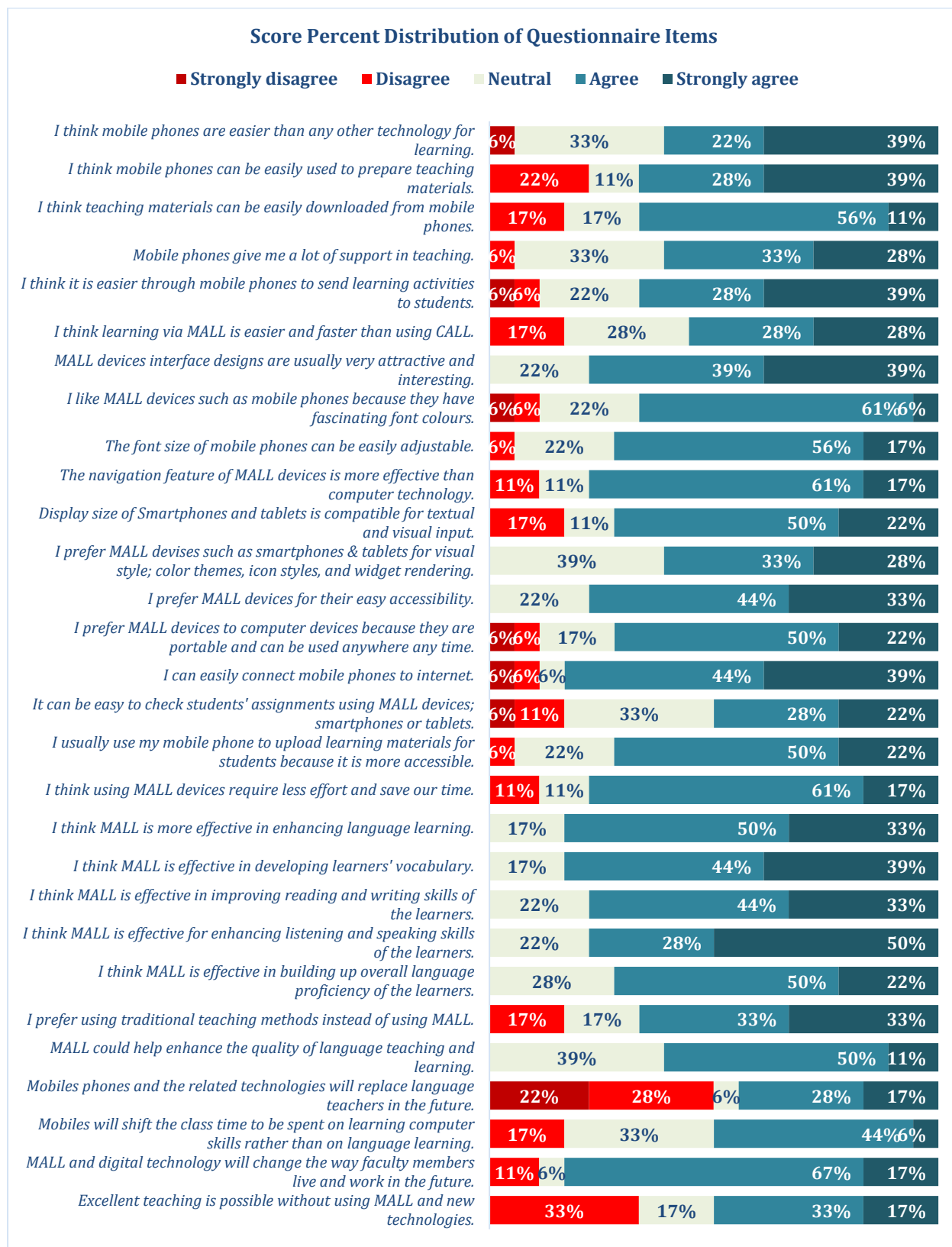| Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I think mobile phones are easier than any other technology for learning.	6%		33%	22%	39%
I think mobile phones can be easily used to prepare teaching materials.		22%	11%	28%	39%
I think teaching materials can be easily downloaded from mobile phones.		17%	17%	56%	11%
Mobile phones give me a lot of support in teaching.	6%		33%	33%	28%
I think it is easier through mobile phones to send learning activities to students.	6%	6%	22%	28%	39%
I think learning via MALL is easier and faster than using CALL.		17%	28%	28%	28%
MALL devices interface designs are usually very attractive and interesting.			22%	39%	39%
I like MALL devices such as mobile phones because they have fascinating font colours.	6% 6%		22%	61%	6%
The font size of mobile phones can be easily adjustable.	6%		22%	56%	17%
The navigation feature of MALL devices is more effective than computer technology.	11%		11%	61%	17%
Display size of Smartphones and tablets is compatible for textual and visual input.		17%	11%	50%	22%
I prefer MALL devises such as smartphones & tablets for visual style; color themes, icon styles, and widget rendering.			39%	33%	28%
I prefer MALL devices for their easy accessibility.			22%	44%	33%
I prefer MALL devices to computer devices because they are portable and can be used anywhere any time.	6% 6%		17%	50%	22%
I can easily connect mobile phones to internet.	6% 6%		6%	44%	39%
It can be easy to check students' assignments using MALL devices; smartphones or tablets.	6%	11%	33%	28%	22%
I usually use my mobile phone to upload learning materials for students because it is more accessible.	6%		22%	50%	22%
I think using MALL devices require less effort and save our time.	11%		11%	61%	17%
I think MALL is more effective in enhancing language learning.			17%	50%	33%
I think MALL is effective in developing learners' vocabulary.			17%	44%	39%
I think MALL is effective in improving reading and writing skills of the learners.			22%	44%	33%
I think MALL is effective for enhancing listening and speaking skills of the learners.			22%	28%	50%
I think MALL is effective in building up overall language proficiency of the learners.			28%	50%	22%
I prefer using traditional teaching methods instead of using MALL.		17%	17%	33%	33%
MALL could help enhance the quality of language teaching and learning.			39%	50%	11%
Mobiles phones and the related technologies will replace language teachers in the future.	22%	28%	6%	28%	17%
Mobiles will shift the class time to be spent on learning computer skills rather than on language learning.		17%	33%	44%	6%
MALL and digital technology will change the way faculty members live and work in the future.	11%	6%		67%	17%
Excellent teaching is possible without using MALL and new technologies.		33%	17%	33%	17%

Figure 5. Score Percent Distribution of Questionnaire Items

Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency of questionnaire items is measured based on the correlations between different items on the same test (dimension). It measures whether several items that propose to measure the same general construct produce similar scores. In the current study, internal consistency is measured with Cronbach's alpha, a statistic calculated from the pairwise correlations between items. Cronbach's alpha values range between zero and one. A commonly accepted rule of thumb is that an α of 0.6-0.7 indicates acceptable reliability, and 0.8 or higher indicates good reliability (Internal Consistency, 2020). An alpha score above 0.75 is generally taken to indicate a scale of high reliability, 0.5 to 0.75 is generally accepted as indicating a moderate reliable scale, while a figure below this generally indicates a scale of low reliability (Hinton, Brownlow & Cozens, 2004).

For the present study, Cronbach's alpha values for the five dimensions indicate moderate to high reliability, from 0.681 to 0.885 with Cronbach's alpha of 0.954 for all questionnaire items; see Table 3. The dimension "Teachers' Attitudes" is measured by a set of six items. The item "Q29. Excellent teaching is possible without using MALL and new technologies." was found to be an inappropriate item so when deleteing it from the dimension the Cronbach alpha value increases from 0.613 to 0.681. The corrected item-total correlation of this item with the dimension was 0.071, which is very week, and with the overall questionnaire was -0.123, which is a negative value indicating an inappropriate item. Therefore, this item was deleted from the analysis.

Table 3. Reliability Statistics

Dimension	Before deleting inappropriate Items		inappropriate Items (to be deleted)	After deleting inappropriate Items	
	No. of Items	Cronbach's alpha		No. of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Overall Questionnaire	29	.947	Q.29	28	.954
Perceived Ease of Use	6	.830	-	6	.830
Interface Design	6	.885	-	6	.885
Perceived Accessibility	6	.877	-	6	.877
Perceived Effectiveness	5	.855	-	5	.855
Teachers' Attitudes	6	.613	Q.29	5	.681

Exploring Factors

In this study, there are five dependent variables: Perceived Ease of Use, Interface Design, Perceived Accessibility, Perceived Effectiveness, and Teachers' Attitudes, i.e., measuring teachers' perceptions about the adoption and integration of MALL. Independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA tests were used to find significant differences between pairs of categories of responses based on the teachers' information. The following factors were found significantly affecting teachers' perceptions.

Gender

A two-independent samples t-test was used to examine the differences between males and females regarding teachers' perceptions, and test results are reported in Table 4. The results revealed a significant difference between males and females in terms of Perceived Ease of Use, Interface Design, Perceived Accessibility, and Teachers' Attitudes, where females had significantly higher mean scores than males, $p < 0.05$. Females are more likely to have higher Perceived Ease of Use, Interface Design, Perceived Accessibility, and Teachers' Attitudes than males. These significant differences can be graphically illustrated by checking the boxplots in Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8, and Figure 9. Hence, it can be inferred that gender is a significant factor affecting teachers' perceptions. The test also showed no significant difference between males and females concerning Perceived Effectiveness, $p > 0.05$.
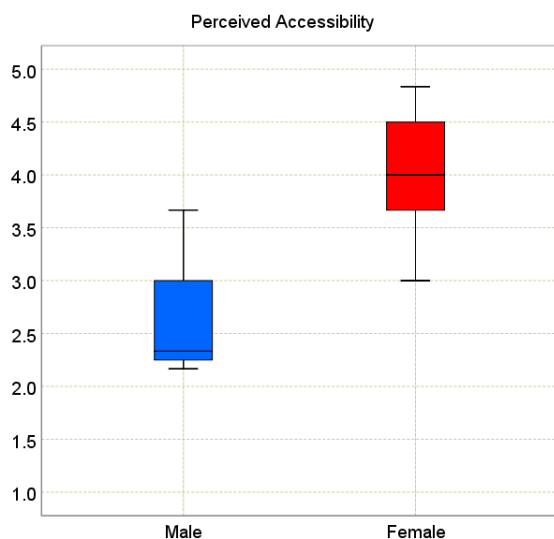
*. Significant at α = .05

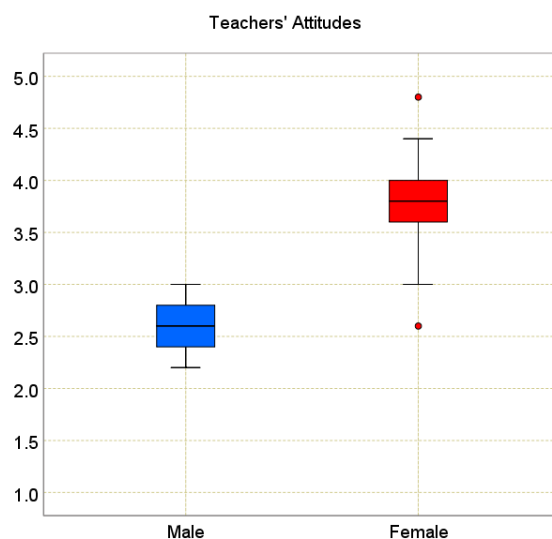

Figure 8. Boxplot of Perceived Accessibility by Gender

Figure 9. Boxplot of Teachers' Attitudes by Gender

Equipment Available in Colleges

With regard to equipment available in colleges where teachers work, the availability of three kinds of equipment were significant factors affecting teachers' perceptions. Teachers who work in colleges with internet access in the English lab available had higher Perceived Accessibility (M = 4.12) than teachers who work in colleges without internet access in the

English lab, $p = 0.004$. Teachers who work in colleges with data projectors in classrooms had lower perceptions in terms of Perceived Ease of Use, Interface Design, Perceived Accessibility, Perceived Effectiveness, and Teachers' Attitudes than teachers who work in colleges without data projector in the classroom, $p < 0.05$; see Table 9. Finally, teachers who work in colleges with laptops had lower perceptions in terms of Interface Design and Perceived Effectiveness than teachers who work in colleges without laptops, $p < 0.05$.

Table 9. Independent Samples T-test - Factor: Equipment Available in Teachers' Colleges

| Teachers' Perceptions | Descriptive Statistics | | | | Independent Samples T-Test | |
| | Unavailable | | Available | | | |
	M	SD	M	SD	Statistic (t)	Sig. (p)
Internet access in the English Lab						
Perceived Accessibility	2.96	.832	4.12	.533	-3.410	.004*
Data projector in classroom						
Perceived Ease of Use	4.30	.543	3.15	.552	4.447	< .001*
Interface Design	4.30	.367	3.27	.563	4.686	< .001*
Perceived Accessibility	4.30	.463	3.31	.726	3.511	.003*
Perceived Effectiveness	4.42	.569	3.80	.454	2.505	.023*
Teachers' Attitudes	3.88	.583	3.12	.575	2.747	.014*
Laptops						
Interface Design	4.10	.580	3.17	.486	3.190	.006*
Perceived Effectiveness	4.34	.519	3.64	.518	2.559	.021*

*. Significant at α = .05

Factors that could affect the use of MALL from the Teachers' Point of View

Teachers who believe that lack of interest is a factor that could affect the use of MALL had higher Perceived Accessibility (M = 4.21) than teachers who did not believe (M = 3.31), $p = 0.010$. also, teachers who believe that lack of training is a factor that could affect the use of MALL had higher Perceived Effectiveness (M = 4.44) than teachers who did not believe (M = 3.77), $p = 0.014$.

Table 11. Independent Samples T-test - Factor: Factors that could affect the use of MALL from the Teachers' Point of View

| Teachers' Perceptions | Descriptive Statistics | | Independent Samples T-test |
	No	Yes	

	M	SD	M	SD	Statistic (*t*)	Sig. (*p*)
Lack of interest						
Perceived Accessibility	3.31	.742	4.21	.563	-2.935	.010*
Lack of training						
Perceived Effectiveness	3.77	.570	4.44	.450	-2.770	.014*

*. Significant at α = .05

Discussion

This study used Surveygizmo to conduct a survey for collecting data from a sample of faculty members in the English Departments at the colleges under Majmaah University. Results In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher had to use a set of statistical methods, namely, frequencies, ratios, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation, in order to describe the study sample. also used the inferential tests represented in the T-test and the ANOVA test.

The teachers were asked about the factors that could affect the use of MALL in their colleges. Results indicated that the most influential factor from the teachers' point of view is lack of interest, lack of training, and time constraints. It also turns out that MALL is essentially a self-learning tool that can be used outside of the classroom, and likewise, it has revealed a consensus on the potential of MALL as a practical approach to English as a Foreign Language English (EFL), English for Academic Purposes, and English for Specific Purposes.

Overall, the teachers' perceptions of MALL were positive. In other words, a majority of teachers were more likely to agree with statements that measure each dimension of the questionnaire. Lawrence (2015) had a similar result for their study; almost half of the participating students confirmed a positive attitude towards integrating smartphones for language learning. Therefore, the positive attitude of these students provides a positive environment to integrate MALL among teachers to offer English language programs at colleges under Majmaah University.

The study was based on five dependent variables: perceived ease of use, interface design, perceived accessibility, perceived effectiveness, and teacher attitudes; that is, measuring teachers' perceptions about MALL adoption and inclusion. The two samples t-test was used independently to examine the differences between males and females with respect to teachers 'perceptions and the results showed a significant difference between males and females in terms of perceived ease of use, interface design, perceived accessibility, and

teachers' attitudes, as females scored significantly higher average scores than males and are likely Females have greater ease of use, interface design, perceived accessibility, and teacher attitudes than males. Hence, it is concluded that gender is an important factor affecting teachers' perceptions. The test also showed that there was no significant difference between males and females with regard to perceived effectiveness

With regard to the equipment available in the colleges where the teachers work, the availability of three types of equipment was an important factor affecting the perceptions of the teachers. Teachers working in colleges with Internet access in an English language lab had higher perceived access than teachers working in colleges without accessing the Internet in an English language lab had teachers working in colleges using a data projector in class Academic perceptions are lower in terms of perceived ease of use, interface design, perceived accessibility, perceived efficacy, and teacher attitudes compared to teachers who work in colleges without a data projector in the classroom.

Teachers who believed that lack of interest was a factor that could influence MALL use had higher perceived access than teachers who did not believe, and teachers who believed lack of training was one of the factors that could influence MALL use had perceived effectiveness. Higher than teachers who did not believe.

The most important finding in this research is that a high percentage of respondents strongly agreed with the statement regarding ease of implementation of MALL. This is evidence of the positive attitude towards the purpose of MALL in improving English language learners. Traxler (2009) also mentioned that mobile devices or smartphones are the future of the most promising device for language learning because these devices improve the language learning process in a more realistic, personalized, and localized way. Moreover, Kukulska-Hulme (2016) suggested that the new century calls for greater learner independence with flexible use of new learning tools such as cell phones and has changed the traditional way in which all language skills will be learned in the future. Therefore, it is suggested that MALL be used as a premium teaching aid in English language classrooms.

Conclusion

This study aims to validate a recently successful learning approach known as MALL. The main focus is on discovering how learners of English as a foreign language at Majmaah University update themselves to use mobile devices to support English language learning and learn new lexical elements using their mobile devices. It also tries to investigate the factors affecting the adoption and implementation of the mall at Majmaah University.

MALL is an area of research that has not been investigated in the context of English as a second or foreign language. Very little is known about the appropriateness of implementing MALL in the ESFL context. More research is needed to assess the appropriateness of shopping center implementation from the perspective of language learners. Therefore, the study recommends that language teachers should also be well prepared, well equipped, and ready to adapt and adopt recent technological innovations to be able to integrate MALL technology into the curriculum. The costs and limitations of the mobile device should be taken into account while using mobile activities in the language learning classroom. These activities and tasks should be short and concise when possible Future researches should focus on exploring the mobile learning skills and skills of English language learners as a foreign language before implementing MALL in the context of English as a foreign language. Some empirical studies should also be conducted to investigate the perceptions of language teachers and learners towards actual mall shopping practices. Because there is a lack of research on the acceptance of EFL teachers for the MALL application, more research should focus on EFL teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards future implementation of MALL.

Reference

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H (2020). Using computer software as a tool of error analysis: Giving EFL teachers and learners a much-needed impetus. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, *12*(2) 418-437.

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Alharbi, M. A. (2021). MALL in collaborative learning as a vocabulary-enhancing tool for EFL learners: A study across two universities in Saudi Arabia. *SAGE Open*, *11*(1), 1–9 https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2158244021999062

Alrasheedi, M. & Capretz, L.F. (2018). Determination of critical success factors affecting mobile learning: A meta-analysis approach. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology, 14(2). 41-51.*

Bai, Y., Mo, D., Zhang, L., Boswell, M., & Rozelle, S. (2016). The impact of integrating ICT with teaching: Evidence from a randomized controlled trial in rural schools in China. *Computers & Education, 96*, 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.02.005

Botero, G.G., Questier, F., Cincinnato, S., He, T. & Zhu, C. (2018). Acceptance and usage of mobile assisted language learning by higher education students. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, *30*(3), pp.426-451.

Briz-Ponce, L., Pereira, A., Carvalho, L., Juanes-Méndez, J.A. & García-Peñalvo, F.J. (2017). Learning with mobile technologies–Students' behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *72*, pp.612-620.

Cheon, J., Lee, S., Crooks, S. M., & Song, J. (2012). An investigation of mobile learning readiness in higher education based on the theory of planned behavior. *Computers & Education, 59*(3), 1054-1064. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.04.015

Crompton, H., Burke, D. and Gregory, K.H. (2017). The use of mobile learning in PK-12 education: A systematic review. *Computers & Education*, *110*, pp.51-63.

Crompton, H., Burke, D., Gregory, K.H. & Gräbe, C. (2016). The use of mobile learning in science: A systematic review. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, *25*(2), pp.149-160.

Duman, G., Orhon, G., & Gedik, N. (2015). Research trends in mobile assisted language learning from 2000 to 2012. *ReCALL, 27*(2), 197-216.

Foomani, E.M. & Hedayati, M. (2016). A seamless learning design for mobile assisted language learning: An Iranian context. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(5), pp.206-213.

Grimshaw, J., Cardoso, W. & Collins, L. (2017). Teacher perspectives on the integration of Mobile Assisted Language Learning. *CALL in a climate of change: Adapting to turbulent global conditions. Research-publishing. net*, pp.135-139.

Hinton, P. R., Brownlow, C., & Cozens, M. M. & B. (2004*). SPSS Explained. London & New York: Taylor & Francis Group / Books.*

Huo, Y., Cho, C.Y., Huang, K.F., Chen, Y.F. & Lee, C.C. (2019). Exploring the DBR superlattice effect on the thermal performance of a VECSEL with the finite element method. *Optics letters*, *44*(2), pp.327-330.

Internal consistency. (2020, January 24). Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internal_consistency

Jung, H.-J. (2015). Fostering an English teaching environment: Factors influencing English as a foreign language teachers' adoption of mobile learning. *Informatics in Education, 14*(2), 219-241.

Kaliisa, R. & Picard, M. (2017). A systematic review on mobile learning in higher education: The African perspective. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, *16*(1), pp.1-18.

Kétyi, A. (2013). Using smart phones in language learning–A pilot study to turn CALL into MALL. *L. Bradley & S. Thouësny (Eds.), 20*, 129-134.

Klímová, B. (2018). Mobile phones and/or smartphones and their apps for teaching English as a foreign language. *Education and Information Technologies, 23*(3), 1091-1099. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-017-9655-5

Kukulska-Hulme, A. (2016). *Personalization of language learning through mobile technologies.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Lawrence, B. (2015). Learner receptiveness towards mobile technology in a college English program: The smart decision?. *English Teaching*, *70*(1). DOI: 10.15858/engtea.70.1.201503.3

Loewen, S., Crowther, D., Isbell, D.R., Kim, K.M., Maloney, J., Miller, Z.F. & Rawal, H. (2019). Mobile Assisted Language Learning: A Duolingo case study. *ReCALL*, *31*(3), pp.293-311.

Nalliveettil, G. M., & Alenazi, T. H. K. (2016). The impact of mobile phones on English language learning: Perceptions of EFL undergraduates. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 7*(2), 264-272.

Rahman, S.M. (2019). Instruction Design of a Mechatronics Course Based on Closed-loop 7E Model Refined with DBR Method. In *2019 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition*.

Rosell-Aguilar, F. (2017). State of the app: A taxonomy and framework for evaluating language learning mobile applications. *Calico journal, 34*(2).

Schuck, S., Kearney, M. & Burden, K. (2017). Exploring mobile learning in the Third Space. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, *26*(2), pp.121-137.

Tan, G. W.-H., Ooi, K.-B., Sim, J.-J., & Phusavat, K. (2012). Determinants of mobile learning adoption: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Computer Information Systems, 52*(3), 82-91.

Tarighat, S., & Khodabakhsh, S. (2016). Mobile-assisted language assessment: Assessing speaking. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *64*, 409-413. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.07.014

Traxler, J. (2009). Learning in a mobile age. *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning (IJMBL)*, *1*(1), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.4018/jmbl.2009010101

Tsutsumi, N., Kaida, K., Kinashi, K. and Sakai, W. (2019). High-performance all-organic DFB and DBR waveguide laser with various grating height fabricated by a two-photon absorption DLW method. *Scientific reports*, *9*(1), pp.1-11.

Zitouni, M., Al-Traif, H., Zemni, B., Mohammed, O.S., &Aljasser, M ,(2021)Utilization of YouTube to improve the pronunciation skill of Saudi learners in translation departments. *Asian ESP Journal, 17*(2). 133–154

Soft Skills: The Success Formula for the Newly EFL Hired Graduates in the Educational Workplaces During and Post Covid-19

Hiba Abuzagha

Faculty of Educational Sciences, Middle East University

Amman, Jordan

(Corresponding author)

Ahmad A.S. Tabieh

Middle East University, Jordan

Bio-profiles:

Hiba Y. Abuzagha has a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Jordan. She has worked in the education field, first as a teacher and then as a teacher and an IGCSE/GCE Coordinator and now as an International Programs Director in a private school in Jordan for more than thirteen years. She is a certified educator from Cambridge Assessment International Education. Currently, she is working on her Master in Academic Administration and Leadership at the Middle East University. Her research focuses on Education and Language Acquisition and in tune with this, she has published a paper on the impact of digital storytelling strategy on teaching the teaching of Arabic.

Dr. Ahmad A.S. Tabieh, Assistant Professor at Middle East University, has been teaching Mathematics and Statistics for more than ten years. He received his master's and PhD degree from the University of Jordan. He has authored *Elementary Statistics*, a book for beginners in the subject, in addition to co-authoring *College Algebra and Trigonometry* in the McGraw-Hill Series. His research focuses on the Education in major and mathematics education.

Abstract

The COVID 19 crisis has imposed many changes as well as challenges in various workplaces, and in the educational ones, the challenges have been of different types and levels. The

parameters constricting employability in the educational sector have expanded exponentially to include non-academic and practical skills. The non-academic skills became a fundamental standard for the selection process of candidates who plan to teach EFL. These skills guarantee that the candidates can contribute effectively and efficiently to the institution while facing unexpected challenges such as the ones caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. Through a mixed approach method, this paper will present the highly demanded soft skills for the newly-hired EFL graduates to guarantee a comprehensive deliverance of educational content during and post COVID 19 crises from the perspective of employers. Moreover, this paper aimed to investigate the level of awareness among graduates about the soft skills demanded to succeed in teaching EFL during COVID 19 and in the post COVID 19 especially since teaching EFL depends on human interaction has grown limited due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

Introduction

The COVID 19 wave that hit the whole world fiercely in 2020 affected almost all sectors of human existence. It has also made pertinent tremendous changes in the mindsets and skills of teachers and employers all over the world to ensure recovery from the severe setbacks. The recovery demands a great shift into what seems to be a novel set of skills to cope with the current situation that has been affecting the productivity level in almost all countries negatively (Suomi et al., 2020) . Covid-19 did not only cost the world precious lives but also led to huge damages to the economy. Employers were forced to reduce the number of workers in their institutions. Regarding the educational sector, the contracts of many teachers were terminated. The educational sector has been affected enormously by the negative consequences of the pandemic (Chakraborty & Maity, 2020). Zheng (2020) reported that school leaders found themselves forced to reduce the number of teachers and administrators. Moreover, teachers found themselves working in extraordinary circumstances because the actual teaching-learning process has drastically and suddenly taken another pattern that requires different strategies and techniques to deliver the content to students who are far away from the actual learning environment.

 The scholastic system has completely changed to meet the demands of the circumstances enforced by the COVID 19 pandemic (Al-Ahdal & Alqasham 2020; Mishra et al., 2020). For some teachers and educators, the shift towards virtual learning has become a challenge yet a must (Mary, 2021), because of the impact of personality factors on effective interaction has to be considered in a virtual setting. Thus, a challenging setup and a novel set of skills should be

acquired to cope with it. As a result, the acquisition of soft skills has become a must and the adoption of this new set of skills by teachers who intend to join the educational workplaces has also become essential (Fixsen & Ridge, 2019).

Soft Skills as defined in Yan et al. (2019) are personality traits which distinguish individual means of communication with others. In the workplace, soft skills and hard skills, which refer to a person's knowledge and occupational skills, complement each other. The need for the acquisition of soft skills by graduates and newly-hired EFLS teachers has emerged during the COVID 19 crisis since this field has now more than ever, come to require a balance between the academic skills and the other non-academic skills such as flexibility and strong communication skills which have become essential in these tough times (Zheng et al., 2020). Understanding these soft skills is vital for employees themselves because they need to have self-actualization to reach their professional goals. Employees must realize which soft skills they do possess and the ones needed to be acquired to be able to evolve as a successful EFL teacher during challenging times and circumstances.

When recruiting, educators and school principals are usually used to focusing on the teacher's knowledge and the academic competencies of candidates. However, the world pandemic has shifted this focus to new perspectives that look for candidates with multifaceted abilitiy set and a wide range of skills, both hard and soft, (Tang, 2020), a fact which is, unfortunately, not duly acknowledged by many graduates or newly-hired EFL teachers. The importance of the acquisition of soft skills along with the cognitive ones to form the mixture of a personality that contributes to the success of the institution and substitute for any loss in the human resources should be highly acknowledged (Jagannathan et al., 2019).

Literature Review

A study that was conducted by Succi and Canovi (2020) aimed at presenting the increased demands for soft skills in an unstable working environment. The research was carried out to compare the students' and the employers' point of views about the importance of soft skills in Europe. Results showed that 86% of respondents emphasized that soft skills have assumed enormous importance in the last 5-10 years. Moreover, the differences emerged in the ranking of the 20 soft skills listed in this study according to the level of their priority.

Succi and Canovi (2020) suggested that companies and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) need to collaborate not only to increase students' awareness of the importance of soft skills but also to provide them with professional consultation about finding the best means for improving

them. Moreover, HEIs have to present soft skills in academic curricula as essential skills to continuously adapt to the unstable labor market and improve their employability.

Succi and Canovi's (2020) research design shed light on how students and employers identify the importance of soft skills in the recruitment process. It also pinpointed how students and recent graduates identified the importance of soft skills in their first job through an exploratory study that has been developed to achieve the research objectives. Results of the pilot study, which were obtained from the pilot survey sent to HR managers, showed that the development of soft skills is a top priority on the agenda of Italian HR managers. Teamwork, communication skills, and learning skills were considered fundamental skills when assessing and looking to employ young graduates.

Results further presented significantly different perspectives about the importance of soft skills in comparison with the hard skills among employers and graduates. Interestingly, employers consider being ethical, adaptability to change, creativity, innovation, and teamwork as the most important skills, while students consider networking and conflict management skills more important.

Another study by (Kinsella & Waite, 2020) presented an answer to the question about the soft skills that public managers find desirable when filling entry-level positions. The authors had semi-structured interviews with heads of departments in a municipal government in the Midwestern states of the USA to identify what employers consider as in-demand soft skills. Additionally, the authors provided public administration educators and consultants with several means to help students develop these skills.

Kinsella & Waite's (2020) study was based on the findings and results of interviews with the heads of departments during a faculty externship at a reputable municipal government. The findings were intended to help public administration educators make wise choices regarding curriculum, training and teaching pedagogy. Yet, the goal of this paper was to help ensure that students graduate with the correct combination of hard and soft skills necessary for success in public-sector employment.

Moreover, the study aimed to identify the soft skills employers expect students to have when entering the public sector workforce. It also provided students with suggestions and recommendations on the best ways to prepare for public-sector employment and what skills to focus on in their professional development throughout their career trajectory.

Buheji and Buheji (2020) conducted a study during the COVID 19 crisis which focused on the employability demands during the post COVID 19 period. The study introduced new approaches in equipping teachers with what they need for times of uncertainty and instability,

new challenges and changes that would probably hit the world in the future and suggested how to survive them.

The framework for employability pattern during the current situation imposed by the world's pandemic was proposed along with a strategy to ensure teachers empowerment to meet the demands and the conditions expected during times of instability. The study presented an empirical research that would support employability and competency development planners to survive the post-COVID 19 era.

The researchers tried to design the new competency requirements while shedding more lights on the importance of 'inquiry-based learning' since it addresses many of the 'new normal' demands, i.e. curiosity, creativity, innovation, learning by exploring, etc. Which are considered as non-cognitive but soft skills.

Based on the literature review, a table representing the toolkit for the implementation of the proposed novel employability competency scale is designed to help manage the conditions of the era. The purpose of the table is to explain the link between the conditions of the "New Normal" and its special requirements. The researchers managed to reveal the necessity of different competencies that depend on mixed requirements presented in the toolkit proposed in this study in the form of a table.

Methodology

Purpose and participants of the study

The study used a mixed-methods approach design i.e., Qualitative-Quantitative, to answer two main questions:

1- Which soft skills do employers in the educational sector seek in the newly-hired EFL graduates in the educational workplaces during and post COVID 19 crises?

2- What is the degree of the EFL newly-hired graduates' awareness of the in-demand/ highly demanded soft skills required by the employers in the educational workplaces?

The qualitative approach was conducted to identify the in-demand soft skills in the educational workplaces during and after the COVID 19 from employers' perspectives. The quantitative approach was conducted to answer the second question of the research, which is about the degree of newly-hired EFL graduates' awareness of the in-demand soft skills required by the employers in the educational workplaces.

The study population consisted of two groups. The first group is the administrative and managerial staff whose experience is over ten years in educational workplaces (Private Schools) in the capital city of Amman. The second group is the teaching staff (teachers) who

are newly-hired with one year of experience in the educational field (Private schools) in Amman.

The sample was chosen according to the convenience sampling and consisted of 50 members of the administrative staff and 250 teachers.

Instruments used in the study

The first instrument was an interview with employers to investigate in-demand soft skills from their perspectives to answer the first research question which aimed at investigating the in-demand soft skills in the newly-hired EFL graduates from the perspectives of the employers. The researchers developed semi-structured interview questions which included items on several soft skills that the researcher has monitored by referring back to the literature review in addition to the open question; "What are soft skills that must be acquired by the EFL teachers?" This was followed up with ranking of the soft skills according to their perceived importance. The interview was conducted with 50 educational experts and their responses were electronically recorded with due permissions and later transcribed.

The second instrument of this study was a questionnaire about the degree of awareness and the acquisition of soft skills by the newly-hired EFL graduates. To answer the second question, the researcher composed a ranking questionnaire that included a group of soft skills that have been detected throughout the interview (the first instrument) and the literature review. This questionnaire was answered by teachers.

Data collection and analysis

The following is the criteria followed in prioritizing the soft skills employers in the educational sector seek in newly-hired EFL graduates in the educational workplaces during and post COVID 19 crises. The relative importance of each skill within each order (1-18) was determined, where

$$Relative\ importance\ of\ the\ skill(x)\ in\ the\ rank\ (y)$$
$$= \frac{the\ number\ of\ recipients\ who\ ranked\ the\ skill\ (x)\ in\ the\ rank\ (y)}{the\ overall\ number\ of\ recipients} (11)$$

Rank (y) is the variable that values (1-18).

- The skill that has higher relative importance in the rank to be determined is the one that gets that particular ranking.

- If more than one skill is equal in relative importance within a specific rank, then we determine the skill that will receive the ranking according to the higher relative importance

of the competing skill in the previous hierarchies of the order under determination and in ascending mode (starting from the first and then the second to the determined arrangement).

Example: When two of the soft skills have got an equal relative importance in rank 3, the researchers have looked at the relative importance for these two particular soft skills in rank one and two. The soft skill that has got more relative importance in the previous top ranks, was put in the current rank; in this case, rank 3.

The following is the equation followed for the calculation of the degree of newly-hired EFL graduates' awareness of the in-demand soft skills required by the employers in the educational workplaces.

$$\text{Awarness Percentage} = \left[100 - \frac{100}{15} \,|\text{Ranked by Employers} - \text{Ranked by Teachers}|\right]\%$$

Table 1.

The intervals and status of the soft skills awareness degree

Awareness interval	Awareness Status	Awareness interval	Awareness Status
(0 – 20) %	No Awareness	(41 – 60) %	Partial Awareness
(21 – 40) %	Weak Awareness	(61 – 80) %	Good Awareness
(81 – 100) %	Deep Awareness		

Results

The findings of the soft skills desired and sought by the employers in the educational sector in newly-hired EFL graduates in the workplaces during and post COVID 19 crisis are illustrated below in Table 2. According to the results of the interview with 50 educational experts, ten soft skills were highlighted and ranked as the most important ones to be acquired by teachers in the educational field.

Table 2.

The relative Impotence of the soft skills in each rank from the perspective of educational experts.

Listed Soft skill	Ranking																		Final Rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Teamwork	0%	9%	18%	0%	18%	18%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	18%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	5

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Communication	18%	18%	9%	9%	18%	9%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**2**
Being professionally ethical/ Professionalism	45%	9%	0%	18%	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	**1**
Adaptability to change	0%	9%	9%	18%	9%	9%	0%	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	**4**
Creativity	0%	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%	27%	36%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**7**
Innovation	0%	0%	9%	9%	9%	0%	9%	18%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	36%	0%	0%	0%	**8**
Conflict management/ Problem solving	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	18%	0%	0%	18%	27%	0%	0%	18%	9%	0%	0%	9%	**15**
Self-management/ Discipline/ Stress management	9%	0%	27%	18%	0%	9%	0%	0%	18%	0%	0%	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%	9%	9%	**3**
Time management/ organization	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	9%	0%	9%	27%	18%	0%	9%	9%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	**9**
Critical thinking	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	27%	0%	0%	27%	0%	0%	27%	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**6**
Global Awareness	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	9%	9%	9%	18%	18%	0%	0%	0%	**14**
Flexibility	0%	9%	0%	9%	9%	9%	18%	0%	0%	27%	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**10**
Decision making	0%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	9%	9%	18%	0%	0%	18%	0%	9%	0%	**12**
Leadership/ Dedication/ Resilience	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	9%	36%	18%	0%	9%	0%	9%	9%	0%	**11**
Self-learning/ Motivation	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	9%	9%	9%	9%	0%	9%	27%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**13**
Emotional intelligence	9%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**17**

Listed Soft skill	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Final Rank
/caring and compassion																			
Digital Literacy	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	16
Focus and concentration; attention to details	0%	0%	0%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	18

It is noted from Table 2 that Being Professionally Ethical has got the top rank from employers' perspective with the highest percentage of importance at 45%, while Communication has got the second rank. Self-Management comes in the third place, followed by Adaptability to Change in the fourth rank, Teamwork in the fifth, Critical Thinking in the sixth, Creativity in the seventh, Innovation in the eighth place, Time Management in the ninth and Flexibility as the last skill in the raking scale with the percentage of 27%.

The findings of the degree of newly-hired graduates' awareness of the in-demand soft skills required by the employers in the educational workplaces are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3.

The relative importance of the soft skills in each rank from the perspective of newly-hired EFL graduates.

Listed Soft skill	Ranking																Final Rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
Global Awareness	21%	21%	8%	16%	4%	3%	3%	5%	1%	6%	0%	0%	0%	4%	5%	1%	4
Teamwork	31%	27%	6%	16%	3%	5%	6%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1
Problem solving	12%	12%	21%	19%	12%	10%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%	0%	4%	4%	0%	3
Communication	16%	25%	18%	16%	4%	8%	4%	4%	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2
Being Professionally Ethical	17%	17%	19%	3%	23%	5%	3%	5%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%	3%	0%	1%	5
Time Management	13%	8%	5%	0%	13%	25%	12%	12%	6%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	6

Adaptability to change	16%	8%	6%	6%	1%	5%	27%	14%	3%	0%	5%	1%	4%	1%	1%	0%	7
Creativity	12%	12%	1%	0%	4%	5%	16%	23%	10%	8%	5%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	8
Self-Management	6%	13%	4%	5%	5%	5%	3%	1%	21%	10%	4%	6%	5%	1%	3%	5%	9
Innovation	6%	9%	4%	4%	3%	1%	1%	5%	8%	21%	6%	13%	5%	9%	1%	3%	10
Critical Thinking	13%	9%	3%	0%	3%	3%	3%	0%	5%	9%	18%	9%	4%	13%	8%	1%	11
Self-Learning	12%	8%	3%	3%	3%	0%	0%	4%	1%	6%	14%	13%	9%	12%	8%	5%	12
Flexibility	8%	10%	4%	3%	1%	4%	0%	1%	4%	4%	5%	14%	23%	5%	6%	6%	13
Decision Making	12%	6%	1%	4%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	9%	4%	13%	10%	16%	16%	6%	14
Leadership	12%	8%	4%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	4%	4%	3%	4%	14%	4%	14%	26%	15
Digital Literacy	14%	13%	4%	1%	6%	0%	1%	0%	6%	3%	9%	0%	3%	13%	6%	19%	16

Table 3 shows the ranking of each in-demand soft skill required by employers in the teachers in the educational workplaces during and post the COVID 19 duration. The respondents were not exposed to the ranking of the employers, and they ranked the soft skills according to importance of each soft skill from their individual perspectives.

Teamwork has been ranked the first with 31% of agreement, Communication comes in the second rank with 25%, Problem solving has come in the third place followed by Global awareness in the fourth rank. Being professionally ethical has been ranked number five, Time management is in the sixth rank, then comes Adaptability to change in the seventh rank, followed by Creativity in the eight and Self-management/ Discipline/ Stress management which come in the ninth rank. Finally, Innovation comes in the tenth rank from the teachers' perspective.

Table 4.

The Awareness Degree of newly-hired graduates towards the in-demand skills

In-Demand Soft Skills	Ranked by Employers	Ranked by Teachers	Awareness Degree	
			Percentage*	Status**
Being professionally ethical/ Professionalism	1	5	73%	Good Awareness

Communication	2	2	100%	Deep Awareness
Self-management/ Discipline/ Stress management	3	9	60%	Partial Awareness
Adaptability to change	4	7	80%	Good Awareness
Teamwork	5	1	73 %	Good Awareness
Critical thinking	6	11	67%	Good Awareness
Creativity	7	8	93%	Deep Awareness
Innovation	8	10	87%	Deep Awareness
Time management / organization	9	6	80%	Good Awareness
Flexibility	10	13	80%	Good Awareness

Table 4 presents the state of teachers' awareness regarding the soft skills demanded by employers in educational settings during and post COVID 19 period. It clearly shows that teachers have an acceptable degree of awareness of the importance of the majority of the suggested soft skills. The highest awareness percentages reflect deep awareness of soft skills like communication, creativity and innovation, as well as good degree of awareness of skills like teamwork, being professionally ethical, adaptability to change, critical thinking, time management and flexibility. Surprisingly, teachers showed partial awareness of the importance of self-management, discipline, and stress management.

Discussion

From the data it is clear that Being professionally ethical is considered as the first in-demand soft skill and the most important one in the time of COVID 19. According to the majority of educators, this skill is very difficult to be monitored or detected, yet it is highly demanded. This can be related to the fact that the COVID 19 has enforced a shift to online teaching which requires a great deal of commitment to conduct of classes, keeping time and syllabus in sync, and being sensitive to students' psychological and physical well-being while learning to the optimum capacity in this difficult period (Mishra et al., 2020).

Through good Communication, which takes the second place in the rank of importance, teachers can deliver their creative ideas and can propose solutions to problems (T, 2015) if they maintain clear communication channels which enable them to capture and engage the attention of their students (Patil,2005). Thus, this skill is a key for maintaining other skills (Sonmez, 2015). Skills like Stress management and Adaptability to change are given high ranks, which seems to be very logical during tough times like the COVID 19 crisis that has hit every aspect of life., whereas Flexibility has been ranked as the least important skill.

Surprisingly, newly recruited EFL teachers showed high levels of awareness regarding the soft skills that employers demand in the post-COVID 19 workplaces. The degree of awareness presented in this study reflects the graduates' realistic expectations regarding the set of skills they are required to acquire to excel in the EFL teaching field during and post COVID 19 era (Succi & Canovi, 2020).

The recent drastic changes in the educational workplaces have placed this field under pressure to choose and keep the best teachers. In order to achieve this, training programs and university qualifications should be developed to implement soft skills effectively in education as acquisition and practice. Moreover, there should be sustainable update of the set of soft skills implemented to ensure compliance with the requirement of the era (Cacciolatti et al., 2017). For example, digital literacy and global awareness are considered as novel skills that have been prioritized currently due to globalization and the pandemic.

Conclusion

The top ten soft skills that employers demand of their emplyees are: Being professionally ethical, Communication, Teamwork, Self-Management, Adaptablity to change, Creativity, Innovation, Time management, Critical Thinking, and Flexibility. Figure 1 shows the top ten in-demand soft skills that should be acquired by graduates working in educational workplaces from educational employers' perspectives.
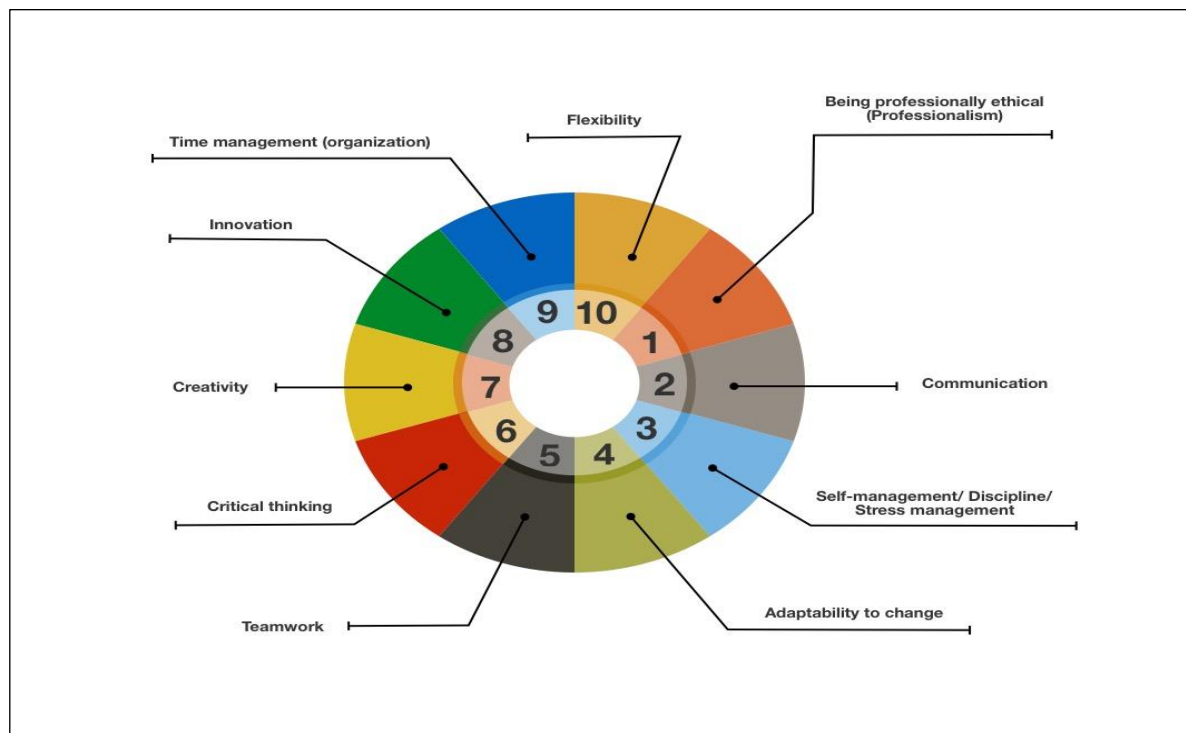
Figure 1. In-Demand Soft Skills for Newly-Hired Graduate at educational workplace

As for the degree of newly-hired EFL graduates' awareness of the in-demand soft skills required by the employers in the educational workplaces, a good level of awareness was shown for Adaptability to change, Critical thinking, Time management and Flexibility. However, participants have shown partial awareness to the importance of Self-management, Discipline, and Stress management which were given a high rank of importance by the employers.

This can lead to another conclusion about embedding elements of soft skills in EFL study curricula and to emphasize the importance of these skills by integrating them in the EFL online classroom through the following ways:

1- Including task-based and problem solving activities through which learners use the target language and get involved in meaningful activities that mimic the real-life situations. Of course, this requires the teachers to possess the problem-solving skill in order to portray a role model for learners and to facilitate this activity.

2- Delivering presentations on specific topics related to students' main concerns and interests. These activities improve the students' speaking skills which are part of the communication skills that they need to acquire to convey messages and/or opinion effectively.

3- Role-plays which require the teachers to be creative and innovative in creating simulations of real-life discussions, interviews, work-place arguments and debates about situations which involve ethical issues and dilemmas. This requires the teachers to implement critical thinking skills as well as interpersonal skills, as do the students.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. & Alqasham, F. H. (2020). Saudi EFL learning and assessment in times of Covid-19: Crisis and beyond. *Asian EFL Journal*, 27(43) 356-383.

Buheji, M., & Buheji, A. (2020). Planning competency in the new normal– employability competency in post- COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, *10*(2), 237-251. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v10i2.17085

Cacciolatti, L., Lee, S. H., & Molinero, C. M. (2017). Clashing institutional interests in skills between government and industry: An analysis of demand for technical and soft skills of graduates in the UK. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *119*, 139–153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2017.03.024

Chakraborty, I., & Maity, P. (2020). COVID-19 outbreak: Migration, effects on society, global environment and prevention. *Science of the Total Environment*, *728*, 138882. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.138882

Fixsen, A., & Ridge, D. (2019). Shades of communitas: A study of soft skills programs. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *48*(4), 510–537. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241618792075

Jagannathan, R., Camasso, M. J., & Delacalle, M. (2019). Promoting cognitive and soft skills acquisition in a disadvantaged public school system: Evidence from the nurture thru nature randomized experiment. *Economics of Education Review*, *70*(April), 173–191. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2019.04.005

Kinsella, C., & Waite, B. (2020). Identifying and developing desirable soft skills for public service. *Teaching Public Administration*. https://doi.org/10.1177/0144739420931552

Mary, J. (2021). Students' challenges in self-study of an ESL listening and speaking course during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Asian EFL Journal Research Articles, 28*(2). https://www.elejournals.com/asian-efl-monthly-editions/aej-monthly-edition-2021/volume-28-issue-2-1-april-2021/

Mishra, D. L., Gupta, D. T., & Shree, D. A. (2020). Online teaching-learning in higher education during lockdown period of COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, *1,* 100012. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2020.100012

Sonmez, J. (2020). *Soft skills: The software developer's life anual*. Simple Programmer, United States.

Succi, C., & Canovi, M. (2020). Soft skills to enhance graduate employability: comparing students and employers' perceptions. *Studies in Higher Education*, *45*(9), 1834–1847. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1585420

Suomi, A., Schofield, T. P., & Butterworth, P. (2020). Unemployment, Employability and COVID19: How the Global Socioeconomic Shock Challenged Negative Perceptions Toward the Less Fortunate in the Australian Context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*(October), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.594837

Tang, K. N. (2019). Beyond employability: Embedding soft skills in higher education. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology - TOJET*, *18*(2), 1–9. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1211098

Yan, L., Yinghong, Y., Lui, S. M. (Carrie), Whiteside, M., & Tsey, K. (2019). Teaching "soft skills" to university students in China: The feasibility of an Australian approach. *Educational Studies*, *45*(2), 242–258. https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2018.1446328

Zheng, F., Khan, N. A., & Hussain, S. (2020). The COVID 19 pandemic and digital higher education: Exploring the impact of proactive personality on social capital through internet self-efficacy and online interaction quality. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 105694. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105694

English Suprasegmentals for the EFL Learners: An Experimental Study with Shadowing Technique

Ayman Mohamed Nasr Eldien El-Esery

Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, Department of English Language,

College of Arts and Sciences, Uglat Asugour, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

a.elesery@qu.edu.sa & elesery_ayman@yahoo.com

Bio-profile:

Ayman Mohamed El-Esery is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics and Translation at Qassim University, KSA. El-Esery has published varied research in ELT, CALL and translation with special focus on EFL, CALL, CALT, translation, interpretation and ESP.

Abstract

The basic segments of language are vowels and consonants which join to form syllables, syllables in turn join to form parts of or full words which add up to make utterances. Superimposed on these are some other features known as suprasegmental or prosodic features which are characterized by loudness, pitch and stress. Inability of non-native learners to master the suprasegmentals as in the case of EFL learners in KSA, lends their speech some degree of artificiality and unnaturalness. The study reports on engaging a group of EFL learners enrolled in the listening and speaking intensive course at Qassim University, KSA, in developing awareness-towards and practicing suprasegmentals of the English language. For achieving the objectives of the study and raising the participants' self-perceptions and efficacy in listening comprehension, and speech intelligibility a Shadowing technique was implemented. The Shadowing Cycle is a comprehensive one built upon cognitive and technical norms. Results of the study showed a systematic pattern of participants and endorsement for native speakers, improvement in their perceptions of suprasegmentals, and listening comprehension as well. Furthermore, results revealed the participants' familiarity with suprasegmentals and their ability to implement them in their oracy.

Introduction

Many challenges face the non-native language learners of English and these have to do with the special features of stress in the language. While in languages like Czech and Polish, syllabic stress rules are fixed with the first syllable stressed in the former and the penultimate in the latter, there are languages in which stress placement may be predictable or non-predictable as in English. This means that learners need to adopt different strategies to grasp the patterns or memorize words with the correct stress per se. We cite these examples: STU-dent, PA-rent (initial syllable is stressed), ec-STAT-ic, geo-GRAPH-ic (stress the second to last syllable), re-QUIRE, de-CIDE (stress the last syllable). Further, change in stress can also be indicative of change in word category, such as, INsult (noun) versus inSULT (verb). Finally, words with four or more syllables may or may not follow fixed rules for stress. Certainly, for the EFL learners to master these complexities of this 'stress-timed' language are in direct contrast to Arabic which is a 'syllable-timed' language. Stress placement rules in Arabic always operate at the word level determined by the number and length of syllables in a word. Further, Arabic syllables always begin with a consonant, if they do not, then elision helps borrow a consonant from a previous word. The researcher's experience with Saudi EFL learners made him aware of the fact that even when listening to the utterances of English native speakers, these learners feel challenged. Thus, EFL learners are no longer able to seize vocabulary successfully while listening to English natives, and consequently, this results in listening comprehension problems and conversation failure. Yang et al. (2009) declared that from 40% to 50% of human verbal exchange is acquired by listening, consequently listening is an essential skill that EFL students want to broaden first when learning English as a foreign language.

The researcher realized that many EFL students enrolling in listening and speaking courses at Qassim University, KSA have listening comprehension obstacles. Synchronizing the audio scripts with the printed ones, it was found that students know most of the essential terminologies needed for listening comprehension. In several informal discussions, students disclosed that their problem is with native speakers' pace and reduced forms (suprasegmentals). Consequently, the need for teaching English language suprasegmentals through a proposed Shadowing Cycle was felt.

Studies related to the teaching of English pronunciation as a second or a foreign language have made obvious the importance of suprasegmental functions (i.e., stress, rhythm, and intonation) in the comprehension and the production of the language (Munro & Derwing 1995, Anderson-Hsieh et al., 1992). Moreover, it has also been asserted pedagogically (Munro & Derwing, 1995) that speakers who had training on suprasegmentals could seemingly switch their mastering to a spontaneous production more successfully than those who obtained training with only segmentals (i.e., vowels and consonants). Also, Wang (2020) stressed the boundary between segmentals and suprasegmentals for achieving intelligibility. Moreover, Coates (2020) realized English non-native Koreans were unable to produce the same emotional effects of 50 words as native English speakers because they were unable to successfully or effectively use the suprasegments.

Even with this literature on the prosodic aspects of English, the teaching of English suprasegmentals is not a priority in most EFL packages or in commercial materials for training, perhaps precisely because it is not easy to 'teach' them to non-native users. Instead, more emphasis is positioned on segmental aspects of the language. The phonetic system is complex in English: At the segment level, there are segmental and suprasegmentals, the former comprising of vowel and consonant sounds. Vowel sounds may be single (short or long) or diphthongs. Consonant sounds may be voiced or unvoiced. Suprasegmentals, on the other hand, comprise of linking, intonation and stress. Finally, stress may be sentential or word based.

Statement of the problem

The Arabic system, degree, placement and location of stress differs completely from English. Moreover, contrary to recognizing this fact and sensitizing EFL learners to these differences, the teaching and the training concern of EFL courses are positioned on the segmental forms of the English language. Consequently, EFL learners face problems in listening to or grasping English suprasegmentals. They face varied problems related to rhythm, intonation, and stress leading to poor listening comprehension and the inability to maintain and use suprasegmentals in their oral communication producing poor, fragmented, and artificial speech in English.

Rationale

There are two main reasons for Shadowing English language suprasegmentals among EFL learners.

First: the researcher noted a large proportion of intensive course students at Qassim University, KSA have great difficulties in answering listening comprehension questions and they get low grades as well.

Second: There is suprasegmental deviance rather than segmental deviance among EFL learners. ELT experts agreed that suprasegmentals are more critical for intelligibility than segmentals (Dickerson, 1989; Wong, 1987; Suwastini et al., 2020; Gilbert, 1987). Improving the overwhelming features of stress, rhythm, and intonation provides great chances for listening comprehension and speech intelligibility rather than segmentals.

Literature Review

Segmentals and suprasegmentals

Florez (1998, p. 4) defined segmentals as "the primary stock of idiosyncratic sounds and the manner that they integrate for composing a spoken language". She added that the instruction of pronunciation has regularly focused on mastering segmentals through discriminating and the production of target sounds (of the target language) through drills. Suprasegmentals exceed the extent of separate sound production, extend throughout segmentals, and are often conducted directly in an unconscious way by native speakers (Florez, 1998). Hall (1997) admitted that we can't ignore the importance of phonemic discrimination, and continues to state that suprasegmentals such as stress, rhythm, and intonation are, if anything, more important than segmentals. Wong (1993) stated that the most relevant features of pronunciation: rhythm, intonation, and stress, play a greater part in English communication than the individual pronunciation sounds. Thus, suprasegmentals viz. rhythm, intonation, and stress have a major role in the success of verbal communication. The listener has to acquire the varied suprasegmental features of the conversation to become a viable communicator.

Stress is the length, loudness, and pitch of syllables within a single word (e.g., **Ca**·na·da). Rhythm refers to the more prominent syllables in an utterance for emphasizing meaning or intent (e.g., I'm **co**·ming on **Mon**·day.). Intonation refers to the rising and falling pitch patterns in utterances. For instance, *I'm traveling on Monday* would normally have a rise-fall pitch on *Monday* while *Are you traveling on Monday?* could have a rising pitch on *Monday*. Although suprasegmentals are important, many language learners appear to have problems with them

(Foote et al., 2011). Hahn (2004) added that such problems can lead to communication difficulties or even breakdown.

Teaching language, specifically, pronunciation during the past was mainly a linguistic work that considered sounds of language as discrete items called phonemes as per McCarthy (1991). Fraser (2000) mentioned that segmentals and suprasegmentals cannot be separated during instruction since it is not always the way to go whilst considering teaching pronunciation in a communicative technique. Such problems with teaching suprasegmentals led the researcher to undertake a "Shadowing approach" in the EFL listening classroom.

What is Shadowing Technique?

Shadowing was originally developed as an interpreting training technique in Europe and eventually gained much interest among language educators as an effective means in improving the speaking and listening competence of learners as it requires competence in both speaking and listening (Hamada, 2016). Tamai (1997) declared that shadowing is a performance or listening task in which the learner follows the heard speech and repeats it exactly while listening with attention to the incoming information.

The researcher proposed a Working Memory Shadowing Model (figure 1). Based on this model, 'Shadowing' is treated as a highly cognitive action rather than a mere automatic memory, parroting action. The model is based on four Cycles: (1) Mumbling where the students shadow the text in low voice without seeing it; (2) Parallel reading where the students look at the text while Shadowing it (3) Comprehending i.e. studying the text and getting the suprasegmentals therein (4) Reflection which is an advanced stage for practicing what has been learned.
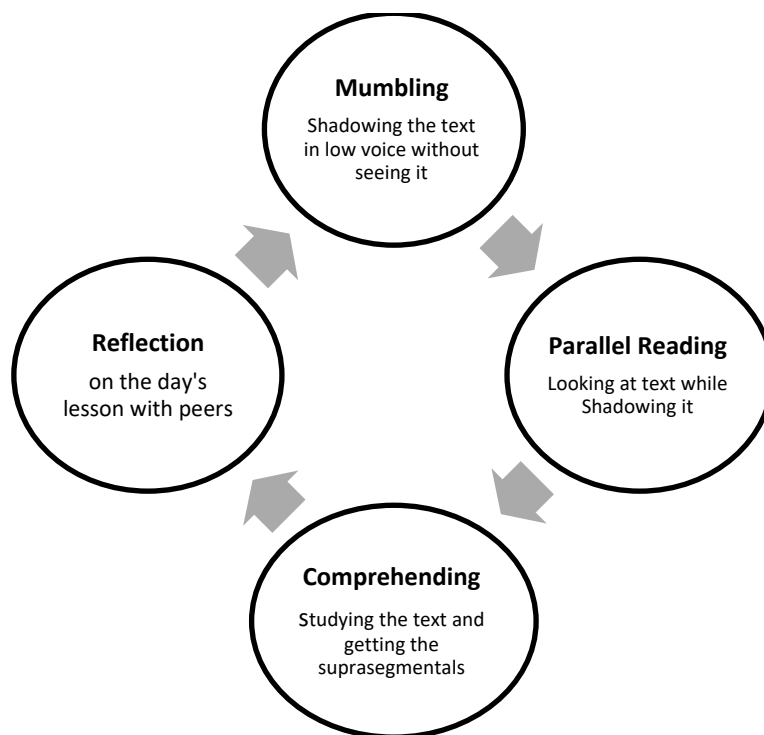
Figure 1. Shadowing Cycle

Method

The first subsection below presents the objectives of the study. Participants and location are described in the second subsection. The third and fourth subsections describe instruments and standardization. The fifth subsection is for the procedure of data collection. Subsection six presents the data analysis method and hypotheses.

Objectives of the Study

The present study tries to fulfill the following objectives:

1. Examining EFL learners' difficulties in listening comprehension.

2. Evaluating EFL participants' listening comprehension of suprasegmentals after managing a Shadowing strategy.

Participants and location

The participants of the study were 35 intensive course learners at Qassim University, KSA (Uglat Asugour College of Science and Arts). All the participants had an exposure to formal EFL education for nine years before joining the intensive course. The participants received suprasegmentals focused instruction during the fall semester of the academic year 2019/2020.

Instruments

Listening Comprehension test

The researcher developed a listening comprehension test for achieving the objectives of the present study. The test includes varied listening extracts that contain suprasegmentals. After listening to the extracts, participants are needed to answer different, related comprehension questions.

Shadowing Listening test

Shadowing listening test provides some English listening extracts. The participants of the study listen to each extract, then identify the suprasegmentals and state the full forms of these suprasegmentals. The participants' responses are evaluated on a three-point scale: Zero for not recognizing suprasegmentals, one for just Shadowing, and two for Shadowing, and stating the full form.

Test validity & Reliability

To verify the content validity of listening comprehension and Shadowing listening tests, the first versions of the tests were submitted to a panel of language instructors and EFL specialists at Qassim University. The jurors were required to give their points of view regarding test grading, items, and the feasibility of the tests.

For checking test reliability, Cronbach's alpha was computed. Cronbach's alpha came to 0.87 for the listening comprehension test and 0.813 for the Shadowing test, proposing a relatively high internal consistency in both the tests.

Procedure of data collection

The present study lasted for three months. The participants received a pre-test in listening comprehension and Shadowing listening. All participants then received suprasegmentals focused instruction for about three months with the proposed Shadowing strategy. Finally, the participants took the post-tests.

Hypotheses

Quantitative analysis is used to test two hypotheses:

1. Participants will comprehend comprehensively the listening extracts when following the Shadowing Cycle.

2. Participants will produce intelligible speech when following the Shadowing Cycle.

Results of the study

Hypothesis one

Participants will comprehend comprehensively the listening extracts when following the Shadowing Cycle.

To verify the validity of the first hypothesis a paired-samples t-test was used. Table (1) shows the significance of the difference between the mean scores of the participants in the pre-post listening comprehension test.

Table 1.

Significance of difference between the mean scores of the participants in the pre-post listening comprehension test

Testing	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	Sig.
Pre-testing	30.11	5.6	34	9.3	0.001
Post-testing	39.0				

The data presented in Table (2) shows that *t* value is (9.3) and significant at 0.001, and *df* equals 34. This means that the Shadowing Cycle is effective in developing EFL learners' listening comprehension to native speakers of the English language.

Hypothesis two

Participants will produce intelligible speech when following the Shadowing Cycle.

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, a paired-samples t-test was used. Table (2) shows the significance of the difference between the mean scores of the participants in the pre-post Shadowing listening test.

Table 2.

Significance of difference between the mean scores of the participants in the pre-post Shadowing listening test

Testing	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	Sig.
Pre-testing	16.6	2.9	34	10.059	0.001

Post-testing	21.6				

Table (2) shows that *t* value is (10.059) and is significant at 0.001, and *df* equals 34. This means that the Shadowing Cycle is effective in developing speech intelligibility among EFL learners.

5. Discussion

Listening comprehension is a critical skill in language learning i.e. many learners face problems related to it, and this is a significant statement as listening enables the language learners to speak in the target language. Thus, EFL researchers have paid attention to developing listening comprehension by analyzing the varied listening comprehension problems and proposing teaching strategies to remedy these. Others improvised CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) programs for developing listening comprehension among language learners.

Wah (2019); Hamsidar et al. (2020); Sebina & Arua (2017) mentioned that listening teachers do not follow clear teaching strategies neither do they teach listening communicatively. Aryana & Apsari (2018) divided the problems of teaching listening skills that face English teachers into Internal like preparation methods and activities, and External that originate from the teaching environment. Alrawashdeh & Al-zayed (2017) mentioned that the 'low' problems of poor listening are related to the teacher's proficiency, the 'moderate' ones related to the teaching environment, and the 'highest' related to teaching aids. Fan (2019) showed the importance of oral corrective feedback in improving listening and speaking skills. Zuhriyah (2020) proposed a frontloading strategy that activates the students' prior knowledge about the topics that will be studied.

Recently EFL researchers have adhered to technology for developing listening comprehension. Islam & Hasan (2020) highlighted the efficacy of MALL in developing English listening comprehension among EFL learners. Khoiriyah (2020) made a review of all CALL materials and tools available for teaching listening comprehension. While Mohamed (2018) and Namaziandost et al., (2018) investigated the usefulness of using audiobooks and visual aids to help EFL learners to grow and develop their listening comprehension. Fachriza (2020) concluded that the audio podcast application is an effective media for achieving better results in guessing the meaning during listening. Hassan & Abdel-Kareem (2020) and Pamuji &

Setyarini (2020) highlighted the use of websites and the associated applications in teaching listening comprehension.

The present researcher developed a Shadowing Cycle as a strategy for developing listening comprehension and speech productivity and intelligibility among EFL learners. The Shadowing Cycle is built on cognitive norms since it manipulates reading scripts while listening. Furthermore, the Shadowing Cycle uses varied technical aids for presenting and repeating audio scripts. Results of the experimental study showed that participants showed improved listening comprehension as well as participants also learned to maintain the suprasegmentals and to use them in their oral discourses.

The main reason that hindered the sample students from getting the meaning of the listening extracts was poor knowledge of the application of suprasegmentals. Once they made mistakes, they showed reluctance to try again which led them to become reticent learners. However, when the participants were trained on managing and following suprasegmentals, they were able to follow the conversations and eventually grasp the correct meaning of utterances.

Speech intelligibility

Following the Shadowing Cycle led the participants to become familiar with suprasegmentals. Participant students were trained to mimic and follow suprasegmentals. Furthermore, at a later stage of the Shadowing Cycle, the participants were required to use the suprasegmentals orally in the reflection stage. It is evident that the Shadowing Cycle helped improved the participants' oral speech as they began to effectively use suprasegmentals in their speech. Results of the Shadowing test revealed the samples' familiarity with suprasegmentals and their ability to use them in their speech.

Conclusion

EFL intensive course students, studying at the College of Science and Arts in Uglat Asugour, Qassim University, KSA face problems related to listening comprehension and speech intelligibility. The researcher realized that such difficulties and problems are related to language suprasegmentals. The researcher's proposed Shadowing Cycle proved efficacious in improving the listening comprehension and speech intelligibility of the participants.

The Shadowing Cycle is based on working memory. participants in the first phase repeat the speech in low voice without seeing it to get acquainted with speed and rhythm. In the next stage, they repeat the speech while seeing it to correlate what they see to what they listen to. The third stage is related to comprehension, participants get to answer varied comprehension questions. The final Cycle is concerned with further practice in varied oral examples to maintain speech intelligibility.

The training course lasted three months, by the end of which, results revealed the participants' enhanced listening comprehension and speech intelligibility as well. Participants showed their ability to follow the speed and the rhythm of the speech. Furthermore, participants proved their ability to produce native similar speech. They tended to use suprasegments in their oral communication and the delivery and rhythm in the target language speech was also enhanced.

Limitations of the Study and Guidelines for Future Research

As this study was conducted on a small sample (35) of expatriate EFL Saudi adult learners, a larger sample like all learners in an institution or university may be engaged in future research to obtain more reliable results. Also, various age groups like secondary stage students, preparatory, and elementary stage pupils should be engaged to get a broader respondent base.

References

Alrawashdeh, A. I., & Al-zayed, N. N. (2017). Difficulties that English teachers encounter while teaching listening comprehension and their ttitudes towards them. *English Language Teaching*, *10*(5), 167-178. doi: 10.5539/elt.v10n5p167

Anderson-Hsieh, J., Johnson, R., & Koehler, K. (1992). The relationship between native speaker judgments of nonnative pronunciation and deviance in segmentais, prosody, and syllable structure. *Language learning*, *42*(4), 529-555. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1992.tb01043.x

Aryana, S., & Apsari, Y. (2018). Analysing teacher's difficulties in teaching listening. *Eltin Journal, Journal Of English Language Teaching In Indonesia*, *6*(2), 100-106. http://e-journal.stkipsiliwangi.ac.id/index.php/eltin

Coates, C. (2020). *The use of suprasegmentals in the production of emotion-affected speech between native English and native Korean speakers* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh).

Dickerson, W. (1989). *Stress in the stream of speech: The rhythm of spoken English - teacher's manual*. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press.

Fachriza, A. (2020). The effect of audio podcast application on guessing meaning skill on teaching listening comprehension. *Educan: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *4*(1), 96-108. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.21111/educan.v4i1.3993

Fan, N. (2019). An investigation of oral corrective feedback in an ESL listening and speaking class. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *10*(1), 197-203. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1001.22

Florez, M. C. (1998). *Improving adult ESL learners' pronunciation skills*. ERIC, National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education.

Foote, J. A., Holtby, A. K., & Derwing, T. M. (2011). Survey of the teaching of pronunciation in adult ESL programs in Canada, 2010. *TESL Canada journal*, *29*(1), 1-22. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v29i1.1086

Fraser, H. (2000). *Coordinating improvements in pronunciation teaching for adult learners of English as a second language*. Canberra: DETYA (Australia National Training Authority Adult Literacy Project). Retrieved October 31, 2004, from http://www-personal.une.edu.au/~hfraser/docs/HF_ANTA_REPORT.pdf.

Gilbert, J. B. (2012). *Clear speech teacher's resource and assessment book: Pronunciation and listening comprehension in North American English*. Cambridge University Press.

Hahn, L. D. (2004). Primary stress and intelligibility: Research to motivate the teaching of suprasegmentals. *TESOL quarterly*, *38*(2), 201-223. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588378

Hamsidar, Amaluddin, & Addas, S. (2020). Take and give learning model in effecting the student's speaking skill. *The Asian EFL Journal, 27* (3.2), 399-416. www.asian-efl-journal.com

Hall, S. (1997). *Integrating pronunciation for fluency in presentation skills* [Paper presentation]. The Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Orlando, March 1997. Retrieved October 31, 2004, from http://www.personal.une.edu.au/~hfraser/docs/HFChangeChallengeOpp.pdf.

Hamada, Y. (2016). Shadowing: Who benefits and how? Uncovering a booming EFL teaching technique for listening comprehension. *Language Teaching Research*, *20*(1), 35-52. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362168815597504

Hassan, M. S., & Abdel-Kareem, M. E. D. (2020). Using a suggested web-based learning program in developing EFL listening skills of the first-year secondary students. *Sohag University International Journal of Educational Research*, *1*(1), 37-59. https://dx.doi.org/10.21608/suijer.2020.72173

Islam, A. S., & Hasan, M. (2020). The effectiveness of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) on ESL listening skill. *NOBEL: Journal of Literature and Language Teaching*, *11*(2), 188-202. http://dx.doi.org/10.15642/NOBEL.2020.11.2.188-202

Khoiriyah, K. (and SLA theory: Developing a framework to analyze web-based materials for teaching listening skills. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, *8*(1), 80-92. http://dx.doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v8i1.1296

McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. London: Cambridge University.

Mohamed, M. M. K. (2018). Using audiobooks for developing listening comprehension among Saudi EFL preparatory year students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *9*(1), 64-73. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0901.08

Munro, M. J., & Derwing, T. M. (1995). Foreign accent, comprehensibility, and intelligibility in the speech of second language learners. *Language learning*, *45*(1), 73-97. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1995.tb00963.x

Namaziandost, E., Sabzevari, A., & Hashemifardnia, A. (2018). The effect of cultural materials on listening comprehension among Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners: In reference to gender. *Cogent Education*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1560601

Pamuji, K. D., & Setyarini, S. (2020, June). Technology for extensive listening practice: EFL teachers' preferences and views. In *Proceedings of the 2020 The 6th International Conference on Frontiers of Educational Technologies* (pp. 77-81). https://doi.org/10.1145/3404709.3404712

Sebina, B., & Arua, A. E. (2017). From perception and knowledge to classroom practice: Teaching listening comprehension to Setswana speakers of English in junior schools in Botswana. *International Journal of Listening*, *31*(1), 33-50. https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2014.928212

Suwastini, N., Wiraningsih, P. & Adnyani, N. (2020). An analysis of interlanguage among EFL students' speech production in English microteaching class. *The Asian EFL Journal, 27*(4.5), 66-89. www.asian-efl-journal.com

Tamai, K. (1997). How to rank shadowing in the respect of its effectiveness and process of listening comprehension. *Current English*, *36*, 105-116.

Wah, N. N. (2019). Teaching listening skills to English as a foreign language students through effective strategies. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD)*, *3*(6), 883-887. URL: https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd29246.pdf

Wang, X. (2020). Segmental versus suprasegmental: Which one is more important to teach?. *RELC Journal*. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220925926

Wong, R. (1987). *Teaching pronunciation: Focus on rhythm*. Washington, D. C: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wong, R. (1993, October). Pronunciation myths and facts. *English Teaching Forum 31*(4), 45-46).

Yang, J. C., Lin, Y. L., & Chung, C. I. (2009, August). Developing a film-based learning system with English verbal reduced forms for supporting English listening comprehension. In *International Conference on Technologies for E-Learning and Digital Entertainment* (pp. 74-84). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-03364-3_9

Zuhriyah, M. (2020). The influence of frontloading strategy toward students'listening comprehension. *Anglo-saxon: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, *11*(1), 68-80. https://www.journal.unrika.ac.id/index.php/jurnalanglo-saxon/article/view/2410/pdf

Appendices

Appendix A

Listening Comprehension Test

I: Listen to the conversation, then answer the following questions.

1 -What kind of job would Jeff prefer?

2 -What was the problem with Jeff's first job?

3 -Why is Andrew unhappy with his job?

4 -Why can't Lee work in the United States?

5 -What does Jeff suggest at the end of the conversation?

II: Listen and complete the following extract.

There are also differences in prepositions. So, for instance in the United States, it's correct to say that John is different from Marry, but the British will say John is different than Mary. But these differences are very small and few in number. And this brings me to my ……………….., which is this: Standard British and standard American English are so similar that most speakers of these two types will have no trouble understanding one another. American and British English are not two different languages. Rather, they are two …………………, two ……………… of the same language, English .

The last area of behavior that I want to mention today is gift giving. The rules of gift giving can be very complicated, and it can be …………………. if you don't know them. For example, in the United States, if you are invited to someone's home for dinner, you can bring flowers or a small gift from your country, but Americans generally don't give gifts in business situations. On the other hand, the Japanese like many other people in Asia, give gifts often, especially if they want to thank someone like a teacher or a doctor for their kindness. In Japan, the tradition of gift giving is very ancient, and there are detailed rules for everything from the color of the ……………… paper to the time of the gift presentation .

III: Listen to the audio then check either the following statements are True (T) or False (F).

1 -Sharon is divorced.

2 -Sharon doesn't do favors for Alicia.

3 -Mari is ready to bring up a baby by herself.

4 -Alicia likes paying attention to Joey.

5 -Alicia is a good babysitter.

IV: Listen to the recording and answer the questions.

1 -Where does the conversation most likely take place?

a- in a college dormitory

b- at the school's library

c- in a university classroom

2 -The woman is in her _____ year in college.

a- second year

b- third year

c- fourth year

3 -Which statement is NOT true about her paying for college?

a- She has worked to earn college tuition.

b- She received a scholarship.

c- She is currently repaying student loans.

4 -The woman wants to._____

a- work in her father's business

b- interview with companies soon

c- go on to graduate school

5 -At the end of the conversation, we find out that._____

a- the woman is going to become a teacher

b- the teacher is the woman's father

c- the man and woman are long-lost relatives

Appendix B

Shadowing Listening test

1- Listen to this part of conversation, repeat the reduced parts and write them down.

Customer: Hi, my name is Chang Lee.

Employer: How ………… I help you.

Customer: I ………………… check my balance.

Teller: Ok. ……………… I have your account number, please?

Customer: 381335.

Employer: Your balance is $302.

Customer: Ok. ……………. I ……………. my father ………… transfer me some money. I'd like ………….. know if it's arrived.

Employer: I'm sorry. Your account doesn't show any deposites.

Customer: Oh, no. I need …………… pay my rent tomorrow. ………….. …………. ………………. think I ……………….. …………….. do?

Employer: Well, we're having some computer problems today. So, why ………… ……………. call us later to check again? Or …………….. …………… come back. We're open till 5:00.

Customer: Ok, thanks.

Employer: You're welcome.

(source: Adapted from: Tanka, J. and Baker, L. (2012). Interactions 2 listening and speaking. McGraw-Hill ELT.)

II- Listen to this conversation, repeat the reduced parts and write them down.

Apartment Manager: ………….. Mr. Brown. How's your apartment ………………. for you?

Tenant: Well Mr. Nelson. That's ………………….. like to talk to you about. (What?) Well, I ………….. talk to you about that noise! (Oh) You see. Would you mind talking to the tenant in 4B and ask ………………… keep his music down, especially after 10:00 o'clock at night?

Apartment Manager: Ohhh. Who me?

Tenant: Why yes. The music is blaring almost every night, ………………. job as manager to take care of these things.

Apartment Manager: Hey, I just collect the rent. Besides, the man living there is the owner's son, and he's a walking refrigerator. (Well . . .) Hey, ………………... what I can do. Anything else?

Tenant: Well, yes. ……………….. talk to the owners of the property next door about the pungent odor drifting this way.

Apartment Manager: Well, the area is zoned for agricultural and livestock use, so there's nothing much ………………. do about that.

Tenant: Well, what about the . . . . That, that noise.

Apartment Manager: What noise? I don't hear anything.

Tenant: There, there it is again.

Apartment Manager: What noise?

Tenant: That noise.

Apartment Manager: Oh, that noise. I guess the military ………….. its exercises on the artillery range.

Tenant: You have to be kidding. ……………….. anything be done about it?

Apartment Manager: Why certainly. I've protested this activity, and these weekly (Weekly!) activities should cease . . . within the next three to five years.

Tenant: Hey, you never told me about these problems before I signed the rental agreement.

(source: Randall's ESL Cyber Listening LAB, from: https://www.esl-lab.com/difficult/housing-complaints-script/)

Learning and Comprehension of English Tense Categories: Examining the Prevalent Patterns among Yemeni EFL Students

Badri Abdulhakim DM Mudhsh

Department of Linguistics, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

Ghazwan Mohammed Saeed Mohammed

Department of English, College of Sciences and Arts (Alnamas), University of Bisha, Bisha, Saudi Arabia

Nazrin B. Laskar

Department of Linguistics, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

Bio-profles:

1. **Dr. Badri Abdulhakim DM Mudhsh** holds a PhD in Linguistics (Applied Linguistics) from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), India. He has taught various courses of Linguistics to undergraduate and postgraduate students at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). He has worked as an English language trainer at the Training and Placement Office of AMU. Previously, he has taught various courses of Linguistics at Sana'a University and Queen Arwa University, Yemen. His research interests language teaching, learning and comprehension. Currently, he is interested in studying tense and aspect in Arabic and English. He has presented many papers in national and international conferences and published many research papers in renowned Journals.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4945-8621. Email: *badrimudhsh@gmail.com*

2. **Dr. Ghazwan Mohammed Saeed Mohammed** obtained his PhD in Linguistics from Aligarh Muslim University, India. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Linguistics at the Department of English, College of Sciences and Arts, Alnamas, University of Bisha, KSA, and a permanent Faculty member of the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Thamar University, Yemen. His research interests include Applied Linguistics, Syntax,

Grammar, Error Analysis and Translation. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8853-9013. Email: *ghaz123456@gmail.com*

3. **Dr. Nazrin B. Laskar** teaches Linguistics at Department of Linguistics at Aligarh Muslim University, India. Her research interests include language variation and change, language contact, pidgins and creoles, dialectology and morpho-syntax. She is primarily interested in studying tense, mood and aspect in contact languages or minority languages embedded in multilingual or language contact situations. She has presented many papers in international conferences and published many research papers in Journals of great repute. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2276-0601; Email: *nazrinlaskar@gmail.com*

Abstract

The current study is an attempt to examine the learning and comprehension patterns of English tense categories by Yemeni EFL students at the different levels of the undergraduate program at the Department of English, Faculty of Arts at Sana'a University. The study also brings to light the English tense categories which the Yemeni EFL students find difficult to learn and hence commit errors in these categories. The data of the study comprised inputs from 120 students covering the four levels, 30 students from each, of EFL undergraduate program. The study used the one-way analysis of variance ANOVA in SPSS 0.22 and Tukey Post Hoc test to analyze the data. The statistical analysis indicated that (1) there is a significant difference in the usage of the various English tense categories across the four levels; (2) the errors committed are not equally distributed within all English tense categories; (3) the Tukey Post Hoc Test indicated a similar pattern of statistically significant difference across all four levels. Furthermore, the category of English future tense turned out to be the most problematic among the other categories for the Yemeni EFL students. It has received the lowest correct answers across the four levels. Lastly, the negative role of the influence of Arabic has been clearly identified to affect the process of learning and comprehension of English tense categories, especially for level one students. The study concluded with some pedagogical implications to the syllabus makers and EFL teachers.

Keywords: *Learning, Comprehension, Tense categories, English as a Foreign Language, Yemeni EFL students.*

Introduction

In Yemeni universities, English is taught as a foreign language. Even though there is much emphasis on the learning and teaching of English in Yemen, the Yemeni learner's proficiency in English remains poor. Syllabus makers and EFL teachers have realized that there is a great deal of errors in the grammatical categories of the English verbs in the writing of the EFL students at Yemeni universities, such as in the case of the English tenses categories. Many researchers have clearly stated that tenses and verb categories are particularly problematic for Arab EFL learners to acquire because of the difficulty of using them correctly (Mattar, 2003; Mohammed, 2008; Mudhsh, 2018; Shafran, 2019; Alkhudiry and Al-Ahdal, 2020; Mudhsh and Laskar, 2021; Alahdal, 2020; Mudhsh, 2021). The fact that Arabic and English differ in their systems with regard to tense led many studies to conclude that Arab learners' errors are attributed to the interference from the first language (L1) i.e., Arabic. For instance, the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) has two simple forms of the verb, *al-maaDii* (perfect/past) and *al-muDaari* (imperfect/present). These two forms *al-maaDii* and *al-muDaari* were referred to as perfect and imperfect by the earliest grammarians like Beeston (1970). The perfect *al-maaDii* expresses the completed actions and the imperfect *al-muDaari* denotes the incomplete actions (Ryding, 2005). In Arabic, the aspectual distinctions seem to be more prominent than tense distinctions (Ryding, 2005). Arabic seems to be deficient in expressing tense distinctions. Comrie (1976) also mentioned the existence of "Two sets of Arabic verb forms to refer to perfective and imperfective". However, he stated that "Perfective indicates both perfective meaning and relative past time reference, while the imperfective indicates everything else (i.e., either imperfective meaning or relative non-past tense" (Comrie, 1976 p. 80). He further suggested that in Arabic the opposition between imperfective/perfective partakes both aspect and (relative) tense.

Moreover, Arabic tends to be an aspectual language unlike English (Ryding, 2005). This fact prompted the researchers to conduct this study, and to examine the Yemeni EFL students' errors to find out the causes and declare them to both EFL teachers and learners. Furthermore, this study limited itself to examining the learning and comprehension of only tense categories by Yemeni EFL students at the four levels at the undergraduate program, the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Sana'a University

Literature Review

With drastic geopolitical changes happening around the globe, English has assumed a significant place in language learning and teaching. Much like the rest of the non-native speaker (NNS) populations elsewhere, there has been a spurt of interest in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the Arab world. In this section, a discussion of some studies relevant to this area will be highlighted. Although, there exists abundant literature on Arab EFL errors, the current study focused only on studies related to the learning of English tense categories and studies on errors committed by Arab EFL leaners as they have a direct bearing on this study.

Mohammed (2008) cited several reasons for the poor performance of students in Yemen learning English as a Foreign Language. He stated that there is a massive dearth of qualified teachers, inadequate instructional materials like audio-visual aids and limited scope for communication in English, both inside and outside the classroom. The use of the traditional pedagogies like the Grammar-Translation Method and mother tongue influence are also added to the problem of English learning in Yemen.

Mattar (2003) found that Arab EFL learners avoid using some tenses and this avoidance is due to lack of similarities between the structures of the target language and those of the learner's native language. An earlier study by Mattar (2001) concluded that Arabic speaking learners learning English as a Foreign Language specifically avoid English present perfect tense not due to the differences between the way it is formed in English and Arabic, but, rather, due to their incapability to find proper form meaning and tense or aspect associations.

Another study by Mohammad (1982) where he adapted the 'generative semanticist' approach to offer a contrastive analysis of the tense and aspect systems of MSA and English, claimed that the systems of these two languages are similar in some respects and quite different in others. Mohammad presented a hierarchy for expected difficulties that the language learner will have to deal with. He concluded that the tense and aspect systems of English are much more complex than those of MSA and, therefore, English grammatical categories of verbs are more difficult to learn than MSA. Apart from comparing the tense and aspects of both the languages, Mohammed also discussed some semantic categories on which there is very little agreement among linguists. For example, he included causative and participative verbs as tense and aspect categories.

A study by Alkhudiry and Al-Ahdal (2020) found that Saudi EFL learners encounter many problems in written English. These problems are mostly found in subject-verb agreement, verb

usage, word order and collocation. They claimed that most of these errors are attributed to the interference of learners' mother tongue. They added that since Arabic and English are of two different language families, it is natural for learners to have many problems and hence commit errors due to these differences. Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2019) highlighted that the interference of learners' L1 leads to significant obstacles in learning English for both EFL and ESL learners.

There are many other studies which suggested that the errors produced by the EFL learners of English are a result of the influence or "interference" or transfer from the L1 (Collins, 2002; Yang & Huang, 2004; Tiittanen, 2013; Al-Khresheh, 2015; Zhang & Liu, 2016; Mudhsh and Laskar, 2021). Despite these notable previous studies on EFL and tense and aspect errors, not many studies have yet been conducted on English tense categories as used by Yemeni EFL students. Therefore, this study hopes to fill an existent gap in this area.

Research Questions

Like other Arab students, English remains a barrier for most EFL students in Yemen as well. English is taught as a foreign language in government schools in Yemen from class 7 to 12. The students of Yemen face a lot of difficulties in speaking and writing in English. A lot of errors appear in their writings, especially in English tense categories. Such problems are not limited to high school students only. EFL students in the departments of English at the Yemeni universities also display similar problems in their writing and speech. Therefore, this study intended to examine the following questions: (1) What are the learning and comprehension patterns of English tense categories as applied by Yemeni EFL students? (2) Which English tense category is the most challenging for Yemeni EFL students? (3) What is the role of mother tongue influences in the learning and comprehension of English tense categories by Yemeni EFL students?

Methodology

Participants

One hundred and twenty undergraduate EFL students at the English Department, Faculty of Arts at Sana'a University participated in this study. All participants were Arabic native speakers, with comparable experience and exposure to learning of English, and shared the age range from 18 to 25 years. As stated earlier, these participants were from across the four levels of the undergraduate program at the University. Thus, thirty students from each level of the undergraduate program were included in this study as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

The distribution of the participants

1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	Total
30	30	30	30	120

Instrument

The instrument of the study comprised of an objective test (multiple choice based) and narratives drawn through a composition test. Students were asked to choose the correct tense for items in a set of sentences representing the three English tense categories. The researchers prepared a list of 16 sentences encompassing the three categories of English tenses. All sentences were supplied with multiple answers and the students were asked to select the appropriate answer for the respective sentences. Once the data of the objective questions were collected, composition of writing tasks were taken up. Various topics related to the participants' everyday life were designed and the participants were asked to write on them.

The researchers characterized the tense categories based on formal definitions provided in literature (Comrie, 1976). Based on the tradition used in pedagogy of English language teaching, the researchers took the following English tense categories:

(i) Simple present tense.

Example: He <u>drinks</u> milk every night.

(ii) Simple past tense.

Example: I <u>graduated</u> from university last year.

(iii) Future tense.

Example: We <u>are going to</u> graduate next year.

Quantitative analysis

After the collection of the data from the students, a quantitative analysis was carried out. The researchers noticed that the performance of the students at the different four levels showed a lot of variation in the learning and comprehension of English tenses. Hence, the researchers undertook a statistical analysis of the variable data by using the SPSS 0.22. SPSS is very commonly used to analyze variable data in social sciences and linguistics. The researchers used the one-way ANOVA in SPSS 16.0 to see whether the differences in the learning and comprehension of the English tenses across the four levels were statistically significant or not. The function of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is to compare the means between

the 'groups' that are considered in the study and determine whether any of these means are statistically significantly different from each other. The One-way ANOVA provides an overall result but cannot point out which specific groups are statistically significantly different from each other. Therefore, the researchers used the Tukey Post Hoc Test which points out through multiple comparisons which specific group's means are significantly different from each other. This post-hoc test compares the 'means of every treatment to the means of every other treatment' and thereby identifies the significant differences between these groups. The results of the quantitative analysis provided by these variable analysis programs are discussed in the following sections.

Results

Simple Present Tense

The data on simple present tense that were elicited from students of four levels were categorized as (i) correct use of simple present tense and (ii) incorrect use of simple present tense. The following Table 2 summarizes these findings.

Table 2.

Correct Use of Simple Present Tense.

Level	N	Correct Use of Simple Present Tense				
		Minimum	**Maximum**	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Percentage**
Level 1	30	15	18	1.34	16.40	54.67
Level 2	30	20	23	1.34	21.60	72.00
Level 3	30	24	28	1.58	26.00	86.67
Level 4	30	26	30	1.51	27.60	92.00

In Table 2, the researcher presents the distribution of 'correct use of simple present tense' data among the undergraduate students at the four levels. The analysis showed that there is an improvement in the learning of the simple present tense as the students move from lower to higher levels. The percentage of students at level one that gave correct responses in simple present tense is 54.6%. At level two, the students' responses in present simple tense rise to 72%. At level three, the percentage of the correct responses is 86.6% which means that the students are gradually becoming more aware of the use of simple present tense. At level four,

the percentage of correct responses is 92%, which shows that level four students have the highest correct responses among the four levels.

Table 3.

Incorrect Use of Simple Present Tense.

Level	N	Incorrect Use of Simple Present Tense				
		Minimum	**Maximum**	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Percentage**
Level 1	30	12	15	1.34	13.60	45.33
Level 2	30	07	10	1.34	8.40	28.00
Level 3	30	02	08	1.58	4.00	13.33
Level 4	30	00	04	1.51	2.40	8.00

Table 3 presents the 'incorrect use of simple present tense' data obtained the students. The results clearly suggested that the rate of errors in simple present tense data slowly decreases as the students go to higher levels. In other words, it is a relationship of inverse proportion: the higher the level is , the lower the rate of errors in the uses of English simple present tense is. About 45.3 % of students of level one gave incorrect responses with respect to 'simple present tense'. It is noted that in level two, there was a decrease in the incorrect use of English present tense and the students' percentage fell to 28%. At level three, the percentage of students with incorrect responses is 13.3% suggesting that these students are slowly becoming more aware of the use of English simple present tense than level one and two students are. At level four, only 8% students gave incorrect answers for simple present tense. Figure 1 below depicts the comparative values for correct and incorrect application of the English simple present tense.
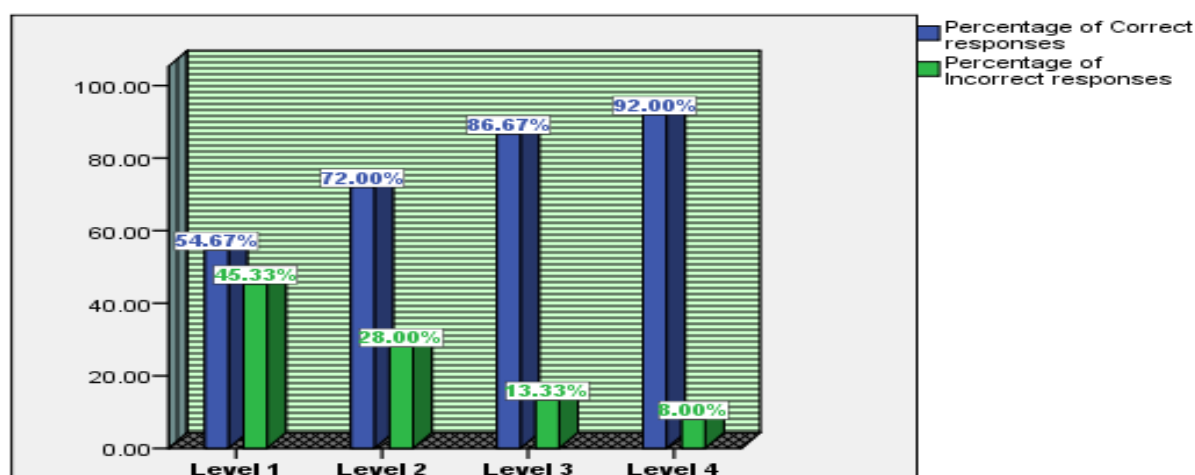
Figure 1. Comparison of the correct and incorrect uses of simple present tense.

Simple Past Tense

The data on simple past tense were categorized as (i) correct use of simple past tense and (ii) incorrect use of simple past tense. Table 4 below summarizes the correct responses across the four levels of the participants.

Table 4.

Correct Use of Simple Past Tense.

Level	N	Correct Use of Simple Past Tense				
		Minimum	**Maximum**	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Percentage**
Level 1	30	14	16	1.15	14.67	48.89
Level 2	30	22	24	1.00	23.00	76.67
Level 3	30	29	30	0.57	29.67	98.89
Level 4	30	27	30	1.73	29.00	96.67

There is a clear indication of improvement in the learning of English simple past tense from lower to higher levels. The percentage of students at level one who gave correct responses in simple past tense is 48.8%. The percentage of students at level two who display correct usage of simple past tense is 76.6%. It is interesting to note that at level three the percentage of students with correct responses rises sharply to an impressive 98.8%. However, the percentage (96.7%) of successful students in level four is slighly less than level three. Table 5 below represents the incorrect usage of simple past tense.

Table 5.

Incorrect Use of Simple Past Tense

Level	N	Incorrect Use of Simple Past Tense				
		Minimum	**Maximum**	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Percentage**
Level 1	30	14	16	1.15	15.33	51.11
Level 2	30	06	08	1.00	7.00	23.33
Level 3	30	00	01	0.57	0.33	1.11
Level 4	30	00	03	1.73	1.00	3.33

The percentage of wrong use of English simple past tense in the data of the undergraduate students as shown in Table 5 depicts a gradual decrease in errors from lower to higher levels. In level one, 51.1 % students displayed wrong use of English past tense. The percentage of students in level two who used the simple past tense incorrectly declined to only 23.3%. There is a huge decline of errors in level three. Only 1.1 % students failed to select the right past tense form. In level four too, we observe that only 3.3% students selected the wrong option for English past tense. Figure 2 below depicts graphically the comparative values for correct versus incorrect responses to English simple past tense.
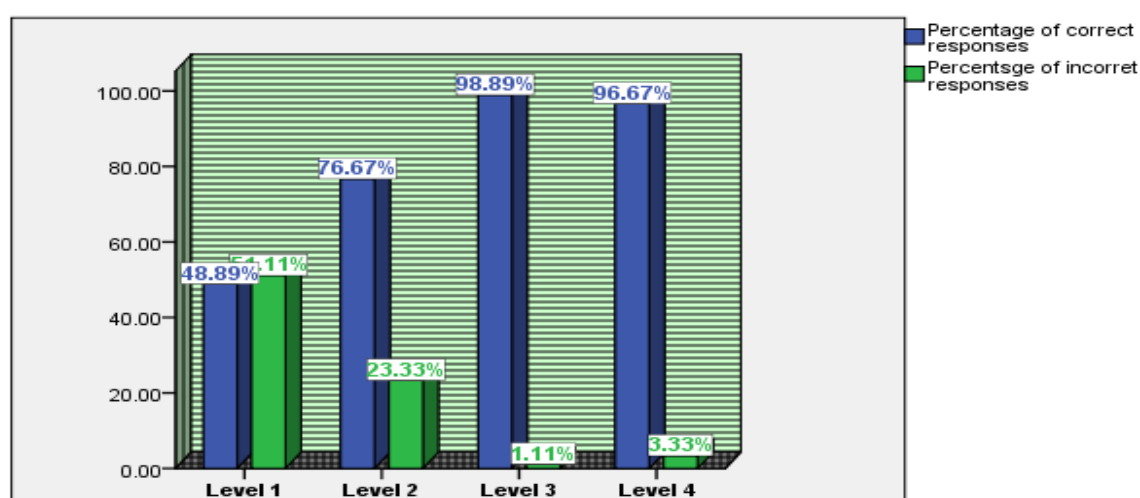
Figure 2. Comparison of the correct and incorrect use of simple past tense.

Future Tense

The data on future tense elicited from students of the four levels were categorized as (i) correct use of future tense and (ii) incorrect use of future tense. Table 6 below summarizes the findings.

Table 6.

Correct Use of Future Tense.

Level	N	Correct Use of Future Tense				
		Minimum	**Maximum**	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Percentage**
Level 1	30	11	18	4.04	13.33	44.44
Level 2	30	19	24	2.88	20.67	68.89
Level 3	30	24	30	3.21	26.33	87.78
Level 4	30	25	30	2.51	27.33	91.11

For level one, 44.4% students were able to use the correct English future tense. Table 6 shows a leap in improvement in the performances of the level wo students. About 68.8% students of level two achieved the desired result. The improvement trend in the learning of English future tense is reflected in the performances of level three students as well. In level three, 87.7% students showed the accurate use of English future tense. The students of the highest level (four) showed the best performance, that is, 91.1% correct usage of the English future tense. Table 7 below summarizes the incorrect use of the English future tense by the participants at the four levels.

Table 7.

Incorrect Use of Future Tense.

Level	N	Incorrect Use of Future Tense				
		Minimum	**Maximum**	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**Percentage**
Level 1	30	12	19	4.04	16.67	55.56
Level 2	30	11	11	2.88	9.38	31.11
Level 3	30	06	06	3.21	3.67	12.22
Level 4	30	05	05	2.51	2.67	8.89

We now look at Table 7 for the distribution of 'incorrect use of English future tense'. The minimum and maximum value of wrong answers of English future tense that were elicited from the students representing the four levels are shown in table 7. It is notable that the value for wrong answers declines at the higher levels. The maximum value of incorrect use of English future tense is 19 in level one, which gradually decreases to 11 in level two, 6 in level three and finally falls to five in level four. Similarly, the minimum value for incorrect use of English future tense too shows a decline. Figure 3 below depicts the comparative values for the correct and incorrect use of the English future tense. Figure 3 shows the correct selection of options increased whereas the incorrect selection decreased sigmficantly in future tense.
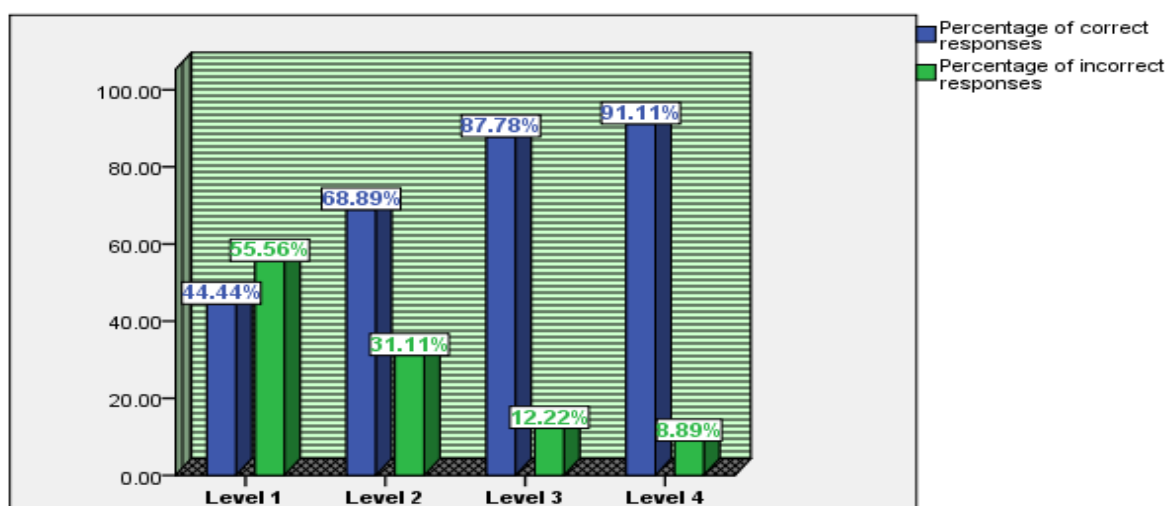
Figure 3. Comparison of students' responses for correct and incorrect use of future tense

Discussion

The analysis of the data shows that there are differences in the use of appropriate English tense categories in the four levels of EFL undergraduate students. The performances in all levels display different success rate, thereby suggesting inter-level differences in the comprehension and learning of English tenses. This finding corroborates the findings of Housen (2002) with regard to the great deal of individual variation in usage of tense forms. The statistical analysis of the variable data using ANOVA and Tukey Post Hoc test indicates that the students of level one attain the least success in the use of the correct forms of the three English tenses under consideration in this study. The students of level one produce the maximum number of errors in the uses of English tenses. But the statistical analysis shows that the errors are not equally distributed within all the English tense categories. The best performance from Level One students is seen in the use of English simple present tense. A total of 54.67% students of level one was successful in selecting the proper options provided for English simple present tense. About 48.89% students of level one answer appropriately English simple past tense questions. On the other hand, the lowest success rate is attained in the category of future tense. In Level One, 44.44% students could select the appropriate answer for future tense. This can be accredited to the fact that English and Arabic differ in terms of their tense systems. In English, the verbal system shows very fine stratification of tense. The present tense is distinguished from present progressive (continuous) tense. Arabic shows prominence of aspect categories. The present tense and progressive aspect are considered under imperfective category in Arabic. The researchers also found that in English an overt distinction between past tense and future

tense exists. The patterns of marking of these tense categories by the level one students indicate the influence of L1 in learning English tense and aspect system. These, further, show that the level one students are in the process of learning the rules of English tense and aspect system; they have not fully internalized the rules of English tense system. Therefore, the students of level one draw from their Arabic system while marking English tenses. This finding is in line with findings of many previous studies that claimed errors produced by the EFL learners of English are a result of the influence or "interference" or transfer from the L1. In addition, L1 influence plays a role in the learning of tense categories (Collins, 2002; Tiittanen, 2013; Zhang & Liu, 2016; Mudhsh, 2018; Alkhudiry and Al-Ahdal, 2020).

Having mastered the English tense by the time the learners reach level two, the performance of these students displays some improvement in the proper use of English tense. In level two, the percentage of successful students, that is those who were able to provide the correct answers for "simple present tense" rose to 72%. A total of 76.67% achieved success in choosing the correct options in the application of the simple past tense. On the other hand, the lowest success rate is attained in the category of future tense. About 68.89% students answer appropriately in the case of the English future tense. Thus, level two students differ from level one students in marking English tense categories. Students of level two show an improvement as compared to level one in all tense categories. This suggests that level two students are gradually able to understand English tense categories and apply them more correctly.

The performance of students of level three showed that internalization of the English tense system has occurred to a large extent. Compared to levels one and two, the level three students performed much better. A total of 86.6% students were able to show correct use of simple present tense. In simple past tense, the success rate further rose to 98.89%. In future tense too it is a moderately good 87.78%. These percentages reflect that the level three students can differentiate English simple present tense from simple past tense. The overall success rate of Level Three students is high in all English tense categories considered in this study. The performance of Level Four students with respect to the use of English tense system seems to be satisfactory. More than 90 percent of the students of level four were able to chow correct use of all the three English tense categories.

The analysis in this study shows that the early learners, that is, students of levels one and two make maximum errors in the use of English tense. These errors occur as a result of the influence of Arabic tense system. Moreover, Arabic and English differ in the way of expressing the tense

system. This may also lead to errors by the students. A similar finding is seen in the study of Mattar (2003) where he concluded the study by saying that there is no correspondence between the structures of the target language and those of the learner's native language. The Yemeni level one and two students resort to their Arabic (L1) system to mark English simple past and future tense. The rate of errors however decreases from level three onwards. The level three and level four students show satisfactory use of English tenses. This indicates that with adequate instruction the Yemeni students learn the rules of English tenses and aspects and can use English tenses properly. Another fact revealed by the quantitative analysis was that the category of English future tense posits the most difficulties for Yemeni learners, especially at levels one and two. The category that receives the lowest minimum correct usage in level one and two is the category of future tense.

The findings of the composition test show an agreement with the results of the objective type test. The responses of level one and level two students were in one or two lines. They could not compose anything beyond an average of thirty words. These too were full of errors, similar in nature across levels one and two. It was clear that the students at levels one and two were not proficient with eth use of any of the three English tenses under consideration. In addition to errors of tense, the 'errors' also reflected wrong agreement, deletion of verb *be* and deletion of the *to*-infinitive. However, a great deal of improvement was observed in the data obtained from level three students. The level three students showed some degree of comfort with expression of thoughts in English. The excerpts from level three show better comprehension as well as better use of English tenses. Nevertheless, a few errors were visible in some of these excerpts, especially in the use of simple past tense in English. It may be noted that the responses of level four students were similar to those of level three students.

Conclusion

The study leads us to note that there is a great deal of difference in the rate of errors committed by students at the different Levels. Errors committed by students were not equally distributed within all English tense categories and there were significant differences in students' correct usage in English tense categories across the four levels. The results of the statistical analysis also indicate that the students of level ne and two attain the least success in the use of the correct forms of English tenses. The students of level one produce the maximum number of errors in the application of English tenses. This may be because English and Arabic differ with regard to the expression of tense and aspect systems. The verbal system in English shows tense and

aspectual oppositions whereas Arabic tends to be an aspectual language (Ryding, 2005). Students of Level One perhaps resort to their Arabic conceptualization of tense while writing and marking the correct answers. They draw from their first language, that is, Arabic. The students in the initial years use their knowledge of L1 (Arabic) while learning English (FL). But since both the systems (Arabic and English) are very different as far as tense system is concerned, the influences from Arabic affect the learning and comprehension of English tenses in the initial years, especially at level one. Moreover, the statistical analysis shows future tense is the most problematic tense category for level one and level two students.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that syllabus makers and EFL teachers consider the differences of English and Arabic system with regard to tense. Students should be given continuous separate inputs on Arabic and English tense and aspect differences. Influence of students' mother tongue i.e., Arabic on learning English tenses should be highly considered and promptly checked. Moreover, EFL teachers should give extra attention to the application of the English future tense while teaching English tense categories to Yemeni EFL students, especially in the initial years.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020). Overcoming pronunciation hurdles in EFL settings: An evaluation of podcasts as a learning tool at Qassim University Saudi Arabia. *Asian EFL Journal Research Articles*, *27*(1), 86-101. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3570621

Al-Khresheh, M. H. (2015). A review study of interlanguage theory. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 4(3)*, 123-131. doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.4n.3p.123

Alkhudiry, R. I., Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020). Analysing EFL discourse of Saudi EFL learners: identifying mother tongue interference. *The Asian ESP Journal*, *16*, 2-1, 89 - 109. Retrieved March 10, 2021, from https://ssrn.com/abstract=3621238

Beeston, A. F. L. (1970). *The Arabic language today*. London: Hutchinson University.

Collins, L. (2002). The roles of L1 influence and lexical aspect in the acquisition of temporal morphology. *Language Learning, 52* (1), 43–94. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.00177

Comrie, B. (1976). *Aspect: An introduction to the study of verbal aspect and related problems* (Vol. 2). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Housen, A. (2002). A corpus-based study of the L2-acquisition of the English verb system. In S. Grange, J. Hung & S. Petch-Tyson (Eds.), *Computer learner corpora, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching* (pp. 77–116). Amsterdam, Netherlands/Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Mattar, H. (2001). Is avoidance a reflection of mother tongue interference? The case of the present perfect tense. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies, 2* (1), 141-155. Retrieved January 20, 2020, from http://www.ijaes.net/article/FullText/9?volume=2&issue=1

Mattar, H. (2003). Is avoidance ruled out by similarity? The case of subordinating conjunctions/adverbs in English and Arabic. *Ponzan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics, 38*, 103-115.

Mohammad, M. (1982). *The semantics of tense and aspect in English and modern standard Arabic*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], Georgetown University,Washington Ds, USA.

Mohammed, H. S. M. (2008). *Use of computer aided techniques in the teaching of Aural-oral skills: A case study of the ELT students in Hodeidah University*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

Mudhsh, B. A. D. (2021). A comparative study of tense and aspect categories in Arabic and English. Cogent Arts & Humanities, 8(1), 1899568.

Mudhsh, B, A, D. (2018). *Cross-linguistic influences of Arabic language in learning English tense and aspect: The case of Sana'a University.* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India.

Mudhsh, B. A. D, & Laskar, N. B. (2021). Examining the learning and comprehension of English aspect categories by Yemeni EFL students. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 17*(Special Issue 1), 222-235. Retrieved January 05, 2021, from www.jlls.org

Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A reference grammar of modern standard Arabic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Shafran, R. W. (2019). Level of directness and the use of please in requests in English by native speakers of Arabic and Hebrew. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *148*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2019.05.020

Tiittanen, M. (2013). Cross-linguistic influence in the use of the English simple past tense: the case of Tamil and Mandarin learners. *TESOL Review, 5*, 89–112.

Wyatt, M., & Dikilitaş, K. (2019). English language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs for grammar instruction: implications for teacher educators. *The Language Learning Journal*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2019.1642943

Yang, S., & Huang, Y. Y. (2004). The impact of the absence of grammatical tense in L1 on the acquisition of the tense-aspect system in L2. *International Review of Applied Linguistics (IRAL), 42*(1), 49-70.

Zhang, Y. & Liu, B. (2016). Variable past tense marking by advanced end-state Chinese speakers of L2 English. In J. Kessler, A. Lenzing & M. Liebner (Eds.), *Developing, modelling and assessing second languages* (pp. 101–120). Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamin.

Errors in the Use of Literary Devices in English Composition: A Study of Saudi EFL Learners' Application of Rhetoric and Figures of Speech

Mohammad Yahya Ali Bani Salameh

Languages and Translation Department,

University of Tabuk

Bio-profile:

Dr Mohammad Yahya Bani Salameh is an Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Department of Languages and Translation, University College at Duba, University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. Dr Bani Salameh did his BA at Zarqa Private University, 1998 – 2002, Jordan and obtained his MA English (Linguistics) degree from AMU, UP, India. In May 2008, He got PhD degree in Linguistics from Aligarh Muslim University, India. His research interests include Rhetoric, Composition and Vocabulary learning strategies.

Abstract

Differentiating between rhetoric and figures of speech is often tricky for EFL learners of English since the latter are also classified under rhetorical devices in some grammar books. Further, both have to do with irregular use of words which only very proficient learner-users may be able to apply correctly. Though rhetoric is not taught as a course in university programs in Saudi Arabia, it is certainly taught as a literary component. However, learners' errors in the use of both are vast and typical, a fact that calls for their investigation and analysis. This study tries to identify, classify and describe the errors in literary devices made by the fourth year university students majoring in English at Haql College, University of Tabuk, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Another aim of the study is to identify the reasons for these errors with an analysis of the essays produced by 30 participants from University of Tabuk. Analysis shows that (a) the students' competence in English rhetoric is poor and (b) The Arab learners' command of English is, in general, inadequate. The errors show clear generalization of rules and discernible transference from Arabic and therefore, can be a roadmap for reference for

curriculum developers, teachers as well as teacher trainers. The study concludes with some pertinent recommendations for remediation of the problem.

Keywords: *Rhetoric, Repetition, Parallelism, Voice Shifting, Connectives*

Introduction

Language is an entity much like us humans with characteristics that distinguish one from the other. These unique features manifest themselves at many levels: National, regional, local and individual, to name a few. Rhetoric is also a feature that distinguishes languages: "Different cultures have different rhetorical tendencies" (Kaplan, 1966). Nowhere is this more evident than in the English essay production by Saudi EFL learners. Van De Wege (2013) summarized previous literature on Arabic rhetoric by pointing out that it is repetitive, non-linear and has a unique tendency to make many points from different angles. As far as Arabic EFL learners' writing is concerned, three features primarily stand out as representative of MT interference: Poor introduction, parallelism, repetition. It may be pertinent to add here that eloquence and circumvention are considered virtues in Arabic, so much so, that at least in the mother tongue, learners are consciously trained on these aspects of language.

The Encyclopedia Britannica notes that historically, as a tradition, about the 5th century BC during the Classical Period in ancient Greece, Rhetoric was an art of public speaking concerning itself with typical settings such as assemblies and courtrooms because of which its teaching was rather restricted to certain elite sections of the society. Aristotle clarified the status of Rhetoric when he proclaimed it as a 'civic art'. This tradition was also carried forward by the later Roman Empire. It was during this time that rhetors or rhetoricians developed the terms that made rhetoric unique as a language device. Public performance was regarded as the highest reach of formal education, and rhetoric was at the center of the educational process in Western Europe for at least two millennia to come. Rhetoric was a virtue in oratory and part of the communicators' training. It was, thus, highly desirable for orators like advocates or people in similar professions which demanded an ability to persuade or inform. In other words, Rhetoric as a language skill was the subject area of the speaker. What is interesting to note here is that Stylistics as an area of linguistic inquiry was as yet not divorced from Rhetoric and it was the Classical rhetoricians who codified the four categories in which to place the figures of speech, viz., *adiectio* (addition), *detractio* (omission), *transmutatio* (transposition), *immutatio* (permutation).

This trend changed as late as in the 20th century when the emphasis of Rhetoric underwent a shift from the speaker or writer to the auditor or reader. With modern rhetoric shifting its focus to the auditor or reader and the point of reference for rhetoric for modern literary criticism was inevitably the classicists. This was not a new practice in any way as stylistic terms invented by the classicists such as, antithesis and metaphor had already been borrowed by critics. This is not to say that modern rhetoric is focused on taxonomy. On the contrary, a text seen from rhetorical perspective lends it a uniqueness which is quite from that of other disciplines as it gives the reader a ready-for-reference map of the author's mind on a particular subject. Further, the interest of modern rhetoric is with the process of the creation of the text as much as it is with the analysis of its structure and author's intention in its creation. Thus, discourse itself is a sub-field of rhetoric in the modern conception of the term and there too, it is to be seen from a critical rather than artistic standpoint.

Figures of speech are an integral part of oral and written language both in commonplace and embellished usage. The strength of Figures of Speech lies in their application of ordinary words to create humorous, eye-catching and mnemonic effects. Thus, they deviate from literal meaning, extending the purview of meaning beyond the familiar into the realm of lesser-known meaning or implicatures. Figures of Speech are a great literary device in advertising, composition of mottoes, captions, newspaper headlines, and institutional tag lines. Colloquial imagery is also abandoned or modified in situations where Figures of Speech are applied. Their use is totally conscious on the part of the user but needs a refined degree of proficiency in the language to create the desired intellectual and emotional impact which is the primary objective behind using them.

Rhetoric is a technique of using language effectively and persuasively in spoken or written form. It is an art of discourse, which studies and employs various methods to convince, influence, or please an audience. Thus, rhetoric directs language in a particular way for effective communication making use of devices. A rhetorical device uses words in a certain way to convey meaning or to persuade. It can also be a technique used to evoke emotion on the part of the reader or audience. Skilled writers use many different types of rhetorical devices in their work to achieve specific effects. Five types of rhetoric devices will be presented and discussed in this study: Repetition, parallelism, connectives, introductory statements, voice shifting, and connectives.

Review of Literature

In a study with EFL learners' English and Persian argumentative essay writing aimed at genre analysis and contrastive rhetoric research, Khodabandeh et al (2013) came to a unique conclusion: L1 conventions need not necessarily influence organization of materials by EFL learners in their English argumentative essay writing. In a large number of studies, it ay be pointed out, this was an assumption, and one that was also supported by experimental findings. In this study, however, the participants' output was similar in both Persian and English argumentative essay writing.

Ghanbari (2014) investigated how awareness of rhetorical practices affect writing strategies employed by EFL learners and concluded that exposure to target langauge culture and rhetoric may ensure better command on the nuances and rhetorical patterns of the target langauge. The study noted both qualitative and quantitaive differences in strategy use between the writers who were 'aware' and those who were 'unaware'. Think aloud protocols along with stimulated recall interviews were employed in this study and based upon these, it recommended rigorous training of learners in the target culture.

Abushihab (2020) pointed out that if critical thinking and learning process are to be fostered in the EFL classroom, then , it is imperative to emphasize the role of contrastive rhetoric which will ensure the correct and effective learning of L2. His argument is that since contrastive rhetoric is is context-dependent, the reader is prompted to look beyond mere text to understand the process of its production and then, successfully analyze it.

In a tertiary EFL context, Rusfandi(2013) set out to investigate how far was the backward transfer of rhetorical structures when EFL learners composed essays in Indonesian. The motivation was Cummins(1979) who propagated transference and interdependence of , languages. The current study specifically compared the arguement-counterargument structures in L1 and L2 writing samples. Findings showed some backard transference in the argument-counterargument structures though being third year students, the participants were considered 'skilful' writers in English. Consequently, the study concluded that the argument-counterargument structures were cognitively demanding for langauge learners. This findings is certainly significant from a pedagogical point of view. Budiharso(2006) also examined the rhetorical features of Indonesian EFL learners' writing in English and Indonesian to isolate the differences and similarities. On the count of the three factors chosen for comaprison rhetoric similarity between Indonesian and English was shared in all: linearity and non-linearity of ideas, development of ideas and coherence of writing. Thus this study contradicted Cummins(1979).

Wornyo & Klu(2018) concluded in a study that second language socialization and rightly point out that early research pedagogical. could not rightly meet the needs of the ESP/ EFL learners and it was only when intercultural research gained momentum that solemn pedagogicla shift was observed in L2 education. The study cites pervious research that confirmed that pedagogicla approaches hinged on intercultural rhetoric had a positive impact .on EFL/ ESL learning environments.

In a Moroccan perspective, Khartite and Zerhouni (2018) evaluated the persuasive essays of EFL learners to verify Kaplan's (1966) contrastive rhetoric hypothesis with emphasis on writing output in English as an outcome of negative transfer from mother tongue, Arabic. Statistical analysis, however, showed that learners' persuasive essays in (L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) displayed more similarities than difference.

Roman Jakobson (cited in Kaartinen, 2017) has defined parallelism as the proximation of two language elements in such a way that neither can be perceived or interpreted in isolation. One function of parallelism is to place together parts of a sentence that are equal in importance. Parallelism ensures recurrent syntactical similarity of these parts apart from lending clarity, rhythm and balance to the sentence. De Beaugrande & Dressier (1981:71) pointed out that parallel structures may be joined with four major types of expressions classified under Conjunctions, Disjunctions, Contradictions, and Subordination. Parallelism, then links sentences by using a general structure.

The following example is a famous one of Winston Churchill:

"The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessing ; the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries "

The term parallelism is further defined by Bodenstein (1977:197) as a "unifying device that creates complex semantic relationships between the parallel verbal structure, while establishing formal symmetries and correspondences". An oft cited quote is:

To err is human; to forgive divine. (Alexander Pope)

In another study with high school learners enrolled in intensive preparatory programs for L1 or L2, Kobayashi and Rinnert (2008) concluded that in Japanese (L1) and English (L2) training in L2 enabled learners to determine their perspective in writing composition and also to state it in the initial content itself. In an environment of academic English-Spanish, Crawford, et al., (2013) used interviews and written discourse analysis to investigate the rhetorical pattern development. Results showed that despite articulating strong identity with the native English speakers, the participants' compositions reflected Spanish conventions.

In a Turkish context, in 1991, Enginarlar (cited in Uysal, 2008) examined the expository essays written in both Turkish and English by Turkish high-school students. Clearly, the participants were bilinguals engaged in an immersion program. Results showed that bilingual writers wrote shorter and pithier introduction content that did the monolinguals. This could possibly suggest a reverse transfer of rhetorical patterns from English to Turkish, and this hypothesis also agrees with the results arrived at by Akyel and Kamışlı (1996), who evaluated student essays before and after writing instruction.

In a similar environment with Turkish learners, Uysal (2008) examined the argumentative essay composition of participants and concluded that one or the other rhetorical pattern was chosen by the participants in their writing. This was especially evident in text organization and cohesive devices. At the same time, they wrote clearer topic sentences while composing in English while these were unclear in Turkish. One notable point was that the time allowed for the composition was only fifty minutes which, according to Uysal, may have led to greatly shortening of brainstorming, outlining, writing, and revision both during and after finishing writing, in short, the processes of composition (Alkhodimi & Al Ahdal, 2019; Thi, & Nguyen, 2020; Alqasham, et al.,2021;).

That rhetorical structures of L1 came to be transferred to L2 had been concluded by Kaplan's (1966) pioneering study of paragraph organization in ESL learners. The study involved 500 English essays by international students and the basis for analysis was Aristotelian rhetoric and logic. In the same study, Kaplan identified five types of paragraph development, each reflecting different rhetorical tendencies, and came to the conclusion that: "each language and each culture has a paragraph order unique to itself, and that part of the learning of the particular language is the mastering of its logical system" (p. 14).

Kaplan (1966) investigated five languages including Arabic in his pioneering work on contrastive rhetoric. Complex repetitive parallel construction and undue use of coordination were found to be the features of Arabic paragraph development. These findings were later corroborated by other studies from a contrastive rhetoric perspective which highlighted the linguistic-cultural differences. Though descriptive in nature, these studies have contributed to greater sensitivity to the differences between languages and this, in turn, has been proved to be an effective measure for overcoming cultural barriers (Smith 2005; Xing et al., 2008). Therefore, ESL/EFL specialists and teachers should focus on cultural differences in composition courses, first by teaching students to appreciate their native language and rhetorical traditions, second by elucidating the cross-cultural differences and finally, by assisting them to make the transition to the target language organizational conventions.

According to Dlugan (2013) as cited in Kadhim,(2018, p.18) "frequent effective use of parallelism are essential for clear writing." It has the following benefits:

Clarity: Parallelisms enable the audience to comprehend the speech better since the facility of reading a content again is not available in case of the spoken word.

Balance: Paired parallel patterns are easy to articulate.

Rhythm: Parallel structures lend rhythm to content. An example is this extract from John F. Kenndy's inaugural address:

 "*We will pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, and oppose any foe in order to assure the survival of success of liberty* ".

Comparability: When elements are placed in parallel structures, their similarities or differences are immediately visible and emphasized.

Concision: Parallelism allows for greater scope of precision in statement of content.

Memorability: Parallel structures are more easily remembered and quoted with greater accuracy.

Statement of the Problem

A large number of Saudi University students face an exceptional difficulty when attempting to write an essay in English. In this study, the researcher is concerned with the Arab learners' rhetorical problems at the intersentential level. Rhetorical errors indicate that Arab learners have transferred Arabic rhetoric to English writing. For example, repetition in Arabic is one of the rhetorical devices used for achieving emphasis, exaggeration and persuasion. It is employed in both oral and written discourse to achieve a rhetorical effect on the listener/reader. Since they are unaware of the uses of the cohesive relations, they try to avoid using them in their writing. Therefore, the absence of cohesive connectives leads to fragmentation of ideas which strip the text of its connectivity (Chafe 1982). A course in English rhetoric is not found in the university plan which means that it is not given the emphasis it deserves. Therefore, it is very important for these students to have adequate rhetorical awareness in order to reduce the occurrence and frequency of rhetorical errors in their writings in English through working hard and effective teaching.

Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What types of rhetorical errors do the Saudi university students encounter in their writings?

2. What is the frequency of each type?

3. What is the most problematic rhetorical challenge faced by the students?

4. How can Arab learners learning English as a foreign language overcome these problems?

Methodology

Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of all the fourth year university students majoring in English at Haql College, University of Tabuk, for the academic year 2017 – 2018. These students are expected to graduate at the end of the second semester. In all there were 65 students (15 males and 50 females). This was a convenience sample as the researcher himself taught these two classes '*The Essay Writing'* in the second term in 2017.

Data Collection

The students of this class were asked to write on many different topics during the entire semester. Given below are the topics on which they have written their essays:

- Road accidents in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

- The importance of English nowadays

- Are the Rich Happy?

- A Journey to an interesting place

- My favorite sport

At the end of the semester lasting three months, three samples were randomly picked for each participant and analyzed for rhetorical errors and intermixing with Figures of Speech.

Data Analysis

The students' essays have been analyzed for the purpose of finding out the rhetorical errors made by the students. The researcher has dealt with errors in the area of parallelism**,** general statements, shifting from indirect to direct speech, voice shifting, repetition and connectives. After analyzing the errors which the students have made, the researcher has classified, described, stated the causes of these errors, and suggested procedures to remedy the problematic areas.

Table: Showing the type of error, number and Percentage

Type of Error	Parallelism	General Sentences	Indirect to Direct	Voice Shifting	Repetition	Connectives	Total
Number of Errors	42	34	51	64	70	19	280
Percentage of Error	15 %	12 %	18 %	23 %	25 %	7 %	100 %

Findings and Discussion

It is evident from the table that the most frequent errors occur in the form of repetition at 25 % ; followed by voice shifting at 23 % ; moving from indirect to direct writing at 18 %, parallelism at 15 % ; general statements at 12 % ; and connectives at 7% ; respectively.

Parallelism

Parallelism is a type of repetition used in Arabic. Errors are of two types. The first is called synonymous parallelism. Below are some examples.

- The good students attend the lectures on time and they never attend them late.

- Good drivers do not drive their cars without license, without good manners and without good brakes.

- To be happy, to be healthy, to be good thinkers, we should look for money.

The other type of errors is wrong parallelism. The following examples have this type of errors.

- Some drivers like fast driving, smoke and to use their mobiles.

- Some of us swam in the Red Sea, playing football and to eat.

Both types of errors are due to interference of Arabic since repetition is used in Arabic for rhetorical purposes, such as for emphasis, exaggeration and persuasion.

Use of General Sentences

Arab learners usually use general sentences at the beginning of their writings without evidence. These sentences have generalizations about people and life; with frequent use of words such as every, *all* and *people*. When students are asked to write about themselves including their experiences and opinions, they write about how other people think in general and avoid personal commitment, voice and tone. Study the examples below.

- Every day we have accidents.

- People are bad these days.

- All people like money.

In short, we can infer that the students use these general sentences to fulfill persuasion. Really, these general sentences affect readers negatively because details are irrelevant and wordy.

Moving from Indirect to Direct Text

The samples show that the EFL learners move from indirect speech to direct speech in their writings without using the appropriate punctuations marks; they also do not prepare the readers for such movement. They also make errors in the auxiliary-subject inversion.

Here are some examples.

- He told me that your brother had a car accident.

- They informed me that you are rich, but you are not happy.

- He said that I must study English at the university.

The errors in the auxiliary-subject inversion are due to Arabic since this rule does not exist in Arabic language.

Voice Shifting

The participants usually shift from first to second to third person pronouns in the same text. The following examples reflect this phenomenon.

- English is very necessary for me because every person needs it.

- Money is necessary for the happiness of everyone in our life, especially for his life, because we cannot live a happy life without money.

This type of errors may be attributed to the English system itself.

Needless Repetition

Repetition is considered a strong device in Arabic, quite contrary to English discourse. It is known that repetition is a rhetoric device in Arabic used to achieve emphasis, exaggeration and persuasion. However, in English, the effect is quite the opposite with repetition being seen as an indication of weakness in the discourse. The following examples show this.

- It was a horrific accident which was a lorry accident.

- The rich people are happy in my society, and my country Saudi Arabia.

- English is important for me because I like English because English is very important in our life.

- Some students are active in English classes and full of energy.

Absence of Connectives

Absence of connectives creates fragmentation of ideas, so the resultant choppy sentences strip the text of its connectivity (Chafe,1982). Look at the example below.

- The road accident was very deadly. no one died.

- The rich are happy. They are not happy sometimes.

- The students are poor in English. they do not study hard. they are careless.

The absence of connectives is due to the students' inability to use them properly, so they try to avoid them.

Misuse of Connectives

The students use connectives wrongly. They connect two related or unrelated ideas in a wrong way. This distorts reading comprehension and creates confusion in the reader' minds.

Study the following examples.

- English is very necessary for Saudis. On the other hand, it is very easy.

- I did not go on the journey although I was ill.

- Road Accidents decrease day after day. However, they are deadly.

The students misuse connectives may be due to teachers or students themselves.

The teachers may not expose their students to the use of connectives; or the students themselves are not hard working.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The students used few connectives in their essays and in most cases, they avoided using them. The reason may be insufficient training in the use of connectives; or the students' lack of confidence in using them.

The samples clearly demonstrate that Arabic is the cause of repetition given the fact that it is considered a positive attribute in the MT. In fact, this trend indicates that the participants may begin to construct an academic discourse community identity and to pursue membership. Teachers of writing should engage students in contrastive rhetoric studies to help them to raise

their awareness and encourage them to feel that they are part of the academic context in which they currently study and could further work in the future.

Contrastive rhetoric studies in composition classes can help students to think more critically while engaging academic writing, since critical thinking plays an important role throughout the composition process. If students engage in different types of exercises, they will benefit them by paying much attention to interlingual differences and similarities in both languages, L1 and L2. Teachers should encourage students to write more and more and teach them the causes and solutions of their errors. The course of rhetoric should be included in the university plan in order for teachers of English to teach it properly.

References

Abushihab, I. (2020). The effect of critical rhetoric in teaching English as a Foreign Language. *Theory and Practice in language Studies*. 10(7) 744-748, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1007.04

Akyel, A. & Kamışlı, S. (1996). Composing in first and second languages: Possible effects of EFL writing instruction. *Paper presented at the Second IATEFL Balkan Conference, Istanbul, Turkey.*

Alkhodimi, K. A., & Al Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2019). Literature in English as a foreign language classroom in KSA: rectifying a relationship with odds. *Utopía y praxis latinoamericana: revista internacional de filosofía iberoamericana y teoría social*, (6), 256-264.

Alqasham, F. H., Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Babekir, A. H. S. (2021) Coherence and cohesion in saudi efl learners' essay writing: a study at a tertiary-level institution. *Asian EFL Journal*. *28* (1.1,).8-25.

Bodenstein, J. (1977). *The excitement of verbal adventure*. Verlag nicht ermittelbar.

Budiharso, T. (2006). The rhetoric features of English and Indonesian essays made by EFL undergraduate students. *TEFLIN Journal,* vol. 17 no. 2.

Chafe, W. (1982). Integration and involvement in speaking, writing, and oral literature. *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy*, 35-54.

Cook, 1989 (cited in Kadhim 2019) Linguistic Features of Parallelism, *Journal of Humanities, 26* (1), Babel University.

Crawford, T., Mora Pablo, I., Goodwin, D., & Lengelin, M. (2013). From contrastive rhetoric towards perceptions of identity: Written academic English in Central Mexico. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *15*(1), 9-24.

Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children. *Review of educational research*, *49*(2), 222-251. https://doi.org/10.3102%2F00346543049002222

Ghanbari, N. (2014). Cross-cultural rhetoric awareness and writing strategies of EFL learners: Implications for writing pedagogy. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, *3*(5), 53-70 DOI: 10.5861/ijrsll.2014.620.

Kaartinen, T. (2017). Parallelism and the composition of Oral narratives in Banda Eli." *Oral Tradition, 31*(2), (2017): 313-330. https://doi.org/10.1353/ort.2017.0012

Kadhim, R.T. (2019). Linguistic Features of Parallelism. *Journal of Human Sciences*, *1*(26).

Kaplan, R. B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education. *Language* Learning, *16*(1/2), 1–2

Khartite, B. & Zerhouni, B. (2018). A Study into the Writing Performance of Moroccan Advanced EFL Writers from an Intercultural Rhetoric Perspective. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ),* Volume 9. Number 3. September 2018, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3258845 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3258845

Khodabandeh, F., Jafarigohar, M., Soleimani, H., Hemmati, F. (2013). Overall Rhetorical Structure of Students' English and Persian Argumentative Essays. Theory and Practice in Language Studies. 3. 10.4304/tpls.3.4.684-690.

Kobayashi, H., & Rinnert, C. (2008). Task response and text construction across L1 and L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *17*(1), 7–29.

McKinley, J. (2013). Displaying critical thinking in EFL academic writing: A discussion of Japanese to English contrastive rhetoric. *RELC Journal*, *44*(2), 195–208.

Rusfandi. (2013). *Transfer of L2 English rhetorical structures of writing L1 Indonesian by Indonesian EFL learners. PhD Thesis, School of Languages and Comp Cultural Studies*, The University of Queensland.

Smith, M. W. (2005). Students as contrastive rhetoricians: Examining ESL student perceptions of L1 and L2 rhetorical conventions. *Arizona Working Papers in SLAT*, *12,* 79-98.

Thi Vu, V.-A., & Nguyen Thi Hong, T. (2020). Ontological Cognitive Metaphor of Love in English Songs of the Late 20th Century from Cognitive Perspective. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, *2*(2), 30–44. https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v2i2.254

Uysal, H. H. (2008). Tracing the culture behind writing: Rhetorical patterns and bidirectional transfer in L1 and L2 essays of Turkish writers in relation to educational context. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *17*(3), 183–207.

Van De Wege, M. (2013*) Arabic rhetoric: main idea, development, parallelism, and word repetition. . EWU Masters Thesis Collection*. 257. https://dc.ewu.edu/theses/257

Wornyo, A. A., & Klu, E. K. (2018). Teaching academic writing skills using intercultural rhetoric approach. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, (48), 1.

Xing, M., Wang, J., & Spencer, K (2008). Raising students' awareness of cross-cultural contrastive rhetoric in English writing via an e-learning course. *Language Learning & Technology, 12*(2), 71-93.

L1 as a Scaffolding Tool in Teaching of English as L2: A Study in the Malay Context

Noor Hayati Romli[1]*, Mohd Sallehhudin Abd Aziz[2] & Pramela Krish N. Krish[3]

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia

*Corresponding email: missusyati@gmail.com

Bio-profiles:

1. **Noor Hayati Romli** is a full-time English teacher at a secondary school in the state of Pahang, Malaysia; she is also doing a part-time PhD at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (National University of Malaysia). She has been teaching English for 11 years and is interested in research related to issues in Second Language Teaching and Learning.

2. **Mohd Sallehhudin Abd Aziz** is an Associate Professor at UKM. His areas of interests include Language Testing and Evaluation, English for Specific Purposes and Intercultural Communication.

3. **Dr. Pramela Krish** is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Research in Language and Linguistics, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Her areas of interest are technology-enhanced language learning, teacher professional development and language use in the new media.

Abstract

The issue of using L 1 in L 2 classrooms is seen as a taboo. It is often disregarded due to ongoing criticisms from proponents of the monolingual approach in second language (L2) learning. Despite this, teaching a TL by excluding the L1 has not been a popular option among L2 language teachers, especially, when they share L1 with the learners. Regular and/ or excessive use of L1 by L2 teachers is seen as a threat towards learners' L2 development, yet an inquiry can be raised as "what are the circumstances that induce teachers to switch to the L1 during the teaching process?". Some previous studies reported that the main reason for the

teacher's switch is the efficacy of this technique with the low proficiency learners. However, a disparity exists between teachers' beliefs and practices, a fact which implies that L2 teachers are not aware of the correct ways of using L1 in the classroom. In this background, the current study aims to examine English (L2) teacher's utilization of Malay (L1) in the English as L2 classroom by adopting a qualitative research method. A convenience sample of three English teachers from national secondary schools in the state of Pahang participated in this study. First, they were interviewed to explore their views regarding the use of L1 in the teaching process. Afterwards their English lessons were recorded to examine how the nature of the use of L1 in teaching the lesson L2 content. The audio-recordings gained from the semi-structured interviews and lessons were transcribed and analyzed thematically by using NVivo 12 software. The analysis of the qualitative data demonstrated that the English teachers were positive with the utilization of Malay to scaffold them to teach English, particularly when it involved the low proficiency students. However, most of them were also concerned about the effects of its use towards the students' second language development. Besides this, the lesson transcriptions revealed that all of the teachers applied Malay for several functions mainly to address specific content points such as, teaching difficult words or sentences, explaining grammar rules or eliciting responses from the students. In short, most of the findings of this study corroborate the results of the previous studies on the integration of L1 in L2 teaching process.

Keywords: *First Language; Second language; Malay; English Teachers*

Introduction

Unesco (2003) described the first language as the language someone first acquired, the language that is used most frequently or the language the person is most proficient at. Mainstream linguists and language teachers typically use these terms interchangeably to refer to the first language or the mother tongue, while the second language or the L2 signifies the second language that is being learned (Nordquist, 2020). In the context of the current research, L1 indicates Malay which is the language spoken by the largest ethnic group in Malaysia, the Malay people. The medium of instruction for national schools in Malaysia is Malay, while other types of schools such as the vernacular schools are mandated to teach the national language and English as compulsory subjects.

One of the main issues that has been widely discussed in the field of second language learning is regarding the use of L1 by teachers (Cook, 2001; Fortune, 2012). In general, there are two main viewpoints on the roles of L1 namely the monolingual and bilingual approaches of language learning. The former strongly rejects the application of L1 during learning of L2 and claims that it could ultimately hinder the learners' right for crucial target language (TL) knowledge (Krashen, 1981). Apart from dismissing the presence of L1 in the classroom context, it highlights the importance of providing TL exposure to the learners in the classroom (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013). Nonetheless, although L1 has not received fair treatment from the advocates of the monolingual approach, the current practices of L2 teachers show that the bilingual approach of L2 learning could be the alternative for teachers and learners. Moreover, as noted by Eldrige (1996) there has been no empirical data published by scholars to show that restricting L1 can enhance the second language learning.

In contrast, L1 could serve numerous functions in the L2 classrooms including pedagogic, discursive, or social functions (Levine, 2012). Current theoretical approaches (Common Underlying Proficiency or CUP) theory of Cummins, 2000) to language learning also acknowledge the role of L1 in enhancing L2 learning based on the claim that learners' brains generate ideas with help from the language that they are most proficient at, which is their L1. Therefore, based on this premise, teachers could use L1 in L2 classrooms since learners can easily access this language to help them process the TL input.

The sociocultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978) claimed that L1 can serve as dynamic functions specifically as a tool to mediate the L2 learning (facilitate metalinguistic awareness and as private speech), a cognitive tool (a tool for thinking, as a means for learners to interact with each other) and as social-mediation, and lastly, to reduce frustration.

Antón and DiCamilla (1998) suggested that students' L1 can provide the scaffolding learning tool that they need to learn L2 especially in understanding words and sentences. Using L1 for vocabulary explanation can encourage the second language development during the ZPD process, (Swain & Lapkin, 2013). This is because L1 vocabulary allows the learners to process TL knowledge that they might not yet possess to generate ideas and reach greater levels of comprehension.

Due to its various advantages, L1 is considered to be an essential learning tool especially for learners who have just begun to learn the L2 or those who are still at early stages of proficiency levels (Auerbach, 1993). Table 1 below lists the functions of L1 for L2 teachers as outlined by Atkinson (1987), Harbord (1992), Canagarajah (1995), Ferguson (2003) and Sali (2014).

Table 1.

L1 Functions in the L2 Classroom

Lesson Content
Elicit response
Review the lesson content
Translate words/phrases/ sentences
Provide definition of terms
Explain or reinforce by repeating
Explain or reinforce by paraphrasing
Explain or reinforce by describing
Explain or reinforce by illustrating / demonstrating
Associate aspects/ideas to the learners' culture
Clarify the meaning of text
Distinguish text
Clarify grammar item
Checking comprehension of listening or reading text
Checking comprehension of a structure
Allow students to give translation of word
Elicit vocabulary by parallel translation
Compare with L1 to avoid inaccurate translation
Present and reinforce language structure or concept
Enhance useful learning skills

Sali (2014) reported that L1 can be used to elicit meaning of words, review the lesson content, translate words or sentences and to provide definition of terms. Meanwhile Canagarajah (1995) stated that L1 is suitable when teachers want to explain or reinforce specific content by repetition, paraphrase, describe, illustrate or demonstrate and lastly when they need to associate aspects/ideas to the learners' culture.

Further, Ferguson (2003) mentioned two roles of L1 to scaffold L2 teaching namely to clarify the text and to distinguish text that are used for the lessons. While Atkinson (1987) focused on more advanced roles of L1 such as using L1 to show or reinforce of language structure or concept and develop learning strategies, Harbord (1992) described more common functions of L1 such as to explain any grammatical rules, checking comprehension of a listening or reading text, checking comprehension of a structure, allowing students to provide translation (as a comprehension check), eliciting vocabulary by giving L1 equivalent and comparing with L1 to avoid incorrect translation.

Although most L2 teachers avoid discussing the issue of using L1, it does not mean that they abandon it altogether in the classrooms (Ibrahim et al., 2013). Some studies have shown that the teachers' language use in the classrooms was different from their views on how the TL should be taught (Tsagari & Georgiou, 2016; Imran & Wyatt, 2015). They averred that as L2

teachers they frequently switched to L1, even when initially demonstrating strong conviction on the importance of maximizing the TL.

Thus, since the majority of the teachers and students from the national schools in Malaysia are Malays, the possibility of using Malay (L1) is higher. This is because switching to L1 has become inevitable when teachers and students speak the same L1 (Nakatsukasa & Loewen, 2014). Besides sharing the L1, another factor that contributed towards this tendency is the students' proficiency level. Numerous studies have reported this as one of the main reasons for the occurrences of L1 during the L2 lessons.

For instance, Paramesvaran & Lim (2018) who analysed secondary school teachers' language use during English classes in a primary school in Malaysia found this to be the cause of the switching. They concluded that the main reason for teachers' L1 use was students' difficulty in understanding the TL. Thus, the teachers were noted using Malay for various functions to ease teaching the lesson content.

Apart from this, Noor et al. (2015) believed that the major stumbling block in establishing an English-only classroom is the students' weak grasp of the TL. Some teachers who participated in Debreli (2016) and Siong & Min (2017) dismissed the total use of TL as majority of the students were incapable to understand teachers' instructions. If teachers maintained the TL, it might lead to demotivation among learners, weaning them away from learning the language (Debreli, 2016).

In addition to this, previous research studies (Ja'afar & Maarof, 2016; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2018; Al-Ahdals & Alqasham, 2020) revealed identical findings with regard to the teachers' perspectives on L1. Similar with most studies on L2 students, most L2 teachers reported to be optimistic towards L1 use in teaching second language learners. Even though most L2 teachers were fairly positive about the use of L1 in the L2 classroom, they were concerned about the effects on the learners, in particular, that over-reliance on L1 during the lessons may deprive them of the opportunity to become independent learners as they constantly needed explanation in L1 (Ja'afar & Maarof, 2016).

Ma (2016) observed that L1 was frequently used by L2 teachers to assist learners in terms of the content, class control and social reasons. Similarly, Shabir (2017) reported that the L2 teachers at a local university in Australia mainly applied L1 to teach the lesson content e.g. to give explanation for words, grammatical items or instructions for activities. Meanwhile, a study by Grant & Nguyen (2017) showed that the L1 (Vietnamese) was used by L2 university teachers in Vietnam to address pedagogical and affective concerns. Specifically, there were

seven ways for making use of L1: to clarify vocabulary or grammar items, discipline the learners, build rapport, to make jokes, to control the class or to give feedback to the learners. The findings from the aforementioned studies correspond with Jumal et al. (2019) who reported the use of Malay by a few English teachers. These teachers applied the L1 mostly to support students' learning such as to repeat content, explain meaning of words and for affective reason. Yet another study that highlighted the specific use of Malay by English teachers is Ja'afar & Maarof (2016). They found that 64 English teachers admitted employing the L1 for nine functions which were grouped into three different categories namely curriculum access, classroom management and interpersonal relations.

Although the previous studies related to L1 managed to report the use of L1 in different domains namely the academic, class management, and social, the significant gap is on how teachers specifically applied it to assist in teaching specific lesson content. Worthy to mention that the previous studies have not yet tried to identify the commonalities among these functions that were proposed by different scholars. Thus, the current study aims to fill in this gap in the available literature by exploring the nature of the use of L1 by L2 teachers. It is hoped that eventually the results will shed light on the correct ways for teachers to reassess and modify the use of L1 in the teaching process. Finally, it can also contribute to the process of developing clear and comprehensive guidelines for the integration of L1 correctly in the L2 classrooms.

Research Questions

1. How do the English teachers perceive the use of L1 (Malay) as a scaffolding tool to teach L2 (English)?
2. How do teachers at national schools in Malaysia use the L1 functions to teach English?

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine the use of L1 (Malay) by L2 (English) teachers. The semi-structured interviews and lesson recordings provide data to explore teachers' perspectives and the use of L1 during the L2 teaching process.

Participants

This study gathered qualitative data from three L2 (English) teachers at three national secondary schools via semi-structured interviews and afterwards their lessons were recorded. Table 2 summarizes their demographic information.

Table 2.

Teachers' demographic background

No	Teacher	Gender	Age	Race	Teacher's L1	Students' L1	Teaching experience (years)
1	Teacher 1	F	30	Malay	Malay	Malay	6
2	Teacher 2	F	42	Malay	Malay	Malay	16
3	Teacher 3	F	40	Malay	Malay	Malay	15

All the three participants possess a first degree in either in TESL or English language studies and already have experience between six to sixteen years of teaching English: Teacher 1 has six years of experience, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 have 16 and 15 years of teaching experience respectively. They stated that the majority of their students' first language is Malay.

Instruments

Semi-structured Interviews

The semi-structured interview consisted of 10 items to assess the participants' overall views on the use of Malay as a scaffolding tool in teaching English. Three sources were used for in the interview protocol based on Hameed (2004), Selamat (2014), Romli and Abd Aziz (2015). The interview protocol designed for this study was subjected to the validation stage for face and content validity. It was then pilot tested before collecting the data. The interview sessions were done prior to recording the lessons wherein each interview lasted around 30 minutes.

Qualitative: Audio-Recorded Lessons

The second method to collect the qualitative data was achieved by recording lessons of the English teachers. This instrument of collecting data has been previously used by Leung (2005). In the context of this study, it has the capacity to capture the nature of language use by the teachers and students during the lessons. Each teacher was requested to self-record three lessons using two audio recording devices that were provided by the researchers. Altogether, there were nine audio-recorded lessons from the three participating English teachers in Pahang. Table 3 summarizes the details of the recorded lessons.

Table 3.

Details of participants' classes

No	Teacher	Form	Proficiency	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
1	Teacher 1	Form 1	Low	Reading	Writing	Reading
2	Teacher 2	Form 2	High & Intermediate	Literature	Speaking	Listening
3	Teacher 3	Form 5	Intermediate	Writing	Literature	Writing

As seen from the above-mentioned details, Teacher 1 had recorded three lessons with her Form 1 class, Teacher 2 recorded Form 2 class, and lastly Teacher 3 recorded her Form 5 class. While only Teacher 2 rated her students as having between high to intermediate proficiency, the other two participants identified their students as having mixed proficiency including weak and intermediate level.

Analysis of Findings

Research question 1: How do the English teachers perceive the use of L1 (Malay) as a scaffolding tool to teach L2 (English)?

The semi-structured interviews were carried out to explore the English teachers' perspective regarding the use of L1 in the teaching process. Ten questions were posed to the participants of which some questions yielded similar responses while others gave a varied feedback.

> ▪ **Interview Question 1: How do you feel about the use of Malay in teaching English?**

All the teachers were fairly positive when they were asked about the role of Malay in the English as L2 classroom. Based on their responses during the interviews, they admitted that they sometimes needed to use Malay in order to teach English. Table 4 below depicts the original responses of the participants to question 1 of the interview.

Table 4.

Interview question 1

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	Oh, okay. **I'm okay with it**. Sometimes Malay is needed for this school as the students don't really understand English.	Positive

Teacher		Summary
Teacher 2	**Malay is a little bit of a necessity in teaching English.** A bit necessary for some, it depends for weak students, it is needed. For those who are good, no need to use Malay. However, if we see them. If we see them, they look unsure we should use it. We can see their faces, right?	Positive
Teacher 3	I feel that, well I know KPM is trying to do HIP and all that, but in the classroom, you are dealing with human beings, and they're all not the same. Some students just shut down when we use English all the time. Because they know we are Malays and we can speak Malay, some students they are okay when we speak English, since they're highly motivated to learn it, so if it gets worse, maybe you can get some students to translate for you. Hmm, it is **okay to use Malay, because my students are mostly Malays**, and they need Malay to understand my teaching, to get explanation using the language.	Positive

Teacher 1 stated that she was not against the use of L1 as most of her students in the school had problem understanding English. Hence, to solve this issue, she had to use Malay sometimes in the classrooms. Meanwhile, Teacher 2 implied that Malay was seen as a necessity when teaching English. It is because it can be used by English teachers to help the students who cannot understand the TL. Another essential point of view came from Teacher 3 who felt that teachers dealt with human beings, and each student had a unique way of learning. She added that some students might withdraw themselves from the lesson if the teachers insisted on using English all the time. Being Malays and living in an environment where English was not used for communication outside of the school context, it was natural for the students to request L1 explanation from their teachers.

- ▪ **Interview Question 2: How important is Malay when you teach English to your students?**

All the three teachers mentioned that it was important to use Malay in the English classroom to ensure the students understand the lesson. Table 5 below depicts the responses.

Table 5.

Interview question 2

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	It is **important to me**. For last classes, **the students have a hard time understand English**, they don't understand at all. But for students in middle classes, I still can use simple English to explain, one by one, to make them understand. But in the end, I have to use Malay.	Important

Teacher		Summary
Teacher 2	Okay for my school, **Malay is to make students understand the lesson content**. But I do not use it continuously. We use English first, then when we feel that they cannot understand some words we can translate them. So, they will understand. And then one more, when we use Malay for weak students, they will feel it is easier to approach us as teachers. If we always use English, they will be scared to approach us. They can use Malay to talk to us, but we reply in English. So, at least they are exposed to some English and have the courage to ask us something.	Important
Teacher 3	**Yes, depends on their readiness to learn**. If they are ready then, it's easy for me to use more English.	Important

According to Teacher 1, her classes consisted of mostly weak learners and usually they had difficulty in understanding English. Although she tried to explain using simple language, eventually she had to take to Malay. Apart from that, Teacher 2 explained that when teachers use Malay, the students feel more confident in asking questions. In contrast, they felt inhibited and ashamed if teachers used only English. Hence, it is important to build up their trust so they would not feel insecure and can learn the language comfortably without any pressure. Lastly, Teacher 3 explained that using Malay also depended on the students' readiness to learn English.

- ▪ **Interview Question 3: According to some studies the use of L1, in this context Malay, helps to improve students' comprehension in L2. What do you think about this finding?**

Majority of the teachers believed that Malay could improve students' comprehension in learning the TL. Here are the responses.

Table 6.

Interview question 3

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	I agree. Because when we read something, our mother tongue is Malay right? If they absolutely have no idea about English, if they keep on reading, they won't understand also, so. Have to use Malay. If they understand a bit, it's okay. **If there's some Malay, it helps a lot**, but not all.	Agree
Teacher 2	**It depends**. If we teach, and we want them to understand the words or sentences, we have to **write the words together with the meanings**. No doubt **it will increase their understanding**. When they first ask us, we explain in English, and then we can simplify and then when simplify doesn't work, we use Malay.	Agree
Teacher 3	For **some students this is true**. Malay can **help** some of **them to learn better** and also **faster**.	Agree

Teacher 1 conceded that it is true since Malay is the students' mother tongue. There is no point in teaching only using the TL if the students had no clue about the words that the teacher used. Therefore, a little bit of English went a long way to assist them in learning the language. Meanwhile, Teacher 2 indirectly said that use of L1 was likely to improve students' comprehension only to a certain extent. She explained that although Malay can improve students' understanding, teachers must also try to reinforce the targeted words to make them understand by writing the words together with its meaning on the board. Similarly, Teacher 3 agreed that the L1 could help specific groups of students to improve their comprehension. Without the explanation in Malay, they would not be able to process the meaning of difficult words and sentences.

- **Interview Question 4: Using Malay increases students' participation in class. What do you think?**

Overall, all the participants agreed that the use of Malay could increase students' participation during the lessons. However, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 were concerned when the students provided responses in L1 instead of the TL. This was not their expectation when they switched to Malay.

Table 7.

Interview question 4

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	**Of course**. Because if they don't understand they are very passive, or they can ignore me or they do their own things. Because they don't understand anything. I mean **for last classes**, it's like that. But for my middle classes, if I use a lot of Malay, it doesn't feel right, because I suppose to teach English.	Positive
Teacher 2	**Yes**. But there is a little bit problem there. That is, **they will still use Malay**. But, **they will participate** when we ask them to. That's the problem. So, we have to ask them to speak in English after that. We give them the sentences. We have to do like that.	Positive but was concerned
Teacher 3	Of course, **they will participate**, but when they participate, **it will be in Malay**. Yes, but it is a process that takes time, if the students cannot use English at all, then we can begin with English then Malay, but at least we try to encourage them in Malay. It depends on the situation. If it's used in the correct way maybe they will respond in TL. It depends on the tasks too.	Positive but was concerned

Teacher 2 was worried about the students' ability to use the TL since the teacher can just explain something using their L1. Although the students would participate, their response would still be in Malay. Nonetheless, according to Teacher 3, learning another language required some time, so if teachers had to facilitate the learning process through L1, it should be done correctly. On the other hand, Teacher 1 stated that she only used Malay for weak learners and avoided using it with the intermediate students since she felt it was not the right way to teach English. Besides, if the students could not understand the words in English, they might not cooperate with her during the lessons.

- ▪ **Interview Question 5: How about the students' motivation to learn English when you use Malay?**

Table 8 demonstrates that Teacher 1 and 2 rejected the statement that Malay motivates the students to learn English.

Table 8.

Interview question 5

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	I think in terms of motivation, I think **normal**. **As long as they understand**, **either English or Malay**, **they will be more motivated to learn**. But. Wait. I think maybe they are motivated a little bit, but teachers are not. Because when I use Malay, I become less confident, I don't feel good at all. Once I start using Malay, I feel incline to keep on using it. Like that. So, students maybe don't feel that's the best. Like they don't learn English at all. For me. But eh how to say, for students. Motivation to learn if using English or Malay, they're still like that. But when they understand they will participate, if they don't understand, they will do something else. So, maybe there's a bit motivation there.	Does not influence
Teacher 2	Motivate to use English? **Maybe not**. They are motivated for their exam. I heard from one student, he said, there's this teacher, she used English all the time. He felt afraid to approach the teacher. So, I asked what he did when he didn't understand? He said all of them just nodded. She would be okay since we appeared like we understood her lesson.	Does not influence
Teacher 3	In terms of motivation, **some students become more motivated by using maybe both languages**, **not just Malay all the time**. Like translating the words when needed or repeating some instructions in the L1, maybe that way can help students to be more motivated in the lesson.	Some are motivated

Although Teacher 1 did not agree that Malay can increase students' motivation, she believed that using it can increase students' cooperation towards the teachers. In addition, she perceived that most teachers would feel demotivated when they used Malay and further shared her discomfort of having to use it herself when she should have used more English. Similarly, Teacher 2 did not agree that the L1 can increase students' motivation to learn English. Instead, the students might show their willingness to learn the TL for the sake of their grades. Then, for those who are unable to understand English usually would keep quiet and pretend that they understood the lesson. On the contrary, Teacher 3 believed that Malay could increase students' motivation to learn English. In fact, she implied that that some students might be more motivated to learn English if teachers used both languages.

- **Interview Question 6: How do you feel about using only English with your students?**

The English teachers were asked about their opinion about teaching using only the TL with their students. In response, a majority of them were rather skeptical about using only English in the classrooms. They said even though they felt that it was their responsibility to use only or majorly English, it was entirely impossible to establish an English-only classroom. This is because all of them had to teach students with different proficiency levels including the weak learners.

Table 9.

Interview question 6

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	Umm. **Like speaking between chicken and ducks**. Yes, if I use fully English. And this based on my class. My better class, there are some who can some cannot.	Impossible
Teacher 2	I'm **so happy if I could use fully English**. **But**, **I cannot**. Considering that we already try to use fully English, even use fully English with good classes, they still need us to use Malay. They will ask "Teacher, what is it in Malay? They don't want us to explain one vocab too long in English. Maybe it's their attitude. Yes, even when they ask permission to go to the toilet, they will say in Malay. And I had to ask them to repeat in English. So, usually they can. But they just don't want to.	Impossible
Teacher 3	I feel a bit disappointed at times, sometimes, I feel **I had no choice but** just **had to deal with it by using Malay**. But I cannot say I'm happily using it in my class.	Impossible – Disappointed

Teacher 1 stated if she were to teach using only English, the conversation between the teacher and students is similar to 'chicken and duck'. This implies that a meaningful conversation cannot be achieved if the teachers use only English during the lessons. Apart from Teacher 1, Teacher 2 lamented that although she used full English in classes with proficient learners, some of her students still wished for her to use the L1 sometimes. She realised that the other major issue is when some students still refuse to talk in the TL although they could understand the language. Meanwhile, Teacher 3 felt disappointed when she had to use Malay in the teaching process.

- **Interview Question 7: How often do you use Malay in your English lesson?**

Regarding this question, mixed responses were recorded from the English teachers during the interview. Some of them described their use of Malay in terms of percentage while others provided general answers for instance using terms such as *sometimes* and *always*.

Table 10.

Interview question 7

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	**Sometimes I always used it sometimes I didn't**. But mostly I look at the content, what do I want to deliver to them. If we really want them to understand, I really have no choice but to use Malay.	Sometimes
Teacher 2	Malay, **if to teach content usually around 20%**. To give meanings of words. But we can use two ways. First, we use English, when we see they cannot follow, we ask they don't understand. If they don't understand usually, they will ask us again. Then, we use simple English. If that doesn't work, we **use Malay for certain parts**.	Sometimes - 20%
Teacher 3	In my case and my school, I mean, of course every day [laugh]. **Every day**, **I have to do that**. Every day, in the lessons, there will be **a few words in Malay** that I will use for the students. To correct them, to give instruction or meanings. The only lesson that I think I use English all the time is reading class.	Always-contents

Both Teacher 1 and 2 admitted using Malay to increase students' comprehension, especially when teaching difficult lesson content. Teacher 2 confessed that she used around 20% of L1 to explain words and sentences. Nevertheless, she usually tried to explain in the TL and would only switch to the L1 as the last option. Meanwhile, Teacher 3 admitted that she always used Malay in her classrooms since there would always be new words in the topic that the students

were not familiar with. Besides, she also used the L1 to give clear instructions for tasks or to correct students' mistakes. Based on the teachers' responses it can be concluded that it is difficult for them to estimate the percentage use of Malay in the classrooms. A common response from them is that they would definitely use Malay if there were weak students in the classes.

- **Interview Question 8: The use of Bahasa Malay aids students' progression in English. Explain.**

The last question of this section is whether Malay could help students' progression in English language. Table 11 shows that two of the participants (Teachers 1 and 2) disagreed with this statement by claiming that Malay did not really help the students improve their English while Teacher 3 had the opposite response.

Table 11.

Interview question 8

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	If Malay, **it does not**. In terms of their understanding of the lesson, yes. But when we use more English, when they can be exposed to English? For example, if we have to learn one language, we go to the native country, then we can be good at it. So, understanding yes, but they must be exposed to more English to improve the language. Students sometimes when they don't understand they shut their minds to learn.	Disagreed
Teacher 2	Maybe **not really in progress** but in understanding. To be better in English, they must also be good at speaking. If we use Malay how they can learn to speak.	Disagreed
Teacher 3	If in terms of progress I think we should **use Malay at the beginning to scaffold their learning**, it is hoped that gradually, they will need less and less. So, **they can progress if we use correctly**, if we use more and more, I don't know how it's going to help them to progress. We also need to encourage them to speak English to help them to improve. Not just using Malay. Well, on some classes, there are a few students who speak English at home, so with these students we practice using English with them. Encourage them to speak English with their friends who speak Malay all the time. But if weak students can understand only English, then why not?	Agreed but give some suggestions

Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 believed that Malay did not help the students improve their proficiency in English, although it could increase their understanding. However, the constant

use of Malay could result in slower progress in the TL, especially in speaking. Therefore, Teacher 1 gave the suggestion for teachers to provide students with an all-English environment to ensure they could immerse themselves with the TL. As noted from the response of Teacher 2, students can only be good at the language if they practice it. The opposite response was gained from Teacher 3 wherein she emphasized the positive aspects of using Malay to help the students learn English. Specifically, she stated that Malay could help some students improve their English. Teacher 3 was very optimistic that L1 had the potential to bring out the best in students provided that teachers used it correctly besides trying to motivate the students to use the TL as far as possible.

- ▪ **Interview Question 9: To what extent should Malay be used to teach English? Why?**

In response to this question, all three participants implied that it should be used to some extent in the teaching of L2 to ensure the students are able to understand the lesson.

Table 12.

Interview question 9

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	Can I answer in terms of percentage? **Maybe teachers can use around 5 to 10 percent**. Or maybe 25 percent of Malay in the class.	Can be used moderately
Teacher 2	It **can be used**. But **to make them understand**. For their comprehension. Sometimes they are so naughty, so if use English, they don't have any reactions. So, we use Malay to brainwash them. That also depend on teachers' emotions. If they feel students cannot be controlled, they use Malay, students will behave.	Can be used to make students understand
Teacher 3	**Until the students understand** and **could respond** to us. If they can respond we can use English instead.	Can be used to make students understand

Teacher 1 suggested that the percentage use of L1 in L2 lessons should be between 5% to 10 % while Teacher 2 recommended using around 20% of the L1. The later explained that using Malay to manage the classroom environment is very effective as the students normally listen when the teachers use their L1 to control their behavior. On the other hand, Teacher 3 suggested that Malay can be used until the students are able to understand and respond to the teachers. If

the students manage to achieve this stage, teachers should stop using the L1 and maintain the TL.

- **Interview Question 10: How do you use Malay to help with the teaching of English? Could you give some examples?**

Question 10 required teachers to give examples on how they used Malay to teach English. Since the teachers were unaware of the various ways to use L1, they mainly emphasizing a few basic functions as summarized in Table 13 below.

Table 13.

Interview question 10

Teacher	Responses	Summary
Teacher 1	It depends. If students able to understand the content in English, I use English. If not, I mix with Malay. Maybe I **explain the meanings**. Explanation usually in Malay.	Contents-meaning of words
Teacher 2	Usually to **give meaning of words**. **Vocab**. And if they don't understand a specific point and we have explained, still don't get it, so have to use Malay, so they can understand. Then, after Malay, we ask them to repeat again the words.	Contents-meaning of words
Teacher 3	For the **content**, maybe for **vocabulary** section I will use Malay. Then to teach them the **grammar**, **tenses**. However, some rules are not available in Malay, so still have to use English.	Contents-vocabulary, grammar, tenses
Teacher 4	Okay, I use it mostly **when they don't understand**, if they don't understand **grammar lesson**, I have to explain the rules in Malay. But very good students they will understand. But weak students must explain in Malay, or else they will be demotivated and do not want to follow the lesson. Even in our school, the middle class, they also have problem in understanding English.	Contents-vocabulary, grammar

From the interviews, we gathered that the teachers used Malay mainly to explain meanings of words and sentences. In particular, Teacher 2 used it when the students did not understand specific lesson content or when she needed to repeat the words to reinforce their memories. Other than explaining difficult words, Teacher 3 admitted using Malay to explain grammar rules, particularly when the rules are not available in their L1.

Research question 2: How do teachers at national schools in Malaysia use the L1 functions to teach English?

Three lessons each from live teaching sessions of the three participants were recorded to examine the nature, reasons, and extent of the use of Malay in teaching English. Each teacher self-recorded these lessons with the same learner group.

Teacher 1: Analysis of Lesson Transcriptions

Table 14.

The use of Malay by Teacher 1 in Lesson 1, 2 & 3

No.	Codes	No. of coding references	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
1	C1 - Elicit response	39	5	17	17
2	C3 - Translate words/phrases/ sentences	29	4	7	18
3	C7 - Explain or reinforce by describing	12	5	5	2
4	C10 - Clarify the meaning of text	4	-	-	4
5	C2 - Review the lesson content	3	3	-	-
6	C13 - Checking comprehension of listening or reading text	3	-	2	1
7	C15 - Allow students to give L1 translation	3	-	1	2
8	C8 - Explain or reinforce by illustrating / demonstrating	2	-	-	2
9	C12 – Clarify grammar item	1	-	-	1
	Total	96	17	32	47

From the analysis of the lesson transcriptions in Table 14, it can be seen that Teacher 1 used Malay for nine different reasons. The highest occurrences of Malay was for C1 (Elicit response) and C3 (Translate words/phrases/ sentences) at 39 and 28 times respectively. In contrast, Malay was rarely used to *clarify grammar item*.

Table 15 shows the evidence from the lesson in which Malay was used by Teacher 1 for nine different functions.

Table 15.

References of Malay use by Teacher 1

	Functions	Lesson	Reference (Evidence)
1.	C1- Elicit response	Lesson 1	• **Berapa hari dalam** February? • **Ada berapa hari lagi kita nak ke** Mac? • How many questions? Ada berapa soalan? • **Macam mana** objective questions.

		Lesson 2	• **Dia punya** key words. What do you think I should bake?
			• Informal letter **tu apa**? **Surat rasmi ke tak rasmi**?
			• Okay cousin **tu apa**?
			• Yes, plan **tu cadangan kan**?
			• **Camne** introduction for a letter?
			• **Tahu**? **Tak tahu**?
			• Sender **tu apa**?
			• Sender **tu apa**?
			• Yes..that's what we call… **kita panggil apa**?
			• Okay dear. **Kamu nak tulis kepada siapa**?
			• Dear **siapa**?
			• After how are you, **apa**?
			• What does it mean? **Apa maksud dia**?
			• Month **tu apa**?
			• No. **Yang tadi kita buat**?
			• **Untuk apa**?
			• Invite **tu apa**?
			• Next. Why **tu apa**?
			• **Pasal soup**?
			• **Apa tu** embarrassing?
			• **Lapar**?
			• **Tahu** food stall? **Dekat kantin ada** food stall **kat tepi tu kan**?
			• Okay. **Dia bawak apa**?
			• Noodle soup **tu apa**?
			• The boys, boys. **Maksudnya sorang ke ramai**?
			• **Buat apa tu** laughed?
		Lesson 3	• **Apa maksud** Principal's office?
			• **Apa maksud** patient? Who knows? Aiman?
			• Students who misbehave. **Apa maksud** misbehave Sue?
			• **Apa maksud** warning letters? What is that?
			• Try to guess. Humiliate **ni apa**? Make trouble **ni apa**?
			• Sofia's diary yang **lapar**?
			• **Mana**? This one.
			• Which word **maksud dia ni**?
			• What did Sofia buy during recess? **Dia beli apa masa rehat**?
2.	C2- Review the lesson content	Lesson 1	• Okay **nampak**? **Ni** for section B.
			• **Oh mana**. Regular **ke**?
			• Number five is C. **Kenapa** bowl of soup **nya**?
3.	C3- Translate words/phrases/ sentences	Lesson 1	• There are five sections. **Okey ada** five sections.
			• **Baru mula**, baru start.
			• **Okey betul** regular **tu biasa-biasa**.
			• **Makanan, makanan mana yang ada diskaun**.

		Lesson 2	• Forty four my dear. Forty four, **empat puluh empat**. • Aaa. Yes. **Sepupu**. • Yes. True. **Penulis**. • **Bulan lepas**. Can you remember how to write the introduction? • Expo **tu ekspo**. • IT **ni bukan** it. **Maksud dia ialah** information technology. • It will be held, **ia akan diadakan**, it will be held at Johor Bahru convention centre.
		Lesson 3	• Yes. **Memalukan**. • Yes **rehat**. • Okay. **Saya sangat lapar dan saya pergi ke kantin**. • One of the boys pushed me. **Ada seorang pelajar tolak dia**. • So I tripped and fell. **Dia terjatuh**, • **Ada ramai budak lelaki tu** laughed at me. • **Aah**, **ketawa**. • Very good. **Bilik pengetua**. • I hope what happened to me today will not happen in the future. **Okey dia harap apa yang berlaku pada hari ini tidak terjadi pada masa depan**. • Misbehave means **tidak berkelakuan baik**. • **Menggangu orang lain**, should be given warning letter. • Yes. **Surat amaran** and advice so that they realize their mistakes and do not do them again. • Make trouble, **buat masalah okey**. • Humiliating means what? Means **memalukan**. • This one? Trouble **masalah**. So? • Make trouble **ni buat masalah**. • **Mengacarakan**. Hosted by? • **Menumpukan pada**.
4.	C7 – Explain or reinforce by describing	Lesson 1	• Hey! February lah. **Mana ada** thirty of February. 29 or 28? • **Itu** objective questions. • Pudding caramel, **puding yang lembik tu**. • **Beginner tu baru** join. • **Dia kata** either **coklat ke** blackforest.
		Lesson 2	• Informal… **tak rasmi**. • **Untuk beli kamera**. • **Yelah alamat tu** address. • **Orang yang menghantar surat tu**, sender. • **Tulis surat kepada kawan**.
		Lesson 3	• **Yang jual tepi-tepi tu**. • **Tidak berkelakuan baik** and disturb others.
5.	C8 – Explain or reinforce by	Lesson 3	• Boys do not do this. **Kalau kawan kita jatuh** we must help, **jangan kita ketawakan okey**?

	illustrating / demonstrating		• **Dia dah malu kita lagi gelak-gelakkan lagi kan**. Which is very good attitude.
6.	C10 – Clarify the meaning of text	Lesson 3	• Paragraph one **bukan pasal mee sup lagi**. • Aaa, should not okay. **Dia dala malu jatuh kita ketawakan lagi**. • **Ni soalan dia**. For each question write the answer in the space provided. • **Dia kata setiap soalan ni jawab pada ruang jawapan dia**.
7.	C12 – Clarify grammar item	Lesson 1	• One of the boys not boys. Boys **tu ramai**. Only one only.
8.	C13 – Checking comprehension of listening or reading text	Lesson 2 Lesson 3	• Telling her of your plan to buy an action camera. **Apa dia maksud ni**? • **Malam ke** last month? • **Dia bukan setakat malu je tapi dia kotor kan**?
9.	C15 – Allow students to give L1 translation	Lesson 2 Lesson 3	• Write a letter to your friend to invite him to join you to an exposition. **Apa maksud ni**? • Just tell me. **Okay apa maksud dia**? Can you tell me? • I was very hungry so I headed to the canteen. **Apa dia cakap** Kalai?

Teacher 2: Analysis of Lesson Transcriptions

As in the case of Teacher 1, the lesson transcriptions revealed that Teacher 2 applied Malay for nine functions.

Table 16.

The use of Malay by Teacher 2 in Lesson 1, 2 & 3

No.	Codes	No. of coding references	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
1	C3 - Translate words/phrases/ sentences	10	6	1	3
2	C1 - Elicit response	4	3	1	-
3	C2 - Review the lesson content	3	1	2	-
4	C7 - Explain or reinforce by describing	2	-	1	1
5	C10 - Clarify the meaning of text	1	1	-	-
6	C13 - Checking comprehension of listening or reading text	1	-	1	-
7	C5 - Explain or reinforce by repeating	1	-	-	1
8	C6 - Explain or reinforce by paraphrasing	1	-	-	1
9	C8 - Explain or reinforce by illustrating / demonstrating	1	-	1	-
	Total	24	11	7	6

The highest occurrence of Malay was for C3 (*Translating words and sentences*) which occurred 10 times while for C1 (*Elicit response*) it was used four times, for C2 (*Review the lesson content*) it occurred three times and for C7 (*Explain or reinforce by describing*) it was applied twice. Lastly, for the other five functions namely C10, C13, C5, C6, C8 Malay occurred once each.

Meanwhile, Table 17 shows the overall instances of the use of Malay by Teacher 2 during the lessons.

Table 17.

References of Malay use by Teacher 2

	Micro-function	**Lesson**	**Reference (Evidence)**
1.	C1 : Elicit response	Lesson 1	• **Tayar ada ape**? • We need that thing during rainy day. **Kena ada benda tu**? • You know when you write a letter, you put it inside? **Apa**? **Apa**?
		Lesson 2	• And for ordinal we start ordinal with what? The starter is? **Permulaan** ordinal?
2.	C2 : Review the lesson content	Lesson 1	• **Bukan rim**, **tu tayar**.
		Lesson 2	• **Ni** thirtieth. • "ty". This is **sembilan puluh**. **Bukan sembilan belas**.
3.	C3- Translate words/phrases/ sentences	Lesson 1	• You know extend? **Tambahan** poem. • **Semak samun**! • Yes. **Bunga tayar**. • **Sampul surat**. • Victim **tu untuk mangsa**. • Yes, the white one. **Yang warna putih**.
		Lesson 2	• **Ke tiga puluh**. **Maksud** in **bahasa**. **Ke tiga puluh**.
		Lesson 3	• Remember is weather. **Cuaca**. • News! **Berita**. **Tajuk berita**. • Phrase means **ungkapan** or **frasa**.
4.	C5 – Explain or reinforce by repeating	Lesson 3	• **Beku**, **berais**.
5.	C6 – Explain or reinforce by paraphrasing	Lesson 3	• **Tak sangka**.
6.		Lesson 2	• **Dua dua boleh**. Good.

	C7 – Explain or reinforce by describing	Lesson 3	• Headlines. **Tu tajuk juga maksudnya**.
7.	C8 – Explain or reinforce illustrating / demonstrating	Lesson 2	• **Teh tarik satu**?
8.	C10 – Clarify the meaning of text	Lesson 1	• **Setem ada tak hantar**. **Tu maksud dia**.
9.	C13 – Checking comprehension of listening or reading text	Lesson 2	• **Yeke**?

Teacher 3: Analysis of Lesson Transcriptions

Table 18.

The use of Malay by Teacher 3 in Lesson 1, 2 & 3

No.	Codes	No. of coding references	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
1	C1 - Elicit response	24	16	4	4
2	C3 - Translate words/phrases/ sentences	8	6	1	1
3	C8 - Explain or reinforce by illustrating / demonstrating	8	3	4	1
4	C9 - Associate aspects/ideas to the learners' culture	8	-	8	-
5	C7 - Explain or reinforce by describing	6	1	2	3
6	C2 - Review the lesson content	5	3	2	-
7	C13 - Checking comprehension of listening or reading text	4	1	2	1
8	C5 - Explain or reinforce by repeating	4	-	1	3
	Total	67	30	24	13

The analysis of lesson transcriptions of Teacher 3 teaching Form 5 class shows that the teacher used Malay for eight functions to help teach English. The main reason was to elicit response (C1) which occurred 24 times. Then, it was also used for remaining reasons namely C3 (*Translate words/phrases/ sentences*), C8 (*Explain or reinforce by illustrating / demonstrating*) and C9 (*Explain or reinforce by describing*) that were noted eight times in the lesson transcriptions. Meanwhile, for functions C7 (*Explain or reinforce by describing*), C2 (*Review the lesson content*), C13 (*Checking comprehension of listening or reading text*) and C5 (*Explain or reinforce by repeating*), Malay was used with much lower frequency.

Table 19.

References of Malay use by Teacher 3

	Micro-function	Lesson	Reference (Evidence)
1.	C1 : Elicit response	Lesson 1	• Prefect **yang pakai baju biru tu**? • K, **bercakap dekat mana**? • So, **awak kena cakap pasal ape**? • **Yang menyumbang kepada**? • **Masalah sosial di kalangan**? • **Okey faktor-faktor yang menyumbang kepada masalah**? • Okay example here is rising cost of education. **Kos nak belaja ni makin**? • Pen? Cheapest how much? **Pen paling murah berapa**? • Back in those days when you were in primary schools, **pen boleh sampai 80 sen betul tak**? • **70 sen pun dapat pen kan**? • Your friends, your group, peer pressure **maksudnya**? **Tekanan rakan se**? • Last one, dysfunctional families. **Apa maksud dia**? • **Kadang-kadang benda ni yang menyebabkan pelajar ni**? • The students stress, so how they show their stress? **Dia buat ma**? • **Ca**? • **Cakaplah**?
		Lesson 2	• **Rasa apa** concerned? **Rasa bim**? **Bim**? • You might or you must try to find solutions, **cari ape** Fahmi? • **Apa maksud** observant? • **Pernah ke buat**?
		Lesson 3	• Remember **awak kena ada**? • You can read books in **bahasa**? • **Masuk tak isi ni**? To make new friends? • **Apa soalan**? Why exercise is the best way to keep you healthy and fit?
2.	C2 : Review the lesson content	Lesson 1	• Now try to imagine in a world somewhere, **kat mana-mana lah**, **awak merupakan seorang**? • Okay stress **dengan akademik**, **betul lah**. But in terms of what? • The term family **tak berfungsi dalam pelajar tu**, **maksudnya** you have family problem.
		Lesson 2	• Concerned **tadi** the meaning is worried, worried for parents and siblings. • **Cari penyelesaian**. How?

3.	C3- Translate words/phrases/ sentences	Lesson 1	• Yes, head is **kepala**. • Yes, **ketua pengawas**. • Yes, **yang mempengaruhi**. • Yes, **rakan sebaya**. • Dysfunctional families, family **ni tak berfungsi**. • Yes, **cadangan**, two ways?
		Lesson 2	• Yes, confess. **Beritahu**.
		Lesson 3	• Find some facts, **fakta sikit**, to make your explanation more convincing.
4.	C5 – Explain or reinforce by repeating	Lesson 2	• **Rasa bimbang**.
		Lesson 3	• **Ayat** last **tu ialah** thesis statement. **Ayat setiap perenggan** topic sentence. • **Bukan awak beritahu lagi awak punya** main points **tu apa ye**. • **Boleh buat dua tiga ayat untuk** books, topic sentence, explanation, example. **Ayat penutup awak**, repeat this one.
5.	C7 – Explain or reinforce by describing	Lesson 1	• Okay, you want to be popular like her, so **da jadi** stress.
		Lesson 2	• **Fikir elok-elok. Fikir dengan bijak**. • **Awak boleh perhati ya, macam mana dia punya** behavior, **tingkahlaku dia**.
		Lesson 3	• **Mesti ada benda ni. Baru nampak awak punya esei tu uniti**. • So, **kita ada lima**. Kavi, question 3 right? • So **kena kaitkan dengan** healthy **ni balik** Kavi, to avoid health issues.
6.	C8 – Explain or reinforce by illustrating / demonstrating	Lesson 1	• **Rajin, rajin tidur. Jadi tak pasal-pasal** all of you become sleepy, **jadi mengantok**, for example only. • To achieve popularity and be accepted socially, **untuk sampai satu tahap popular kat sekolah ni dan diterima semua orang**. • **Gaduh ke, mak ayah hisap dadah ke kan, contohlah kan, mak ayah bercerai ke**.
		Lesson 2	• **Ada terkasar bahasa dengan mak ayah, minta maaf, okay**? Don't be so selfish. • Did it change? **Selalunya orangnya sangat hepi, tiba hari ini** he looks so sad, why? • So, you must be aware of that. **Kalau nampak yang macam tu tanya dia**, are you okay? • Is not a solution. **Lari dari rumah bukanlah jalan penyelesaian**.
		Lesson 3	• So, your explanation matches with your topic sentence. **Jangan ni lain, yang ni lain**.
7.	C9 – Associate aspects/ideas to	Lesson 2	• **Kan, kadang-kadang pandai jaga perasaan kita je kan**?

	the learners' culture		• **Awak juga kena jaga perasaan ibu dan bapa**. • **Abah mak** I'm sorry. I raised my voice yesterday. • **Tak boleh bayar sebenarnya apa yang mak bapak buat kat kita**. **Betul**? • **Sampai mati pun tak boleh bayar tapi** at least, the least that you can do is you can make them happy. • **Tak pernah**. **Daripada lahir sampai sekarang takde masalah**. **Menipulah**. • **Ada orang yang tak boleh** handle, not only he kills himself, but kills the family members as well. • **Ke ada** group group? Group **ni lain**, group **tu tak campur**.
8.	C13 – Checking comprehension of listening or reading text	Lesson 1	• Okay, **faham**? Peer pressure.
		Lesson 2	• So, in this poem, we know that the mother, feels, concerned, **betul**? • **Betul**?
		Lesson 3	• **Dapat** ye?

Discussion

The findings from the interviews showed that English teachers in Pahang had positive views on the use of Malay in teaching English. According to them, the use of Malay is a complementary teaching strategy to support the English teachers to assist low proficiency students in English classes. They insisted that they did not have problems using exclusively English with the students with better English proficiency. This is proven from the results as the occurrences of Malay mostly happened during classes that consisted of students with mixed level of proficiencies or classes including the low proficiency learners.

Their positive views on the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom are parallel with results from certain previous studies. Similar patterns emerged on how L2 teachers view the use of L1 in the second language classroom. Ja'afar & Maarof (2016), Ngoc & Yen (2018), and Tsagari & Giannikas (2018) reported that L2 teachers who participated in their studies responded positively towards the use of L1 during the L2 lessons. It is because most L2 teachers had to use the L1 after the struggle faced by the learners to understand the TL.

Most of the English teachers provided several reasons for using Malay and this is also acknowledged in previous research studies, for instance, to explain words, grammar rules, and manage sstudents' discipline. In addition, the English teachers expressed their hope to use exclusively English in the classroom, although it was impossible to be done at their schools. Even though they felt disappointed when they used L1 during the English lessons, they felt

satisfied when their students were able to complete the task given and understand their instructions. Furthermore, its use is inevitable as they share the same mother tongue with the students. Further, apparently, the classes involved in the recording sessions mainly consisted of students whose proficiency levels ranged from intermediate to low. This varied proficiency learner group within a class can explain why the English teachers employed Malay during the three lessons. Their response was supported by Auerbach (1993), Al-Ahdal (2014), and Al-Ahdal and Al-Awaid (2018) who held that the L1 is necessary for learners who are still not proficient in the TL or are at the beginner level.

Apart from this, as noted from the interviews, English teachers believed that Malay could increase the students' comprehension and allow them to be more active during the teaching and learning process. However, teachers were quick to remind the researcher that the use of L1 is solely to help low proficiency learners. Its use could assist this specific group of students to understand teachers' instructions. In fact, according to the teachers, using Malay is the quickest strategy to attract weak students to participate in the lessons. Previous studies also indicated similar: The use of students' L1 is beneficial in terms of aiding their comprehension and to make them become more confident to learn L2 (Sbaihat et al., 2018). Other L2 students are also reported to be grateful when their teachers are willing to switch to L1 instead of maintaining the TL, to ease their difficulty to understand words, grammar rules and instructions in the class (Naka, 2014).

In contrast to some of the other previous studies, English teachers in this study did not think that Malay can improve students' proficiency. Some past studies reported the opposite by stating that L1 could enhance second language learning. In relation, some previous research studies like Zhang (2018) and Ghaiyoomian & Zarei (2015) revealed the effectiveness of using L1 in several aspects. Both these studies reported that using L1 is beneficial in improving linguistic accuracy and writing quality. This is especially relevant with students who are not proficient in the TL as they need the L1 to facilitate their learning through direct communication with their teachers (Then & Ting, 2011). Besides, a few teachers in the study believed that Malay did not help the students to improve their language output especially in speaking skill. Oftentimes, these students know the contents or answers, but because of their lack of vocabulary, they fail to express it in the TL.

Judging from the teachers' disappointment in using this language, it seems that they might feel that they had been using a lot of Malay to teach English. However, in real classroom setting, they used Malay moderately throughout their lessons. They mainly switched to Malay when they had to explain something, and then too they were bilingual. Moreover, they did not employ

all the functions simultaneously during the lesson delivery. The moderate usage of L1 has also been observed in earlier studies such as Alrabah et al., (2016) and Ja'afar & Maarof (2016). With regard to the past research studies, the highest usage of the L1 functions was recorded in Yatağanbaba & Yıldırım (2015) and Paker & Karaağaç (2015).

There are some implications that can be drawn from the overall findings of this study. One it shows that Malay plays many significant roles in the English language classrooms in Pahang. The use of Malay by English teachers in their day-to-day lessons occurs due to a few critical reasons such as, the students' proficiency level, time restriction, and content of the lesson. Thus, without the use of the L1, it is almost impossible to deliver the lesson effectively especially in the presence of low proficiency students. This finding suggests that teachers try to do their best to teach English by using the TL. However, their mission to use only the TL is hampered because of the stated reasons, especially the students' proficiency level. Hence, to avoid overusing the L1 in the classroom, it is suggested that teachers predetermine as to how they are going to use the L1.

In addition to that, further research studies can be carried out to examine if the use of L1 affects students in certain types of language skills. For instance, they can examine whether the use of the functions of L1 could improve students' language skills such as, reading, listening, speaking or writing skills. Based on the various functions of L1 in teaching of English, researchers can try to evaluate the feasibility or the effectiveness of the functions in the L2 classrooms. Further, future research can also be carried out to examine the effects of school context towards the use of L1 by English teachers. For instance, researchers can compare the use of L1 between primary or secondary schools or between school and tertiary level. These studies can highlight the use of L1 by the teachers or learners to evaluate its actual use in the L2 classroom, which can help identify which classroom contexts use specific functions and how they differ from the others.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2014). High school English teachers' professional life cycle: A study in an EFL context. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *4*(1), 30-38. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270162916_High_School_English_Teachers_Professional_Life_Cycle_A_Study_in_an_EFL_Context

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Al-Awaid, S. A. A. (2018). English as the lingua franca of development: Finding common correlates in Saudi Arabia. *Malaysian Journal of Languages and Linguistics*, *7*(1), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.24200/mjll.vol7iss1pp1-7

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Alqasham, F. H. (2020). Saudi EFL learning and assessment in times of Covid-19: Crisis and beyond. *Asian EFL Journal*, 27(4.3) 356-383.

Alrabah, S., Wu, S. H., Alotaibi, A. M., & Aldaihani, H. A. (2016). English teachers' use of learners' L1 (Arabic) in college classrooms in Kuwait. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(1), 1-11. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1087094

Antón, M., & DiCamilla, F. (1998). Socio-cognitive functions of L1 collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom. *Canadian modern language review*, *54*(3), 314-342. DOI: 10.3138/cmlr.54.3.314

Atkinson, D. (1987). The mother tongue in the classroom: a neglected resource?. *ELT journal*, *41*(4), 241-247. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/41.4.241

Auerbach, E. R. (1993). Reexamining English only in the ESL classroom. *TESOL quarterly*, *27*(1), 9-32. https://doi.org/10.2307/3586949

Canagarajah, A. S. (1995). Functions of codeswitching in ESL classrooms: Socialising bilingualism in Jaffna. *Journal of multilingual & multicultural development*, *16*(3), 173-195. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.1995.9994599

Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 57*(3), 402-423. DOI: 10.3138/cmlr.57.3.402

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Eldridge, J. (1996). Code-switching in a Turkish secondary school. *ELT journal*, *50*(4), 303-311. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/50.4.303

Ferguson, G. (2003). Classroom code-switching in post-colonial contexts: Functions, attitudes and policies. *AILA review*, *16*(1), 38-51. https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.16.05fer

Fortune, J. (2012). The forbidden fruit: using the mother tongue in a Bogota university EFL programme. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *14*(2), 70-87.

Ghaiyoomian, H., & Zarei, G. R. (2015). The effect of using translation on learning grammatical structures: A case study of Iranian junior high school students. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, *3*(1), 32-39. https://relp.khuisf.ac.ir/article_533621.html

Grant, L. E., & Nguyen, T. H. (2017). Code-switching in Vietnamese university EFL teachers' classroom instruction: A pedagogical focus. *Language Awareness*, *26*(3), 244-259. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2017.1402915

Hameed, J. J. A. S. (2004). *The use of Malay as a support language to teach English.* Unpublished master thesis, National University of Malaysia.

Harbord, J. (1992). The use of the mother tongue in the classroom. *ELT journal*, *46*(4), 350-355. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/46.4.350

Ibrahim, E. H. E., Shah, M. I. A., & Armia, N. T. (2013). Code-switching in English as a foreign language classroom: Teachers' attitudes. *English Language Teaching*, *6*(7), 139-150.

Imran, S., & Wyatt, M. (2015). Pakistani university English teachers' cognitions and classroom practices regarding their use of the learners' first languages. *Asian EFL Journal*, *17*(1), 138-179. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Pakistani-university-English-teachers%27-cognitions-Imran-Wyatt/8628b44073d3ab91e14af739f2864d159da39568

Ja'afar, N. S. B., & Maarof, N. B. (2016). Retracted: Teachers' beliefs of code switching in the ESL classroom. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 4*(4), 212-222. http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/jss.2016.44030

Jumal, N. A. B., AlSaqqaf, A., & Mohamed, N. Z. N. (2019). Code switching in Malaysian secondary ESL classroom: A preliminary study from Sabah. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, *9*(5), 327-334. http://www.aessweb.com/html/4562

Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. University of Southern California.

Levine, G. S. (2014). Principles for code choice in the foreign language classroom: A focus on grammaring. *Language Teaching*, *47*(3), 332. DOI:10.1017/S0261444811000498

Leung, K. K. (2005). *The role of the first language in second language learning for adult learners: a Vygotskian perspective* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Technology, Sydney]. http://hdl.handle.net/10453/37184

Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How languages are learned* (4th edition). Oxford University Press, New York.

Ma, L. P. F. (2016). Examining the functions of L1 use through teacher and student interactions in an adult migrant English classroom. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 22*(4), 386-401. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2016.1257562

Naka, L. (2014). *Advantages of mother tongue in English language classes* [Paper presentation]. The 2nd International Conference on Research and Educatıon – "Challenges Toward the Future" (ICRAE2014). http://konferenca.unishk.edu.al/icrae2014/cd/pdfdoc/137.pdf

Nakatsukasa, K., & Loewen, S. (2014). A teacher's first language use in form-focused episodes in Spanish as a foreign language classroom. *Language Teaching Research*, *19*(2), 133-149. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168814541737

Noor, A. M., Embong, A. M., & Aigbogun, O. (2015). Using L1 in L2 classrooms: A case study among secondary school students of mixed English language proficiencies. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, *8*(2), 75.

Nordquist, R. (2020). *What is a second language (L2).* https://www.thoughtco.com/second-language-1691930.

Ngoc, N. B., & Yen, P.H. (2018). The frequency and functions of teachers' use of mother tongue in EFL classrooms. *European Journal of English Language Teaching, 3*(4), 15-28. https://www.oapub.org/edu/index.php/ejel/article/view/1747

Paramesvaran, M. D., & Jia, W. L. (2018). Code-switching practices in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom from teacher and student perspectives. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *8*(2), 254-264. doi: 10.17509/ijal.v8i2.13273

Paker, T., & Karaağaç, Ö. (2015). The use and functions of mother tongue in EFL classes. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *199*, 111-119. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.494

Romli, N. H., & Abd Aziz, M. S. (2015). The use of Bahasa Melayu in the English language classroom by 'non-optionist' English teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *172*, 770-777. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.431

Sali, P. (2014). An analysis of the teachers' use of L1 in Turkish EFL classrooms. *System*, *42*, 308-318. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.12.021

Sbaihat, A., Al Duweiri, H., Hashem, T., & Kalaldeh, R. (2018). Learners' attitudes toward using the Arabic mother tongue in Hispanic literature classrooms. *Jordan Journal of Modern Languages & Literature*, *10*(2), 145-160.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328031604_Learners'_attitudes_toward_using_the_Arabic_mother_tongue_in_Hispanic_literature_classrooms

Selamat, J. T. (2014). *Code switching in the Malaysian ESL classroom* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Otago.

Shabir, M. (2017). Student-teachers' beliefs on the use of L1 in EFL classroom: A global perspective. *English Language Teaching*, *10*(4), 45-52. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1133200

Siong, T. N., & Min, L. H. (2017). Socio-environmental factors impacting on teachers'attitudes towards code-switching in ESL classrooms in a rural district in Malaysia. *Kajian Malaysia*, *35*(2), 105-125.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2013). A Vygotskian sociocultural perspective on immersion education: The L1/L2 debate. *Journal of immersion and content-based language education*, *1*(1), 101-129. https://doi.org/10.1075/jicb.1.1.05swa

Then, D. C. O., & Ting, S. H. (2011). Code-switching in English and science classrooms: More than translation. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *8*(4), 299-323. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2011.577777

Tsagari, D., & Georgiou, E. (2016). Use of mother tongue in second language learning: Voices and practices in private language education In Cyprus. *Mediterranean Language Review*, *23*, 101-126. https://doi.org/10.13173/medilangrevi.23.2016.0101

Tsagari, D., & Giannikas, C. N. (2020). Re-evaluating the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom: students vs. teachers. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *11*(1), 151-181. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2017-0104

UNESCO Education Position Paper. (2003*). Education in a multilingual world.* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000129728.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). Interaction between. learning and development. In Gauvain & Cole (Eds), *Readings on the development of children (*pp. 34-40)*.* New York: Scientific American Books. https://innovation.umn.edu/igdi/wp-content/uploads/sites/37/2018/08/Interaction_Between_Learning_and_Development.pdf

Yatağanbaba, E., & Yıldırım, R. (2015). EFL teachers' code switching in Turkish secondary EFL young language learner classrooms. *International Journal of Linguistics*, *7*(1), 82-101. doi:10.5296/ijl.v7i1.6750

Zhang, M. (2018). Collaborative writing in the EFL classroom: The effects of L1 and L2 use. *System*, *76*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.04.009

English Phonology for the Non-native Learner: A Survey of the Hidden Challenges

Dr. Mohammed AbdAlla AbdAlgane Mohammed

Department of English and Translation, College of Science and Arts

Ar Rass, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

Bio-profile:

Dr. Mohammed AbdAlgane is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, has been awarded an MA in ELT and a PhD in Applied Linguistics from University of Gezira, Sudan. Mohammed has been teaching English at the tertiary level in Sudan as well as Saudi Arabia since 2006. He taught the four skills, Linguistics, Phonetics & Phonology, Morphology, etc. His research interests are EFL speech production and perception, vocabulary teaching, reading, readability,Phonetics, Phonology and teacher education.

Abstract

Both teachers and learners in EFL/ ESL classrooms often wonder at the unexpected surprises that English phonology throw up. Critical aspects of the language are a particular obstacle for the non-native learner who must scrouge through incessant grammar, reference and help books to get a grasp of the nuances of the phonology. This study aims to contain some critical English linguistic concepts. The author uses qualitative testing to explore and break down the more piqued aspects of English phonology with the aim of making teaching of English pronunciation and phonology more feasible for the EFL teachers. The study proves that most of the L2 students do not grasp the English phonology properly. The focus of this research is to illustrate the enigmatic and troublesome hidden features that English learners need to master as they study English. Even the advanced level EFL learners find tension cycles, stress shifts, unstressed syllables and so on rather challenging and baffling. This study approach seeks to bring in one place the peculiarities of English phonology that the non-native learners need to identify and tackle.

1.   Introduction

In this article, I would try to pull together some of the phonological material that is accessible to students of English as a link to the English language. The draft of the paper provides a general view of how vowels and consonants function. You might be involved in learning about or researching linguistics and then improving your knowledge of it. It was supposed to be taught because the language would be the right one if it was to be universally spoken, so that the proper way to speak English could be known. In this article, the author attempts to make sense of some unknown elements in the English phonology.

2.   Definition of Phonology

According to Nordquist (2019), "Phonology is the branch of linguistics concerned with the study of speech sounds with reference to their distribution and patterning". Pennington (2007), on the other hand, mentioned certain different answers about the question, "What is phonology? ."The classical definition given by Catford)2001(, as cited in Pennington (2007), differentiated "phonology" from "phonetics" though it is also stated that these two linguistic disciplines are not independent of each other. He clarified that while phonetics concerns itself with the production dynamicsi.e., the human sound producing organs, aerodynamics, and acoustics of speech sounds, the purview of phonology is the arrangement of these as formal systems in languages. Therefore, the most study-worthy aspects of sound production are determined by the frequency of utilization ofsounds (Ali, Hasnain, & Beg, 2019; Ali, 2012; Al-Ahdal, 2020).

Catford further states, "Thus, phonetics depends to some extent upon phonology to indicate areas of linguistic relevance and importance. Phonology, on the other hand, is heavily dependent on phonetics, since it is phonetics that provides the insights that enable one to discover what sound features are linguistically utilized, and it is phonetics again, that supplies the terminology for the description and classification of the linguistically relevant features of sounds" (p. 177)

Catford further states, "Thus, phonetics depends to some extent upon phonology to indicate areas of linguistic relevance and importance. Phonology, on the other hand, is heavily dependent on phonetics, since it is phonetics that provides the insights that enable one to discover what sound features are linguistically utilized, and it is phonetics again, that supplies

the terminology for the description and classification of the linguistically relevant features of sounds" (p. 177)

3. **Transcription (notation)**

Transcription means the use of phonetic symbols to show sounds or sound sequence in a written form. There are different systems of phonetic symbols, but the most commonly used one is that of the (IPA): International Phonetic Association.

3.1. Types of Transcription:

Roach (2009) stated that the distinction between the two types of transcription refers to the degree of refinement in representing speech sounds.

3.1.1. Phonemic　　Transcription/Broad Transcription:

It uses only the distinctive sounds of language (phonemes). It does not show the finer points of pronunciation. It's written within slanting brackets, /　　/.

3.1.2. Phonetic　　Transcription/Narrow transcription:

It uses phonetic symbols for various sounds, including symbols to show in details how a particular sound is produced. It is written within square brackets. In narrow transcription aspiration (= a little puff of air which sometimes follows a speech sound) is shown by the symbol [h] or ['], e.g. [pʰin] or [p'in]. Narrow transcription would also mark the difference between clear and dark [L] (Al-Ahdal, & Alharbi, 2021; Al-Ahdal & Algouzi, 2021).

4. **Pronunciation of "-ed and -s" endings**

Not all "-ed" endings are pronounced the same, rather differently, i.e. they could be pronounced: /d/, /id/, or

/t/. As well as "-s" endings could be pronounced: /z/,

/s/, or /iz/.

4.1 Pronunciation of "-d/-ed" Endings

4.1.1. If the final sound of the word is a vowel sound or one of the following consonant sounds

(b, g, v, ð, z, ʒ, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, l, r), then the (-d/-ed) endings are pronounced /d/.

Examples:

- hurried, married, played, enjoyed, covered, answered

- robbed, rubbed, grabbed, disturbed, absorbed, curbed, scrubbed

- begged, nagged, banged, clanged, dragged, hugged

- loved, moved, carved, arrived, received
- bathed, soothed, teethed, breathed
- used, fused, mused, refused, amazed, surprised

- massaged, camouflaged, sabotaged
- judged, changed, fringed, damaged, raged
- calmed, combed, roamed, blamed
- fastened, abandoned, determined, ruined
- pulled, fooled, ruled, drooled, juggled

4.1.2. If the final sound of the word is one of the following consonant sounds (t, d), then the (-d/-ed) endings are pronounced /id/.

Examples:

- painted, invited, lasted, wanted, created, started, hated, visited

- faded, added, persuaded, needed, decided, ended

4.1.3. If the final sound of the word is one of the following consonant sounds (p, k, f, θ, s, ʃ, tʃ), then the (-d/-ed) endings are pronounced

/t/.

Examples:

- helped, dropped, kidnapped, stopped
- picked, kicked, asked, booked, cooked, baked, looked, worked
- sniffed, stuffed, puffed, coughed, laughed
- earthed, berthed

- missed, kissed, forced, mixed, fixed, danced

- washed, fished, finished, brushed

- watched, crunched, stretched, reached

4.2. Pronunciation of "-s/-es" Endings

4.2.1. If the final sound of the word is a vowel sound or one of the following consonant sounds (b, d, g, v, ð, ŋ, m, n, l, r), then the (-s/-es) endings are pronounced /z/. Examples:

- cities, plays, ways, boys, keys, sees, fleas, shows, follows, news, views, etc.
- jobs, ribs, clubs, disturbs
- friends, kids, stands, accords, awards
- dogs, eggs, pigs, pegs, digs
- wives, drives, moves, survives, arrives, receives
- clothes, booths, bathes, breathes, teethes
- rings, sings, kings, wings, things
- names, blames, screams, teams, dams
- pens, scans, bans, explains, maintains
- tools, examples, travels, rules, noodles

4.2.2. If the final sound of the word is one of the following consonant sounds (p, t, k, f, θ), then the (- s/-es) endings are pronounced /s/. Examples:
- ships, taps, maps, grapes, camps, wraps
- cats, fats, rats, governments, kits
- dishes, polishes, relishes, flourishes, diminishes
- matches, churches, teaches, crunches
- camouflages, sabotages
- bridges, judges, changes, damages

4.2.3. If the final sound of the word is one of the following consonant sounds (s, z, ʃ, tʃ, ʒ, ʤ), then the (-s/-es) endings are pronounced /iz/.

Examples:

- boxes, services, misses, forces
- uses, fuses, muses, refuses, amazes, surprises

5. **Homographs**

Also known as heteronyms, homographs are words that share the same spelling but have different pronunciation and meaning.

Examples:

1. Refuse

- The Director had to refuse taking up new projects. /ɹɛfjuːz/
- I need to clear the kitchen of the refuse before going to bed. /ɹɛfjuːs/

    2. Tear

- Do not tear documents before you read them. /ter/
- The museum has a statue whose tear looks real. /tir/

3. Wound

- The doctor remarked that the wound would need weeks to heal. /wünd/
- The clock failed to sound the alarm as it was not properly wound. /waủnd/

4. Resume

- The club can resume its activities once the renovation is complete.
/ri-ˈzüm/
- The manager asked the candidate to leave behind his resume. /re-zə-mā/

5. Wind

- The east wind got our teacher to fall sick. /wind/
- The trainer got the performers to wind their way through the stadium. / wind/

    6. Bow:

- Actors have a tradition of taking a bow post performance. /baʊ/.
- A bow and arrow were all that Robinhood had to save the downtrodden. /bəʊ/.

    7. Close:

- The restaurant will close soon; we need to hurry for our meal. /kləʊz/.

•	Children need to keep close to their guardians in an airport. It's easy to get lost in the crowd. /kləʊs/.

8. Content:

•	The content of protein in the food far exceeded his advised diet. /kɒntent/.

•	The baby was content just to stay near the mother. /kəntent/.

9. Contract:

•	The new export contract is worth

$16 million. /kɒntrækt/.

•	Your muscles will contract if you get cold. /kəntrækt/.

10. Desert:

•	It hasn't rained in this part of the

desert for years. /dezət/.

•	He was planning to desert his family and go abroad. /dizɜ:

11. Lead:

•	Just follow the signs and they will

lead you to the exit. /li:d/.

•	Gold is heavier than lead. /led/.

12. Minute:

•	The President only stayed a minute

to inquire about his sick mother. /minit/.

•	The clerk was in the habit of running to the manager even for every

minute doubt. /mainju:t/.

13. Object:

•	The archaeologists discovered an object over 5000 years old at the new excavation site. /ɒbdʒikt/.

•	The leader had to object to every proposal if only to appear in control of the negotiation. /əbdʒekt/.

2.	Project:

•	The manufacturing project will make us independent of imports. /prɒdʒekt/.

•	They were trying to project an image of unity though they were as far from each other as the east is to west. /prədʒekt/.

/ɔ:/:

6. Homophones

Homophones are words that sound the same but have a different spelling and meaning.

Examples:

/ei/:

• rain/rein/reign

Cents   sense

Council   counsel

Fourth forth

Herd   heard

Led   lead (n)

Naval navel

Principal   principle

Recede reseed

straight strait

stationary   stationery

weather   whether

Which witch

Would wood

Your   you're

/i:/:

• heel/heal/he'll

/əʊ/:

• road/rode/rowed

/ə/:

alter   altar

current currant

gorilla guerrilla

idol   idle

minor miner

/ai/:

- aisle/isle/I'll
- by/bye/buy
- right/write/right

- Nurse Susan is very patient. (Enduring).
- He is a cancer patient. (a person under medical treatment).
- Can:
- He can run fast. (to be able).
- We drank a can of Coke each. (the amount contained in a can).

/eə/:

/u:/:

- there/their/they're
- where/wear/ware

- to/too/two

- Address:
- To address a conference. (to make a formal speech to a group of people).

- Don't forget to write your address. (details of where someone lives or works).

8. Capitonyms

A capitonym is a word that changes its meaning when its first letter is capitalized. It is a form of homonyms. Thus, capitonyms are words that have the same pronunciation and spelling but differ in meaning when the first letter of one of them is capitalized.

A lot of proper nouns are capitonyms, such as names of people, places, teams, etc.

Examples:

1.   Bill & bill:
- My best friend Bill lives next door. (a man's name).
- Do you have a ten-dollar bill? (a

7.   Homonyms

Homonyms are words that have the same pronunciation and spelling but differ in meaning.

Examples:

- Right:
- Ben fractured his right arm. (the opposite of left).
- Are you sure this is the right key. (correct).
- Bear:
- I haven't seen a real bear. (an animal).
- Tim said he can't bear the situation he's in anymore. (to endure or tolerate).
- Fly:
- I saw a fly in my cookie. (an insect).
- Most birds fly with a speed of 30 mph. (to engage in flight).
- Patient:

piece of paper money).

2.   Rose & rose:

- He gave Rose a gift yesterday. (a woman's name).

- She gave him a rose last night. (a flower).

3. Brown & brown:

- John discussed the matter with Mr.

Brown. (a man's name).

- It's such a nice brown jacket. (a colour).

4. Turkey & turkey:

- One of my siblings lives in

Turkey. (a country).

- Mom will cook turkey for dinner. (a type of bird).

5. China & china:

- Made in China. (A country).

- A china vase. (White clay which is baked and used for making delicate cups, plates, etc).

6. May & may:

- We will be having a vacation this

May. (a month).

- You may leave now. (to give permission).

9. Clear and dark /l/

The so-called "clear /l/" or "light /l/" occurs before a vowel, e.g. (lap, leaf, leap lord, lose, black, follow, failure, etc.) or before the approximant or glide consonant /j/ (billiard, scallion).

The so-called "dark /ɫ/ " occurs at the end of words,

e.g. (call, trial, mail, dull, pool, full, etc.) and before consonants (milk, hold, fault, film, belt).

Examples of some words with both kinds of clear and dark /l/:

lull /lʌɫ/ flail /fleIɫ/ little /ˈlɪtɫ̩/

(As you can see, English /l/ sounds that are close to the beginning of the syllable are clear, while those which are close to the end of the syllable are dark).

Because in all English words which begin with the sound /l/ the next sound is a vowel or a glide consonant, English words never start with a dark "ɫ".

In many varieties of English there are two quite different /l/ sounds. The difference between them in sound production is the position of the back part of the tongue, i.e., the first variety is known as clear /l/ in which the back part of the tongue is low, e.g., listen to the first sound in "led" /led/. Whereas, the second variety is known as dark /ɫ/ or velarized /ɫ/ in which the back part of the tongue is raised towards the roof of the mouth, e.g., listen to the final sound in: "bell"

/bel/. The tip of the tongue is in the same position, contacting the alveolar ridge (behind the upper front teeth) for both of these sounds.

10.   The syllable

According to Roach (2009), a syllable is a unit in speech larger than a single segment and smaller than a word. However, this characterization can be seen from both a phonetic and phonological point of view. In phonetics it is identified on the basis of the amount of the articulatory effort needed to produce it. In phonology it is defined by the way sounds combine in a language to produce various sequences. Vowels can form a syllable on their own, or they can be the center of a syllable.

Crystal (1985) believes that a syllable is an element of speech that acts as a unit of rhythm, which is noticeable in English pronunciation and consisting of a vowel, a syllable consonant or a vowel plus consonant combination. On the other hand, a syllable is defined by Laver (1994:39) as "a complex unit made up of nucleus and marginal elements". Forel and Puskás (2005:35) affirm that in English a syllable consists of a phoneme or sequence of phonemes. If the syllable receives word stress it can be associated with meaning and form what is usually called a word. For us, syllable is the unit which sounds loud in a spoken word, formed normally by a nucleus, which stands as the center of the syllable

10.1.   The Structure of the English Syllable

The beginning of a syllable is called (onset), the center or middle of a syllable is called (peak/nucleus), and the end of a syllable is called (coda).

Examples:

-        cat

onset   peak   coda

/k/   /æ/   /t/

-        stops

Onset   peak   coda

/st/ /ɒ/

/ps/

- splints

Onset peak coda

/spl/ /I/ /nts/

10.2. Syllable Sequences

Typical syllable sequences in English include:

-V: err, or, are, eye

-CV: go, see, more, key, be, tea

-CCV: blue, true, pray

-CCCV: spray, splay, spew

-VC: in, on, at, am, ought, ease

-VCC: ant, apple, eggs, eighth, ink

-VCCC: ants, apples

-CVC: hat, king, ran, fill, pick

-CVCC: hats, kings, runs, fills, picks

-CVCCC: sixth, text, tempt

-CVCCCC: sixths, texts

-CCVC: stop, spot, clash, gloom, broom

-CCVCC: speaks, sports, snakes, crunch, friend

-CCVCCC: friends, crunched, clasps, sphinx

-CCVCCCC: twelfths, glimpsed

-CCCVC: spring, string, screen, scream, squeak, stream

-CCCVCC: strength, streets, strikes

-CCCVCCC: strengthen, splints, scratched, stretched

-CCCVCCCC: scrambles, strengthens

10.3.　Syllabification

Syllabification or syllable division is the act of dividing the word into syllables.

10.3.1. Syllabification Rules

1.　　Divide after the prefix, e.g. un.seen, pre.view, im.po.lite, ir.reg.u.lar, etc.

2.　　Divide before the suffix, e.g. trac.tion, pi.ous, friend.ship, hap.pi.ness, sug.ar.less, , etc.

3.　　When one or more consonants are followed by "le", count back three and divide, e.g., ma.ple, ex.am.ple, crip.ple, etc.

4.　　When there are two consonants in the middle, you should divide the word between the consonants, unless they blend into one sound like "ch, ph, sh, etc.", e.g. hap.pen, hap.py, bril.liant, bit.ter, etc.

5.　　When one consonant appears between two vowels, it will most likely be in the same syllable as the second vowel, e.g. si.lent, mi.nus, tu.lip, pu.pil, ba.sic, etc.

6.　　Divide between compound words, e.g. dog.house, ice.cream, high.school, liv.ing.room, etc.

7.　　Divide before a single middle consonant when the vowel sound before it is long, e.g., o.pen, ti.ger, u.nit, mu.sic, bo.nus, etc.

8.　　Divide after the middle consonant or consonant blend like "sh, ch, ph, etc.", when the vowel sound before it is short, e.g., cab.in, rob.in, riv.er, trop.ic, pun.ish, etc.

9.　　Divide between two vowels that don't blend to make one sound, e.g. be.ing, po.et, o.a.sis, ne.on, Du.et, etc.

10.

10.4.　Syllable Analysis

I.　　ONSET:

1.　　One-consonant onset (CV/CVC/CVCC/etc.):

The only one consonant in the onset is analyzed as initial, e.g. the /n/ in no, the /h/ in hat, the /p/ in pens, etc.

2.　　Two-consonant onset (CCV, CCVC, CCVCC, etc.):

The two-consonant clusters in the onset are divided into two types:

A.　　Two-consonant clusters with pre-initial /s/:

Pre-initial +　Initial

/s/　　+　　/p, t, k, f, m, n/

*/l, w, j, r/ are also possible. These clusters can be analyzed either as pre-initial /s/ + initial /l, w, j, r/ or initial /s/ + post-initial /l, w, j, r/.

Examples:

Spin, stick, skin, sphere, smell, snow, slip, swing, sue, syringe, etc.

*syringe is pronounced /srɪndʒ/ for many speakers.

B.   Two-consonant clusters with post-initial /l, r, w, j/:

Initial +   Post-

initial

/p, t, k, b, d, g, f, θ, s, ʃ, h, v, m, n, l/ +   /l, r, w, j/

Examples:

Play, pray, puke, tray, twin, tune, clay, cry, quick, queue, black, bring, beauty, drip, dwell, due, glue, grin, fly, fry, few, throw, thwart, slip, swim, sue, shrew, huge, view, muse, news, lewd, etc.

3.   Three-consonant onset (CCCVC, CCCVCC, CCCVCCC, CCCVCCCC):

The three-consonant clusters in the onset are always start with /s/ as pre-initial +

/p, t, k/ as initial + /l, r, w, j/ as post-initial.

Pre-initial   +   Initial +   Post- initial

/s/   +   /p, t, k/ +

/l,r,w,j/

Examples:

Splay, spray, spew, string, stew, sclerosis, screen, squeak, skewer, etc.

II.   CODA:

1.   One-consonant coda (VC, CVC, CCVC, CCCVC):

The only one consonant in the coda is analyzed as final, e.g., the /t/ in hat, the /ns/ in pens, the /lpt/ in helped, the /n/ in ran, etc.

2.   Two-consonant coda (VCC, CVCC, CCVCC, CCCVCC):

The two-consonant clusters in the coda are divided into two types:

A.   Two-consonant clusters with pre-final /m, n, ŋ, l, s/:

Pre-final   +   Final

/m, n, ŋ, l, s/   +   /consonant/

Examples:

Bump, bent, bank, belt, ask, etc.

B.   Two-consonant clusters with post-final /s, z, t, d, θ/:

Final   +   Post-final

/consonant /   +   /s, z, t, d, θ/ Examples:

Bets, beds, backed, bagged, eighth, etc.

3.   Three-consonant coda(VCCC, CVCCC, CCVCCC, CCCVCCC):

The three-consonant clusters in the coda are divided into two types:

A.   The three-consonant clusters in the coda include a pre-final/m, n, ŋ, l, s/ + a final+ a post-final /s, z, t, d, θ/.

Pre-final   +   Final   + Post-final

/m, n, ŋ, l, s/   +   /consonant/   +

/s, z, t, d,θ/ Examples:

Bumps, bonds, banks, helped/twelfth, tests, etc.

B.   The three-consonant clusters forming a coda include a final + a post-final1 /s, z, t, d,θ/ + a post-final2 /s, z, t, d,θ/.

Final   +   Post-final 1   + Post-final 2

/consonant/   +   /s, z, t, d,θ/   +

/s, z, t, d,θ/ Examples:

Fifths, next, lapsed, etc.

4.   Most four-consonant clusters forming a coda can be analyzed as consisting of a pre-final/m, n, ŋ, l, s/+ a final + a post-final1 /s, z, t, d, θ/ + a post-final2 /s, z, t, d, θ/.

Pre-final   +   Final   + Post-final1 + Post-final2

/m, n, ŋ, l, s/ + /consonant/ + /s, z, t, d, θ/ +

/s, z, t, d, θ/ Examples:

Twelfths, prompts, etc.

5.   A small number of cases seem to require a different analysis, as consisting of a final consonant with no pre-final but three post-final consonants.

Examples:

Sixths, texts, etc.

11.   Stress

Only one syllable can receive the primary stress in a word unless it is an exceptional case of compound words.

When you stress a syllable in a word, this is what you do:

☐   Produce a longer vowel.

☐   Raise the pitch of the syllable to a higher level.

☐   Say the syllable louder.

☐   Pronounce it with clarity.

☐   Create a more distinctive facial movement.

In two-syllable nouns, the first syllable is normally stressed but there are exceptions to the rule.

Examples:

Oo   oO (Exceptions)

table   mistake

carpet machine

country   technique

human antique

doctor mirage

village garage

building   chalet

garden brochure

valley buffet

forest mountain distance summer

In two-syllable adjectives, the first syllable is normally stressed but there are exceptions to the rule.

Examples:

Oo   oO (Exceptions)

happy   superb

ugly   asleep

yellow alone

fancy   complete

lovely extreme

little   alive

famous distinct

friendly   precise

sunny intense

hungry enough

In two-syllable verbs, the second syllable is normally stressed but there are exceptions to the rule.

Examples:

oO   Oo (Exceptions)

convene   travel

pursue answer

concede   borrow

prevent carry

decide visit

relax   study

begin cancel

forget copy

explain enter

arrive listen

return open

In two-syllable adverbs and prepositions, the first syllable is stressed but there are exceptions to the rule.

Examples:

Oo   oO

always perhaps

In words ending with one of the suffixes: (-tion, - sion, -ian, -ious, -ic, -ient, -ial, -ia, or –ish), the stress falls on the syllable preceding them. Except the suffix "-able," the first syllable is stressed.

Examples:

-tion   -sion   -ian

-ious   -ic

separation   decision

technician   delicious   scientific

operation   occasion

electrician   superstitious   economic

compensation corrosion

beautician   religious   atomic

coalition   cohesion

comedian   ferocious   artistic

education   abrasion   civilian nutritious   fantastic

decoration

bombastic

communication

elastic erratic

pragmatic

later   indeed

often   unless

over   besides

shortly until

slowly above

sooner below

under   before

Words that have three syllables and end in "-ly" or "- er" often have the stress on the first syllable.

Examples:

Ooo (-ly)   Ooo (-er)

perfectly   gardener

happily   manager

recklessly   publisher

instantly   carpenter

normally   character

orderly happier

quietly quieter

easily   easier

neighborly   busier

In words ending with suffixes: (-cy, -ty, -phy, -gy, or

–al), stress falls on the second syllable preceding them, i.e., two from the end.

Examples:

-cy   -ty   -phy

-gy   -al

infancy publicity   photography geology   alphabetical

democracy   nationality   geography allergy   aboriginal

fallacy personality   calligraphy biology   admiral

frequency   dignity biography apology   cultural

autocracy   normality   philosophy phonology   national

pregnancy   adversity technology

privacy absurdity electricity reality activity

In many words with suffixes: (-ade, -ee, -eer, -ese, - que, teen, or –oon), the suffix itself is stressed.

Examples:

-ade   -ee   -eer   -

ese   -que   -teen   -oon

crusade   guarantee   puppeteer Japanese   physique   thirteen balloon

tirade   addressee   auctioneer Vietnamese   mystique   fourteen cartoon

brigadeappointee   volunteer Nepalese   unique   fifteen buffoon

invade consignee   pioneer Chinese   technique   sixteen raccoon

persuade absentee   engineer Maltese   oblique   seventeen typhoon

In most compound words, the first syllable is stressed but there are exceptions to the rule.

Examples:

Oo   Ooo

Oooo

blackboard   traffic light

travel agent

sunrise bus station

art gallery

swimwear   sunglasses supermarket

bedroom   boarding card

tape recorder

car park   window seat

photocopy

bookshop   check-in desk

bus stop   basketball

footpath airport shoe shop road sign

Stress on the second part too:

If the first part of the compound word is not a noun, there may be stress on the second part too.

If the object in the second part is made out of the material in the first part, e.g. glass jar.

If the first part tells us what type the second part is,

e.g., car door. Examples:

OO   OOo

OoO

first class   bad-tempered double room

half-price   old-fashioned overnight

handmade   short-sighted second-hand

In reflexive pronouns, the second syllable is stressed. Examples:

oO myself

themselves ourselves yourself yourselves himself herself itself oneself

Word stress shift

We can build longer words by adding parts to the beginning or end of shorter words. Usually, this does not change the stress; it stays on the same syllable as in the original word. For example:

forget forgetful forgetfulness forgettable unforgettable

Suffixes that do not affect stress placement

—   -able: do: doable

—   -age: pilfer: pilferage

—   -al: propose: proposal

—   -en: tight: tighten

—   -ful: beauty: beautiful

—   -ing: tantalize: tantalizing

—   -like: bird: birdlike

—   -less: help: helpess

—   -ly: quick: quickly

—   -ment: abolish: abolishment

—   -ness: dark: darkness

—   -ous: vitue: virtuous

—   -fy: edict: edify

—   -wise: other: otherwise

—   -y (adjective or noun): fun: funny

'-ish' in the case of adjectives does not affect stress placement: 'devil,'

devilish'; however, verbs with stems of more than one syllable always have the stress on the syllable immediately preceding 'ish' - for example,

replenish, demolish, etc.

Word-class pairs

One aspect of word stress is best treated as a separate issue. There are several dozen pairs of two-syllable words with identical spelling which differ from each other in stress placement, apparently according to word class (noun, verb or adjective). All appear to consist of prefix + stem. We shall treat them as a special type of word and give them the following rule: if a pair of prefix-plus-stem words exists, both members of which are spelt identically, one of which is a verb and the other of which is either a noun or an adjective, then the stress is placed on the second syllable of the verb but on the first syllable of the noun or adjective. Some common examples are given below (V = verb, A = adjective, N = noun):

abstract (A)   abstract (V)

perfect (A)   perfect (V).

Oo (nouns)	Examples	oO (verbs)	Examples
survey	We need a customer survey to find product popularity.	survey	We have surveyed the entire university.
contrast	There is a big contrast between living and existing.	contrast	We contrasted the shirt and the trousers.
detail	The manager needs the report in great detail.	detail	The artist focused on the detailing of the painting.
escort	The child had an escort all the way to the aircraft.	escort	The cops escorted the robber out.
perfume	We agreed to gift him a bottle of perfume on his retirement.	perfume	The flowers perfumed the party hall.
reject	This is one of the rejects from the factory.	reject	He rejected her advice.
upset	The victory was an upset in the championships.	upset	He upset her with his cruel remarks.

compound	They lived in a compound.	compound	Current policy is just compounding problems.

Oo (nouns)	Examples	oO (verbs)	Examples
rewrite	They need to rewrite the script.	rewrite	The teacher rewrote the report card.
update	The listeners waited for an update on the floods.	update	The computers are getting updated this afternoon.
upgrade	We got an upgrade on our holiday voucher.	upgrade	The bank has upgraded all credit cards.
invite	I received an invite to her party.	invite	They invited us to their house.
misprint	There's a misprint in the book.	misprint	He misprinted the word.
insert	Put a couple of inserts in this text.	insert	He inserted a few words into her paragraph.

Oo (nouns)	Examples	oO (verbs)	Examples
Contract	Have you signed the contract?	contract	The economy is contracting.
Conduct	The conduct of the student was unacceptable.	conduct	They're conducting an enquiry.
Subject	What subjects do you study?	subject	She was subjected to harsh criticism.
Present	He gave her a present.	present	He's going to present his findings
Refuse	The refuse collectors are on strike.	refuse	He refused permission.
Desert	They went travelling in the Sahara desert.	desert	The soldiers deserted their post.

More Examples:

Oo (nouns)	oO (verbs)
record	record
object	object
export	export
import	import
register	register
increase	increase
decrease	decrease
discount	discount
refund	refund
permit	permit
conflict	conflict
contest	contest
insult	insult
protest	protest
rebel	rebel

11.   Conclusion

English phonology is an extremely significant domain in linguistics that should receive the attention of language learners, teachers, and researchers. This paper is just an attempt to cast light on some areas of English phonology that might seem important to those who are interested in having an overall idea about it. In conclusion, English phonology is never a solid body that has fixed patterns or rules; rather, it is flexible and has several exceptions as well. Further in-depth researching of English phonology is highly recommended and encouraged.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020). Code mixing in Arabic conversations of college students: A sociolinguistic study of attitudes to switching to English. Asian ESP Journal, 16(1), 6-19.

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Algouzi, S. (2021). Linguistic features of asynchronous academic Netspeak of EFL learners: An analysis of online discourse. The Asian ESP Journal, 17(3.2), 9-24 https://www.elejournals.com/asian-esp-journal/volume-17-issue-3-2-march-2021/

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Alharbi, M. A. (2021). MALL in collaborative learning as a vocabulary-enhancing tool for EFL learners: A study across two Universities in Saudi Arabia. Sage Open, 11(1),1-9 https://doi.org/10.1177%2F215824402199906

Ali, J. K. M. (2012). Influence of information and communication technology (ICT) on English language structure. Unpublished PhD Thesis). Aligarh Muslim University, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Ali, J. K. M., Hasnain, S. I., & Beg, M.S. (2019). The impact of texting on standard English: The students' perspective. Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL (5). 65-75 DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/call5.6

Crystal, D. (1985). What is linguistics? London: Edward Arnold.

Forel, Claire-A. and Puskás, G. (2005). Phonetics and Phonology. Geneva, University of Geneva

Laver, J. (1994). Principles of Phonetics. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Nordquist, R. (2019). Phonology: definition and observations.ThoughtCo.www.thoughtco.com

Pennington, M. C. (2007). The context of phonology. In Phonology in context (pp. 1-24). Palgrave Macmillan,London.doi:https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230625396_1

Roach, P. (2009). English phonetics and phonology paperback with audio CDs (2): A practical course. Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom.

The Argumentative Essay: An Evaluation of Indonesian University Learners' Writing in English

T. Silvana Sinar
Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia
e-mail: tengkusilvana@usu.ac.id

Liza Amalia Putri
Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif, Jakarta, Indonesia

Dian Marisha Putri
Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

Bio-profiles:

T. Silvana Sinar is a Professor at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara. She earned her master's degree in Linguistics from Sydney University, Australia, and doctoral degree in Linguistics from Universiti Malaya, Malaysia. Her research interests include systemic linguistics, multimodal analysis, discourse analysis, and English language teaching.

Liza Amalia Putri is a Lecturer in Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif, Jakarta, Indonesia. Her research interests include linguistics, literature and English language teaching.

Dian Marisha Putri is a Lecturer at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara. She earned her master's degree from Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan. Her research interests include literature, linguistics, translation studies and English language teaching.

Abstract

By the time students majoring in English at Indonesian universities reach the fourth semester, they have already studied the language for almost two years. At this stage, students are expected to be able to produce a well-structured, organized, coherent essay in English. For this sake, this study was set out to examine if this case is true with 120 students of the English departments at four different universities in Medan, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. At least two types of errors are most frequently occurring in the writing of these students apart from poor

organization of the essays. These are errors in subject-verb agreement and punctuation. Out of the sample of 120 essays, only one essay showed complete organization, introductory paragraphs. For some other essays, many parts of the essay such as the body, counterargument, etc., were missing in their essays. Moreover, in some other essays the concluding paragraph is not probably drawn. With all these shortcomings, the essays are not well developed and considered incomplete.

Keywords: argumentative essay, essay organization, students' writing

Introduction

Writing is an activity in which people transfer the ideas in mind into the written form. Kroll (1990) stated that writing is a complex, recursive, and creative process or set of behaviours that is similar in its broad outlines for first and second language writers (Herman, 2014). It is, however, not as simple as putting the words into sentences, but it also involves the diction choices (Ritonga & Yusuf, 2020) to make meaningful sentences. In addition, it is also a cognitive process because the process of writing is influenced by the task-environment and the writer's long term memory. Some of the primary goals of writing class are to improve students' academic writing skills, to get students involved in the writing process, and to develop students' critical thinking, though writing is a complex skill and one which is not easy for the students to master (Richard and Renandya, 2002, as cited in Herman et al., 2020). In order to help students improve their writing, teachers should implement the writing process in the classroom which includes planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Besides implementing the process, teachers should also encourage students to actively engage with the rhetorical problems including the rhetorical situation and the writing goals when composing so that they can produce more qualified writing.

Furthermore, Herman et al. (2020) defined writing as a written expression of ideas. Writing is regarded as an expression of logic that is the product of thinking (MaCmillan & Weyers, 2007; Pardede and Herman, 2020). In addition, it has several different kinds and forms of expressions. Oshima and Hogue (2006) defined writing as a progressive activity. When developing ideas, it is not considered done when we write all ideas that we want to write, but it needs several changes and revisions.

In universities, students are assigned to write academically as part of scholarly or academic writing. Essay writing is also one of the forms of academic writing. Zemach and Rumisek (2002) defined "essay" as a group of paragraphs written about a single topic with a central, main idea. The group of paragraphs in essay consists of an introductory paragraph, several body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.

Argumentation is as an area of research in science education that has gained significant attention in recent years (Lee et al., 2009). Erduran et al. (2015) stated that the aim of argumentation studies in top science education journals is to contribute to the understanding of

the development of argumentation theory in relation to their foundational grounding, particularly in relation to the epistemic and linguistic aspects. Their research results highlighted the key of conceptualizations around argumentation which is based on its epistemic and linguistic aspects. In their study, Bermani et al. (2015) showed that they employed five types of data to ground their arguments wherein the data in the form of facts was dominantly used by the researchers. In line with Toulmin's theory (1985) that facts are a common ground for arguments, it seems that the researchers realized the importance of facts for their readers, especially the new one to be highlighted.

As EFL learners, composing in English is considered complicated and it is almost Utopian to expect error free writing form ESl or EFL learners (Al-Ahdal & Alharbi 2020). Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) described error analysis as a set of procedures to identify, describe and explain learners' errors. Error Analysis process is not only applied regularly to find out and determine the different types of errors but also to define the basis and reasons for committing errors. Samples of the learners' productive English consisted of the best technique to examine second language acquisition (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). The current research also carried out error analysis on the students' writings.

There has been a great deal of research to examine students' errors in EFL writing in varied environments. For example, Katiya et al. (2015) analyzed the essays of first-year Chemistry students. The study concluded that the major problems with EFL writing included first language interference, punctuation and spelling errors, misapplication of essay construction rules and syntactic and morphological errors concede the quality, meaning and rhetorical aspect of the contents. Taher (2011) investigated most frequent errors performed by Swedish junior high school students. Common errors included verb tense, verb inflection and subject-verb agreement and other errors that stem from lack of grammatical knowledge leading to incorrect transfer from Swedish into English.

Method

In this research, the participants were 120 major students of the English department at four different universities in Medan, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia: University of Sumatera Utara, State University of Medan, University of Harapan, and Islamic University of Sumatera Utara. The participants were asked to compose argumentative essays to obtain a reasonable database of learners' English writing.

This study applied flow analysis from Miles et al. (2014). They suggested that the data analysis consisted of three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Five essays were selected according to the purposive sample indicators that have been stated previously. Following this, essay organization and function of each part of the essay were abstracted and labelled for simplification. The sample that considered a representative of the real population of this study is the one that follows a set of principal requirement of an argumentative essay. The final step is to draw the conclusion with three basic types of triangulation viz., data triangulation, theory triangulation and investigator triangulation.

In terms of language errors conducted by the students, the researchers followed two steps of error analysis. First, each essay was examined word by word and sentence by sentence. Second, the number of errors was counted and changed into percentage to consider the frequency of occurrence.

Results and Discussion

Results

The organization of the Essay

Ideally, an essay is organized into an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. The introductory paragraph should include the hook to introduce the issue, the background information to explain the issue, and the thesis statement to present the writer's point of view. The body paragraphs should consist of the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis, the following sentences to support the topic sentence, and a paragraph including the opposing opinion. The concluding paragraph should be about the conclusion, restating the writer's opinion but using different language, and a conclusion offering a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment reinforcing the writer's viewpoint. The researchers analyzed the findings in term of the organization of the essay by the participant(s).

Subject A (essay 1)

This essay includes an introductory paragraph and its parts (the hook to introduce the issue, the background information to explain the issue, and the thesis statement to present the student's point of view), body paragraphs together with its content (the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis, the sentences to support the topic sentence, and a paragraph with the opposing opinion), and a concluding paragraph as well as its parts (conclusion restating the student's opinion but using different language and conclusion offering a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment reinforcing the student's viewpoint).

> The author Arthur C. Clarke says any sufficiently advanced technology is equivalent to magic. Yes, it is true! Everything has been changed by technology. Mobile phones and Internet have the great role in making advantages as well as disadvantages. The debate appears when the devices are used by college students. Students can easily lose their focus in classroom as many teachers complain. In another university, some teachers feel annoyed because their students frequently check on their phone to see the messages or the social media. This fact make universities think to ban cell phones for students in classroom. Well, I disapprove of the restriction.
> The most advantageous thing of mobile phones is that students can get connected. and encouraged to build collaborative learning. They are able to share notes and lesson with others. In addition, every college student has a different way of learning, for example college students look for references from a book, ask a lecturer directly, or have someone seek information on the cell phone.

The second reason why I don't approve of the ban is because some collage students are helped by the cell phones. Some students catch faster and some are slow to capture the material that the lecturer tells them. If the lecturer exposes the material too quickly, mobile phones are the collage student's choice to record a video of the lecturer explaining the material or to take pictures of the material that the lecturer is presenting. With cell phones around, students tend to use and check it many times. They can lose focus easily when they are in classroom. But checking cell phones often is needed, for example when the loved ones call you for emergency. If you do not respond it fast, it might become a disaster. Checking cell phones for many times is fine as long as students do not lose focus when the teacher is explaining.

In conclusion, cell phones do not fully have a negative impact for college student, so universities are better not to ban it for them. If they do, it means they deny the fact that nowadays we live in the 21st century.

Subject B (essay 2)

This essay has an introductory paragraph but it does not include all of its parts (only the hook to introduce the issue and the thesis statement to present the student's point of view), body paragraphs together carry the incomplete content (the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis and the sentences to support the topic sentence without a paragraph to express the opposing opinion), and a concluding paragraph with only a conclusion offering a warning, a prediction, or any other type of comment reinforcing the student's viewpoint.

Do you think that cell phones should be banned in the classroom? Do you think it better for the whole classroom? I think it is not necessary students have cell phones in classrooms.

They think that cell phones make a lot of noise in the classrooms. so it is bothering them or even the whole classrooms. Because some cell phones have a loud ringing tone. The phone will ring so loud and that's the time all the people turn to check whose cell phones is ringing. They want to know what people will talk about. That is the time students won't pay attention in classrooms. They might think that those people are talking on the cell phones are taking about something more interesting. So, they might hope for knowing about what they're saying on the cell phones.

Students cannot keep track of their time. Even in the middle of lecturing or working on their classworks. The students would stop listening to the instructors or teacher or stop on their work and start to answer their cell phones. Sometimes they stop from what they're doing and start to play games on their cell phones. And they don't mind to concentrate or even pay any attention in their class any more. Its likely cell phones are more to interrupt all of their work and their attention in the classrooms.

In conclusion, if universities do not ban cell phones in future time, students will get bad scores and fail the study.

Subject C (essay 3)

This essay has an introductory paragraph not including all of its parts (only the background information to explain the issue and the thesis statement to present the student's point of view), body paragraphs together with its content but, once again, incomplete (the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis and the paragraph to express the opposing opinion), and a concluding paragraph with only the conclusion restating the student's opinion but using different language.

Students must study and learn a lot so they can make their dreams come true. Universities in rich countries push the students to study and use technology all the time so they can reach their dreams. I think smart phones shouldn't be banned in college but students must be able to use a smart phone for useful things.

Students are required to always be updated about the news of what is happening. Students also need smart phones to contact the parents. Students use the smart phones for supporting their learning.

But there are some students who abuse the use of smart phones. For example, using their smart phone to play games during the lecture process.

Banning smart phones in universities is good because some students abuse the use of smart phones. It can make students not focus with their study. But the ban can make students difficult to get new information and contact their family when emergency.

In conclusion, universities should not ban smart phones but students should limit the use of smart phones to reduce the negative effects.

Subject D (essay 4)

This essay has an introductory paragraph but including all of its parts (only the hook to introduce the issue and the background information to explain the issue without the thesis statement to present the student's point of view), incomplete body paragraphs together with the content (only the paragraph to express the opposing opinion), and a concluding paragraph with only a conclusion restating the student's opinion but using different language.

Why the score of students decline in academic field? The use of mobile phones in universities is considered to be the cause of the decline in the score of students. Students can send messages to their friends, check their social media, play games with their mobile phones when they are in classroom, so students do not focus with the lesson and the teacher and it causes their score bad.

Universities think banning cell phones is the solution. Students do not pay attention to the lesson in classroom because they use mobile phones to chat with their friends and even date with their girlfriend or boyfriend. It results in the decline of the score because of not focus in classroom. Banning cell phones is not the answer to make students focused. Encouraging students to use their technological devices to find, analyze, evaluate and apply their knowledge means giving them interesting assignments in class time that requires the use of their cell phones. Of course they will use it to send messages to other students but then it can also be used for group work

and social learning. Specifically, cellphones can be used to support learning of higher level skills, such as problem solving and critical thinking.

So, I am a student who thinks that banning mobile phones in universities is entirely the wrong approach.

Subject E (essay 5)

This essay only has an introductory paragraph together with its parts (the hook to introduce the issue, the background information to explain the issue, and the thesis statement to present the student's point of view) and body paragraphs as well as its content but these are incomplete (the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis and the sentences to support the topic sentence but without the paragraph to express the opposing opinion). However, there is no concluding paragraph in this essay.

> What do you think about having to wear uniforms in schools? Does it have a positive or negative impact on student development at the schools? The prohibition of carrying cell phones for students at the university in the hope that they would not interfere with teaching and learning activities, turned out to cause a lot of debate within the university itself.
>
> First, one of the advantages of using cell phones at universities is that they can be used as a tool. Mobile phones are equipped with various accessories, such as calculators, cameras, and the internet. This application can be used to help in the academic field.
>
> Second, usually, many students come from out of town, so a telephone is needed if he is in college. Because public transportation is inadequate for the purpose of going to university, an internet application is needed to view maps or order a motorcycle taxi online.
>
> Third, also, not a few lecturers who did not attend class and did not provide information directly, so a telephone is also needed for information facilities when the lecturer cannot be present at that time.

It is evident that a few students write the essay with complete organization, and many students write the essay with incomplete organization. Subject A is the essay that uses the complete organization together with its parts. While, subjects B, C, D, E are the essays that lack the parts of organization. In the introductory paragraph, there are three parts needed to make it a good paragraph. They are the hook, the background information, and the thesis statement. Subject B does not have the background information in the introductory paragraph. Here is the introductory paragraph written by subject B:

> Do you think that cell phones should be banned in the classroom? Do you think it better for the whole classroom? I think it is not necessary students have cell phones in classrooms.

This paragraph indicates that it has the hook to start the paragraph to get the readers interested in reading the essay, and it applies questions as the hook: Do you think that cell phones should be banned in the classroom? Do you think it better for the whole classroom? Besides, there is the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph: I think it is not necessary that students have cell phones in classrooms.

As it has been mentioned before, Oshima and Hogue (2007) stated that the introductory paragraph should include the hook to introduce the issue, the background information to explain the issue, and the thesis statement to present the student's point of view. Essay 2 should have the background information to draw the readers into the issue. Sinar et al. (2019) explained that the background information is needed to justify the readers' attention to the issue by (1) explaining the issue and why it is important, (2) covering background information readers need to understand the argument, (3) introducing the conversations surrounding the issue, (4) justifying why the writer is addressing the issue.

Subject 3 also lacks in the introductory paragraph: the hook is missing. The following is the introductory paragraph of essay 3:

> Students must study and learn a lot so they can make their dreams come true. Universities in rich countries push the students to study and use technology all the time so they can reach their dreams. I think smart phones shouldn't be banned in college but students must be able to use a smart phone for useful things.

It is seen that essay 3 does not begin with the hook to introduce the issue in the form of an anecdote, a question, or a surprising statement or fact that makes the readers want to know more. Rather, the paragraph directly starts with the background information: *Students must study and learn a lot so they can make their dreams come true. Universities in rich countries push the students to study and use technology all the time so they can reach their dreams. The thesis statement is delivered after the background information: I think smart phones shouldn't be banned in college but students must be able to use a smart phone for useful things.*

Furthermore, Sinar et al. (2019) stated that the thesis statement or the claim is the essential thing in an argumentative essay. It states the position that the subject is proving in the argument. An effective thesis statement is (1) debatable. Reasonable people disagree, (2) engaging and not obvious. People will be intrigued by the debate, (3) logical. They are based on reasons and evidence, not personal opinions. Subject 4 in this research does not have the thesis statement in the essay. Here is the introductory paragraph of essay 4:

> Why the score of students decline in academic field? The use of mobile phones in universities is considered to be the cause of the decline in the score of students. Students can send messages to their friends, check their social media, play games with their mobile phones when they are in classroom, so students do not focus with the lesson and the teacher and it causes their score bad.

This paragraph only contains the hook and the general information. The hook is a question: Why the score of students decline in academic field, and the general information about banning cell phones in universities. There is no thesis statement explaining the position of the subject whether he/she approves or dis approves of the statement.

As discussed before, the body paragraphs should have the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis, the following sentences to support the topic sentence, and a paragraph including the opposing opinion. Essay 3 does not have the sentences to explain the topic sentences. The subject only writes the topic sentences to support the argument in the thesis statement. The following is the first part of the body paragraphs:

Students are required to always be updated about the news of what is happening. Students also need smart phones to contact the parents. Students use the smart phones for supporting their learning.

Besides the topic sentences, body paragraphs should include the paragraph to express the opposing opinion. Essay 2 does not have the counterargument paragraph in the essay. Here is the body paragraphs composed by subject 2:

They think that cell phones make a lot of noise in the classrooms. So it is bothering them or even the whole classrooms. Because some cell phones have a loud ringing tone. The phone will ring so loud and that's the time all the people turn to check whose cell phones is ringing. They want to know what people will talk about. That is the time students won't pay attention in classrooms. They might think that those people are talking on the cell phones are taking about something more interesting. So, they might hope for knowing about what they're saying on the cell phones.

Students can not keep track of their time. Even in the middle of lecturing or working on their classworks. The students would stop listening to the instructors or teacher or stop on their work and start to answer their cell phones. Sometimes they stop from what they're doing and start to play games on their cell phones. And they don't mind to concentrate or even pay any attention in their class any more. Its likely cell phones are more to interrupt all of their work and their attention in the classrooms.

As can be seen, the body paragraphs only highlight the topic sentences followed by the supporting sentences.

The last part of an argumentative essay is the concluding paragraph. Although this is the last part, it also has an important role in an essay. If writers miss the concluding paragraph, the essay is considered unfinished. The concluding paragraph is made up of certain parts. They are: conclusion restating the student's opinion but using different language and, conclusion offering a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment reinforcing the student's viewpoint.

Essay 5 does not have the concluding paragraph composed of the parts. Here is the essay:

What do you think about having to wear uniforms in schools? Does it have a positive or negative impact on student development at the schools? The prohibition of carrying cell phones for students at the university in the hope that they would not interfere with teaching and learning activities, turned out to cause a lot of debate within the university itself.

First, one of the advantages of using cell phones at universities is that they can be used as a tool. Mobile phones are equipped with various accessories, such as calculators, cameras, and the internet. This application can be used to help in the academic field.

Second, usually, many students come from out of town, so a telephone is needed if he is in college. Because public transportation is inadequate for the purpose of going to university, an internet application is needed to view maps or order a motorcycle taxi online.

Third, also, not a few lecturers who did not attend class and did not provide information directly, so a telephone is also needed for information facilities when the lecturer cannot be present at that time.

As can be seen, the essay has the introductory paragraph and the body paragraphs. This essay does not end with the concluding paragraph. The essay is therefore, considered unfinished.

Parts of the Introductory Paragraph of the Essay
- *The Hook Introducing the Issue*

Subject A manages to write the argumentative essay with complete organization. However, the hook does not introduce the issue appropriately. In addition, subject E involves the hook in the introduction paragraph, but the hook does not introduce the issue well or clarify the issue to the readers. Here is the introductory paragraph of essay 1:

The author, Arthur C. Clarke says any sufficiently advanced technology is equivalent to magic. Yes, it is true! Everything has been changed by technology. Mobile phones and Internet have the great role in making advantages as well as disadvantages. The debate appears when the devices are used by college students. Students can easily lose their focus in classroom as many teachers complain. In another university, some teachers feel annoyed because their students frequently check on their phone to see the messages or the social media. This facts make universities think to ban cell phones for students in classroom. Well, I disapprove of the restriction.

As can be seen, subject A uses a quote from a famous author to start the paragraph as the hook. The hook is expected to introduce an issue about the change made due to the technology. However, the issue is the ban on cell phones at universities. In addition, usually after getting the reader's attention, subject A is supposed to include the answers to the question that introduces the issue and the background information that readers will need to understand the issue.

- *The Background Information Explaining the Issue*

Subject C has the background information in the introductory paragraph, but the information does not explain why the issue is important. It should explain the issue in some detail. Here is the introductory paragraph of essay 3:

Students must study and learn a lot so they can make their dreams come true. Universities in rich countries push the students to study and use technology all the time so they can reach their dreams. I think smart phones shouldn't be banned in college but students must be able to use a smart phone for useful things.

In this essay, the background information should explain why the issue is important and the details about the history or the people involved, what they want, or how it affects them as advised by Murray and Moore (2006). This information does not tell the readers why there is the issue of banning cell phones in the universities in the first place. The subject introduces the readers to the need of the students to study and the wealth of a country in order to reach their dream. It does not, however, deal with the issue of banning cell phones in universities.

- *The Thesis Statement Presenting the Student's Point of View*

Subject E has the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph, but it does not present the student's point of view. Here is the essay:

> What do you think about having to wear uniforms in schools? Does it have a positive or negative impact on student development at the schools? The prohibition of carrying cell phones for students at the university in the hope that they would not interfere with teaching and learning activities, turned out to cause a lot of debate within the university itself.
> First, one of the advantages of using cell phones at universities is that they can be used as a tool. Mobile phones are equipped with various accessories, such as calculators, cameras, and the internet. This application can be used to help in the academic field.
> Second, usually, many students come from out of town, so a telephone is needed if he is in college. Because public transportation is inadequate for the purpose of going to university, an internet application is needed to view maps or order a motorcycle taxi online.
> Third, also, not a few lecturers who did not attend class and did not provide information directly, so a telephone is also needed for information facilities when the lecturer cannot be present at that time.

The thesis statement should show the position the subject is proving in the argument. It establishes what the subject's argument will do. As we can see, the thesis statement explains that the ban on cell phones causes debate in universities. It does not tell the position of the subject whether he/she approves or dis approves of the ban. While, from the topic sentences in the body paragraphs, it implies that the subject disapproves of the ban on cell phones in universities.

Parts of the Body Paragraphs of the Essay

The Topic Sentences Supporting the Student's Main Argument in the Thesis

Subject B has the topic sentences in the body paragraphs, but they do not support the student's main argument in the thesis. Here is the topic sentence in the first body paragraph:

> They think that cell phones make a lot of noise in the classrooms. So it is bothering them or even the whole classrooms.

The subject thesis is that he/she approves of the ban on cell phones in universities. The topic sentence should explain the reasons for this.

Parts of the Concluding Paragraph of the Essay

The Conclusion Restating the Student's Opinion but Using Different Language

Subject D has the conclusion to restate the student's opinion, but it does not use a different language. Here is the concluding paragraph of essay 4:

> So, I am a student who thinks that banning mobile phones in universities is entirely the wrong approach.

As can be seen, the subject rewrites the same sentence as the one in the thesis statement for the conclusion. This is not in agreement with the desirable organization.

Language Errors

The study focuses on the error analysis based on the type and number of errors. The results show that there are two kinds of errors made by the students most frequently. The first type of error is subject-verb agreement, and the second type is punctuation. The number of s-v agreement errors is 140 out of the total number of errors, 352. The number of punctuation errors is follows this with 67 out of 352 errors. The examples of subject-verb agreement error are:

1. This fact make universities think to ban cell phones for students in classroom. Well, I disapprove of the restriction.
2. That's the time all the people turn to check whose cell phones is ringing.

The sentences are supposed to be:

1. This fact makes universities think of banning cell phones for students in classroom. Well, I disapprove of the restriction.
2. That's the time all the people turn to check whose cell phone is ringing.

The examples of punctuation errors are:

1. They think that cell phones make a lot of noise in the classrooms. So it is bothering them or even the whole classrooms. Because some cell phones have a loud ringing tone.
2. Students must study and learn a lot so they can make their dreams come true.

The sentences are supposed to be:

1. They think that cell phones make a lot of noise in the classrooms, so it is bothering them or even the whole classroom. Because some cell phones have a loud ringing tone.
2. Students must study and learn a lot, so they can make their dreams come true.

Discussion

In this study, all the participants were asked to write a five-paragraph essay. It is a common method of academic writing to write an argumentative essay by employing the five-paragraph approach. It is aligned with what Zemach & Rumisek (2002) who reprted that an essay must have at least three paragraphs, but a five-paragraph essay is a common assignment for academic writing. Firstly, it can be stated that the analysis simply indicates that some students are not able to present the complete structure of the essay. The organization of an essay with three paragraphs includes an introductory paragraph, a supporting paragraph, and a concluding paragraph, whereas the organization of a five-paragraph essay has an introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs (paragraph two to four), and a concluding paragraph. Abbas and Herdi (2018) in their research also found this result in the students' essays. In addition to the problems in the essay structure or organization, students have problems in using perfect grammar and writing mechanics. A previous study by Zein et al. (2019) also concluded that the problem of

incomplete generic structure is found in other genre namely narrative text. These problems seem to be major problems that the teachers have to resolve.

Secondly, the study shows that the students cannot present the argument-counterargument structure in their essays. Based on Oshima and Hogue (2007), the introductory paragraph should include the hook to introduce the issue, the background information to explain the issue, and the thesis statement to present the student's point of view. The body paragraphs should consist of the topic sentences to support the student's main argument in the thesis, the following sentences to support the topic sentence, and a paragraph including the opposing opinion. The concluding paragraph should involve conclusion restating the student's opinion but using different language and conclusion offering a warning, a prediction, or other type of comment reinforcing the student's viewpoint.

This fact also supports the previous finding of Rusfandi (2015) clarifying that this issue still remains the major problem with EFL learners' essay writing in English. He further explained that students present only a one-sided model of argument in support of their justification. Nimehchisalem (2018) also declared that in writing argumentative essay, the pros and cons of the issue are the important things to be considered by the writer before giving their justfication. He added that students' lack of understanding about the issue prevents them from presenting the two sides. The other possibility is the lack of prior knowledge of the issue.

Conclusion

Contrary to valid expectation, the university students majoring in English at the four universities are poor at organizing an argumentative essay: Out of five research subjects, only one essay had complete organization. The hook, the background information, and the thesis statement are the biggest casualties. A few subjects do not include parts of the body paragraphs, the topic sentences, and the sentences to support the topic sentence. However, the researchers' claim is that many research subjects do not have the counterargument in their essay. In addition, in some instances the concluding paragraph has some missing parts, such as a restatement of the main idea. As a result, the essays are not well developed and considered unfinished.

References

Abbas, M. F. F., & Herdi, H. (2018). Solving the students' problems in writing argumentative essay through collaborative writing strategy. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, *7*(1), 105-114. https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v7i1.1499

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Alharbi, M. A. (2021). MALL in collaborative learning as a vocabulary-enhancing tool for EFL learners: A study across two Universities in Saudi Arabia. *Sage Open, 11*(1), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F215824402199906

Bermani, R. A., Safnil, S., & Arono, A. (2017). An analysis of argument structure of research article of English ostgraduate program of Bengkulu University published in journal. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, *2*(2), 47-64. https://ejournal.unib.ac.id/index.php/joall/article/view/5954

Ellis, R. & Barkhuizen, G., B. (2005). *Analysing learner language.* Oxford University Press. UK.

Erduran, S., Ozdem, Y., & Park, J. Y. (2015). Research trends on argumentation in science education: A journal content analysis from 1998–2014. *International Journal of STEM Education*, *2*(1), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-015-0020-1

Herman, H. (2014). *An experiential function on students' genre of writing*. Jakarta: Halaman Moeka Publishing.

Herman, H., Purba, R., Thao, N. V., & Purba, A. (2020). Using genre-based approach to overcome students' difficulties in writing. *Journal of Education and E-Learning Research*, *7*(4), 464-470. https://doi.org/10.20448/journal.509.2020.74.464.470

Herman, H., Sinaga, H., & Hutauruk, B. S. (2020). Students' difficulties in using personal pronouns in writing recount text. *Scientia: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian*, *5*(1), 29-36. https://doi.org/10.32923/sci.v5i1.1341

Katiya, M., Mtonjeni, T., & Sefalane-Nkohla, P. (2015). Making sense of errors made by analytical chemistry students in their writing. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *6*(3), 490-503. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0603.04

Kroll, B. (1990). *Second language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, H. N., Cho, H. J., & Sohn, J. J. (2009). The teachers' view on using argumentation in school science. *Journal of the Korean Association for Science Education*, *29*(6), 666-679. https://www.koreascience.or.kr/article/JAKO200908856859628.page s

McMillan, K., & Weyers, J. (2007). *How to write essays & assignments*. Pearson Education.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Murray, R., & Moore, S. (2006). *The handbook of academic writing: A fresh approach*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Nimehchisalem, V. (2018). Pyramid of argumentation: Towards an integrated model for teaching and assessing ESL writing. *Journal of Language & Communication*, *5*(2), 185-200. https://journalfbmk.upm.edu.my/ojs3/index.php/jlc/issue/view/10

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing Academic English* (4th ed.). Pearson/Longman.

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2007). *Introduction to academic writing* (3rd ed.). Pearson/Longman.

Pardede, H., & Herman, H. (2020). The effect of numbered heads together method to the students' ability in writing recount text. *Cetta: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, *3*(2), 291-303. https://doi.org/10.37329/cetta.v3i2.455

Ritonga, M., & Yusuf, M. (2020). Diction choice and stylistic editing in the translation of Rapunzel texts: An intralingual translation study. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, *9*(4), 2935–2940. http://www.ijstr.org

Rusfandi, R. (2015). Argument-counterargument structure in Indonesian EFL learners' English argumentative essays: A dialogic concept of writing. *RELC Journal*, *46*(2), 181-197. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0033688215587607

Sinar, T. S., Putri, L. A. & Putri, D. M. (2019). *Write argumentative and exploratory texts for college*. Medan: USU Press.

Taher, A. (2011). Error analysis : A study of Swedish junior high school students' texts and grammar knowledge (Report nr: 2011ht5009) [Doctoral dissertation, Uppsala University, Sweden]. Retrieved from http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-168388

Toulmin, S. E. (1958). *The uses of argument*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Zein, T., Sinar, T., Nurlela, N., & Yusuf, M. (2019). The incomplete linguistic features and schematic structure in EFL university students' narrative texts. *Journal of Education, Teaching and Learning*, *4*(1), 203-209. https://doi.org/10.26737/jetl.v4i1.675

Zemach, D. E., & Rumisek, L. A. (2002). *College writing: From paragraph to essay*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

Language Learning Strategies: A Study of Their Effectiveness in Enhancing Preservice Teachers' Proficiency in English

Wafaa A. Ghareeb

Assistant Professor in Curricula and Methods of Teaching English
Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University, Saudi Arabia

Kholoud A. Alwehebi *(Corresponding author)*

Assistant Professor in Curriculum and English Language Methodology
Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University, Saudi Arabia

Bio-profiles:

Dr. Wafaa Abdel Raouf Ghareeb has a PhD degree in English Language Curriculum and Methodology from Ain Shams University in Egypt. She is an Assistant Professor of Methods of Teaching English in the Curriculum and Methodology Dept., Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University. Her research centres on language learning strategies, language assessment and active learning.

Dr. Kholoud Alwehebi holds a PhD degree in English language Curriculum and Methodology from Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, Saudi Arabia. She is an Assistant Professor of English language Curriculum and Methodology at the department of Curriculum and Methodology. Her main research interests include English strategies, developing English language skills and training program (Email: kholoudalwehebi20@gmail.com)

Abstract

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a challenging courses for students in Saudi Arabia. All language students have unique difficulties in learning English, and Saudi EFL students are no exception. Further, these difficulties are magnified for learners if their teachers are not well entrenched in language skills. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of

language learning strategies to improve the writing and oral skills of pre-service EFL teachers in the College of Science and Humanities, Imam Abdul Rahman Bin Faisal University. The existing literature shows that metacognitive and cognitive strategies are key factors to complete the EFL course. Data for this research is collected using the Strategies Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire version 7.0 by Oxford (1990). The authors conduct a training program using SILL strategies for developing pre-service English teachers' proficiency. There are three groups of student teachers in this study: two experimental groups that receive training for ten weeks on the metacognitive and cognitive strategies, respectively, and one control group that does not receive any training. The authors also address EFL students' challenges and present possible solutions for their successful EFL course completion. The study's outcome indicates that trained students' writing and oral abilities improve significantly. It also provides insight into the integration of a practical approach for developing both writing and oral skills.

Keywords: *Language learning strategies, English proficiency, Pedagogical strategies, Cognitive strategies, Metacognitive strategies.*

1. Introduction

The education system of Saudi Arabia has provided a healthy environment for teachers to teach English. It asserts the necessity of Saudi students to learn English and develop their communication skills. Moreover, English is taught as a compulsory course from Grade 4 to the university level. There is a global demand for English, given its unrivaled status as the language of science, technology, business, and commerce (Ur Rahman & Alhaisony, 2013). Also, Saudi people recognize the application of English for advancing their careers and strengthening their national standing in the international arena (Alrabai, 2016, p. 21).

However, teaching and learning English in Saudi Arabia presents many problems. Many research studies have affirmed that Saudi learners from primary school to university levels have a shallow grasp of the language and low motivation to learn it. Improperly trained teachers fail to provide sufficient training and the right inputs to the students.

A student needs to have good reading skills in order to earn high points in exams. This is, however, a pragmatic reason for paying careful attention to reading. A deeper study of the subject and academic literature (Grabe, 1991; Krashen, 2003) confirms the argument that modern pedagogy plays an important role in the process of reading and therefore reading, in the process of learning foreign languages. Of course, adequate teaching and learning are important to improve reading skills. Testing has become essential to ensure the reliability of

the operation. Therefore, the number of assessments has increased exponentially and changed significantly, influencing what is taught and how it is taught and learned. Students typically find it hard to create significance from texts, and studies show that reading comprehension is a complex task (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). The study conducted by Salataki & Akyel (2002) indicates that students who begin to learn English most likely have severe problems understanding the text. Researchers have focused for a long time on this issue (Duke & Pearson, 2009). They suggested that the metacognitive reading approach is an efficient method that helps students understand what they read.

Teachers use their first language (Arabic) as a medium of instruction and follow traditional teaching methods rather than learner-centered activities. The examination pattern also makes students memorize information and present it in an exam paper (Fareh, 2010; Ur Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013; Al-Nasser, 2015; Alrabai, 2016; Abdelaziz, 2018). In addition, learners lack interaction with trainers. Furthermore, they do not have enough motivation to learn English because they encounter many difficulties in learning it, given the significant differences between English and Arabic in both the writing and aural systems. These difficulties add to learners' anxiety and make them reluctant to share actively in language activities. They also have a negative attitude to learning English. They consider it a mere subject that requires passing marks and not a life skill that needs practice and development. There is also a lack of emphasis on developing skills on the part of the educational system—instead, the emphasis is on rote learning (Fareh, 2010; Al-Nasser, 2015; Alrabai, 2016; Asif, 2017; Abdelaziz, 2018; Asiri & Shukri, 2018). Investigating the opinions of 150 teachers, Alhamad (2018) concluded that the most conspicuous challenges they face in teaching English included dealing with low English proficiency students and managing their negative attitudes toward learning the language. The present study tries to improve EFL student teachers' proficiency and motivation to learn and teach English to enhance their ability to effectively teach English to school learners. It aims to address the challenges in the EFL teaching system.

One of the approved methods of promoting language learners' proficiency at all educational levels is training in language learning strategies (LLS). Many research studies have proven that LLS has a positive relationship with language learning and proficiency (McMullen, 2009; Abad & Alzat, 2016; Al-Ahdal & Al-Ma'amari, 2015; Zhenhui, 2016; Teng & Zhang, 2020). In addition, it can be used to apply strategic learning ability to assess EFL learners' ability to solve their learning problems, boost the learning speed, and make the learning process more efficient, effective, and probably more enjoyable (Gu, 2019; Nhem, 2019; Al-Ahdal, & Abduh, 2021).

Liu (2010) stated that: "second language teachers could play an active and valuable role by teaching students how to apply learning strategies to varied language activities and how to extend the strategies to new tasks both in the language classroom and in content areas requiring language skills". (p. 102)

Gu (2019) emphasized the role of the teacher in language learning strategies instruction (LLSI). He suggested a collaborative action research model for LLSI. Thus, the performance of students can be improved by changing their learning strategies. Saudi students study abroad and often apply for international examinations to enhance their credentials. In order to successfully pass exams and studies, Saudi learners need to master the English language. For this purpose, conducting research on language teaching and learning in Saudi Arabia is crucial if international requirements are to be fulfilled. As with all EFL students worldwide, Saudi students must build learning strategies to bring about successful learning. This study aims to identify the importance of effective learning strategies for the successful completion of EFL. The structure of the research as follows: Section 2 introduces the existing literature related to LLS. The methodology of the research and data collection is included in section 3. Section 4 discusses the outcome of the study. Finally, section 5 concludes the research with its future direction.

2. Review of Literature

Language Learning Strategies and Language Proficiency

In order to study LLS, researchers often discuss the usage of LLS in terms of language learning skills, which is to promote learning processes and enhance language proficiency. Various scholars have established the concept of competence and engaged in the study of its various respects. Plonsky (2019) stated in his research that the experimental group's performance after completing the training session was better than the control group. A majority of studies show a significant correlation between LLS and competence; however, their connection directions were always different. Some researchers emphasized that the use of strategy is primarily determined by ability. Skilled students participated in LLS more often than less-skilled students and used a wider variety of techniques. Mahmoodi and Karampour (2019) argued that the proficient students applied cognitive strategies, whereas Al-Zubeiry (2019) underlined the learning strategies of proficient students of universities, such as cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies. Al-Ghazo (2016) suggested that the skilled learners use fewer communication techniques but more effectively than the less skilled students. Also, the critical difference in

applying LLS between skilled and less-skilled students is that skilled students are much more likely to adopt LLS and can choose the best strategies according to their task's objective. Some studies have investigated the effects of LLS on linguistic skills. Liu (2010) as well as Platsidou and Kantaridou (2014) pointed out the importance of language learning strategy and its importance in anticipation of linguistic success. Wu (2008) found that cognitive techniques play the leading role in skills. Rao (2016) found that English abilities of learners had a considerable impact on their learning strategy and found that high-level pupils employ more strategies than low-level learners. The study of strategy uses in relation to affective variables such as attitude and motivation is another important field of LLS research. A large number of these studies showed that LLS is more common to pupils with a positive attitude than pupils with a negative attitude. Platsidou and Kantaridou (2014) indicated that attitudes towards second-language learning affect direct and indirect approaches and that changing language learning attitudes can also promote their strategic practices. Jabbari and Golkar (2014) have established thatoptimistic students use cognitive, compensatory, metacognitive and social methods. The existing studies discuss that LLS supports pre-service teachers to improve their language skills. For instance, metacognitive strategies positively impacted developing confidence and proficiency in speaking for secondary school students in British schools (Forbes & Fisher, 2018) and L2 intermediate-level learners (Mahmoodi & Karampour, 2019). LLS were also successful in developing Jordanian EFL university students' reading comprehension (Al-Ghazo, 2016), and improving the writing performance of Iranian EFL learners (Ahmadi et al., 2012; Azizi et al., 2017), Saudi EFL university students (Al-Zubeiry, 2019), and Kazakhstani secondary school students (Delovarova et al., 2020). Guo and Xin (2018) showed that students improve vocabulary learning through LLS.

Also, explicit instruction of cognitive strategies improves learners' LLS and performance in speaking, writing, grammar, and vocabulary (Chamorro & Paz, 2017). The utilization of LLS has shown better reading comprehension in Iranian university students (Ghavamnia, 2019).

Metacognitive and cognitive strategies enabled advanced language learners to develop their language proficiency (Lee & Heinz, 2016) and vocabulary (Teng, 2015; Gibson, 2016). Economics undergraduate students improved their oral communication ability using LLS (Puripunyavanich & Soontornwipast, 2018).

Many research studies practised one or more of the types of LLS such as affective, social, memory, compensation, cognitive, and metacognitive and showed positive effects on reducing anxiety, promoting autonomy, and developing many language skills, such as speaking, reading,

and writing (Castro & Lopez, 2014; El-Sakka, 2016; Abad & Alzate, 2016; Raoofi et al. 2017; Shen & Park, 2018; Talebi and Grazib 2019).

Language Learning Strategy Instruction (LLSI)

After studying the LLS applied by successful language learners, several educators suggested that teaching these strategies to pre-service EFL teachers can promote their language proficiency. Rubin (1981) argues that techniques are not preserved by persons with decent ability, they can be learnt by others.

Strategy training is essential in second and foreign languages (Oxford, 1990, p. 201), and its effect is generally more substantial for L2 learners than in L1 education (Plonsky, 2019). Strategy instruction varies in the level of explicitness. Most research indicates that explicit strategies are more successful (Oxford, 2013, p. 181). Oxford (2013) described four levels of strategy instruction from the least to the most explicit. It grades from just integrating the strategies in the textbooks with no clear presentation, to naming and describing the steps and benefits of the strategies and asking students to apply them, to demonstrating the strategies, giving students practice activities on them and asking them to evaluate their success and discuss how to transfer the strategy to new tasks.

Many factors are leading to the success of learning strategy instruction. Some factors are related to training design, some are related to learners' variables, and some are related to teachers' interests and motivational approaches. As for the design, Oxford (1990, p. 201) affirmed that training should not be abstract or theoretical but should be highly practical and useful for all students. Oxford (2013, p. 180) added that effective L2 strategy instruction should involve the following necessary procedures: developing learners' metacognitive awareness of strategies and their use, modeling, practising and self-reflection, and observing learners and questioning them regarding learning. Plonsky (2019) added that "studies that focused on a single strategy (cognitive or meta-cognitive) produced substantially larger effects than those that taught multiple strategies".

Furthermore, this is related to the length of the study. Thus, teaching one strategy over a month could be more successful than teaching ten strategies over the same period, "since it is not just a matter of length but also the intensity and depth of coverage and the potential for transfer". (p. 14)

As for learners' variables, Plonsky (2019) held that strategy instruction is more beneficial for intermediate or advanced learners than for beginners because an appropriate level of language must be reached so that learners can properly operationalize the strategies. Also, LLSI is more

effective in L2 than foreign language contexts because L2 learners are aided by increased exposure to the target language and more significant opportunities to practice strategies and skills.

Considering learners' attitudes and beliefs is also an essential factor in the success of strategy instruction (Oxford, 2013). Self-regulated L2 learning requires the learner to become an active co-constructor of knowledge and take responsibility for learning. Some learners from different cultures tend to be inactive and need to develop new attitudes and beliefs. Strategy instruction can provide these learners with methods to take responsibility for their learning and help them become more confident and proficient.

Several approaches for LLSI have been developed over the past 40 years for L1, L2, and EFL contexts (Liu, 2010; Oxford, 2013; Gu, 2019). Some of the standard models include the following: Pearson and Dole's model (1987); Oxford's model (1990); O'Malley and Chamot 's CALLA model (1990); Cohen's model (1998); Grenfell and Harris' model (1999); and Macaro's model (2001a, 2001b). These models shared approximately the same essential steps with some minor variations in the sequence of these steps. The necessary steps are as follows:

- Supporting learners' experience of learning strategies and identifying their current strategies

- Presenting and modelling new strategies

- Providing practice activities for learners to apply and monitor strategies

- Managing learners to evaluate their progress in strategy management

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Problem Statement and Research Questions

According to the researchers' teaching experience, teachers have inadequate English language proficiency. It is evident from their written lesson plans and their oral presentations of the microteaching sessions. Many of them have problems with most language areas, such as grammar, vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation, fluency, etc. Most of them are also not motivated to learn and not independent students. Also, many studies have affirmed these problems (Al-Nasser, 2015; Abdelaziz, 2018). Alrabai (2016) stated that Saudi EFL learners usually have problems developing the productive skills of speaking and academic writing.

In this study, the authors proposed and conducted a training program on LLS to ascertain its effectiveness in improving pre-service teachers' proficiency in writing and oral abilities. Students were distributed into three groups in order to evaluate the efficiency of the training program. The program intended to investigate EFL Saudi learners' learning problems and identify the pre-service teachers' issues in preparing lesson plans in English and instruction methodologies.

The training program consists of two categories of LLS: metacognitive and cognitive. It was based on the outcome of a pilot study that inspected the strategies adopted by the participants. Many studies have noted that the Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) is a useful evaluation tool for measuring students' learning strategies. SILL strategies include metacognitive, memory, cognitive, competent, effective, and social. The SILL version 7 (Oxford,1999) was employed for evaluating the LLS of EFL pre-service teachers. The study shows that the least known and accepted strategies were the metacognitive and cognitive, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Students awareness about learning strategies

(SILL) Strategy categories	Group 1 (15 students)	Group 2 (15 students)	Group 3 (15 students)
Metacognitive	1	Zero	2
Cognitive	5	1	4
Memory	7	13	10
Affective	6	9	7
Compensation	8	7	6
Social	7	5	7

These results contradicted the results of Alhaysony's (2017) results, who conducted an identical SILL study with 134 EFL Saudi students at Aljouf University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Her findings explained that students followed the cognitive, metacognitive, and compensation strategies rather than the other strategies. Nevertheless, this pilot study's conclusions coincided with Alhaysony's in that Saudi students' performance of language learning strategies ranged from low to medium.

According to the study of Alhaysony (2017), it is noticed that more students employed cognitive strategies, and only a few students used metacognitive ones. It shows that students had a low proficiency level in English since many researchers have affirmed that metacognitive strategies are crucial for the success of L2 learning (Oxford, 2013, p. 45; Raoofi et al., 2017; Talebi & Grazib, 2019). Oxford's studies on second and foreign language learning agree that students use metacognitive strategies less often than cognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies' performance was limited to planning strategies more than self-monitoring and self-evaluating (Oxford, 1990, p. 138).

However, Oxford (1990) suggested that cognitive strategies for a better outcome must accompany metacognitive strategies. However, some research studies showed that metacognitive strategies alone effectively developed students' language knowledge and abilities (Al-Ghazo, 2016; Forbes & Fisher, 2018).

Thus, the present study attempted to examine the effects of each of the two categories (cognitive and metacognitive) on developing the writing and oral language abilities of the participants of the study. With this aim, the study tried to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1 (RQ1) – Does language learning strategies improve writing and oral skills in a foreign language?

Research Question 2 (RQ2) - Will metacognitive strategies significantly develop student teachers' writing and oral language abilities?

Research Question 3 (RQ3) - Are there significant differences between cognitive and metacognitive strategies in developing student teachers' writing and oral language abilities?

3.2 Participants

The study sample comprised of (45) pre-service female teachers of English in the College of Science and Humanities in Imam Abdul Rahman Bin Faisal University in Saudi Arabia. One of the study's researchers taught Teaching Strategies to the participants. 52 students registered for the course; however, some students had not submitted the final post-Test requirements by

the end of the program. Therefore, they were excluded, and the total number of participants thus became 45 across three groups (Experiment Group 1 (EG1), Experiment Group 2 (EG2), and Control Group (CG). Two EG (30 students) and one CG (15 students) were employed in the research. The experiment was conducted for 10 weeks – between 04.10.2020 and 06.12.2020. In both control and experimental groups, the English Grade 9 (approved by the Ministry for Education) coursebook was used. The control group (CG) was taught by the methodology and methods mentioned in the coursebook. The learning goals of the two experimental groups were also identified in the same way as in the case of CG; however, the researchers developed the methodology and approach and relied largely on teaching the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. From the first day of the courses, EG1 and EG2 obtained clear guidance on cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The researchers trained EG1 with metacognitive strategies, whereas EG2 with cognitive strategies, respectively.

To make sure that the three groups had approximately similar oral and writing abilities before the program, the researchers administered pre-tests of oral and writing skills. Table 2 presents the mean and standard deviation of students' scores on writing and oral skill tests.

Table 2: Pre-test scores of participants

Pre-test	Group	No. Ss	Means	Standard deviations
Writing test	CG	15	11,93	2,19
	EG1	15	11,60	1,68
	EG2	15	11,67	2,32
Oral test	CG	15	11,47	2,26
	EG1	15	11,00	1,60
	EG2	15	11,53	2,26

Figure 1 represents the summary of the mean values of the three groups on the oral and writing pre-tests.
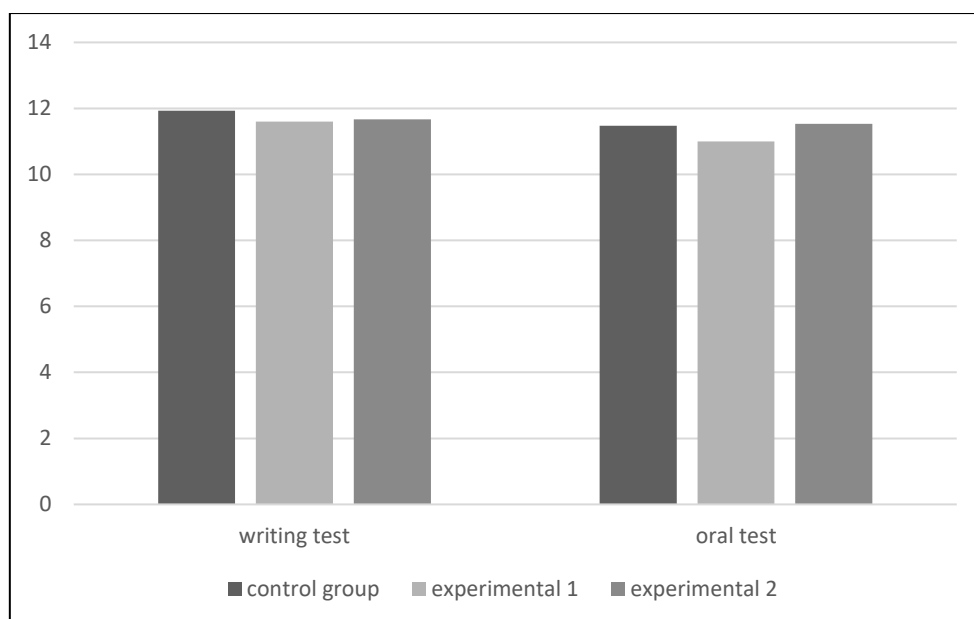
Figure 1: Mean of pre-test scores

To determine the significance of the differences among the three groups' mean scores, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA of Pretest scores

Test	Source of variance	Sum of squares	Freedom scores	Means of squares	F value	Level of significance
Pretest of writing	Among groups	0,93	2	0,47	0,11	Not significant
	Within groups	181,87	42	4,33		
Pretest of oral ability	Among groups	2,53	2	1,27	0,30	Not significant
	Within groups	179,47	42	4,27		

Table 3 shows no significant differences between the means of scores of the three groups on both the writing and oral pre-tests. It is evident from the result that the three groups had closely comparable writing and oral skills.

3.3 Design of the Study

The study followed the quasi-experimental design with two experimental groups and one control group, and a pre-and post-test design. The experimental groups received training on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, respectively. The control group did not receive any training on the LLS.

3.3.1 Data Collection and Instruments

The instruments used in the present study included the following:

Pre-test and post-tests of writing and oral abilities

For the pre-tests, the students in the three groups were invited to draft a lesson plan for an English lesson for the public intermediate level schools (Grade 9). Later, they were requested to present their lessons to their classmates. For the post-Tests, students drafted another lesson plan for a lesson in the same grade to ascertain the lessons' language level is identical. Finally, they presented these lessons to Grade 9 students.

The researchers evaluated the students' writing skills using rubrics adapted from Council of Europe (2009) in Gonzalez (2017). Some revisions were made to the rubrics to suit the context of this study. The assessments included the following elements: ideas, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing (presented in Appendix A).

Moreover, during their oral presentations of the lessons, the researchers evaluated their language proficiency using a rating sheet for oral proficiency of the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) site. Some modifications were made in the grading system of this sheet for the statistical purpose of this study. The evaluation focused on the elements of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency (Appendix B).

The Program of the Study

The training program included two parts: part one presented the cognitive strategies to experimental group 1, and part two presented metacognitive strategies for experimental group 2. Both groups of strategies were taken from the classification of learning strategies presented by Oxford (1990):

Cognitive strategies: a. Repeating; b. Formally practicing with sounds and writing systems; c. Recognizing and using formulae and patterns; d. Re-combining; e. Practicing naturalistically; f. Reasoning deductively; g. Taking notes; h. Summarizing and highlighting

Metacognitive strategies: a. Previewing and linking with already known materials; b. Selective attention; c. Finding out about language learning; d. Organizing; e. Setting goals and objectives; f. Identifying the purposes of language tasks; g. Seeking practice opportunities; h. Self-monitoring

For each of these strategies, one or two language activities were developed to apply and practice the strategies in language learning and teaching. Activities include

- watching a video on multiple intelligences and taking notes of the main points,
- reading a chapter on second language acquisition and summarizing it,

- identifying the language area that participants have a problem with and set goals and objectives for tackling this problem.

Authors conducted class discussion to understand the students learning strategies and their application.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

This section provides an overview of the study results and provides a report and an interpretation of strategy among EFL pre-service teachers. It is organized so as to address the research questions of this study.

The researchers presented a solution of RQ1 using the t-Test that compared the mean scores of students in EG1 (who received training on the cognitive strategies) on the pre- and post-tests of writing and oral abilities as presented in Table 4.

Table 4 : t-Test pre- and post-test performance (Cognitive Strategy)

Test	Measure	MS	SD	t value	p
Writing test	Pretest	11,60	1,68	-7.58	0,01
	Posttest	16,53	1,64		
Oral test	Pretest	11,00	1,60	-10.43	0,01
	Posttest	15,87	2,53		

Note: *MS* = mean scores, *SD* = standard deviation, *p* = level of significance.

Table 4 shows statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level between students' mean scores on the pre-and post-Tests. It indicates the effectiveness of training on the cognitive strategies on improving pre-service teachers' language proficiency in writing the lesson plans and oral presentations.

During the training, students' activities were designed to help them consciously use the English language, pay attention to the language they used, detect their errors, and try to correct them. Some of the activities used in this group included: watching a video and repeating ideas to oneself or a friend; 189racticing simple sentences and pronouncing basic English vowels; adding visual imageries in front of varied vowel sounds; using groups of language formulas and patterns in their conversations; searching the internet for communication games; presenting them to their classmates and playing them; developing stories from scrambled words, phrases, and sentences; practicing selected grammar structures in real-life situations with their friends;

and holding class discussions and online discussions on the Blackboard about critical educational issues for them, such as ambitions, emotions, difficulties, and preparation. After completing each activity, the students discussed the outcome of the strategy (repeating, practicing naturalistically, and taking notes) and how it supported them to practice the language in authentic and meaningful contexts and self and peer-correct their errors.

RQ2 is addressed using the t-Test that matched the means of scores of students of EG2 (who received training on the metacognitive strategies) on the pre test and post-test of writing and oral abilities, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: t-Test pre- and post-test performance (Metacognitive Strategy)

Test	Measure	Mean scores	Standard deviation	T value	Level of significance
Writing test	Pretest	11,67	2,32	-5,52	0,01
	Posttest	16,13	2,36		
Oral test	Pretest	11,53	2,26	-9,28	0,01
	Posttest	16,13	3,02		

Table 5 shows statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level among students' mean scores on the pre-and post-tests. The post-test scores are better comparing to the pre-test scores. It indicates the effectiveness of training on metacognitive strategies to develop student teachers' writing and oral performance in English.

The activities applying the metacognitive strategies helped the students think of their learning processes, identify their language problems, plan for tackling these problems, and monitor their learning. Some of the activities carried out by the students in this group include reading about language learning, talking about their experiences of learning English when they were in the intermediate and high schools, writing letters to teachers giving them ideas on the best ways to teach children how to read or to write in English, discussing their problems in studying English and explaining how they tried to overcome them, writing down the specific techniques they followed, writing short- and long-term goals for learning English and plans for achieving these goals, and listing language errors in their own or classmates' essays or oral presentations and correcting them.

To address RQ3, the means and standard deviations were calculated for comparing the three groups' scores (EG1, EG2, and CG) on the Post-tests of Writing and Oral Abilities as presented in Table 6. The relevant graph for Table 6 is illustrated in Figure 2.

Table 6: Performance of Control and Experimental Groups

Posttest	Group	No. Ss	MS	SD

Writing test	CG	15	13,67	2,74
	EG1	15	16,53	1,64
	EG2	15	16,13	2,36
Oral test	CG	15	13,67	2,77
	EG1	15	15,87	2,53
	EG2	15	16,13	3,02

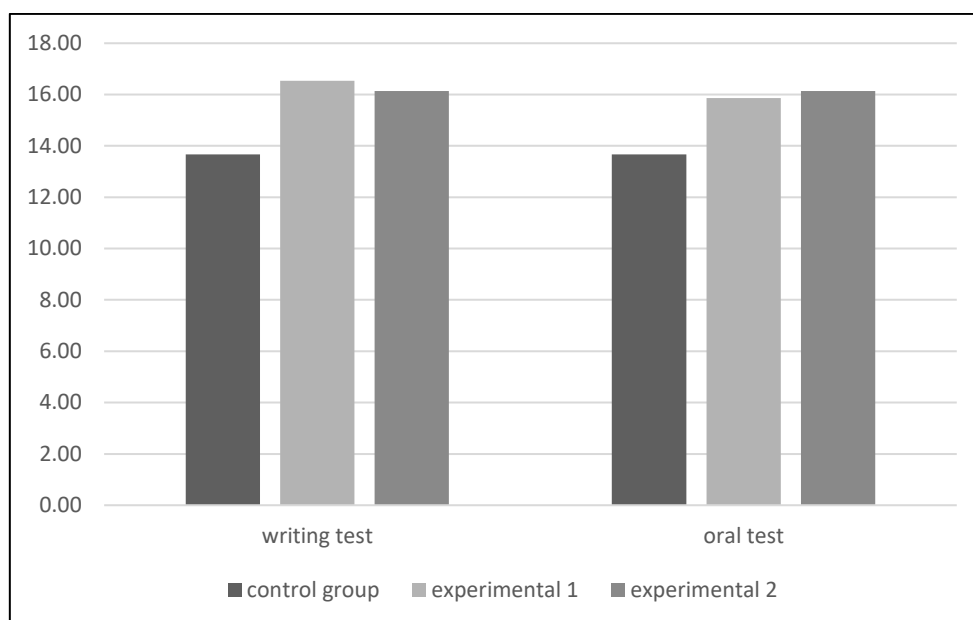*Note*: Ss= students, *MS* = mean scores, *SD* = standard deviation.

Figure 2: Posttest performance

Then, the one-way ANOVA was performed to identify the significance of the differences among the mean scores of the three groups on the post-Tests of writing and oral abilities as presented in Table 7.

Table 7 ANOVA of Posttests

Table 7 Test	Source of variance	Sum of squares	Freedom scores	Means of squares	F value	Level of significance
Posttest of writing	Among groups	72,31	2	36,16	6,88	0,01
	Within groups	220,80	42	5,26		
Posttest of oral ability	Among groups	54,98	2	27,49	3,55	0,05
	Within groups	324,80	42	7,73		

Table 7 shows statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level among the mean scores of the three groups on the post-test of writing and at the 0.05 level on the post-test of oral ability. For identifying the direction of differences, post comparisons were made to determine the least significant difference as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Test	Group	Control	Exp. 1	Exp. 2
Posttest of Writing	CG	--	-	-
	EG1	-2.87 **	-	-
	EG2	-2.47**	0.4	-
Posttest of oral ability	CG	-	-	-
	EG1	-2.20*	-	-
	EG2	-2.47*	-0.27	-

Table 8 shows that the CG had significantly lower means than the two experimental groups on both tests. Moreover, there were no significant differences between the two experimental groups.

These results indicate that training on cognitive and metacognitive strategies had positive effects on improving the writing and oral performance in English of both of the experimental groups.

Each category of learning strategies has its own merits and demerits. Cognitive strategies, as described by Oxford (1990), are essential in learning a new language. They vary considerably, ranging from analyzing expressions to summarizing. However, they all share a standard function: the manipulation and transformation of the target language by the learner. The present study's program used all of the practising group strategies under the cognitive category in Oxford's classification, as they are the most critical strategies for the students. The most effective strategy in this group is practising naturalistically. It presented students the chance to apply the language in natural and realistic settings. Also, this group's essential strategies are taking notes, summarizing, and highlighting. These strategies are necessary for developing both comprehension and production in the English language.

4.2 Discussion

The researchers attempted to identify the learning strategies that improve the English language proficiency of the pre-service EFL teachers. The outcome shows that there is a significant development in the writing and oral skills of students after participating in the training program. Cognitive and metacognitive skills are the most effective skills for a student to learn a foreign language.

Metacognitive strategies are also essential for successful language learning. The strategies include paying attention, reviewing, and linking content with familiar materials to encourage

students to develop their skills. It also supports students in overcoming language stimuli, such as unfamiliar vocabulary, confusing rules, and different writing systems. Other metacognitive strategies such as organizing, setting goals and considering language tasks' purposes serve learners to arrange and plan their language learning efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, the seeking practice opportunities strategy directs interested learners to look for opportunities outside the classroom to benefit them in practicing the foreign language more in real-life situations. Thus, it enhances their learning and proficiency in the language. The self-monitoring strategy also encourages students to think positively about their language flaws and learn from them (Oxford, 1990).

With regard to metacognitive strategies, students have an excellent desire to learn English: They need to focus on their educational and professional existence. In addition, they have to learn English to overcome their communication barriers. The possibility of program failure (self-imposed) was a powerful incentive to monitor their learning. The high-frequency usage and support to find resources for practice of both cognitive and metacognitive approach have seemed to show that they play an essential role in the process of learning a foreign language (Oxford, 1990b: 136). The effects of high-frequency cognitive and metacognitive approach usage have been consistent with past studies. The primary objective of the study was to examine the efficacy and knowledge of cognitive and metacognitive techniques of the students of EFL. The experimental groups outperformed the control group in writing and oral tests. Thus, both cognitive and metacognitive strategic instruction seems to have helped enhance the performance of students. In other words, the experimental groups received clear guidance and practices for preparing and tracking their lecture, which contributed to improving the process. The results of this research also show that the training on two methods enhances the metacognitive memory of the experimental groups.

Regarding the influence of skill level on the use of LLSs, the findings showed that skill had a significant impact on the overall strategies employed by subjects as well as on the categories. Those with higher levels of experience employed a substantially higher number of tactics than their counterparts in both categories. Thus a linear relationship was found between the degree of language competence and the use of strategy. In addition, highly qualified students are concerned with communication and only ask questions about clarity or repetition when they believe it is essential to decoding the context. They also use a variety of techniques, such as

context deviation, according to their own needs, as a result of seeking clarity. On the other hand, less eligible students concentrate more on learning and vocabulary.

4.3 Limitations of the study

The current research hopefully provided useful information for Saudi EFL English students to study LLS usage. Like any other analysis, there are some limitations, but neither of them is a challenge to research validity. These limitations, however, seem to indicate to potential researchers how they might further explore the application of LLSs. As training is the principal instrument in this research, this study's data are focused on self-reporting. Therefore it is probable for respondents to have overestimated or underestimated the frequency with which they implement those tactics in the strategy implementation(Cohen, 1998). This study excludes undergraduate students and graduate students from different years. Also, students participated willingly in our study because they were able to decline participation to affect motivation. The research aimed to investigate the use of Saudi LLSs in and out of class by Saudi EFL learners and their competence. Therefore, all potential considerations have not been included in the present analysis.

5. **Conclusion**

This study proposed to examine the effectiveness of direct instruction of cognitive and metacognitive LLS in developing writing and oral proficiency of EFL pre-service teachers. The findings unveiled that both categories of strategies were influential in developing the intended skills. These results agree with the existing studies (Guapacha Chamorro & Benavidez Paz, 2017; Forbes & Fisher, 2018; Mahmoodi & Karampour, 2019). They also support the general idea that when students are aware of the successful learning strategies that can achieve their goals, they become more motivated and go through the learning process enthusiastically and thoughtfully, leading to success.

The present study's findings might encourage university teachers of EFL courses to give more attention to presenting and practicing both cognitive and metacognitive strategies to promote their students' motivation and improve their performance in all language skills. It is also recommended that methodology courses in teacher education programs present LLS to achieve two primary purposes: (a) to improve the language learning processes of student teachers and hence develop their proficiency in English, and (b) to equip them with useful techniques for LLSI so that they can transfer these strategies to school learners.

Metacognitive skills teaching shows a beneficial use of time to teach EFL. As students reflect on their learning methods, they can better determine what they should do to improve their learning. Good metacognitive knowledge enables language students to learn. The study showed a clear positive relationship between the readability and the degree of metacognitive knowledge of students. More consciously and intentionally, the students in the study community used metacognitive techniques. One of the keys to student reading success in the target language is to consider what strategies are, when and how they should be applied and, more significantly, how these strategies can be tested. During learning processes, teachers strive not just to involve but also, to inspire learners in this process. Metacognitive learning is a crucial element if students view themselves as active rather than passive participants in the process. The critical role of metacognition in successful learning clarifies how students must practice, use metacognitive influence and make the best use of cognitive resources. The inferences drawn from the literature under review are that the intervention from methodological techniques benefits students from EFL reading technical research.

Authors suggest training intermediate and high school EFL teachers on the effectiveness of LLS to help them improve their teaching and learning processes of English in pre-university education.

For more understanding of the effect of LLS on foreign language teaching and learning in the Saudi context, there is a need to study the relationship between EFL teachers' awareness, and use of LLS in teaching English to improve learners' proficiency in the foreign language. There is also a need to study the effects of the other categories of LLS on developing language proficiency in various educational stages.

References

Abad, J. V., & Alzate, P. A. (2016). Strategies instruction to improve the preparation for English oral exams. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 18*(1), 129–147. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v18n1.49592

Abdelaziz, A. A. (2018). The reasons behind inefficient English language practices in Saudi Universities. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 8*(9), 65–72. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0809.03

Ahmadi, K., Ketabi, S., & Rabiee, M. (2012). The Effect of Explicit Instruction of Meta Cognitive Learning Strategies on Promoting Iranian Intermediate Language Learners' Writing Skill. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, *2*(5).938–944. https://doi:10.4304/tpls.2.5.938-944

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Al-Ma'amari, A. A. H. (2015). Learning Strategies of the Arab EFL Learners: Finding Correlation with Outcomes. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, *6*(5), 230-241. http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.6n.5p.230

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. & Abduh, M.Y.M. (2021), English writing proficiency and apprehensions among Saudi college students: Facts and remedies. *TESOL International Journal, 16*(1) 34–56.

Al-Ghazo, A. (2016). The effect of explicit instruction of meta-cognitive learning strategies on promoting Jordanian language learners' reading competence. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(10), 170–177.

Alhamad, R. (2018). Challenges and induction needs of novice English as a foreign language teachers in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies, 6*(1), 50–60. http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.6n.1p.50

Alhaysony, M. (2017). Language learning strategies use by Saudi EFL students: The effect of duration of English language study and gender. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *7*(1), 1–18.

Al-Nasser, A. S. (2015). Problems of English language acquisition in Saudi Arabia: An exploratory-cum-remedial study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *5*(8), 1612–1619. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0508.10

Alrabai, F. (2016). Factors underlying low achievement of Saudi EFL learners. *International Journal of English Linguistics, 6*(3), 21–37. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v6n3p21

Alrashidi, O., & Huy Phan, X. (2015). Education context and English teaching and learning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: An overview. *English Language Teaching, 8*(5), 33-44.

Al-Zubeiry, H. Y. A. (2019). The efficacy of meta-cognitive strategies instruction in enhancing Saudi EFL students' academic writing. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies, 5*(4), 71–86.

Asif, F. (2017). The anxiety factors among Saudi EFL learners: A study from English language teachers' perspective. English Language Teaching, 10(6), 160–173. http://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n6p160

Asiri, J., & Shukri, N. (2018). Female teachers' perspectives of learner autonomy in the Saudi context. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 8*(6), 570–580. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0806.03

Azizi, M., Nemati, A., & Estahbanati, N. (2017). Meta-cognitive awareness of writing strategy use among Iranian EFL learners and its impact on their writing performance. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 5*(1), 42–51

Castro Garcés, A. Y., & López Olivera, S. F. (2014). Communication strategies used by pre-service English teachers of different proficiency levels. *HOW Journal*, *21*(1), 10–25. https://doi.org/10.19183/how.21.1.12

Cohen, A. (2011). *Strategies in learning and using a second language* (2nd ed.). Longman.

Delovarova, K., Kassymova, G., & Tulepova, S. (2020). The impact of meta-cognitive writing strategies usage on the writing performance among Kazakhstani secondary school students. *Journal of Talent Development and Excellence, 12*(1),

Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2009). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. *Journal of education*, *189*(1-2), 107-122. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0022057409189001-208

El-Sakka, S. (2016). Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction for Developing Speaking Proficiency and Reducing Speaking Anxiety of Egyptian University Students. *English Language Teaching, 9(12), 22-33*

Fang, G., & Li, X. (2018). The influence of meta-cognitive strategies on individual's vocabulary learning. *Studies in Literature and Language, 17*(1), 1–4. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/10517

Fareh, S. (2010). Challenges of teaching English in the Arab world: Why can't EFL programs deliver as expected? *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*(2), 3600–3604. www.sciencedirect.com

Forbes, K., & Fisher, L. (2018). The impact of expanding advanced level secondary school students' awareness and use of metacognitive learning strategies on confidence and

proficiency in foreign language speaking skills. *The Language Learning Journal, 46* (2), 173–185. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2015.1010448

Ghavamnia, M. (2019). Improving Iranian graduate students' performance in reading scientific articles in English through explicit strategy instruction. *Reading Psychology, 40*(7), 612–637. https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2019.1658667

Gibson, C. (2016). Bridging English language learner achievement gaps through effective vocabulary development strategies. *English Language Teaching, 9*(9), 134–138.

González, E. F., Trejo, N. P. & Roux, R. (2017). Assessing EFL university students' writing: a study of score reliability. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa, 19*(2), 91-103. https://doi.org/10.24320/redie.2017.19.2.928

González, M. C. (2017). The contribution of lexical diversity to college-level writing. *TESOL Journal*, *8*(4), 899-919. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.342

Grabe, W. (1991). Current developments in second language reading research. *TESOL quarterly*, *25*(3), 375-406. https://doi.org/10.2307/3586977

Grenfell, M., & Harris, V. (1999). Learners' strategies. *Modern languages and learning strategies*, 53-81.

Gu, P. Y. (2019). Approaches to learning strategy instruction. In A. U. Chamot & V. Harris (Eds.), *Learning strategy instruction in the language classroom: Issues and implementation* (pp. 22–37). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

 Guapacha Chamorro, M. E., & Benavidez Paz, L. H. (2017). Improving language learning strategies and performance of pre-service language teachers through a CALLA-TBLT model. *Profile Issues in Teachers` Professional Development*, *19*(2), 101–120. https://dx.doi.org/10.15446/profile.v19n2.57581

Jabbari, M. J., and Golkar, N. (2014). The relationship between EFL learners'language learning attitudes and language learning strategies.Int. J. Linguist.6,161–167 https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v6i3.5837

Javid, C., & Umer, M. (2014). Saudi EFL learners' writing problems: A move towards solution. Proceedings of the Global Summit on Education, GSE 2014 (E- ISBN 978-967-11768-5-6) 4–5 March, 2014, Kuala Lampur, MALAYSIA. Organized by: WorldConferences.net

Krashen, S. D. (2003). Explorations in language acquisition and use. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Lee, J., & Heinz, M. (2016). English language learning strategies reported by advanced language learners. *Journal of International Education Research, 12*(2), 67–76.

Liu, Jing. (2010). Language Learning Strategies and Its Training Model. *International Education Studies*. 3 (3), 100-104

McMullen, M. G. (2009). Using language learning strategies to improve the writing skills of Saudi EFL students: Will it really work? *System, 37*(3), 418–433. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.05.001

Nhem, D. (2019). Language Learning Strategies: A Comparative Study of Young and Adolescent Cambodian Learners . *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, *1*(2), 34–45. https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v1i2.43

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

Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Location: Heinle & Heinle.

Oxford, R. L. (2013). Teaching and researching language learning strategies. New York: Routledge, Taylor, and Francis Group.

Platsidou, M., & Kantaridou, Z. (2014). The role of attitudes and learning strategy use in predicting perceived competence in school-aged foreign language learners. *Journal of Language and Literature*, *5*(3), 253-260. https://doi.org/10.7813/jll.2014/5-3/43

Plonsky, L. (2019). Language learning strategy instruction: Recent research and future directions. In A. U. Chamot & V. Haries (Eds.), Learning strategy instruction in the language classroom: Issues and implementation (pp. 3–21). Location: Publisher.

Puripunyavanich, M., & Soontornwipast, K. (2018). The effects of learning and communication strategies instruction on economics undergraduates' oral communication ability in Thailand. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 9*(2), 218–233. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no2.15

Rao, Z. (2016). Language learning strategies and English proficiency: interpretations from information-processing theory. *The Language Learning Journal*, *44*(1), 90-106. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2012.733886

Raoofi, S., et. al. (2017). An investigation into writing strategies and writing proficiency of university students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 8*(1), 7–28.

Rubin, L. B. (1981). Sociological research: The subjective dimension. *Symbolic Interaction*, *4*(1), 97-112.

Salataki, R., & Akyel, A. (2002). Possible effects of strategy instruction on L1 and L2 reading. Reading in a Foreign Language, 14, 1-17.

Shen, W., & Park, H. (2018). The effects of meta-cognitive strategies, working memory capacity, and syntactic awareness on L2 reading comprehension. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics, 22*(2), 87–112.

Talebi, S., & Grazib, M. (2019). The relationship between language learning strategy use, language proficiency and learner gender: Case study of the first-year EFL students at the University of Mascara-ALGERIA. *East African Scholars Journal of Education, Humanities and Literature, 2* (5), 246–252.

Teng, F. (2015). Assessing the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies use and vocabulary knowledge. *PASAA: Journal of Language Teaching and Learning in Thailand, 49*, 39–65.

Teng, L., & Zhang, L. (2020). Empowering learners in the second/foreign language classroom: Can self-regulated learning strategies-based writing instruction make a difference? *Journal of Second Language Writing, 47*(100701), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2019.100701

Ur Rahman, M. & Alhaisoni, E. (2013). Teaching of English in Saudi Arabia: Prospects and challenges. *Academic Research International, 4*(1), 112–118.

Whitehead, E. (2019). Application of meta-cognitive strategy instruction in listening comprehension to the Level III student teachers. *Excellence in Education Journal, 8*(2), 35–50.

Zhenhui, R. (2016). Language learning strategies and English proficiency: Interpretations from information-processing theory. *Language Learning Journal, 44*(1), 90–106. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2012.733886

Zhongshe, L., & Meihua, L. (2015). An investigation of Chinese university EFL learners' foreign language reading anxiety, reading strategy use and reading comprehension performance. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 5*(1), 65–85. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2015.5.1.4

Appendix A: Rubrics for Assessing Written Language in Students' Lesson Plans

Score	Content	Use of language	Use of vocabulary	Mechanics and spelling
5	Plan shows knowledge of the topic and gives details or examples to support main ideas. Communication is effective.	Text makes use and maintains use of simple language structures effectively. There are no grammar errors in general. Facility in use of language is apparent.	Demonstrates broad use of vocabulary; shows awareness of vocabulary-related teaching and classroom tasks.	Writing shows mastery of punctuation and spelling conventions. Capitalization and typos are not found.
4	Lesson plan is approximately complete but information may be redundant or unnecessary. Some detail is given. Sufficient development of main ideas. Some gaps may be found in information.	Grammatical accuracy is consistently maintained. Few grammar errors in general.	Demonstrates sophisticated use of vocabulary. Good command of vocabulary related to teaching and class activities. Minor errors in vocabulary use.	Writing shows occasional errors in punctuation and spelling conventions. Capitalization and typos are occasionally found.
3	Plan is addressed Adequately, but information may be missing. Some details are used to support the main idea. Shows some knowledge of the main procedures and limited development of main ideas.	Some grammatical "slips" may be found. Grammatical errors, such as verb tense, verb agreement, number, word order, articles, pronouns, and prepositions, are found, but they do not lead to misunderstanding. Context given in text allows for interpretation of meaning.	Vocabulary accuracy is high, although occasional errors may be found. Adequate and appropriate word choice and usage. Some incorrect word choice does occur without impeding communication.	Writing shows few errors in punctuation and spelling conventions. Few capitalization and typos are found.
2	Plan reveals little knowledge of lesson procedures and activities. Major gaps in information are found, and	Frequent grammatical inaccuracies found. Frequent and basic errors of tense, agreement, number, word order, articles, pronouns, and	Sufficient control of elementary vocabulary to express basic ideas. Repetition of vocabulary is	Writing shows frequent errors in punctuation and spelling conventions. Capitalization and typos

	insufficient details to support main ideas are given. Inappropriate information. .	prepositions are found. Understanding of ideas is seldom confusing.	frequent. Frequent misuse of word form, and word choice and usage, making communication confusing.	are frequently found. Meaning may be confusing.
1	Plan presents limited knowledge of the main lesson procedures and tasks. Inadequate number of activities. Details are not given.	Almost all or most basic grammatical constructions are inaccurate. Major issues in simple sentences. Errors of negation, agreement, number, word order, articles, pronouns, and prepositions frequently found. Understanding of information difficult.	Text has little knowledge of English vocabulary and word forms. Language sufficient for coping with simple lesson planning needs. Information is basically translated. Inappropriate choice of word forms.	Almost all spelling is inaccurate, and the text shows the ignorance of punctuation conventions. Text is dominated by capitalization and typos. Meaning is obscured.
0	Plan does not reveal knowledge of lesson procedures and tasks. Totally inadequate ideas or activities. No details are given. Content insufficient to assess.	All language use is inaccurate. Meaning obscured. Content insufficient to assess.	No apparent vocabulary use or vocabulary comprehension is present in text. Content insufficient to assess.	All spelling is inaccurate, and the text shows the ignorance of punctuation conventions. Text is dominated by capitalization and typos. Meaning is obscured. Content insufficient to assess.

Appendix B: Rubrics for Assessing Students' Oral Presentations of their Lesson Plans

Fluency	
5	Speech is smooth and flowing. No hesitancy or rephrasing.
4	Speech is smooth for the most part. Occasional hesitancy. Some rephrasing.
3	Speech is generally hesitant and often choppy.
2	Speech is extremely hesitant and choppy. Frequent pauses and/or unfinished phrases.
1	Speech is limited to isolated words or short phrases. No fluency.
Pronunciation	
5	No errors in pronunciation that impede comprehension.
4	A few errors in pronunciation rarely impede comprehension.
3	Occasional pronunciation errors cause some confusion or misunderstanding.
2	Frequent pronunciation errors cause consistent confusion or misunderstanding.
1	So many pronunciation errors that comprehension is impossible
Vocabulary	
5	Appropriately uses a wide range of vocabulary that is required for lesson planning and related to teaching and learning procedures
4	Uses a fairly wide range of vocabulary in the context of teaching and learning, most of which is used appropriately.
3	Uses an adequate range of vocabulary related to teaching and learning, but sometimes inappropriately.
2	Uses a limited range of vocabulary related to teaching and learning. Vocabulary is often used inappropriately.
1	Shows no command of vocabulary in the context of teaching and learning
Grammar	
5	No or very few grammatical errors
4	Some grammatical errors; however, they do not impede comprehension
3	Several grammatical errors occasionally impede comprehension.
2	Many grammatical errors frequently impede comprehension.
1	Grammatical errors so frequent that comprehension is totally impeded

Readability of Adapted Reading Passages and its Relationship to Reading and Writing Performance

Besma Allagui

Assistant professor, Rabdan Academy, Abu Dhabi UAE,
General Education and Foundation Department, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Bio-profile:

Besma Allagui is an Assistant Professor in the General Education Department at Rabdan Academy, Abu Dhabi, where she teaches English courses and Professional Communication. Her research is centred on two areas: language learning through technology and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) writing processes. Her research on technology has been concerned with the use of WhatsApp, digital walls, students response systems, and augmented reality. Research on writing processes has focused on students' perceptions of teacher feedback and rubrics, students' decision-making processes while writing, and aspects of students' argumentative writing. Dr. Besma's research has been published in various journals, including the International Journal of Mobile Learning and Organisation.
ORCID ID http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8445-5456

Abstract

Adapted reading materials are frequently used by ESL instructors to develop reading comprehension and elicit ideas for writing. Little attention has been given to the readability and appropriateness of reading materials in reading-to-write tasks. The objective of this study was to evaluate the readability and suitability of reading materials used in reading-to-write tasks and to ascertain whether the assessed readability features relate to students' reading and writing performance. Over the course of a 14-week semester, students (n=27) enrolled in a college preparatory program were asked to read teacher-adapted passages (n=10), answer reading comprehension questions and then perform writing tasks in response to the main idea in each text. Scores from the reading and writing tasks were compared with indices on five features of readability generated with the help of Coh-Metrix T.E.R.A. to see if readability could predict

reading and writing performance. Results indicate that significant differences across the texts were found. Three features (narrativity, referential cohesion and deep cohesion) regressed into students' reading performance. There were no associations between readability features and students' writing performance. These findings suggest implications for writing and reading teachers to assist them in selecting suitable texts that match the students' reading level and the goals of the writing assignment. While teachers may select texts that appeal to the students in terms of topics, discrepancy in readability could result in difficulties in text understanding.

Introduction

The source text is an important element in reading-to-write tasks which have become increasingly popular in various educational and assessment contexts (Carson, 2001; Carson and Lecki, 1993; Golparvar & Khafi, 2021). Readability, generally defined as the extent to which a text is matched to its reader makes these tasks more or less challenging. Research has demonstrated that often reading materials are written at a level higher than the students' expected reading levels which poses additional challenges (Nelson et al, , 2012; Tortorelli, 2020). According to research by Rezaee and Nouroozi (2011), there is a significant correlation between the readability of passages and the learners' performance at intermediate and advanced levels. Related research on writing from sources recognized the several benefits of relying on the source text to get the necessary background knowledge and recommended better selection of reading materials that meet the target level of the students (Delaney, 2008; Cheng, 2009; Cumming, 1989; Gebril & Plakans, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Lumley, 2005; Richards, 2004; Weigle, 2004; Al-Ahdal & Alqasham, 2020).

Nevertheless, there is little research investigating the readability of the source text in reading-to-write tasks and the associations between reading and writing performance in those tasks and readability features. Most current research focuses on surface-level syntactic elements of students' written texts that contribute to readability (Delaney, 2008; Gebril, 2009; Plakans, 2010). Therefore, to address this problem, there is need to conduct more research to determine the extent to which texts selected to prompt writing have appropriate readability features and whether there are any associations between readability features provided by Coh-Metrix Text Ease and Readability Assessor (T.E.R.A.) and students' overall reading and writing scores across a sample of adapted source texts. The present study has two aims: (1) to evaluate the

readability of adapted reading materials used in reading-to-write tasks and (2) to determine associations between readability and students' overall reading and writing performance. The results may assist the future design and selection of adapted texts in reading-to-write tasks to better tailor them to the reading level of the students.

The contribution of the study is therefore threefold. First, we examine readability using broader linguistic and non-linguistic features with the help of Coh-Metrix TERA computational tool. Second, we focus on the readability of source texts used in integrated reading-writing assignments. Third, we explore the relationship between the readability features and students' reading and writing performance. Specifically, we use a stepwise regression analysis to determine the predictive power of each readability feature. To the best of our knowledge, this approach has not been applied in readability studies before.

Review of the Literature

Measuring Readability

Readability has been referred to as comprehensibility. McLaughlin (1969) who created the SMOG readability formula (a tool that assesses readability based on the number of syllables and the number of sentences) defines readability as the degree to which readers find the text easy and comprehensible. Thus, the reader and text are closely related. Readability scholars point out that text difficulty is determined not only by linguistic variables that reside in the text but also by psychological and reader-related variables (Brown, 1998; Crossley et al., 2011; Greenfield, 2003). While not all readability variables are quantifiable, researchers developed several tools to predict reading difficulty. Many formulas are available online such as Flesch Kinkaid, Gunning-Fog-Score, and SMOG Index that can be run to obtain an objective measurement of the text ease or difficulty. Most of these formulas provide indices calculated on the basis of the number of words, number of syllables, and sentence length. Discourse analysts have long criticized the validity of these indices due to their reliance on surface linguistic features and their failure to take into account the psycholinguistic and cognitive models of reading (Crossley et al. 2007; Ismail & Yusof, 2016; Wefelmeyer & Backus, 2017). In view of these limitations, researchers developed an alternative tool called Coh-Metrix TERA to accurately and reliably measure text characteristics that go beyond surface textual features to include deep features such as cohesion and coherence. Crossley and McNamara (2011) argued that these characteristics map into the first five levels of discourse: words, syntax,

textbase, situation model, and genre. Thus, the indices have more predictive power being based on psychological and cognitive models of reading (Graesser et al., 2011).

Specifically, Coh-Metrix TERA provides five indices that assess readability: (1) narrativity, (2) syntactic simplicity, (3) word concreteness, (4) referential cohesion, and (5) deep cohesion. Narrativity refers to texts that 'tell a story' which make reference to particular places, times and descriptions of unique events and individuals yielding a higher percentage of verbs, adverbs, and adjectives (Crossley & McNamara, 2011, p. 7). Texts with high indices of narrativity tend to be close to spoken English and thus can be easily processed (Dufty et al., 2006). Syntactic simplicity is a feature of texts containing a limited percentage of words, simple verb forms, and short noun phrases with fewer modifiers. Texts with high indices of text simplicity are more familiar which makes reading less challenging (Lei et al., 2014). Word concreteness is another characteristic that contributes to ease of reading. It refers to the extent to which words can be put into pictures and images (Fiebach & Friederici, 2004). Notably, a text with a high percentage of word concreteness can be easier than a text with a high percentage of abstract words. Referential cohesion refers to the degree to which the texts include overlapping words and concepts (Graesser et al., 2004). When referential cohesion is present, the text is said to have explicit links between ideas and overt linguistic connections across the entire text. Low referential cohesion, however, indicates that the text may be challenging to its readers as they will have to make more inferences. Deep cohesion refers to the existence of cause-and-effect relationship between sentences in the text through the use of causal, intentional, and temporal connectives (Graesser et al., 2004). Deep cohesion plays an important role in helping the reader understand links between ideas and clauses and discovering text organization (Lei et al., 2014).

Previous Readability Studies in Second Language Learning

A set of previous studies in the field of second language learning have predicted text readability using automated tools. This line of research generally highlighted problems in materials selected to develop reading ability (Baker, 2019). In a study of 167 passages levelled for Grades 1–6, Toyama et al. (2017) evaluated the passages' difficulty using four analytical tools of text complexity (Lexile, Flesch-Kincaid, Reading Memory M and TE). The results indicated that there was no progression between levels which could be due to the use of different tools by the publishers to estimate the readability of the reading materials. Based on the results, the authors concluded that the texts cannot be used to determine students' reading performance. Morales

(2020) found similar results in a secondary school setting. He also used three readability formulas to analyze reading passages included in 10th, 11th, and 12th grade textbooks: Flesch Reading Ease, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, and Coh-Metrix L2 reading index. Results demonstrated that the readability of the texts used in textbooks for 10th and 12th graders is similar, but the texts used in the textbook for 11th graders are more difficult to read which implied lack of progression in both readability and cognitive demand across these grades.

Focusing on adapted reading materials, Jin et al. (2020) analysed a large dataset consisting in 3,368 adapted English texts used in 12 primary and secondary grade levels in China. Results from eight syntactic complexity measures found a significant between-level variability with moderate to large effect sizes and irregularities in the progression indicating that the adapted materials did not match the students' reading levels.

Researchers in post-secondary education also reached similar conclusions. In one of the earliest studies, Cline (1972) demonstrated that students' reading ability was lower than the readability level of the community college textbooks. The author found that 17 textbooks required higher grade level reading ability than 50% of the students and 7 textbooks were not suitable for 75% of the students. The author recommended improving the program to match students with texts they can understand. In another study, Lin (2010) investigated a popular university EFL reader series in Japan quantitatively with Flesch-Kincaid readability formulae and qualitatively using student and teacher interviews. Results indicated that readability fluctuated across volumes implying that text selection should not be only based on the volume number.

In another comparative study, Miller (2011) assessed the language in texts commonly used in reading skill development classes (e.g., biographies, newspaper or news magazine articles) and the language in texts more commonly encountered in introductory undergraduate university classes in order to determine their appropriateness to university students. The author relied on the analysis of features related to readability including the Academic Word List (AWL), nominal modification features, and surface linguistic features. Results showed significant differences in percentage of AWL vocabulary and use of nominal modification, but no significant difference in features traditionally associated with readability. The results suggested that the readability features of ESL textbook texts did not match the language features found in university textbooks and therefore more attention must be given to selecting supplementary reading materials. Similar results were reported in Odo's (2018) study indicating that the majority of the texts are excessively challenging for L2 readers which required scaffolding. The table below includes a summary of studies highlighting mismatch between reading materials and reading performance which call for more attention to text selection:

Table 1

Overview of studies focusing on the assessment of readability

Study	Materials evaluated	Method	Result	Conclusion
Cline (1972)	24 college textbooks	The Dale Chall readability formula	All textbooks required higher grade level reading ability. None of the reading passages were suitable for the poor readers.	Considerable discrepancy requiring improvement of the program.
Li (2011)	3 college English textbooks in China and three American college-level textbooks.	Flesch 2.0 SMOG and Coleman-Liau Index	College reading textbooks produced by Chinese publishers seemed to vary in level, with some texts above the reading ability of most college students.	Simplification does not necessarily result in better readability indices
Srisunakrua & Chumworatayee (2019)	Reading passages compiled in the English textbooks and the Thai national education English test	Coh-Metrix TERA	Passages from the English textbooks are easier than those used in the English test	More attention should be paid to the discrepancies in the levels of readability between reading passages.
Tabatabaei & Bagheri (2013)	High school textbooks	Flesch Kinkaid	Reading passages are not in accord with the students' reading levels. Students mostly had an average and a low level of interest and background knowledge	Interest and background knowledge should be considered as important factors in text selection
Toyama et al. (2017)	67 leveled passages grade 1-6	Lexile, Flesch-Kincaid, RMM and TE	Lack of progression between levels	The texts cannot be used to determine students' reading performance

Morales (2020)	Textbooks	Flesch Reading Ease, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, and Coh-Metrix L2 reading index (RDL2).	Similarity between readability of textbooks Questions are more difficult than target level	More careful selection of textbooks Consideration of progression and cognitive demands
Jin et al. (2020)	3368 adapted reading materials	Syntactic complexity	A significant between-level variability with moderate to large effect sizes	Adapted materials need to match the students' reading levels
Tortorelli (2020)	Assessment tasks	(Lexile Analyzer, the Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor (TEA)	3 features of Coh-Metrix relate to oral reading rate	Focus on semantic and cohesion features when selecting texts
Miller (2011)	A variety of authentic materials (biographies, newspaper or magazine articles) Excerpts of textbooks	Academic Word List (AWL) nominal modification features, and surface features associated with readability.	ESL textbook Language is not representative of language in university textbooks	Consideration must be given to text selection

Taken together, previous readability research within second language learning suggests that cohesion, syntactic and semantic features need to be considered to improve text selection. Even though this line of research did not focus on readability of the source text in reading-to-write tasks, it contributed to our understanding of the role of readability in determining students' performance.

Readability of the Source Text

Readability is a crucially important consideration for the designers of integrated reading-to-write tasks. This notion is well-supported in the current research on integrated reading and writing tasks (Delaney, 2008; Esmaeili, 2002; Feak, & Dobson, 1996; Plakans & Gebril, 2011; Plakans & Gebril, 2013; Plakans & Gebril, 2017; Richards, 2004; Risemberg, 1996; Spivey, 1990; Yu, 2009). Without evaluating the readability of the source text, developers risk producing tasks that do not correctly match the reading abilities of the learners for whom the assessment is planned. For instance, Plakans and Gebril (2011) demonstrated that the source text plays an important role in providing test-takers with background knowledge and language. The authors studied the functions of the source text through eliciting responses from 145 students at a Middle Eastern university. The study showed that students-writers used the source text to learn about the topic and generate ideas while relying in the author' main idea to shape their opinions. Furthermore, the information in the text provided the writers with evidence to support their claims and provided useful language (vocabulary and grammar) that helped learners structure their writing and select appropriate words.

Research investigating the relationship between text readability and student reading performance exists but has yielded inconsistent results (Brown, 1998; Tortorelli, 2020). Brown (1998) examined the correlation between readability and actual mean cloze scores in 50 passages taken from an English textbook. The results showed that the number of words and syllables did not affect comprehension. In a recent study, Tortorelli (2020) specifically investigated the relationship between oral reading rate and features of text complexity provided by two tools (Lexile Analyzer and Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor (TEA). It was found that a strong relationship was established between three Coh-Metrix features (word concreteness, referential cohesion, and deep cohesion) and oral reading rate. The author further suggested that more consideration needs to be given to features of semantic complexity and text cohesion in order to improve text selection.

Research investigating the impact of the source text on students' writing is still in its infancy. For example, Gebril and Plakans (2016) calculated the lexical diversity in students' essays before and after removing words borrowed from the source text. The authors found that borrowing from source texts significantly affected the lexical diversity of recomputed scores in reading-to-write tasks. The same conclusion was drawn from an earlier study by Hirvela and Du (2013) who found that source text information can include content that triggers ideas or forms used in the source text that could be used by the writer to put forward arguments.

Despite the value of the source text, most prior research so far focused on how to determine reading materials that match students' reading ability. Therefore, several questions remain unanswered regarding the associations between readability and writing performance. Reading-to-write scholars suggested that "more research is needed about the reading issue and readability levels of texts'' (Gebril & Plakans, 2009, p. 71). To fill in this gap, this study addressed the readability of the source text in reading-to-write tasks. Features analyzed were: word concreteness, syntactic simplicity, referential cohesion, deep cohesion, and narrativity. Using the linguistic computation tool Coh-Metrix TERA the study investigated the variance in texts across grade levels and text topics. The objective of this study was to consider the importance of assessing readability in order to assign the right text to the right student at the right time. Specifically, the study was based upon the following research questions:

1. How similar are reading texts assigned in reading-to-write tasks in terms of readability features?
2. How do readability features relate to students' reading and writing performance?

Methodology

The objective of the study was to analyze readability features in source texts included in reading-to-write tasks specifically because previous research has demonstrated the benefits of the source text over writing performance (Plakans & Gebril, 2011; Plakans & Gebril, 2013; Richards, 2004; Risemberg, 1996; Spivey, 1990). The texts were given as class assignments to 27 students enrolled in a preparatory English language course. The research focused on five features of readability measured by Coh-Metrix T.E.R.A. Multiple regression was conducted in order to understand the degree to which the readability features were associated with the participants' reading and writing performance.

Participants

Participants in the study were 27 Male Emirati students studying English as a Second Language in a preparatory program in a college in Abu Dhabi. Based on the results from the placement exam, the students had been grouped into intermediate level classes. The focus of instruction was on improving their reading and writing skills. Students were often asked to read authentic and adapted passages requiring them to answer reading comprehension questions and then complete a writing task related to the reading. All participants gave consent for their grades to be used for research purposes only. The Committees on Research Ethics at Rabdan Academy gave ethical approval for conducting the study.

The Reading Texts

In total, all reading passages used in the semester were chosen for analysis. There were ten texts taken from newspapers and magazines. In other words, these texts possessed characteristics particular to informational texts. To ensure a variety of text levels, the corpus comprised reading passages that were suitable to beginning and intermediate second language (L2) learners on topics of general interest. Minor adjustments were made to ensure ease of reading. Each of these reading passages were accompanied with reading comprehension questions (multiple choice, true/false/ and table completion) that were followed by a short writing task related to the reading. Table 2 presents the topic, the word length, and the level of each text.

Table 2.

Description of the texts

Week #	Title	Flesh-Kinkaid equivalent grade level	Flesh-Kinkaid readability assumption	Number of words
Week 2	McDonald's	Grade 7	Average	202
Week 3	Globalization of food	Grade 9	Average	634
Week 4	Globalization	Grade 9	Fairly difficult	634
Week 5	Driving	Grade 6-8	Average	414
Week 6	Video-conferencing	College	Difficult	258
Week 7	Wearable cameras	Grade 10	Fairly difficult	963
Week 9	Colors	Grade 9	Average	499
Week 10	Extreme sports	Grade 7	Average	310

| Week 11 | Risk-Taking | Grade 11 | Fairly difficult | 477 |
| Week 12 | Sinking City | Grade 10 | Fairly difficult | 616 |

Comprehension questions

For each text, different types of comprehension questions were created: determining the main idea and supporting details, distinguishing facts from opinion, predicting content, finding similarities and differences, sequencing, and true-false statements. In total the reading comprehension questions included 61 items with an average of five items per passage. Students completed the reading comprehension tasks in class. Cronbach's Alpha ranged from 0.73 to 0.87 suggesting that the reading questions measure component skills of comprehension. A composite measure of reading comprehension was obtained based on combined scores for each passage.

Writing performance

After answering the reading questions students completed a number of different writing tasks as follows:

  Week 2: Writing about their favourite restaurant

  Week 3: Writing about how to globalize their fast food restaurant

  Week 4: Writing about the advantages and disadvantages of globalization

  Week 5: Writing about solutions to the problem of texting while driving

  Week 6: Video-conferencing writing an email to invite people attend a conference

  Week 7: Giving opinion about wearable cameras

  Week 9: Writing about the importance of colours in our life

  Week 10: Writing about the reasons why some people take part in extreme sports

  Week 11: Writing about themselves as risk-takers

  Week 12: Writing about a natural disaster that has occurred in the UAE

The writing tasks were classified as narrative, descriptive, persuasive and email writing types. Students completed each writing task in one lesson after reading the passage and answering the reading comprehension questions. They were allowed approximately 30 minutes to write their paragraphs. To assess students writing performance in a variety of tasks a 16-point rubric was created including essential and generic writing aspects (content and ideas, organization, word choice, grammar and mechanics). The researcher

and another colleague who was not familiar with the study design marked the written paragraphs.

Figure 1 shows an example of the reading and writing tasks.

Figure 1. Sample Reading and Writing Tasks

Data Collection and Analysis

Over the course of a 14-week semester, student from an intermediate group were asked to read the chosen passages, answer the reading comprehension questions and then write a paragraph in response to the main idea in the text. After obtaining approval from the research ethics committee at the research institution, data were collected from students' grades on the reading and writing tasks. Grading resulted in two sets of average scores were obtained for each student, one based on their performance in the reading comprehension part and one based on their performance in the writing. These raw scores were converted to percentages and subsequently underwent the final data analysis.

To measure ease of reading Coh-Metrix TERA was used in this study. The computational tool can be accessed from the following website: http://129.219.222.70:8084/Coh-Metrix.aspx. It is free to use and has many advantages over traditional readability tools. Its most useful contribution may be allowing researchers to discern which textual features are most critical to comprehension for different populations at different moments in development. Texts were copied and pasted into the website and then submitted for analysis. Later, the web services derived the readability indices. Figure 2 below shows a sample of the analysis output:
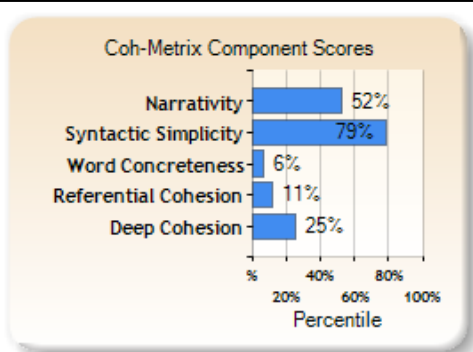
This text is average in narrativity. Its high syntactic simplicity means that it has simple sentence structures. Simple syntax is easier to process. It has low word concreteness suggesting a high volume of word abstractness and low imageability. Thus, it may be more difficult to understand. It has low referential cohesion. Thus, there is less overlap in explicit words and ideas between sentences. These conceptual gaps require the reader to make more inferences. It is low in deep cohesion suggesting a lack of explicit causal relationships when needed by the text. Because of this, it may be more difficult to comprehend for unfamiliar topics.

Figure 2. Sample analysis output

Upon completion of the textual analysis, percentages were entered into an excel sheet in order to compute descriptive statistics (Means, SD, Variance). Descriptive statistics were also calculated for scores earned by each students on the reading and writing sections for each chosen text.

In predicting whether a change in readability features would correspond to a change in writing and reading performance multiple regressions was used. Multiple linear regression was calculated in order to assess the degree to which the readability features

(independent variables) of chosen texts were related to predicting the (dependent variable) overall performance of students in the reading and writing sections.

Results

The results of the Coh-Metrix T.E.R.A demonstrated some recognizable similarities and differences between the chosen texts.

Table 3.

A comparison between the texts on readability features

	Narrativity	Syn. simplicity	Word concreteness	Referential cohesion	Deep cohesion
Driving	47	71	39	44	88
Colors	49	30	42	11	90
Globalization	33	87	63	8	53
Extreme sports	27	83	58	27	72
Sinking city	26	60	87	17	89
Risk-taking	37	65	28	61	85
Globalized food	30	52	76	35	34
Wearable cameras	37	41	58	9	39
Video conferencing	13	69	25	2	37
McDonald's	38	41	90	40	98

The texts appear to have distinct readability indices that suggest that they may not be relevant to intermediate levels. An examination of means and standard deviations show that differences were more recognizable in two components: referential cohesion and word concreteness.

Table 4.

Means, standards deviations, maximums and minimums

	Narrativity	Syntactic Simplicity	Word concreteness	Referential cohesion	Deep cohesion
Mean	33.7	59.9	56.6	25.4	68.5
Standard Deviation	10.53	18.77	23.09	19.20	25.19
Minimum	13	30	25	2	34
Maximum	49	87	90	61	98

As the readability scores are expressed in percentages, the standard deviations ranged from 10.53 to 25.18. Of particular interest is the finding that all texts had low to moderate narrativity indices meaning they were more informative. It is also of interest that features interact to contribute to readability at different levels. For example, when considering the deep cohesion index, the texts appear easy to read. On the flipside, when considering the referential cohesion index, the texts could be regarded as difficult to read.

To further facilitate understanding of the similarities and differences in the levels of readability, results are presented in the next sections according to each readability feature.

Narrativity. An important feature of readability is the degree to which a passage contains simple and familiar ideas that are easy to understand (McNamara et al., 2010). In the Coh-Metrix TERA tool this feature is referred to as narrativity and can yield very high indices in story-based passages. *Figure* 3 shows some variability in narrativity levels among the chosen texts.
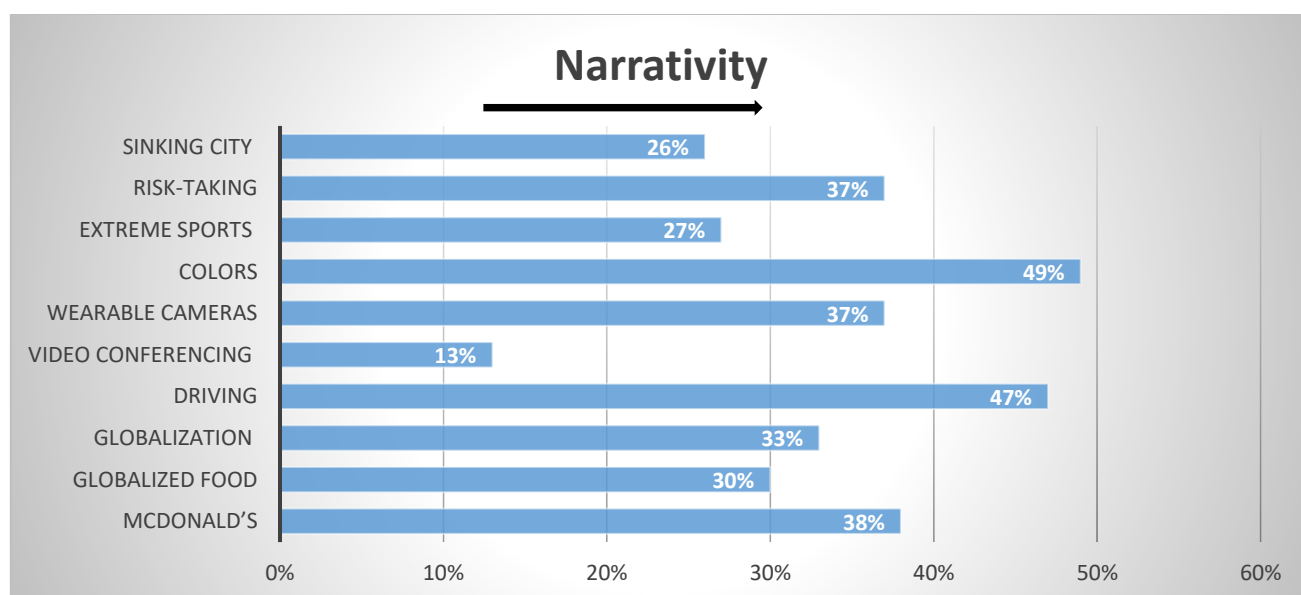
Figure 3. Percentile scores for narrativity

Narrativity plays an important role in readability assessment. The higher the narrativity index the easier the text would be. In the current study, none of the passages had a high score of the narrativity feature. All ten passages scored below the 50th percentile meaning they were predominantly informational and therefore conceptually complex for students at pre-intermediate levels. *Colors* and *driving* scored 49% and 47% respectively with some story-like features but with a larger number of dynamic verbs (live, eat, drink, hold)

in comparison to *video conferencing* which received the lowest score indicating the absence of narrativity features such as plot, characters and events. When the narratitivity feature of Coh-Metrix was taken into account as the main aspect of readability, it could be said that the passages chosen for pre-intermediate level students were not suitable.

Syntactic simplicity

Coh-Metrix TERA measures syntactic simplicity by counting the number of words, clauses, and sentences per text which can make the text easy or difficult to understand (Crossley & McManamara, 2011). Syntactic simplicity could be regarded as the most important readability feature because most teachers make their judgement on the basis of sentence structure. The texts chosen demonstrate several syntactic simplicity patterns (See *Figure 4*).
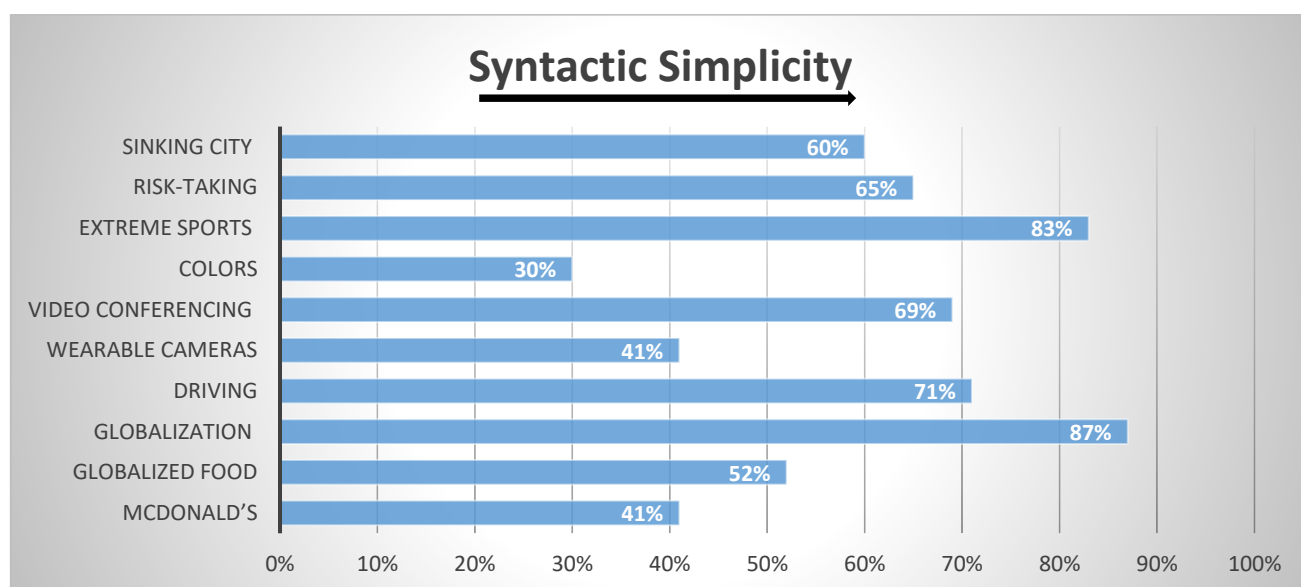

Figure 4. Percentile scores for Syntactic Simplicity

The texts showed consistently higher readability scores than for the narrativity feature except for passage 7 (colors) which had a moderate syntactic simplicity score. The texts had mostly simple sentences, verbs in the present tense, with all verbs in the active voice. None of the texts had a score below the 25th percentile. Two texts (globalization, extreme sports) had particularly high scores with almost all sentences having few words in front of the main verb. Surprisingly, *Globalization* had been described as difficult according to the Flesh Kinkaid analysis which could mean that different readability formulas could yield a variety of readability scores.

Word Concreteness

A more important indication of the lexical complexity can be accounted for by examining Coh-Metrix TERA scores on word concreteness; that is the extent to which the words are understandable. As shown on *Figure* 5 the texts are characterized by similarly high word concreteness with 6 texts above the 50th, 60th, 70th, 80, and 90th percentile. Across all texts the mean score was 56.6 (*SD*= 23.09). One text about McDonald's yielded a particularly high concreteness score (90%) meaning that almost all words were concrete. This was in contrast to "video conferencing" which yielded a low word concreteness score (25%) indicating the use of a large number of words that are hard to imagine. Thus, there was a 60% difference between the easiest and the hardest text.
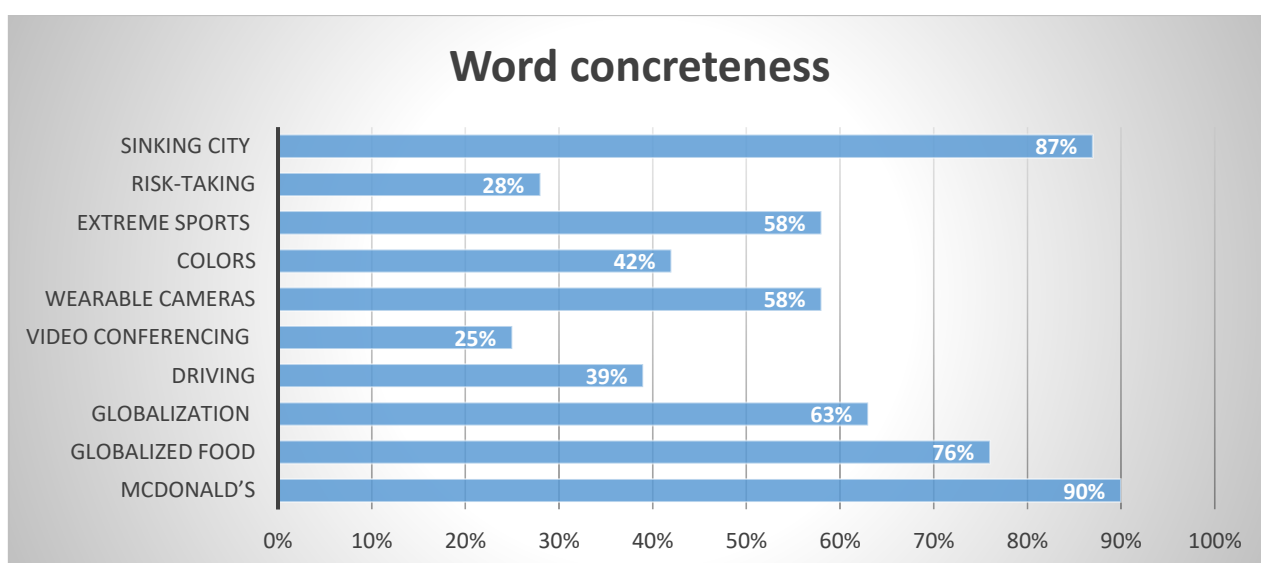
Figure 5. Percentile scores for word concreteness

Referential cohesion

Referential cohesion measures the number of repeated concepts, use of the definite article, and meaning overlap. When phrases are repeated, it is often easier for weak learners to grasp the meaning. Results from Coh-Metrix TERA show significantly moderate scores of overlaps between sentences. There was one text with particularly high referential cohesion scores (Risk-Taking). Two texts had average scores of referential cohesions meaning they included some degree of idea overlap. The remaining texts had low scores ranging between 2% and 27% which indicates increased difficulty as readers of these texts have to work harder to make more inferences in order to grasp the meaning behind the words. This could be explained by the process of shortening of texts which may have resulted in less redundancy and therefore rendered the texts more challenging. Overall,

the results suggest that the texts chosen could be harder for weak leaners to understand. However, when referential cohesion is considered alongside syntactic simplicity and word concreteness its contribution to readability might become insignificant.
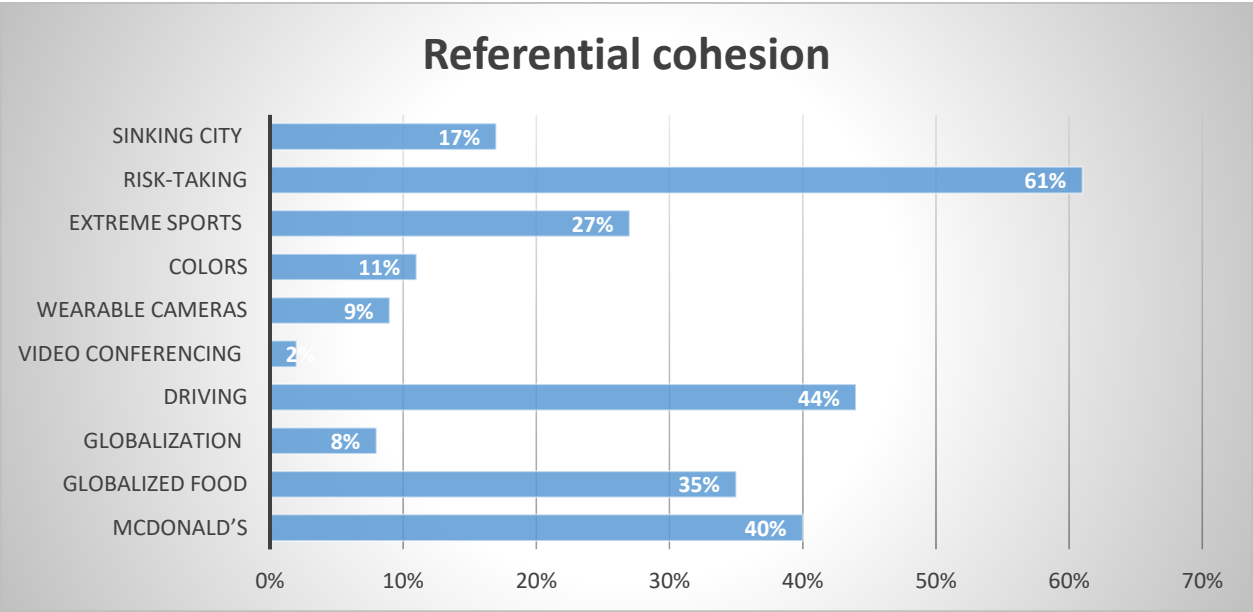

Figure 6. Percentile scores for referential cohesion

Deep cohesion

Deep cohesion is one of the five components of text readability which refers to the degree to which ideas are interconnected using explicit connectives (e.g. additive, causal, contrastive, temporal). An increase in deep cohesion scores indicates easier reading and better textual understanding. *Figure 7* displays the scores generated for the ten texts for deep cohesion. As expected, connective occurred more frequently in texts with high syntactic simplicity levels probably due to the use of shorter sentences and simpler syntax. The scores for seven texts were above the 50th percentile indicating the extent to which the authors of the texts relied on explicit connective to arrange their ideas. The remaining texts were at a similar level of deep cohesion indicating potential difficulty.
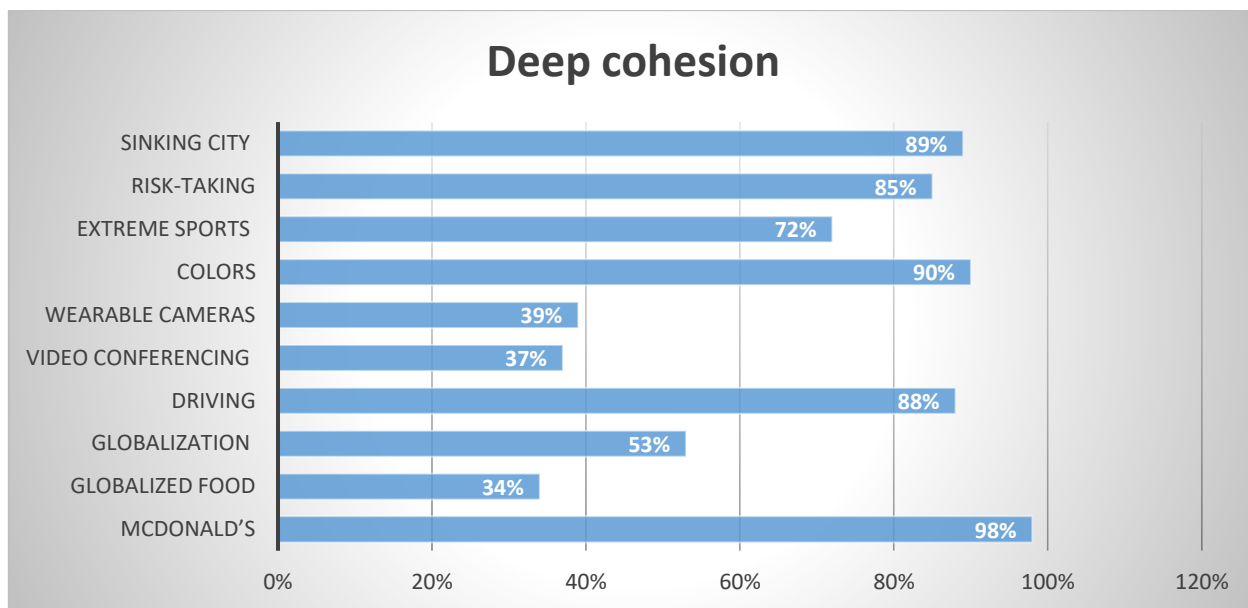
Figure 7. Percentile scores for deep cohesion

Relationship between readability and students' reading/writing performance

The second question investigated whether the reading passages corresponded to the students' reading and writing levels. Aggregate reading and writing scores were calculated for each passage. The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) in Tables 6 provide evidence of the variability in the students' performance across texts.

Table 6.

Means and standard deviations of students' reading and writing performance

	Reading Comprehension		Writing performance	
Passage	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
McDonald's	71.96	9.59	74.12	9.02
Globalization of food	83.35	8.46	88.16	11.15
Globalization	83.24	6.46	57.12	10.47
Driving	56.35	6.90	81.04	7.98
Video-conferencing	56.65	12.41	88.34	10.11
Wearable cameras	86.35	4.49	72.67	11.33
Colors	93.77	5.03	56.45	9.12
Extreme sports	66.08	10.35	66.69	5.43
Risk-Taking	40.21	10.05	55.96	12.49
Sinking City	56.23	12.19	83.334	15.05

Data indicate that students differed in their performance on the reading and writing tasks. Their scores on the writing tasks were somewhat higher than the scores they earned in the reading comprehension part where they scored below 70% in 5 out of 10 texts. Students scored the highest on the reading questions of two texts (colors and wearable cameras) but they were less successful on the writing sections. Their highest score on the writing section was achieved in their writing of an invitation email.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine which of the textual features were predictive of reading and writing performance. A multiple regression analysis was calculated including the five features. These features were regressed against the aggregate scores earned on the writing part and the reading part for each text.

The multiple regression analysis for reading average yielded a significant model $F(5, 4)$ = 4.934, p < .073, r = .927, r 2 = .860, adjusted r 2 = .686. These results signify that readability features account for 86% of variation in the students' performance on the reading section. The analysis showed that three features contribute the most to this variation: narrativity, deep cohesion and referential cohesion. The remaining indices were not related to reading average. The feature with the highest beta coefficient in the model was narrativity which indicates that there is a strong association between reading performance and the level of text narrativity.

Table 7.

Multiple regression analysis results for reading average

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	55.688	23.468	2.372	0.076
Narrativity	1.214	0.416	2.919	0.043
Syn. simplicity	-0.108	0.201	-0.540	0.617
Word concreteness	0.282	0.145	1.939	0.124
Referential cohesion	-0.484	0.196	-2.467	0.069
Deep cohesion	-0.356	0.164	-2.168	0.095

By contrast, the stepwise regression analysis for writing average yielded a non-significant model $F(5, 8) = 0.145$, $p < 0.971$, r = 0.391, r 2 =0.153, adjusted r 2 = -0.904. Results mean that the combination of the readability features account for only 15% of variance in the students' performance in the writing section. All readability features were not

predictive of writing performance. In other words, the features of readability in the chosen texts may not impact the students' writing performance.

Table 8.

Multiple regression analysis results for writing average

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	73.317	39.937	1.836	0.140
Narrativity	0.286	0.708	0.404	0.707
Syn. Simplicity	-0.045	0.342	-0.133	0.901
Word concreteness	-0.009	0.248	-0.038	0.972
Referential cohesion	-0.059	0.334	-0.177	0.868
Deep cohesion	-0.185	0.279	-0.662	0.544

Discussion

This study focused on measuring readability of the source text included in reading-to-write tasks which were assigned to pre-intermediate level students during their course work. While research dealing with textbook readability exists, there is a gap in investigating the readability of adapted reading materials. Teachers often rely on their own judgment to determine readability of these texts. For this study, all texts used during a 14-week semester were analyzed using Coh-Metrix T.E.R.A. Specifically, we investigated how readability varies when different topics are chosen and whether text readability is related to reading comprehension and writing performance. Five features were measured: narrativity, syntactic simplicity, word concreteness, referential cohesion and deep cohesion.

Coh-Metrix TERA analysis demonstrated that the texts differed in readability scores. Such differences may be desirable during instruction because students may vary in their reading proficiency levels. However, this variation may be challenging during assessment because the level of the text represents a benchmark against which students' performance is determined and therefore it should not be harder or easier than the students' expected level. Differences in readability scores across texts further indicate inconsistencies between teacher's estimation of text ease and Coh-Metrix TERA scores. One possible explanation of these differences may lie in how teachers judge semantic or lexical complexity. Crossley et al. (2011) claimed that teachers depend on word or structure lists, traditional readability formula, or on their intuition when evaluating text readability.

Results demonstrated that the texts chosen are mainly informative in nature focusing less on characters and plots that characterize narrative writing which means that they will pose a challenge for pre-intermediate level students. When considering narrativity alone, it could be said that the texts were hard for pre-intermediate level learners who came from a story-telling cultural background which values oral communication. Nevertheless, the texts included many of the features to make them easy to comprehend. It was found that the majority of texts contained simpler sentence structure with few multi-syllabic words and more conversational language that could result in much easier understanding of the content of the passages. With regards to lexis, results showed that the scores on word concreteness were moderate for the majority of the samples and thus contributing to an increase in text ease. Deep cohesion appeared to be high for the majority of texts despite the low scores obtained for referential cohesion. As such, the use of connectives served to compensate for lack of overlap between ideas making the texts more readable because students may refer to these connectives to draw conclusions.

These results support Tortorelli (2020) who obtained positive Coh-Metrix z scores for all features except for narrativity suggesting that the texts had concrete words, simpler syntax, and more cohesive ties which made them readable. Differences between readability features across texts also echo Nelson's et al. (2012) results who found that although all five features of Coh-metrix analysis were correlated with text grade levels, the strength of those correlations differed. It was found that three features (syntactic simplicity, referential cohesion and narrativity) were in accordance with text grade level. Word concreteness and deep cohesion, however, showed patterns of inconsistencies correlating with some texts but not with others.

The associations of each feature with aggregate reading and writing scores were evaluated with a multiple regression analysis. The results demonstrated that students' overall reading performance was related to narrativity, referential cohesion and deep cohesion. Relationship, however does not mean causality. In other words, it appeared that texts with low narrativity were challenging for students to comprehend. Since the majority of the texts analyzed were informative, this might explain the recurrence of low scores on the reading sections. This also indicates that while a text might appear to have high syntactic simplicity students might have difficulty to comprehend it due to lack of high narrativity features. It is possible that this result is influenced by cultural norms in the local context which value story-telling as a form of communication. Theoretically, this result is consistent with theories of reading that put forward the dynamic elements of reader, text,

and activity as essential to readability (Snow & Sweet, 2003). The results are partially in agreement with previous studies which revealed strong correlation between narrativity and reading comprehension (Crossley et al. 2011; Nelson et al, 2012, Tortelli 2020). Consequently, it is important to give more consideration to narrativity and cohesion when simplifying texts for pre-intermediate level students.

Deep and referential cohesion were also associated with reading performance. This was found in previous studies (Dahl et al.2020; Hall et al., 2016). In Hall's et al. (2016) study, students showed improved comprehension accuracy and faster comprehension answers for texts that were high in referential cohesion.

Similar to previous research, the results in the current study demonstrated that the complexity of syntax did not significantly affect the level of reading comprehension. Ulijn and Strother (1990) found that there were no significant differences between subgroups reading an authentic (in original, unadapted form) computer science text and those reading a syntactically adapted text either in comprehension or in time across the four groups of subjects. Chen (2014) also reached the same conclusion revealing that syntactic difficulty was not an element that affected participants' reading comprehension.

Nevertheless, one has to remember that knowledge of vocabulary has already been shown to contribute to reading comprehension in previous research (Mehrpour & Rahimi, 2010; Perfetti, 2007; Tanenhaus, 1988). In Mehrpour and Rahimi, 2010' study the analysis of the data indicated that the learners' knowledge of the general vocabulary content of the reading comprehension texts affected their performance on the reading comprehension test. The authors remarked that students had acquired prior knowledge and schemata skills that helped them deal with lexis difficulty. In our study, word concretness was not associated with reading performance. It could be that in the current study the participants lacked the inferencing and guessing skills needed to understand foreign language vocabulary. Thus, vocabulary remains an intriguing but important variable to investigate in future studies while controlling for all other readability features.

The study, nevertheless, found no associations between the textual features and students' writing performance, which means that writing performance may be related to other variables such as overall course performance. This result is contrary to what previous research on how students benefit from the source text. Gebril and Plakans (2009) recognized in a previous study that students drew on the cohesive devices while working on integrated reading and writing assignments. It can be concluded that the text may

provide useful resources such vocabulary and ideas however it may not predict writing scores.

Implications for Teachers, Material developers and Researchers

Findings from the present study may have some implications for material developers, researchers and teachers. In the present study, it was found that readability does not rest on a single feature. It is a combination of surface-level and deep-level elements. Therefore, material developers need to take into consideration a variety of features while selecting and adapting reading materials.

Teachers may use Coh-Metrix TERA to compute and describe features of readability in order to better select their reading materials and match the chosen passages to the learners' levels. Coh-metrix TERA may become an important online tool to help teachers go beyond the surface level features and take into account deep features such as text's narrativity and cohesion.

Furthermore, the results have demonstrated that some features may have more predictive power than others may. Regression analysis demonstrated that three readability features in particular (narrativity, deep cohesion, and referential cohesion) appear to significantly affect reading performance in reading-to-write tasks. Therefore, busy reading teachers may pay more attention to narrativity and cohesion when selecting reading materials for integrated tasks.

In addition to the above implications for material writers and teachers, researchers may also benefit from the findings of this study. It was found that no associations existed between readability features and writing performance which indicated that readability features did not seem to be very useful in predicting the writing scores in reading-to-write tasks. This finding would be a good starting point for researchers to further investigate the link between readability and writing performance. In future work, we plan to interview stdents writers on their perceptions of the source text in order to arrive at a better understanding of the relationship.

Conclusion

This article presented findings of an automated analysis of texts used to assess students' performance in integrated reading and writing tasks. We utilized Coh-Metrix TERA to measure the readability of the texts. The results highlighted the diversification of texts in terms of topic and readability features. Altogether, the texts provided students with more

information than with events. The results suggest that texts chosen as the basis of writing relied on simple sentence structure, connectives and concrete words that students could possibly use as models for their writing. In addition, the results further suggested that narrativity and deep cohesion may predict both reading and writing performance.

The study enhanced our understanding of important features that could influence reading and writing processes. It has demonstrated the need for teachers and test designers to consider readability as the starting point for text selection. Nevertheless, and as in all studies, this study has some limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study analyzed texts used only in one course which could mean that a bigger corpus could yield more generalizable results. Yet, even with a small corpus, we have achieved statistical significance and detected an association between readability features and reading performance. Second, there is the reliance on one computational tool to examine readability features. It should be noted that Coh-Metrix TERA cannot evaluate all the features that encompass readability. The use of multiple readability tools and indices will provide more valid context within which to view and compare the readability of the texts. The study should be expanded to include texts used in a variety of courses and grade levels in order to analyze whether the texts have appropriate readability features. Future research might also include background knowledge, eagerness to read and purpose of reading as important text and individual variables.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. & Alqasham, F. H. (2020). Saudi EFL learning and assessment in times of Covid-19: Crisis and beyond. *Asian EFL Journal*, 27(4.3) 356-383.

Baker, J. (2019). Writing about the writing center in the Asian context: Exploring the mis/match between the reading levels of self-access materials and the students who visit the center. *The Asian ESP Journal*, *15*(3), 256-285. https://www.elejournals.com › AESPJ

Brown, J. D. (1998). An EFL readability index. *JALT Journal*, *15*(2), 7-36. http://hdl.handle.net/10125/40779

Carson, J. (2001). A task analysis of reading and writing in academic contexts. In: D.Belcher & A. Hirvela (Eds.), *Linking literacies: Perspectives on L2 reading-writing connections* (pp. 246–270). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Carson, J., & Leki, I. (1993). *Reading in the composition classroom: Second language perspectives*. Heinle & Heinle Publication, Boston.

Chen, K. Y. (2014). Vocabulary, syntactic knowledge and reading comprehension: The perspective of college EFL Students. *An Interdisciplinary Journal*, *66*, 39-52. https://www.cma.edu.tw/journal/66files/(39-52)

Cheng, F. W. (2009). Task representation and text construction in reading-to-write. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, *13*(2), 1-21. Retrieved March 7, 2021, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ868849

Cline, T. A. (1972). Readability of community college textbooks. *Journal of Reading,16* (1), 33-37. https://doi.org/10.1080%2F10862967209547033

Crossley, S. A., Dufty, D. F., McCarthy, P. M., & McNamara, D. S. (2007). Toward a new readability: A mixed model approach. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (29) 29. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/39r3d755

Crossley, S. A., & McNamara, D. S. (2011). Understanding expert ratings of essay quality: Coh-Metrix analyses of first and second language writing. *International Journal of Continuing Engineering Education and Life Long Learning*, *21*(2-3), 170-191. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJCEELL.2011.040197

Crossley, S. A., Allen, D. B., & McNamara, D. S. (2011). Text readability and intuitive simplification: A comparison of readability formulas. *Reading in a foreign language, 23*(1), 84-101. Available at *http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/*

Cumming, A. (1989). Writing expertise and second-language proficiency. *Language Learning, 39*(1), 81-141. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1989.tb00592.x

Dahl, A., Carlson, S., Renken, M., & Reynolds, E. (2020). *Exploring deep and referential cohesion and its effects on adolescent readers' comprehension processing* (No. 3827). EasyChair Preprint.

Delaney, Y. A. (2008). Investigating the reading-to-write construct. *Journal of English for academic purposes*, *7*(3), 140-150. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2008.04.001

Dufty, D. F., Graesser, A. C., Lightman, E., Crossley, S. A., & McNamara, D. S. (2006). An algorithm for detecting spatial cohesion in text [Paper presentation]. *The 16th Annual Meeting of the Society for Text and Discourse,* Minneapolis, MN, USA.

Esmaeili, H. (2002). Reading-to-write reading and writing tasks and ESL students' reading and writing performance in an English language test. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *58*(4), 599-620. DOI: 10.3138/cmlr.58.4.599

Feak, C. & Dobson, B. (1996). Building on the impromptu: A source-based writing assessment. *College ESL*, *6* (1), 73–84. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ530884

Fiebach, C. J., Friederici, A. D. (2004). Processing concrete words: fMRI evidence against a specific right-hemisphere involvement. *Neuropsychologia. 42*(1), 62–70. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0028-3932(03)00145-3

Gebril, A. (2009). Score generalizability of academic writing tasks: Does one test method fit it all? *Language Testing, 26* (4), 507-531. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532209340188

Gerbil, L. & Plakans, L. (2009). Investigating source use, discourse features, and process in integrated writing tests. *SPAAN Fellow Working Paper in Second Language Assessment, 7*(1), 47-84. Retrieved Febrauary 10, 2021 from www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/research/spaan

Gebril, A., & Plakans, L. (2016). Source-based tasks in academic writing assessment: Lexical diversity, textual borrowing and proficiency. *Journal of English for academic purposes*, *24*, 78-88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2016.10.001

Golparvar, S. E., & Khafi, A. (2021). The role of L2 writing self-efficacy in integrated writing strategy use and performance. *Assessing Writing*, *47*, 100504. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2020.100504

Grabe, W. & Stoller, F. (2002). *Teaching and researching reading*. Longman, London.

Graesser, A. C., McNamara, D. S., & Kulikowich, J. M. (2011). Coh-Metrix: Providing multilevel analyses of text characteristics. *Educational Researcher*, *40*(5), 223-234. https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0013189X11413260

Graesser, A. C., McNamara, D. S., Louwerse, M. M., & Cai, Z. (2004). Coh-Metrix: Analysis of text on cohesion and language. *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers*, *36*(2), 193-202. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03195564

Greenfield, G. (2003). The miyazaki EFL readability index. *Comparative Culture, the Journal of Miyazaki International College 9*, 41-49. http://id.nii.ac.jp/1106/00000418/

Hall, S. S., Maltby, J., Filik, R., & Paterson, K. B. (2016). Key skills for science learning: the importance of text cohesion and reading ability. *Educational Psychology*, *36*(2), 191-215. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2014.926313

Hirvela, A., & Du, Q. (2013). Why am I paraphrasing?": Undergraduate ESL writers' engagement with source-based academic writing and reading. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 12*(2), 87-98. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2012.11.005

Ismail, A., & Yusof, N. (2016). Readability of ESL picture books in Malaysia. *Journal of Nusantara Studies, 1(1), 60-70.* https://doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol1iss1pp60-70

Jin, T., Lu, X., & Ni, J. (2020). Syntactic complexity in adapted teaching materials: differences among grade levels and implications for benchmarking. *The Modern Language Journal*, *104*(1), 192-208. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12622

Lei, C. Man, K. & Ting, T. O. (2014). Using Coh-Metrix to analyse writing skills of students: A case study in a technological common core curriculum course. *Proceedings of the International MultiConference of Engineers and Computer Scientists*. IMECS, Hong Kong.

Li, H. (2011, August). Readability assessment and comparison of Chinese and American College EFL reading textbooks based on Information analysis. *International Conference on Computer Science, Environment, Ecoinformatics, and Education, 218,* 539-542. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-23357-9_96

Lin, C. C. (2010). " E-book flood" for changing EFL learners' reading attitudes. *Online Submission*, *7*(11), 36-43. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED514805

Lumley, T. (2005). *Assessing second language writing: The rater's perspective*. P. Lang.

Mehrpour, S., & Rahimi, M. (2010). The impact of general and specific vocabulary knowledge on reading and listening comprehension: A case of Iranian EFL learners. *System*, *38*(2), 292-300. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.01.004

McLaughlin, G. H. (1969). SMOG grading: A new readability formula. *Journal of Reading, 12*(8), 639-646. Retrieved April 20, 2021 from https://www.jstor.org/stable/40011226

McNamara, D. S., Crossley, S. A., & McCarthy, P. M. (2010). Linguistic features of writing quality. *Written Communication*, *27*(1), 57-86. https://doi.org/10.1177/741088309351547

Miller, D. (2011). ESL reading textbooks vs. university textbooks: Are we giving our students the input they may need?. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *10*(1), 32-46. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.12.002

Morales, B. C. (2020). Readability and types of questions in Chilean EFL high school textbooks. *TESOL Journal*, *11*(2), 498. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.498

Nelson, J., Perfetti, C., Liben, D., & Liben, M. (2012). *Measures of text difficulty: Testing their predictive value for grade levels and student performance*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.

Odo, D. M. (2018). Evaluating SLA textbook comprehensibility: Comparing Coh-metrix results with EFL teachers' ratings. *Modern English Education, 19*(2), 9-19. Doi: 10.18095/meeso.2018.19.2.02

Perfetti, C. (2007). Reading ability: Lexical quality to comprehension. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, *11*(4), 357-383. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888430701530730

Plakans, L. (2010). Independent vs. integrated writing tasks: A comparison of task representation. *TESOL Quarterly, 44* (1), 185-194. Retrieved April 14, 2021, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/27785076

Plakans, L. & Gebril, A. (2011). A close investigation into source use in integrated second language writing tasks. *Assessing Writing*, *17*(1), 18-34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2011.09.002

Plakans, L. & Gebril, A. (2013). Using multiple texts in an integrated writing assessment: Source text use as a predictor of score. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 22*(3), 217-230. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2013.02.003

Plakans, L. & Gebril, A. (2017). Exploring the relationship of organization and connection with scores in integrated writing assessment. *Assessing Writing, 31*, 98-112. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2016.08.005

Rezaee, A. A., & Norouzi, M. H. (2011). Readability formulas and cohesive markers in reading comprehension. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies, 1*, 1005-1010. https://doi.org/10.4304/TPLS.1.8.1005-1010

Richards, J. C. (2004). *Second language writing.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Risemberg, R. (1996). Reading-to-write: self-regulated learning strategies when writing essays from sources. *Reading Research and Instruction, 35*(4)*, 365-383. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388079609558221

Srisunakrua, T., & Chumworatayee, T. (2019). Readability of reading passages in English textbooks and the Thai National Education English Test: A comparative study. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 10(2)*, 257-269. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no2.20

Spivey, N. N. (1990). Transforming texts: constructive processes in reading and writing. *Written Communication, 7(2)*, 256-287. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088390007002004

Tabatabaei, E., & Bagheri, M. S. (2013). Readability of reading comprehension texts in Iranian senior high schools regarding students' background knowledge and interest. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *4*(5), 1028-1035. https://doi.org/10.4304/JLTR.4.5.1028-1035

Tanenhaus, M. K. (1988). Psycholinguistics: An overview. In F.J. Newmeyer, ed., *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey,3,* 1-37. Cambridge University Press, New York, USA.

Tortorelli, L. S. (2020). Beyond first grade: Examining word, sentence, and discourse text factors associated with oral reading rate in informational text in second grade. *Reading and Writing*, *33*(1), 143-170. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-019-09956-5

Toyama, Y., Hiebert, E. H., & Pearson, P. D. (2017). An analysis of the text complexity of levelled passages in four popular classroom reading assessments. *Educational Assessment*, *22*(3), 139-170. https://doi.org/10.1080/10627197.2017.1344091

Ulijn, J. M., & Strother, J. B. (1990). The effect of syntactic simplification on reading EST texts as L1 and L2. *Journal of research in reading*, *13*(1), 38-54. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.1990.tb00321.x

Yu, G. (2009). The shifting sands in the effects of source text summarizability on summary writing. *Assessing Writing*, *14*(2). 116-137. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2009.04.002

Wefelmeyer, E., & Backus, M. B. (2017). Strategies for using data analytics in testing the readability levels of textbooks: it's time to get serious. *Procedia Computer Science*, *118*, 95-99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2017.11.149

Weigle, S. C. (2004). Integrating reading and writing in a competency test for non- native speakers of English. *Assessing Writing, 9*(1). 27-55. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2004.01.002

Higher Secondary ESL learners and English Conditional Sentences: An investigation of the efficacy of Corpus-Based instruction

Asmara Shafqat[1], Najeeb us Saqlain[2], Khola Sara Amir[3]

[1]*Lecturer, Humanities Department, NED University of Engineering and Technology, Pakistan Email: asmarashafqat@neduet.edu.pk ,ORCID 0000-0002-5928-5915*

[2]*Assistant Professor, Department of English, College of Science and Humanities in Rumah, Majmaah University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Email: na.khan@mu.edu.sa. ORICID: 0000-0003-0182-0337*

[3]*Lecturer, Department of English, University of Wah, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: khola.sara@uow.edu.pk*

Bio-profiles:

1. **Asmara Shafqat** is a doctoral candidate in Applied Linguistics and is working at NED University of Science and Technology, Karachi, Pakistan as a lecturer. She has been associated with research in Theoretical Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, and Corpus Linguistics for many years. Asmara has been engaged in teaching undergraduate and graduate level students in addition to her supervisory role for master's students' theses. Her areas of expertise are Academic Writing, Research Writing, Corpus Linguistics, and Pragmatics.

2. **Dr. Najeeb us Saqlain** holds a Ph.D. in English as a Second Language (ESL) and is currently working at the Department of English, College of Science and Humanities in Rumah, Majmaah University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as an Assistant Professor and Head of the Academic Accreditation Unit. In his last eighteen years of university teaching, Dr. Saqlain has been an inspiration for the students of many universities in Pakistan and KSA. He has been a corporate trainer and an active researcher. He has several national and international publications to his credit.

3. **Khola Sara Amir** is both a PhD Scholar at a lecturer at University of Wah, Pakistan, and is in charge of radio station of the same University. She has served at the Department of English as a chairperson for two years. Her research interests include Language Acquisition and Corpus Linguistics.

Abstract

This study investigates the role of corpus in teaching conditional sentences to higher secondary level ESL learners. It is a small-scale experimental study conducted with a convenience sample of 60 ESL freshmen participants of the higher secondary level at a private institute in Karachi. The duration of the study is four weeks, during which a control group is taught the conditional structures and usages using the prescribed coursebook. In contrast, the experimental group is taught the same structures and usages using British National Corpus (BNC) for one month. In order to analyze the quantitative data, the mean scores of pre-test and post-test have been taken from both groups for comparison using paired samples t-test. The statistical analysis of the T-test results measured by SPSS showed that the students could learn better by using corpus-based activities compared to the control group.

Keywords: *Corpus linguistics; ESL learners; and English Conditional Sentences; Corpus-Based instruction.*

1.Introduction

Among the principles of lexicography, primacy is the authenticity of language use, especially when dictionaries are produced for the non-native learners of a language. This task is made somewhat easier by the creation of a language corpus which is nothing but linguistic data that forms the basis of verifying hypotheses about a language. Language corpus as is to be found today, thus legitimizes varieties of a language by helping lexicographers add new words and usages to standard dictionaries based upon the quantum of use. In this sense, the 'corpus is a general-purpose tool' (Burnage & Baguley, BNC archive). In an ESL/ EFL context, the use of corpora is invaluable to teachers as it provides authentic language samples, rather than relying on their intuition about language use.

Corpus linguistics is rapidly making its space in the current digitized age of teaching. A corpus is a well-defined collection of authentic and natural discourse that is used for linguistic analysis with the help of computers. As stated earlier, corpus language data is also known as the true representation of naturally occurring language samples. There are burgeoning questions in ELT whether to utilize corpus in classrooms or not, yet corpora have been found very helpful in teaching language (Hunston, 2002). The use of corpus, however, in ELT is not without criticism, for Hunston corpora is a vital source in describing language for language learners, but for some others such as Chomsky (1988), it is unauthentic exposure of language learners since it focuses on external language phenomenon, a fact that prompted Chomsky to call it 'e-language', as opposed to 'i-learning' which refers to the language within the mind.

Conflicting theories and views on the use of corpora in ELT have resulted in controversy on the subject. Language experts recommend learners to utilize corpora in language learning. Chambers (2007) believed that a corpus provides significant and appropriate input into L2 teaching. Tao (2001) claimed that the corpora facilitate learners to understand the complex use of language. However, much like Chomsky, some researchers are not comfortable with the claim that Corpora is an authentic source of learning a language. So, language teachers have a natural question: Can classroom activities based on corpora provide significant real-life input to learners? Despite these confusions, the literature indicates that many teachers take advantage of corpora to provide learners with authentic exposure for real-life language interactions. This study examines the effectiveness of using corpora at the higher secondary level for learning conditional sentences.

The results will prove the importance of using corpora in ELT, and its findings will contribute to the existing literature. The available literature on corpus-based grammar activities have focused on advanced or intermediate learners in EFL setting for reading, writing and teaching vocabulary; however, this study will provide the proof whether the activities based on corpus can be employed for teaching conditional sentences effectively in ESL setting and whether the conclusion of existing literature based on corpus hold true for ESL learners on the higher secondary level.

The British National Corpus is a massive collection of 100 million word samples of written and spoken British variety of English from the later part of the 20th century, created between 1991- 1994. Of this, as many as ninety percent of the words are from written sources and the

remaining from spoken media, also available in the audio format. It is an important observation that three largest word categories in the corpus are comprised of noun (18.07%), verb (14.97%), and conjunction (11.72%). For the purpose of this study, the conjunction is of relevance since conditionals fall under this category. The purpose behind the creation fo this corpora, much like others, was to enable lexicographers and researchers study a large number of language samples more easily since they are in a computer-readable format.

1.1 Problem Statement

This study was conducted in the background of English Examination of Karachi Board of Intermediate, wherein the new pattern of first-year examination demands students to learn grammar with effective grammar use in real situations. But most English teachers prefer using the recommended book of Sind Text Board which is said to be outdated. In the new pattern of English examination paper, conditional sentences are given due importance. Conditional sentences are a complex aspect of grammar and pose a special challenge for the ESL learners, most of whom cannot assimilate two parts of the sentence using the conditionals, nor able to define the time and condition.

It is unfortunate to state that in Pakistan there is very less awareness about corpora-based English language teaching. According to Rahman (2001), many Pakistani teachers teach English language as a subject by translation method and typically use utopian situations; therefore, such ignorance about real-life interactions creates boredom in grammar lessons. Addressing such contentions, Yoon and Hirvela (2004) stated that to motivate teachers and learners for using corpora; one must consider how to use them effectively for building linguistic competence of ESL students so that different corpora like BNC, COCA, and international corpus can be used effectively in ELT classrooms.

1.2 Research Question

The present study aims to address the following research question:
How effective is using the BNC to teach conditional sentences at a higher secondary level to ESL learners in Pakistan?

1.3 Hypothesis:

1.3.1 Null Hypothesis:

Ho**:** At 5% significance level, the data provide sufficient evidence to conclude that mean of Experimental Group is not greater than mean of Control Group.

1.3.2. Alternative Hypothesis*:*

Ha: At 5% significance level, the data provide sufficient evidence to conclude that mean of Experimental Group is greater than mean of Control Group.

2. Literature Review

In the globalized world, new work dynamics are open for employing corpus linguistics on account of digital communication. The corpus can be defined as the naturally occurring texts, collected and organized for teaching and other purposes. Moreover, Hunston (2002) explains the term *'language corpuses* as written, or spoken language data collections that are gathered to describe a certain form of language. Since the 1950s, the use of corpora for language teaching has developed many critical questions among linguists. First, many applied linguists raised a question whether corpus linguistics was a new methodology in ELT or a branch of linguistics. Hunston answered this question by stating that '*corpus linguistics*' is a kind of methodology that can be employed in every domain of linguistics.

Second, corpus use in ELT is not without criticism. Chomsky (1988), for example, believing inbuilt-in language ability, argued that the corpus could not be a useful tool for linguistics because language competence should be the model for linguists but not the performance. He supported his argument by adding that corpus collection cannot differentiate between correct and incorrect sentences, but intuition can distinguish between correct and incorrect grammar. Chomsky laid emphasis on the idea that a corpus, on the contrary, is the naturally occurring text that is outside somewhere. Thus a corpus will always prove to be a poor and irrelevant linguistic competence model in ELT (Mc Enery & Wilson, 1997). He claimed that corpora is a finite set of language, while human language is infinite, thus corpora cannot be the representative of an infinite and unique language.

The debate of Chomsky is very much related to the difference between empirical and rationalist theories that generated some confusion as to what might be the best model for natural or artificial data in language teaching (McEnery & Wilson, 1997). In the rationalist theory, conclusions are drawn by the mindful judgments of linguists about the artificial data, whereas

in empiricist theory, the natural data is collected by using corpus. For Chomsky, linguistics should be more rational and less empirical. The findings of Johns (1986, 1991), on the other hand, recommend that the corpora can positively impact EFL/ESL learners, in fact, it can even enhance the performance of language teachers. Hunston (2002) also claimed that the potential of corpora is usually recognized in language teaching. The historical view tells that corpus linguistics did not grow considerably until some research in the 1980s emphasized the importance of corpora on second language learning and teaching (Chambers, 2007).

In ELT, Widdowson (1991) raised the issue that corpora can provide useful and effective descriptions for learners. He claimed that important real-life information could be provided to language learners, teachers and researchers by the corpora. He argued that language descriptions appearing from corpora must be regarded as factors to be considered rather than as facts to be uncritically accepted for ELT. That is to say, the descriptions of language should be informed by corpus linguistics rather than determining language teaching by it. Boulton's (2009) empirical study directly centered upon the impact of corpus in the EFL classroom. He examined whether a Data-Driven Linguistics (DDL) approach by using the print outs of concordance might be helpful for EFL learners. Further, whether language learners effectively use DDL on their own without undergoing training. He concluded that both lower and high level learners can consult the corpus data for preference purposes.

Despite some criticism, language scholars claim that a corpus-based approach can provide a significant and suitable model to the learners (Chambers, 2007), because it has the potential to make clear the patterns and purposes of language (Tao, 2001, p. 116). Besides, only advanced and intermediate learners along with their attitude, have been focused upon for corpus-based activities in EFL settings (Gilmore, 2009Kennedy & Miceli, 2001; Sun, 2000; Sun, 2007; Sun &Wang, 2003; Al-Ahdal, 2020a; Al-Ahdal, 2020b; Bautista, 2020) but lower proficiency learners have been overlooked. In order to address this issue some empirical research was recommended, determining whether in existing literature the activities based on corpus for teaching grammar indicate that the use of corpora at different levels proves to be effective in ESL classes. Girgin (2011) however, investigated the effectiveness of teaching grammar through corpus-based grammar activities to lower level EFL learners at Erciyes University School of Foreign Languages, Turkey. His study explored whether EFL learners, at lower proficiency level, were able to make use of corpus-based activities successfully to learn the selected structures of English grammar.

Pragmatic use of corpora cannot be discussed without referencing English for Specific Purpose (ESP) wherein corpus is seen as well-matched scaffolding to learners' needs and as well as for further research. Most of the studies have discovered that (e.g. Aston, 1997; Ghadessy et al. 2001; Gavioli, 2002; Flowerdew, 2005) small but well-structured corpora of different kinds can produce significant results in ESP. Small but advantageous for ESP in a sense that specific and specialized domain-oriented corpus centers around the needs of learners for achieving the membership in the relevant community of practice, and for the research projects corpus is fine tuned to the specific requirements as small scale disciplinary corpora. Moreover, corpora are used for point of reference so as to highlight the differences in specialized uses of general language.

Corpora have been the need of ELT practitioners for teaching intercultural and interdisciplinary communication in the midst of rapid globalization. Corpus linguistics is a king of methodology that can be employed around every domain of linguistics (McEnery & Wilson, p.2, 1996). The organized and purposeful collection of natural text is a very useful resource for teaching English for Specific Purposes and other language-oriented functions in applied linguistics.

3. Research Method

As the strategy for this small-scale study was experimental, two groups of comparable proficiency levels were formed with a convenience sample of 60 participants from higher secondary freshmen in a private institute of Karachi in ESL setting. The first group was control group, and this was taught the conditional structures and usages with the course book by a fellow teacher who had no idea about corpus, while the second was called an experimental group, who were taught the same structures and usages using BNC in team teaching for an equal number of hours across four weeks by the teacher-researchers. The employed design was a deliberate attempt to minimize the possible teacher effect on the results that could be harmful if the experimental and control groups were taught by the same teacher-researchers.

3.1 Context

This study was conducted with the freshmen at a private institution of Karachi that prepares students for the examination of Karachi Board of Intermediate. Another aim of the aforementioned institution is to help students develop necessary language skills to prepare for

the future tertiary education. All students are provided compulsory intensive language education for two academic years as per the board instructions. Before the beginning of the academic year, no proficiency test is administered to incoming students. If they score 33 or above out of 100 in the previous Matric Board Exams, they are accepted to an intermediate level of education. The English examinations of Karachi Board of Intermediate are mainly based on rote learning. Still, recently, there has been some so-called 'improvement' in the assessment of English in which conditional sentences have been given due place under the grammar portion.

3.2 *Participants*

Sixty intermediate students were divided into two groups, i.e., one was the control group, and another was experimental group. The control group was taught all three conditional sentences by a fellow teacher who had no idea of corpus linguistics, however the experimental group was taught all three conditional sentences by the teacher-researchers as a team teaching by using concordance lines, taken from BNC. In order to make sure the same level of learners in both intact groups, pre-tests were conducted in both the groups. After one month's treatment in the experimental group and the traditional teaching in controlled group, post-tests were again conducted in both groups.

3.3 Instrument

The instrument for this study was the adapted tests of conditional sentences, taken from the master thesis of Girgin (2011), who used Oxford grammar for developing the tool for quantitative data. However, the material for concordance lines used in this research for teaching conditional tenses was derived from British National Corpus. *If*-conditionals in English are normally composed of two parts: a conditional clause and the main clause. Three possible conditional constructions used here are as follows:

(1) First conditional: present + will + verb in the base form (*if it rains, we'll go home*).

(2) Second conditional: past + would + verb in the base form (*if it rained, we would go home*).

 (3) Third conditional: past perfect + would have + V.3 (*if it had rained, we would have gone home*).

Table 1. Distribution of *if*-conditionals			
Verb Forms (tenses and modals)		Time Reference	Meaning (modality)
If – clause	Main clause		

Table 1. Distribution of *if*-conditionals with types and meanings.

3.4 *Tests*

After having chosen three conditional structures to be taught during the treatment of the study, two EFL tests (pre-test, and post-test) were adapted from Grigin (2011). The selected target grammar structures were three conditional sentences. So as to formulate the two similar tests of one kind, the teacher-researchers adapted a pool of questions for each target structure. Approximately forty questions of the same level of difficulty were adapted from previous research. Each test consisted of 10 questions based on conditional types I, II, and III. The pre-test and post-test papers had gap-filling questions with one example sentence.

The conditional clause or if-clause, also known as a protasis, usually begins with the subordinating conjunction if the main clause, sometimes referred to as an apodosis, deals with the situation dependent on the condition represented in the situation *if*-clause (Werth). Three conditional constructions emerge as follows:
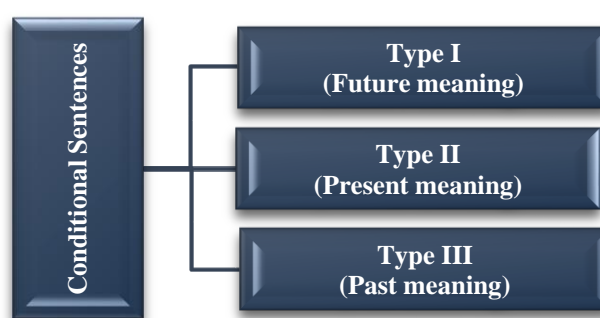
3.5 Conditional Sentences

We use conditional sentences when one situation depends on another. There are three types of these.

3.5.1 Type I*: (future meaning)*

We use type I when something is possible, true or real.

Construction: If + Present Simple + Future Simple

For instance:

- *If you invite me, I will come.*

- *If he is a good doctor, he will save his patient.*

Note: We always use simple present tense with *if*, in conditional type I but it will give you future meaning.

3.5.2 Type II*: (present meaning)*

We use type II, when something is impossible, untrue, or unreal.

Construction: If + past simple + subject + would + infinitive

For instance,

- *If you invited me, I would come.*

- *If he were good doctor, he would save patient.*

- *If he were good player, he would win the match.*

Note: In conditional type II only, we use "were" with all the subjects to make the statement formal.

3.5.3 Type III*: (past meaning)*

We use type III to talk about a past event that did not happen.

Construction: If + past perfect + subject + would have + past participle

For instance,

- *If you had invited me, I would have come.*

- *If he had been good player, he would have won the match.*

- *T.S. Elliot commented, had John Keats lived longer, he would have surpassed Shakespeare's matureness.*

Note: In conditional type III only, we can use interrogative sentences and remove *if* to standardize the speech. For instance, *Had you invited me, I would have come.*
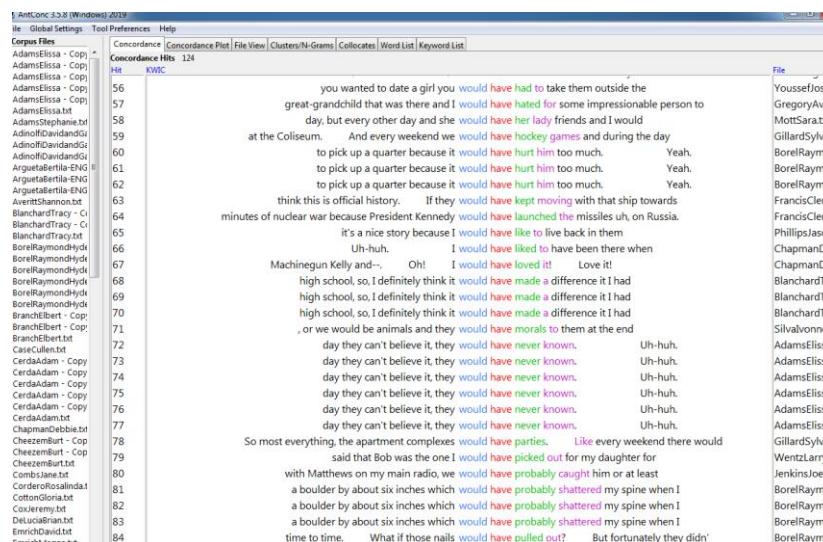
Figure 1. Screenshot of AntConc version 3.2.1w. The list shows usages of *would have* from BNC.

3.6 Scoring

After conducting both the pre and post-tests, tests were scored by the teacher-researchers. The test items consisted of gap-filling questions based on a 0-1 point scale for each gap-filling item, where 0 marks means *no response/ incorrect response*, and 1 mark represented a *complete, correct response*. All the test papers were scored by the teacher-researchers. For the control group, the course book was used to teach three types of conditional sentences but BNC corpus was used to see the natural and authentic use of Conditional sentences and proper concordance lines of conditional sentences was shown to the students of experimental group, as the concordance lines were necessary for presentation and practice purposes. A snapshot of concordance lines is shown below.

After seeing the natural use of conditional sentences in concordance lines, the students were able to infer the rules ,by studying concordance lines. They were not required to rote learn only usages but rather look at its different descriptive uses.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

For data collection purposes, the researchers adapted the test of Girgin (2011), and the specific BNC corpus was used to teach the conditional sentences to the learners of the experimental group. Two pre and post-tests were conducted to see the learning difference after the

intervention. It may be noted here again that the control group was taught from the prescribed textbook. In contrast, the experimental group was explained how to handle corpus-based text for learning conditional sentences. Further, the control group was taught the prescriptive rules of conditional sentences from the same textbook while the experimental group was taught by descriptive grammar where rules were not taught rather, different uses of conditional sentences in natural settings were shown by referring to BNC. After ensuring that participants in the control group had understood the rules and types of conditional sentences, they were asked to take the gap-filling exercises. The post-test of both control and experimental groups were conducted, and their scores were further compared and analyzed using the SPSS software.

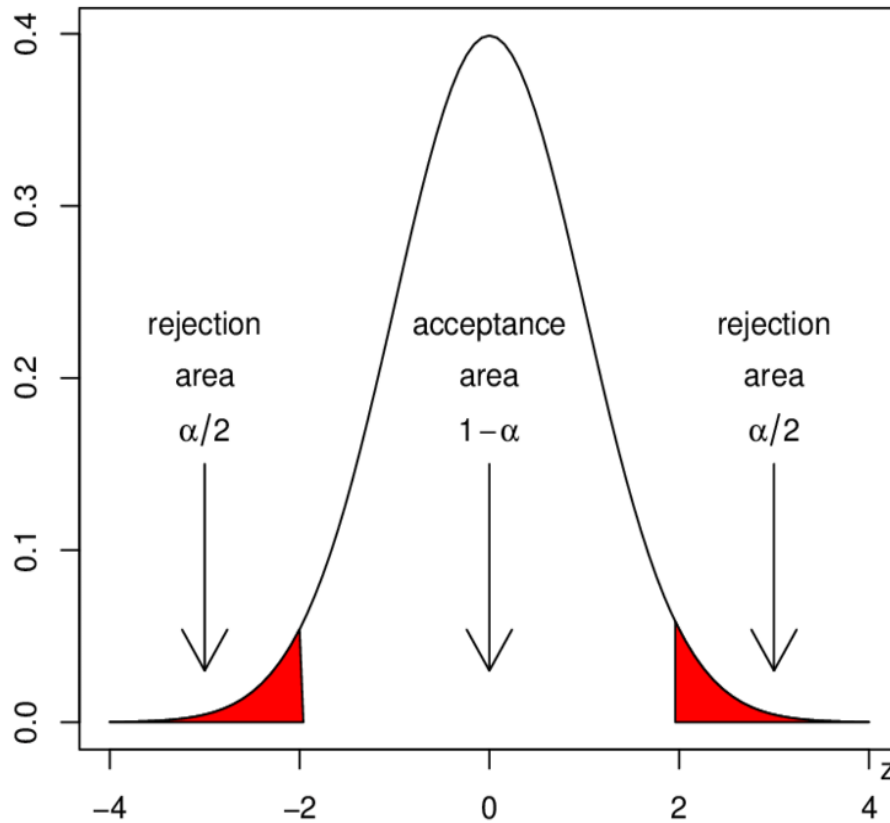Figure 2. Screenshot of SPSS version 2.4

Figure 3. Normal Density

3.8 *Data Analysis*

As this is quantitative research, numerical data in the form of scores of the learners were collected to compare their first performance with their final performance of both the groups. First, the pre-test performance would be compared with the post-test performance of control and experimental groups separately. The performance of the same sample was analyzed twice by paired sampled *t*-test before and after the intervention. Then we needed to compare the post-test performance of the control group with the post test score of the experimental group so as to see if differences in performance existed between the groups. In this regard, independent samples *t*-test is used to compare the means of their performances. A paired samples t-test is used with mean comparison of the same population before and after the control and experimental groups separately.

Table 3. Samples of T-test	
Dependent Samples **T-Test**	Dependent samples t- test is used to check whether the mean changes overtime (Pre-Post). It is also bused to check whether means differ for two related samples.
Computation (Paired t-test for Mean) $t = \dfrac{\bar{d}}{S_d/\sqrt{n}}$	$$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{S_d/\sqrt{n}} = -4.88$$
Example:	Stress level is measured for 10 people before and after therapy. The results are given below. At 5% significance level, can we conclude that the therapy reduces stress? <table><tr><td>S (Pre)</td><td>85</td><td>90</td><td>85</td><td>95</td><td>70</td><td>88</td><td>89</td><td>92</td><td>95</td><td>82</td></tr><tr><td>S(Post)</td><td>70</td><td>80</td><td>70</td><td>88</td><td>68</td><td>86</td><td>79</td><td>91</td><td>88</td><td>69</td></tr><tr><td>d</td><td>-15</td><td>-10</td><td>-15</td><td>-7</td><td>-2</td><td>-2</td><td>-10</td><td>-1</td><td>-7</td><td>-13</td></tr></table> $$\bar{d} = -8.2$$ $S_d = 5.31$

Table 4. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control group	Pre Test	4.77	30	1.755	.321
	Post Test	6.07	30	1.363	.249
Experimental group	Pre Test	5.33	30	1.826	.333
	Post Test	6.60	30	1.868	.341

Table 5. Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Control group	Pre Test & Post Test	30	.454	.012
Experimental group	Pre Test & Post Test	30	.728	.000

Table 6. Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					lower	upper			
Cont. grp.	Pre Test - Post Test	-1.300	1.664	.304	-1.921	-.679	-4.279	29	.000
Exp. grp.	Pre Test - Post Test	-1.267	1.363	.249	-1.776	-.758	-5.091	29	.000

4. Results

After comparisons of performances of both the groups, it is investigated that the mean (average) score of the experimental group is more significant than controlled group. It means that the students have been able to get good marks when they were taught by corpus-based text. Thus, this study shows the effectiveness of corpus-based teaching to higher secondary grade students.

Table 7. One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control group	30	6.07	1.363	.249
Experimental group	30	6.57	1.870	.341

Table 8. One-Sample Test						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					lower	upper
Cont. grp.	24.381	29	.000	6.067	5.56	6.58
Exp. grp.	19.238	29	.000	6.567	5.87	7.26

5. Discussion

This study clearly proves the effectiveness of activities based on corpus in ESL classrooms. The scores of the learners of both groups have been compared to determine which group retained more knowledge of the conditional sentences. After comparison of both the performances, significant change is seen in both the results because the control group was taught by the traditional method of prescriptive grammar where students cram some rules of grammar, yet they are unable to apply them correctly. Moreover, traditional teaching through a textbook is less effective and quite boring. On the other hand, it can be claimed that using corpora in L2 teaching is effective and helpful for ESL learners since corpora provide authentic and real-life language samples to the learners to understand the real descriptions of a language.

Although the corpus-based study is effective for ESL learners, it is still not applied in educational setups in Pakistani classrooms, which are not well equipped. Further, English is taught as a subject by textbook just to pass the exam for which students cram the rules of grammar. Moreover, the specific corpus text is not easily available. Furthermore, students, while attempting the gap-filling exercises, left some questions blank. For these blank parts of the tests, a score of 0 was allocated, which is confusing while analyzing the result, as sometimes students may know the answer, but they are not left with enough time to complete the test, leading to un-attempted questions in some cases. The corpus-based instruction was given only for this particular research, and it was observed that students were not motivated because of institutional restraints and time constraints. Many students face problems while using the AntConc application for learning English.

This study proves that teaching with corpus-based activities is more effective for higher secondary ESL learners. In corpus-based teaching, teachers can make their own corpus-based

grammar activities according to learners' needs and mental level, in addition to encouraging learners to refer to the corpus in out-of-class time. Students of Higher Secondary level can use computer applications too. These activities are more interesting for language learners and go towards making the students independent language learners. The material developers should also use corpora-derived information to provide significant input to language learners. The curriculum planners can also incorporate corpus-based activities while designing curriculum materials and activities. This small-scale research only examined the effectiveness of corpus-based sources on higher secondary level of ESL learners' performance in conditional sentences tests. Hence, it is proposed that, in the future, empirical studies may be conducted to scrutinize the effectiveness of learning English grammar structures through corpus-based foundations.

6. Conclusion

The current study determined the effectiveness of using corpus-based activities on Higher Secondary Level for teaching selected conditional sentences. The result of this experimental study and its academic implications may help English Language Teachers who would like to use corpus-based activities for teaching grammatical structures in ESL classrooms.

Results of the quantitative analysis indicate three core features of corpus involvement in ESL setting that have positive effects on students learning outcomes: (a) learners were able to learn better the targeted structures of conditional sentences by using corpus-based activities in the classroom, and this finding implicates the fact that language teachers should use the corpus-based activities in classrooms; (b) curriculum developers should also focus on incorporating corpora-based-content in ESL setting; (c) the coherence with modern technology can lead to successful global communication.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020a). Teaching preparatory school students in KSA through rhymes: An experimental study. *The Asian ESP Journal*, *16*(4), 33-56.

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020b). EBook interaction Logs as a tool in predicting learner performance in reading. *Asiatic: IIUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, *14*(1), 174-188.

Aston, G. (1997). 'Small and large corpora in language learning' in B. LewandowskaTomaszczyk and J. P. Melia (eds): Practical Applications in Language Corpora. Lodz University Press.

Bautista, J., Samonte, I., Improgo, C. M., & Gutierrez, M. R. (2020). Mother tongue versus English as a second language in mathematical word problems: Implications to language policy development in the Philippines. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, *2*(2), 18–29. https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v2i2.283

Boulton, A. (2009, July). Corpora for all? Learning styles and data-driven learning. In *5th Corpus Linguistics Conference*.

Chambers, A. (2007). Integrating corpora in language learning and teaching. *Re CALL, 19*(3), 249 251. https://doi:10.1017/S0958344007000134

Chomsky, N. (1988). *Language and problems of knowledge.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Flowerdew, L. (2005). 'An integration of corpus-based and genre-based approaches to text analysis in EAP/ESP: countering criticisms against corpus-based methodologies,' English for Specific Purposes 24/3: 321–32.

Gavioli, L. (1997). 'Exploring texts through the concordancer: Guiding the learner' in A. Wichmann, S. Fligelstone, T. McEnery, and G. Knowles (eds): Teaching and Language Corpora. Longman

Ghadessy, M., Henry, A., & Roseberry, R. L. (Eds.). (2001). *Small corpus studies and ELT: Theory and practice* (Vol. 5). John Benjamins Publishing.

Gilmore, A. (2009). Using online corpora to develop students' writing skills. ELT Journal, 63(4), 363-372.

Girgin, U. (2011). *Corpus-based activities at lower levels of EFL proficiency: The effectiveness of using concordance lines on grammar learning* (Doctoral dissertation, Bilkent University).

http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/archive/papers/gblibs.html   Gavin Burnage and Glynis Baguley

Hunston, S. (2002). *Corpora in applied linguistics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johns, T. F. (1986). "Microconcord: A language-learner's research tool." System 14.2, 151-162.

Johns, T. F. (1991). Should you be persuaded – two samples of data-driven learning materials. Tim F. Johns and Philip King, eds. Classroom Concordancing (ELR Journal 4), 1-16

Kennedy, C., & Miceli, T. (2001). An evaluation of intermediate students' approaches to corpus investigation. *Language learning & technology*, *5*(3), 77-90. http://llt.msu.edu/vol5num3/kennedymiceli/

McEnery, T., & Wilson, A. (1997). Teaching and language corpora (TALC). *RECALL-HULL-, 9*, 5-14.

Rahman, T. (2001). *English-Teaching Institutions in Pakistan*, Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural

Sun, Y-C. (2000). Using on-line corpus to facilitate language learning. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, British Columbia, Canada. Retrieved 23.03.2011, from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1060374304000190.

Sun, Y-C. (2007). Learner perceptions of a concordancing tool for academic writing. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 20(4), 323-343.

Sun, Y. C., & Wang, L. Y. (2003). Concordancers in the EFL classroom: Cognitive approaches and collocation difficulty. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *16*(1), 83-94. https://doi.org/10.1076/call.16.1.83.15528

Tao, H. (2001). *Discovering the usual with corpora: The case of remember*. na. In Simpson, Rita / Swales, John (eds) Corpus Linguistics in North America. University of Michigan Press, 116-144.

Widdowson, H. (1991), 'The description and prescription of language', in J. Alatis (ed.), Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, pp. 11–24

Yoon, H., & Hirvela, A. (2004). ESL student attitudes toward corpus use in L2 writing. *Journal of second language writing*, *13*(4), 257-283. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.06.002

Relevance of Short Stories in the   EFL/ ESL Classrooms: A Critical Study of Literature

Mohammad Mujtaba Ahmad

Department of English Language and Translation, College of Sciences and Arts, Methnab,

Qassim University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

1933@qu.edu.sa

Bio-profile:

Dr. Mohammad Mujtaba Ahmad earned his M. A. degree in English literature from Lalit Narayana Mithila University (Bihar), India. He engaged himself in a comparative study of various languages and went on to complete his Ph.D. in 2004. He started his teaching career as a lecturer in the department of English at M. R. S. M College, Darbhanga, India, where he taught for more than a decade. He joined as a lecturer in Ministry of Health, K.S.A, in 2004. In 2009 he joined Qassim University and is currently rendering his service as an Assistant Professor in the Department of English Language and Translation, College of Sciences and Arts, Methnab. He is a reputed creative writer and has authored several books, including *Songs of Tears and Laughter*, a collection of his published poems. He used to compose humorous poems in English most of which have been published in esteemed Indian dailies like The Hindustan Times, Patna, apart from many magazines. His humorous articles are frequently published in popular newspapers and magazines from Hyderabad, India. He has earned a name for translating into English the articles from Urdu newspaper *Akhbar-e-Mashriq* published from Kolkata, India. He has also translated many famous Urdu poems into English and published the anthology as *Sunny Songs*.

Abstract

The use of literature has long been rejected by many scholars in the EFL/ ESL class on the ground that it has an artistic vein, and it cannot yield the desired result as the language used is complex and difficult for L2 learners. Recently, however, the failure of traditional teaching pedagogies to bring about desired learning outcomes has highlighted the importance of

literature in the ESL/ EFL classroom. It provides a forceful medium for enhancing linguistic, phonetic, cultural, moral, and humanistic awareness. Among the various genres of literature, perhaps the most enjoyable and entertaining genre is the short story. This paper aims to establish the usefulness and relevance of teaching short stories in EFL/ ESL classrooms by tracing the history of the short story and summarizing studies on the subject. The biggest challenge for the ESL/ EFL teacher is engaging the learners in the learning process, and this is easily tackled when short stories are used as authentic language materials. Short stories successfully capture learners' attention and ensure engagement, enhancing learners' language skills apart from reinforcing universal principles such as, victory of truth and justice, paling of evil before good, and other human values. In other words, short stories enrich the learners' language repertoire while also giving them a sense of aesthetic fulfilment.

Keywords: Short story; Didacticism; Aesthetic; Linguistic skills; Pedagogy; Approach.

Introduction:

An argument whether in favor or against the practice of teaching literature in EFL/ ESL classrooms is rendered redundant by the very fact that in practice, target language literature is being taught in EFL/ ESL classes all over the world. Hence, it seems more pertinent and useful to examine which genre of literature should be taught in EFL/ ESL class though it is also noteworthy to understand that every genre has its own strengths and weaknesses as a language learning medium, making it more accurate to say which genre of literature should get special attention. Generally, poetry, drama, novel, and short story are taught in different EFL/ ESL contexts and varying degrees of success. Short story is fiction that can be read in a single sitting which is a feature that makes it suitable for EFL/ ESL class time frame. So far as poetry is concerned, it is replete with emotions, aesthetic beauty, metaphysical ideas, and emotions, which pose difficulties in understanding the beauty lying beneath the lines and hence, the awkwardness of the L2 reader in interpreting it.

On the other hand, short stories are famous for their singularity of effect. The features of a 'good' short story have been summarized by Edgar Allan Poe, making it a perfect addition to the EFL/ ESL classroom: It can be read in one sitting, ends in its climax, and has only one mood. Then there is drama as a genre. But the problem of incorporating this genre in EFL/ ESL classrooms is that what is written for stage can't be understood forcefully while sitting in the class and listening to the instructor. Keeping in view the ease and availability of the short story, its brevity, and singularity of effect, it is widely accepted as the most appropriate genre to be

taught in EFL/ ESL classrooms. It is accepted as a perfect pedagogical tool by many scholars. Brumfit et al. (1996) advocate the use of short- stories as one of the best methods in ELT available with a teacher because of various educational aspects. In their opinion, short stories help to develop the language skills of the students more effectively. They are easy to finish in a class and easy to understand. They also catch the students' attention more than any other genre or even extracts of them. The current study has tried to establish this fact. The study of the evolution and history of this genre has also been carried out to present a clear view of its importance and utility. Also the different kinds of short stories have been discussed to shed light on their special features. The different advantages of this genre have also been discussed to depict the accuracy and sensibility of incorporating this genre in EFL/ ESL classes.

1. History of the Short Story

Short story is prose fiction with a single plot, a single setting, and focuses on a single incident. It is less complex than a novel. A classical definition of the short story is that one should be able to read it in one sitting., a point most notably made in Edgar Allan Poe's essay, *The Philosophy of Combination* (1846). Another definition places the maximum word limit at 7,500 words. In contemporary usage, the term short story most often refers to a work of fiction no longer than 20,000 and no shorter than 1,000 words (www.en.wikipedia.org). H. G. Wells, the famous master of short story has defined it in the following words :

"A short story is, or should be a single thing; it aims at producing one single vivid effect; it has to seize the attention at the outset, and never relaxing gather it together more and more until the climax is reached. The limits of the human capacity to attend closely, therefore, set a limit to it; it must explode and finish before the interruption occurs on fatigue sets in. (Rees, 2003).

The evolution of the short story can be traced even before man learned to express himself in a durable medium. This was the time of the folktales and fables (Sen, 2017) which existed since time immemorial. Ancient narratives like the Epic of Gilgamesh, are in verse form. The War of the Gods, The Story of Adapa (both Babylonian), were inscribed in cuneiform on clay during the 2nd millennium BCE (Britannica). In Egypt, India, Middle East, and Greece, narratives andtales' traditions can be traced from ancient times. *The Shipwrecked Sailor,* an Egyptian tale was composed in 2000 BC and it has a strong moral: the result of struggle in life is always sweet. There is a rich treasure of stories in the ancient Indian literature. Books like Ramayana, Jataka Kathas, and Panchatantra are also comprise tales and narratives. In fact, Panchatantra

is an anthology of amusing and moralistic animal tales akin to those of 'Aesop' in Greece who contributed richly to the art of fiction.

In Europe during the Middle Ages, the short tale became an important means of diversion and amusement. From the medieval to the Renaissance period, many cultures adopted short stories for their own purposes. Sen (2017) pointed out that though the short story evolved greatly in Europe right upto the Renaissance period, it was with the appearance of Chaucer and Boccaccio that fabliaux and fables entered the realm of the short story.

Thomas Hardy and George Eliot in Britain, Pushkin and Turgenev in Russia, Balzac in France and Hawthorne and Fennimore Cooper in America contributed majorly to the development of the short story in the international arena. These writers, in turn, influenced Maupassant, Chekhov, Poe and Melville. At the same time, the modern short story was also picking pace in America. Thus, short-story writing flourished in the 19th century simultaneously in Germany, America, France and Russia. Chekhov, however, revolutionized the genre by abandoning the beginning-middle -and end plot, refusing to judge his characters, and not striving for a climax or seeking narrative resolution. Thus, for a long time, there were two main traditions in short stories: the event- plot story, and the Chekhovian story, and most of the short stories fell into one of these two categories (Boyd, 2006).

2. Types of Short Stories

According to Roan 1952), a comprehensive list of the types of short stories would include the following:

1. Anecdote: It is characterized by a very short description, which nevertheless, is amusing and has inherent laughter to it.

2. Drabble: A very short description of about one hundred words which is characterized by mastery of expression in a very limited space.

3. Fable: Short fiction with animals as characters having traits similar to humans, and usually carrying a moral lesson.

4. Feghoot: A short, humorous story with humour springing from pun, and the conclusion being an atrocious pun.

5. Flash fiction: Ranging in length from a few words to a maximum of 1000 words, also known as micro-fiction.

6. Frame story: A story within a story.

7. Mini saga: A story that is composed with only fifty words.

8. Story sequence: A story that has a well-defined beginning, middle and end.

9. Sketch story: A story with a minor or no plot and is in the nature of a sketch of a preson or a place.

10. Vignette: Basically impressionistic, these stories focus on one scene, person or idea.

Relevance of Short Stories in EFL/ ESL Classroom:

With modern life posing intolerable tensions, turmoil and challenges to the entire learner community struggling to adjust to the Covid imposed new normal, the respite offered by reading short stories of another culture can be an excellent creative break. Short stories consume the reader faster as the compulsion to fit in detail in a limited space makes them read pithier than other genre. So far as the incorporation of the short story in EFL/ ESL classes is concerned many imminent scholars agree that it can be used as an effective pedagogical tool. Boyd (2006) has said in support of the idea: "The short story is both relatively quickly written and the perfect pedagogical tool." One of the benefits of incorporating the short story in EFL/ ESL curriculum is that it is not time consuming like the novel and drama. Because of its shortness of length, it can be taught easily in one lecture as the great practitioner of short story, Edgar Allan Poe, has remarked, "a narrative that could be read at one sitting from a half an hour up to two hours". So the introduction of short stories as TLM in EFL/ ESL classrooms seems to be appropriate.

In the development of basic skills of language the role of short story in the EFL/ ESL class has been recognized by many scholars like (Bretz, 1990); Kelly & Krishnan (1995); Gilroy et al.,1997); Belcher and Hirvela (2000); and Kim (2004). Brez (1990) argues that the short story enriches communicative competence by providing a springboard for critical thinking and aesthetic appreciation. Lazar (1993) believes that the use of short stories in ELT classrooms offers TLM that is authentic and motivating and does possess cultural values. With the incorporation of short stories in the EFL/ ESL class we can derive the motivational, cultural, literary benefits along with sublime thinking. To make this study more useful the main benefits of shorts stories are discussed here.

Empowerment of basic skills: Short stories can help the students develop their basic skills of language. Not only writing and reading but listening and speaking can also improve. Thiyagarajan (2014:5-6) argued that "Reading short stories motivate the students not only to develop their reading skill but also their thinking skills." He further stated that reading skills enable learners "to speak the language in a more imaginative way and discuss everyone's perspective." Short stories offer narratives written by eminent writers who have a magnificent control and mastery over language. So the use of words, syntax and sentence structure may

be learnt through it. Murdoch (2002) says that short stories facilitate the instructors to teach the four skills to all levels of language proficiency. If selected and exploited appropriately, short stories provide quality text -content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency. Slattery & Willis (2001:98) stated that short stories are a great treasury of supported meaning which can enhance all the four skills of learners.

Cultural Empowerment: Through the teaching of short stories, alien cultures can be taught. It is an admitted fact that most of the authors are the citizens of their time and age and they are the ambassadors of their cultures. So the short story introduces new cultures to learners. Various cultural aspects can be explored through it. In different parts of the globe, diverse cultures and social habits are prevalent and what separates the populations of the world are not races but cultures. But the cultural differences among people living in different parts of the globe can bridge a vast gulf if we use books as a platform to study the cultures of others. This cultural empathy can actually bring humanity together.It is essential to note that knowing new cultures brings the peoples of different societies close to each other and it is the books which can educate us in new cultures and societies. Short stories are an effective tool to impart the lessons of cultures of the people about whom the stories were written. Through the teaching of culture, learners get well acquainted with the social and moral standards, customs and traditions of the past, and the present. When the student learn about the new culture they also compare their own culture and at times get benefited from the new culture. To avoid misinterpretation due to differences between the two cultures instructors should provide enough explanation.

3. Authentic Teaching Material

One of the advantages of teaching short story or other genres of literature is that the students are provided authentic, trusted, and genuine language material. Though there may be a big volume of available teaching-learning material, the main challenge before the instructors of language in EFL/ ESL class is to grab the students' attention and keep them engaged. It's not an easy task at all. To meet this challenge, there is the need to use authentic teaching material. An "authentic material is any material written in English that was not created for intentional use in the English language classroom. Using this content to teach the English language can make the learning process even more engaging, imaginative, and motivating. It can also be useful to elicit genuine responses from learners" (https:/ / www.english.< blog<au…). numerous scholars have emphasized the use of authentic material in the EFL/ ESL classroom. According to Lazar (1993), "the use of short stories in ELT classrooms offers learning material

which is motivating, authentic and of great educational value". In the process of language acquisition, the use of authentic material will yield the desired results. According to Hwang (2005:2) the exposure to great amounts of authentic materials "increases (learners') sensitivity to and competence in the target language." He further argues that popular materials such as short stories "have been found most appealing because of their realistic, ready-to-use language and relevance to learners' mindsets and experiences," learners' exposure to authentic material will prompt the process of natural language acquisition. (Hwang, 2005; Sell, 2005).

Motivating learners: Almost all genres of literature have some sort of motivational elements in them. Through the use of short stories students can be motivated in an entertaining way. Literature is endowed with the intrinsic quality of motivating the reader. Short stories are replete with motivational factors. Here a short story is quoted to make the point.

4. Everyone has a Story in Life

A 24-year-old boy seeing out from the train's window shouted……
"Dad, look the trees are going behind!"
Dad smiled, and a young couple sitting nearby looked at the 24 year old's childish behavior with pity, suddenly he again exclaimed…
"Dad, look the clouds are running with us!"
The couple couldn't resist and said to the old man…….
"Why don't you take your son to a good doctor?" The old man smiled and said ……
"I did and we are just coming from the hospital, my son was blind from birth, he just got his eyes."

Every single person on the planet has a story. Don't judge people before you truly know them. The truth might surprise you. (https://www.4recruitmentservices.com<.....)
Motivational and inspirational qualities are there in short stories about which Elliot (1990) affirms by saying that literature motivates advanced students and is "motivationally effective if students can genuinely engage with its thoughts and emotions and appreciate its aesthetic qualities". Literature is accorded high place in every civilized society and the civil, moral and cultural standards of a society are acknowledged with the help of existing literature there. Johan Wolfgang Von Goethe has rightly written, "The decline of literature indicates the decline of a nation." If the short stories instructors select the teaching material keeping in view the interest

of the learners it would yield unexpected results. Instructors should avoid 'frustrational reading' (Schulz, 1981). Murdoch (2002:2) argues in this connection by stating, "short stories can, if selected and exploited approximately, provide text content which will greatly enhance English language teaching courses for learners at intermediate levels of proficiency."

Introduction of literary elements: Every literary genre is replete with beautiful literary devices. The use of words in literary works testifies the famous observation of Coleridge, "Prose is the words in their best order and poetry the best words in the best order." Chesterton has written in a similar vein, "Literature is a luxury; fiction is a necessity." Ezra Pound has written about the language used in literature, "Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree." Language and literary devices are vital in fiction as well as in others genres of literature too. Great practitioners of modern short story have used different literary devices to attain the artistic excellence. Stories of Edgar Alan Poe, Herman Melville, Anton Chekhov, Ernest Hemingway, Katherine Mansfield, John Galsworthy and many others have made use of many literary devices to reach the artistic perfection. It would not be possible to analyze the writings of all these great short story writers in the scope of this study, but some of the writers' language used in their famous stories would be discussed in order to know how the teaching of short story in EFL/ ESL classroom. A famous short story written by Ernest Hemingway entitle *Hills Like While Elephant* is about a young couple and the polemic issue of abortion. Hemingway has used with artistic perfection two literary elements namely setting and symbolism. In the opening paragraph the setting introduces the tense atmosphere that continues till the end of the story. The setting of the story is in the 1920's. The author has described the setting in the following words:

> *The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white . On this side there was no shade and no trees and the station was between two lines of rails in the sun. […] The American and the girl with him sat at a table in the shade, outside the building. It was very hot, and the express from Barcelona would come in forty minutes. It stopped at this junction for two minutes and went to Madrid.*

In the opening paragraph, Hemingway describes a landscape that is bereft of any natural structure which would make it attractive. The valley has no shade and no trees and is bordered by the hills from which the story derives its name. The young couple is engaged in a serious discussion. They have to describe abortion which, according to American is easy and a friendly solution to the problem, but for the girl not easy to decide. They have only two choices, like

the two rail lines that pass by the station. The loneliness and openness around the railroad indicate that there is no way to back out of the problem, and the couple have to take some decision. The symbolism of the landscape of the station is fundamental to the depiction of the conflict in the story. When the girl sees the white and long hills she says 'they look like white elephants. Through her observation of the white hills, she foresees the birth of her baby, and the white color symbolizes the innocent and purity of the unborn child. In the description of the other side of the valley, as quoted below, the fields of grain and trees symbolize fertility and fruitfulness that is related to her pregnancy and the unborn child in her womb. The Ebro River represents life as it has the germinating power.

> "*The girl stood up and walked to the end of the station. Across, on the other side, were the fields of grain and trees along the banks of the Ebro. Far away, beyond the river, were mountains.The shadow of a cloud moved across the field of grain and she the river through the trees.*

The two valleys describe the features of the main characters. At the end, the description of their luggage quoted below is symbolic of their lifestyle, American life, and culture.

> *He did not say anything but looked at the bags against the wall of the station. There were labels on them from all the hotels where they had spent nights."*

The American wants abortion to keep his current lifestyle. The bags carrying labels of various hotels symbolize his vivacious spirit. From the above discussion, it is clear that short story writers use many literary elements, which opens new vistas of knowledge of their culture to the learners.

Critical Thinking: There is no place for acceptance of any information as blind faith. From the time of Socrates to our times, the ability to think critically and reason well has been regarded as an essential and necessary outcome of education (Reed, 1998). Dewy (1933) considers learning to think as the central purpose of education. The study of short stories carrying different themes and perspectives provides the learners a healthy mode of thinking. They start thinking critically when they read such stories. Howie (2011) believes that the instructors have the responsibility to help students develop cognitive skills because everyone needs to make judgments, be decisive, come to conclusions, synthesize information, organize, evaluate, predict, and apply knowledge. Young (2007), as cited by Khatib et al. (2017) in their paper, indicated that "stories have two crucial advantages over traditional content, [first] because they

are entertaining, students' pervasive apprehension is reduced, and they learn from the beginning that critical thinking is natural, familiar, and sometimes even fun. Second, the stories put issues of critical thinking in an easily remembered context."

Personal Growth: Literature provides a rich platform for the development of one's personality: intellectually, culturally, morally, and educationally. It gives us a better understanding of society and the world, it broadens our outlook, and we find ourselves better poised to be useful to others. As literature reflects life, short stories being an essential genre of literature, pave the way for our personal growth. Carter and Long (1991) stated that literary genres encourage intellectual development and personal growth simultaneously. Violetta-Irene (2015:3) stated that through reading literature, a learner could establish relationships with their surroundings. In fact, the short story is a grenade of ideas that guide us in darkness and light our way, provide us a good understanding of our surroundings, and all these factors help in our personal growth. Short stories seem more targeted -hand grenades of ideas if you will. When they work, they hit, they explode, and you never forget them. Long fiction feels more like atmosphere: it's a lot smokier and less defined" (Bacigalupi, 2010; Alkhodimi & Al Ahdal, 2019).

In addition to the above-mentioned advantages of incorporating short stories in the EFL/ ESL classroom, the following advantages mentioned by Arigol as cited by Khatib (2017) are listed below:

- It makes the reading assignment easy being concise and straightforward;
- Introducing the reader to other cultures;
- Providing a fictional, fascinating world;
- Helping students to be more creative and raising the critical thinking skills;
- Raising cultural awareness;
- Reducing anxiety and helping them feel more relaxed
- Providing multicultural contexts

5. Conclusion

It is amply clear that among the different genres of English literature for the L2 learner, the short story is the genre that is the most suitable for EFL/ ESL classrooms. Drama is purely an art to be performed on the stage and novels also being so lengthy cannot be enjoyed in the classroom environment in a proper manner. Poetry being the carrier of emotions, can pose problems because of the metaphysical thoughts and aesthetic ideas difficult for the L2 learner to decipher. So, it is the short story which is the most suitable literary genre to be introduced

in the EFL/ ESL classroom. According to Edgar Allan Poe, short story has unity of impression. It deals with a single character, a single event, a single emotion or the series of emotions called forth by a single situation. The short story is the single effect, complete and self-contained (Matthews, 1994; Al-Ahdal,2020). It is clear from the present study that incorporation of the short story in EFL/ ESL classrooms will not only help in the development of language skills, but it would be equally important in the attainment of cultural, didactic, social, moral, and linguistic excellence. Literary elements are learned and critical thinking is developed with the teaching of short stories. Being 'short', it engages the learner better, becoming a cause of joy and entertainment. It gives the EFL/ ESL learners an opportunity to enrich and embellish their language repertoire, to enjoy the authentic material, to bask in the cultural sun, to inculcate sublime and critical thinking, to meet the requirements of personal growth along with empowering vocabulary and other language skills. Hence it should be incorporated in EFL/ ESL classrooms everywhere.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020). EBook interaction Logs as a tool in predicting learner performance in reading. *Asiatic: IIUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, *14*(1), 174-188.

Alkhodimi, K. A., & Al Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2019). Literature in English as a foreign language classroom in KSA: rectifying a relationship with odds. *Utopía y praxis latinoamericana: revista internacional de filosofía iberoamericana y teoría social*, (6), 256-264.

Bacigalupi, P. (2010). *Ship breaker*. Hachette UK.

Belcher, D. & Hirvela,A. (2000).Literature and L2 composition : Revisiting the debate. *Journal of Second Language Writing,9*(1),21-29

Boyd, W. (2006). A short history of the short story. *The Quarter*, *3*, 5-9.

Brumfit, C. J., Brumfit, C., & Carter, R. (Eds.). (1986). *Literature and language teaching*. Oxford University.

Carter, R. and Long, M.N(1991) *Teaching Literature* . Harlow: Longman

Collie, J. and Slatter,S .(1991) *Literature in the Language Classroom* . Glasgow: Cambridge University Press.

Dewy, J. (1933). How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process. *DC Heath and Company. NY US*.

Elliot, R. (1990). Encouraging reader-response to literature in ESL situations. *ELT journal*, *44*(3), 191-198. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/44.3.191

Gilory, M. and Perkinson, B.(1997).Teaching Literature in a Foreign Language. Language Teaching 29(4),213-225.

Gilroy, M., Fraser, S., Parkinson, B., & Benson, C. (1997). GEPM Research Project–Final Report. *Unpublished mimeo: IALS*.

Howie, D. (2011). *Teaching students thinking skills and strategies: A framework for cognitive education in inclusive settings*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Hwang, C. C. (2005): Effective EFL education through popular authentic materials. *Asian EFL Journal,. 7*(1). 90-101.

Hwang,C.C.(2005) : Effective EFL Education through Popular Authentic Materials . Asian EFL journal,Vol 7.1.

Kelly, R. K., & Krishnan, L. A. (1995). " Fiction Talk" in the ESP Classroom. *English for Specific Purposes*, *14*(1), 77-86.

Khatib, M, Seyyed, H. & Seyyed R.(2017). Shoat story based language teaching: A literature-based language teaching method (Journal of Humanities Insights: I December 2017))

Kim,M.(2004).Literature. Literature discussions in adult L2 learning . Language and Education 18(2),145-166.

Lazar, G.(1993). *Literature in Language Teaching: A guide for teachers and trainers*. Ernst Klett Sprachen Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matthews, B. (1994)The Philosophy of the Short-Story. In: MAY, Charles. The New Short Story Theories. Athens: Ohio University Press. p. 73-80.

Mourao,S.(2009). Using Stories in the Primary Classroom. In the British Council,Brit. Lit: Using Literature in EFL Classrooms(17-26). The British Council.

Murdoch, G. (2002). Exploiting well-known short stories for language skills development. *IATEFL LCS SIG Newsletter*, *23*, 9-17.

Reed, J. H. (1998). *Effect of a model for critical thinking on student achievement in primary source document analysis and interpretation, argumentative reasoning, critical thinking dispositions, and history content in a community college history course*. University of South Florida.

ROAN, H. (1952). LITERARY NEWS. *The National Cactus and Succulent Journal*, 38-38.

Schulz, R. A. (1981). Literature and readability: Bridging the gap in foreign language reading. *The modern language journal*, *65*(1), 43-53. https://doi.org/10.2307/326206

Sell, J.P.A. (2005). Why Teach literature in the foreign language classroom? *Encuentro 15*(1):86-93.

SEN, M. (2017)The evolution and growth of short story. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL*,.5..(3,) ,

Thiyagarajan, K. (2014). Integrating Short Stories in the ESL Classroom for Developing Learners' Communicative Competence. *Language in India*, *14*(12), 671-678.

Violetta-Irene, K. (2015). The use of literature in the language classroom: Methods and aims. *International journal of information and education technology*, *5*(1), 74.

Young, A. (1996). Introducing critical thinking at the college level with children's stories. *College Teaching*, *44*(3), 90-93.

Cognitive and Attitudinal Effects of Jigsaw Technique as a Collaborative Learning Strategy in Literature Teaching in the Philipines

Kanittha Charernnit

College of Hospitality Industry Management; Suan Sunandha
Rajabhat University, Thailand
kanittha.ch@ssru.ac.th
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3016-9451

Alaa Q. Alhourani
Jouf University, Saudi Arabia
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8182-417X

Myla M. Arcinas
De La Salle University, Philippines
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5795-031X

Lovella G. Velasco
Nueva Vizcaya State University
lgvelasco@nvsu.edu.ph lovella.velasco@yahoo.com

Bio-profiles:

Kanittha Charernnit is a faculty of the College of Hospitality Industry Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand. She has co-authored and published researches various international journals. She has also presented results of her findings in various international research conferences and symposia.

Alaa Qasim Alhourani is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at Jouf University, Saudi Arabia. He teaches courses at the English Department such as phonetics and phonology, semantics, sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. His research interests include language development reading strategies, learning styles and language acquisition.

Dr. Myla M. Arcinas is an Associate Professor at the De La Salle University, Philippines and the current Assistant Dean for External Affairs and Lasallian Mission at the College of Liberal Arts. She has published numerous articles in international journals and her research interests include e-learning, information and communication technologies (ICT), social research methods, youth/adolescents studies, organizational and health studies.

Dr. Lovella Gamponia Velasco is an associate professor of Language and Literature at Nueva Vizcaya State University Bambang Campus. She was a Civil Service Commission Pagasa 2019 awardee for promoting researches on regional women writers and regional literature. At present, she is the Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

Abstract

The study generally aims to assess the effects of the jigsaw technique as a collaborative learning strategy on students' achievements in learning literature. Specifically, it looks into the students' general attitude towards using collaborative learning strategies when they are taught English literature. It employs a quasi-experimental research design with two groups of respondents totaling 68 senior high school students who are enrolled for a typical literature course: 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World. Results indicated that using the jigsaw technique enhances students' attitudes towards collaborative learning apart from improving the achievement of students in a literature course. The effect of Jigsaw as collaborative learning on achievements in literature is the same regardless of students' ability level and gender. However, students with more academic preparation are likely to benefit more from learning collaboratively. The study's results will offer implications on the development of students' literary competence, which is the primary goal of literature teaching.

Introduction

Innovative and outcomes-based education is necessary for the 21st century. Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty. Over the past decade, significant progress has been made in Philippines towards increasing access to education and school enrollment rates at all levels, particularly for girls. Quality educational services should be assured to ensure children's well-being and their access to continued learning. Earlier studies claimed that the teacher's instructional methods affected student achievement (Al-

Ahdal & Alqasham, 2020; Blazar & Kraft, 2017; Cheng et al., 2019; Egalite & Kisida, 2018; Magulod Jr. et al., 2019; Magulod Jr., 2018a). It is believed that students are encouraged to engage effectively in the learning process if the teacher uses the right techniques. These approaches offer instructions for students to reach their maximum learning potential. Successful teachers identify students' differences, create ties with students, interact with parents, offer valuable inputs to students, and use methods that help students take responsibility for their education. The teacher's techniques also influence and improve the success of students.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning (CL) is a teaching philosophy (Alghasab, Hardman & Handley, 2019; Herrera-Pavo, 2021; Malmberg et al., 2019). It reflects a significant shift from the classroom-oriented, lecture-centered learning environment. The method of lecturing/listening/notation does not entirely cease in collaborative classrooms but is contiguous to other processes focused on student discussion and constructive cooperation with the course materials (Jiang & Dewaele, 2019). Teachers who use collaborative methods prefer to view themselves less like expert knowledge transmitters to students and more like specialist creators of intellectual environments for students, such as coaches and midwives, for an emerging learning process (Jiang & Zhang, 2020). Over the last ten years, collaborative teaching-learning has surfaced as a significant concept within the field of language education (Bozanta & Mardikyan, 2017; Dado & Bodemer, 2017; Ibrahim et al., 2015; Kaendler et al., 2015; Kukulska-Hulme & Viberg, 2018; Lin, 2015; Lin et al., 2016; Nishioka, 2016). Collaboration is working together to accomplish shared goals. Collaborative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's knowledge (Meijer et al., 2020). Within collaborative learning groups, students are given two responsibilities: learning the assigned material and ensuring that all other group members do the same. Thus, a student seeks an outcome that is beneficial to him and all other group members.

Literature Teaching and Learning

Literature is mandatory, particularly for students specializing in the English language and literature courses, for secondary and general school education, and college curricula. The students of literature pick other English language skills like reading, writing, and speaking. Literature teaching is not only about teaching students how to read and evaluate literature. It also lets students develop a sense of themselves, self-awareness, and a more in-depth view of the universe and other people. This study allows teachers to leverage students' literary potential

and improve their education through a range of collaborative and comprehensive academic teaching approaches. This research could also help teachers develop their literature expertise by using technical tools to illustrate and analyze various literature courses. The lack of literature for literary enjoyment and reading success of university students were significant motivators for the conduct of this study. In the Philippines, collaborative deserves more attention than it has received so far. Educators always talk about the students as the focus of classroom discussion, but they seem to forget that the heart of collaborative learning is the "learner-centered curriculum" which involves an essential trust in the learner's willingness and the ability to cope with the various learning tasks. If the teacher is in 'in-charge' most of the time, as is seen in traditional Filipino classrooms, respect for learners' choices, or the development of a sense of responsibility to learn cannot develop in the learners. Collaborative learning, on the other hand, aims towards achievement of autonomous learning and allows more room for the development of responsibility. Learner collaboration in schools is worth a try because this creates a positive interdependence among the learners who perceive that they can reach their goal best when others in the same learning group also do as well as possible. Positive interdependence needs to be structured carefully to encourage all members to work to their full capacity.

The goal of Literature Teaching is Literary Competence

Literary appreciation is one of the skills under literary competence. The mechanism by which the reader of a work of literature achieves meaningful comprehension of its subject and his/ her personal insight into the structure of the same result is known as literary appreciation (Magulod Jr., 2018b). One of the most critical consequences of teaching literature is the growth of literary competence. This applies to students' internalization of literary grammar, which helps them translate linguistic sequences into literary constructs and meanings. The aim of literature is that it helps students measure and interpret their worth as individuals (Myren-Svelstad, 2020; Magulod Jr., 2018a; Alter & Ratheiser, 2019; Almansour & Al-Ahdal, 2020). Reading of literature is made more interesting by engaging with subjects that are intrinsically interesting. They can apply what they are reading to their own lives because literature deals with thoughts, objects, sensations, and events that are either part of the reader's reality or they can integrate with imaginatively. Literature is a context for language usage as well as an indication of language in use. As a result, learning the vocabulary of literary texts as a language in motion will help learners develop a greater understanding of various structures of language

organization. As a result, teaching language through literature offers contextual enrichment and familiarizes the learner with how contact works in their context. It stimulates students both emotionally and physically, making language learning more challenging and thrilling.

Jigsaw Technique in Learning

The Jigsaw Technique is a student-friendly cooperative learning methodology (Alfares, 2021; Solehati & Kosasih, 2020). Since much of the work is done by the students themselves in this method, the teacher is not the primary source of information. This makes this way of teaching effective to self-study. Students assume responsibility for their work and successes, and as a result, they are held accountable by their peers (Ruantika et al., 2020). Since learning revolves around contact with peers, students are active participants in the learning process, and therefore, it helps to develop inter-personal and collaborative skills among students. Teachers, on the other hand, would love working with this technique because it is straightforward to practice, can be used in combination with other teaching techniques, and can be useful even if used for just an hour a day. When using the Jigsaw Technique, there could be several difficulties. A dominant student is a prevalent concern. Each jigsaw community has a designated leader to help with this issue. Students understand that encouraging each student to present their material before answering questions and making remarks helps them succeed.

Research Context and Gap

The study situates its research gap on the applicability of jigsaw in teaching English, which has not been well-researched, particularly in the literature classes. Previous studies of Salubayba et al. (2018) assessed the effectiveness of jigsaw in teaching science. Consequently, Pelobillo (2018) employed jigsaw in teaching physics and problem-solving. In like manner, Barbosa et al. (2020) studied the effects of jigsaw in reading. These studies affirmed that the use of jigsaw has positive impacts on students' learning. This research gap calls for further studies looking at the Jigsaw Technique's effectiveness in teaching of English literature. This study was conducted to fill this research gap. Teachers have been observed to move too quickly to expecting students to talk openly in a large group, rather like throwing a big class into the river where only a few could swim, and the rest would drown, never to be heard of again. In this context, if a teacher wants to produce active learning, then group work or collaborative learning, appropriately designed, will be a powerful tool for providing simultaneous opportunities for all class members. When teachers give students a group task who make

mistakes and struggle on their way, they have delegated authority, which is a crucial feature of collaboration. Students are free to accomplish their tasks in the way they think best, but they are accountable to the teacher for the final product. Although collaborative learning effects appear to be motivational, the key is not motivation to win the competition against another, but motivation to assist one's teammates in meeting their individual goals and then ensuring that the team will do well. Collaborative learning has been around for many years, and in foreign countries, research has shown that students' learning in small groups outperformed students in whole-class settings. This implies a strong link between the communicative approach to second language instruction and collaborative learning.

Objectives of the Study

The study generally assessed the effects of jigsaw in collaborative learning strategies on students' achievement in literature. Specifically, it aimed to: (1) Describe the attitude of the students towards the use of jigsaw as a collaborative learning strategy in literature, (2) assess the difference in the attitude scores of students using the jigsaw as a collaborative learning strategy, (3) ascertain the difference in the gain scores of the students before and after the intervention, (4) identify the relationship between the attitude and achievement scores of the students in using Jigsaw Technique.

Research Hypotheses

The following are the null hypotheses of the study: (1) There is no difference in the attitude scores of the two groups of subjects before and after the study; (2) There is no difference in the achievement of the students towards learning literature with the use of jigsaw technique before and after the study; (3) There is no relationship between the learners' attitude and achievement in the literature classroom.

Methodology

Research Design

This study made use of the quasi-experimental design using non-equivalent pretest and posttest design. This method is considered appropriate to examine the effects of innovations in an educational setting, which is a common method for academic research (Bloomfield et al., 2019, Campbell et al., 2019; Galama et al., 2018). Before the study's conduct, a pretest was done; a similar test was made after the study. The treatment focused on the use of the collaborative

learning strategy namely jigsaw technique. The study was conducted in one educational institution in the Philippines.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 68 senior high school students taking up a typical literature course, *21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World.* This study employed purposive sampling, and complete enumeration. The respondents were divided into two groups, A and B. Class A composed of 32 students (18 females and 14 males), while Class B composed of 36 students (19 females and 17 males). To ensure homogeneity of the participants' proficiency with respect to the level of skills, only the top two highest sections in the senior high school department were involved in the study. All participants were at the average proficiency level. Meanwhile, the test of homogeneity of variances of their language proficiency level was computed using the Levene's test for equality of variances set at 0.05 alpha level.

	Class A	Class B
Famale	18	19
Male	14	17
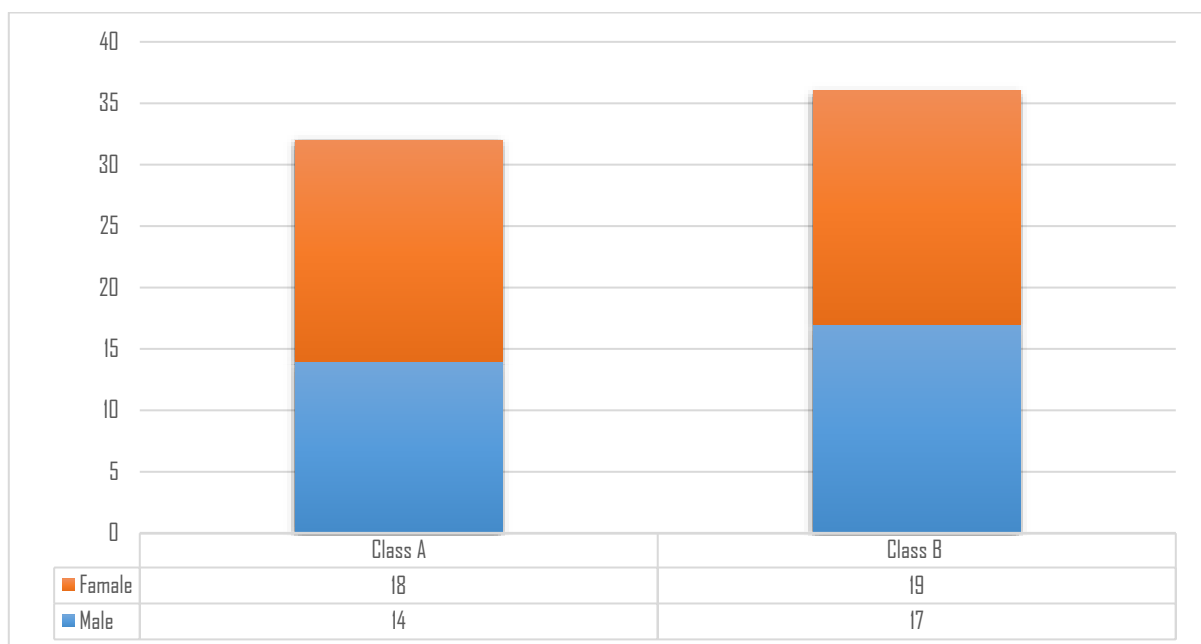
Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents

Anchored on the study's understanding of ethical studies, the participants' personal information and data were handled confidentially. The school authorities approved the written request before the selection of participants and conduct of the study. The researchers also secured the parents' consent. The parents were duly informed of the pros and cons with respect to their wards.

Treatment and Procedure

The researchers used a pretest and a posttest design for data collection. The pretest was composed of 50 items containing ten varied skills and covering literary pieces representing two different literature genres: a poem and a short story. Each of the ten skills tested five items. On the other hand, although the posttest was composed of 50 items, and the same skills were tested as in the pretest, the content was altogether different. A 3-point Likert scale was developed to obtain the students' attitudinal data which elicited the students' attitude towards the different collaborative learning strategies. A 30-item quiz was administered to the students after a strategy had been used. Each of the ten skills tested had three items. The t-test for independent samples was used to test the pretest and posttest scores between the students using the jigsaw technique. The same test was used to compare the attitudes of the two groups. The t-test for dependent samples was used in testing the difference, if any, in the scores of the two groups of students before and after the study. To test the relationship between the attitude and performance of students, the Pearson's product-moment correlation was used. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis

The study used descriptive statistics including frequency, mean, and standard deviation for data analysis. The following scale was adopted to analyze and interpret the respondents' attitudes before and after their exposure to Jigsaw Technique: 4.20-5.00, Highly Favorable; 3.40-4.19, Favorable; 3.39-2.59, Neutral; 2.58-1.80, Not Favorable; 1.00- 1.79, Very Unfavorable. The t-test of dependent sample means was used to ascertain the significant differences in the language proficiency and English language grammar attitude using jigsaw technique before and after the interventions when grouped gender-wise. Similarly, the Cohen's d effect size was used to interpret the gain scores before and after the interventions. Finally, Pearson-r was used to test the relationship between the variables. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk's normality showed a normal distribution of the pre-test-post-test scores obtained using Jigsaw Technique. This indicates that there is a normal distribution of the pre-test-post-test scores.

Results and Discussion

The attitude of students toward Jigsaw Technique as Collaborative Learning Strategy

Table 1 exhibits the attitudes of students towards the Jigsaw Technique. It can be seen from the data that both groups of respondents have a positive attitude towards the use of the Jigsaw

Technique. This is evidenced form the grand mean of Class A (X=3.42) and grand mean of Class B (X=3.41) both having descriptive interpretation coinciding with 'agreed'. The findings revealed that the respondents manifested positive and favorable attitudes to the use of Jigsaw Technique in their literature class. This confirms the findings of Melis et al. (2019) that when students are placed in groups, they learn to use appropriate social skills because they engage in such interactive abilities as trust–building, conflict management, constructive criticisms, encouragement, negotiation, and clarifying. Moreover, while working in the group, the students may have interacted with one another in their language, which facilitated comprehension of the test. Loes & Pascarella (2017) put in plain words that research has shown that collaborative learning produced positive effects, primarily on academic development, development of higher thinking skills, self-esteem and social confidence, and social acceptance of mainstreamed students.

Table 1.

Students' attitudes towards Jigsaw Technique

Items	Class A		Class B	
	Weighted Mean	**Descriptive Value**	**Weighted Mean**	**Descriptive Value**
1. I found my work in the group interesting.	3.40	Agree	2.90	Agree
2. I found my work in the group difficult.	4.20	Strongly agree	3.43	Agree
3. I understood exactly what my group was supposed to do.	3.33	Undecided	2.75	Undecided
4. I had a chance to talk during the group session.	3.34	Undecided	3.67	Agree
5. I talked as much I wanted to.	4.23	Strongly agree	3.24	Neutral
6. I got along well with everybody in the group.	2.26	Disagree	3.34	Undecided
7. I listened to the ideas of my group mates.	3.40	Agree	3.45	Agree
8. my group mates listened to me, never interrupted me.	3.40	Agree	4.21	Strongly agree
9. I would like to work with this group again.	3.40	Agree	2.93	Agree
10. I would like to do Jigsaw again.	3.40	Agree	3.23	Undecided
11. I attribute my score to the collaborative learning strategy employed.	3.40	Agree	4.32	Strongly agree
12. I feel I would have gotten a higher score if I had worked alone.	3.40	Agree	2.90	Undecided
13. I preferred to have worked alone.	3.40	Agree	3.25	Undecided
14. I learned how to be more considerate to others	3.40	Agree	3.48	Agree
15. I am more confident in learning and working with the group.	3.40	Agree	3.39	Undecided
Grand Mean	3.42	Agree	3.41	Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00- Highly Positive (strongly agree) ;3.40-4.19-Positive (agree) ;3.60-2.39-Neutral (undecided) ;1.80-2.59-Negative (disagree) ;1.00-1.79-HighlyNegative (strongly disagree)

The difference in the attitude of Class A and B students after the intervention using Jigsaw Technique Collaborative Strategy

After each of the four collaborative strategies were employed for a week, the students answered an attitudinaire to determine what they thought of the strategy. From the data in Table 2, it can

be gleaned that the jigsaw procedure did not register a significant difference. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the groups' attitude scores is accepted. This means that the attitude scores between the two groups are similar. This implies that both groups of students have a favorable disposition in using jigsaw as a collaborative learning strategy in English literature. The jigsaw procedure had some difficult instructions: The students were required to form a homegroup, and later a focus group to learn the materials and finally back to the homegroup to report what has been learned. The complexity of the directions perhaps created confusion for Class A students. One could also presume that the Class B students are better in analytical thinking than the Class A, especially in higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) and that because of this, the former thrive more on challenging instructions, never giving up even if at first, they do not understand what they are expected to do.

Table 2.

Difference between the attitudes of students from Class A and Class B groups

Jigsaw Technique as Collaborative Learning Strategy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Computed t-value
Class A	3.42	0.43	0.71	0.432 ns
Class B	3.41	0.32	0.51	

Critical value *t (df=37) .05.2-tailed tests) =2.033*
**= significant at 0.01 level

Mean achievement scores of the two groups before and after the study

As stated earlier, all the respondents were given a 50-item test before and after the study. The succeeding tables give an idea about the result. For the pretest, the Class A students' scores found on the higher score intervals with N=1 or 5% getting a score in the bracket 41-45; N=11 or 57.9% were found within the bracket of 36-40. Nobody among them got a score lower than 26. The mean pretest score for Class B came to 35.58, a figure much higher than Class A's mean of 26.35, with nobody getting a score higher than 36. However, N=5 or 25% had scores within the 31-35 range; N=7 or 35% were found in the 26-30 score bracket, and N=8 or 40% scored below 26. The disparity in the pretest mean achievement scores of both groups suggests that the Class A students are more academically prepared and more knowledgeable in processing the ten target skills in the study, namely: identifying structure, character, and feelings, identifying era, time, or age, recognizing imagery, figurative language, and poetic devices and deducing author's attitude. The same trend is seen in the posttest, with the Class B getting a mean achievement score of 44.42 as compared to 34.50 of Class A. One can deduct

from the posttest drift that just like in the pretest, the Class A students outperformed Class B once more, which signifies that the former are indeed academically better than the latter in literature learning.

Table 3.
Mean Achievement scores of the two groups before and after the study

Category	Class A		Class B	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Pretest				
16-20	2	10	0	0
21-25	6	20	0	0
26-30	7	35	4	21.05
31-53	5	25	3	15.80
36-40	0	0	11	57.90
41-45	0	0	1	5.00
Mean	26.35		35.58	
SD	5.18		4.10	
Post-test				
21-25	1	5	0	0
26-30	4	20	0	0
31-53	5	25	0	0
36-40	6	30	1	5.3
41-45	4	20	10	52.6
46-50	0	0	8	42.1
Mean	34.50		11.42	
SD	5.47		2.71	

Mean gain score of the students with the use of Collaborative Learning Strategy

The following Table 4 presents the gain score of Class A and Class B students. Based on the mean gain scores, with Class B having 8.84 and Class A having 8.15, it is inferred that both groups benefitted from the four collaborative strategies used in learning the ten target skills since there is a notable increase in their posttest scores. This finding confirms Bozanta and Mardikyan's (2017) pronouncement that collaborative learning through discussion resulted in high achievement and motivation to learn. This further corroborates one of the findings in a study of Berkes (2017) who concluded that when a class is structured and collaborative learning is employed to accomplish a given task, the students benefited both academically and socially. Nyembe and Howard (2019) also declared that interaction among the students on learning lessons would improve student achievement.

Moreover, the present study substantiates Molinillo et al., (2018) who also concluded that the students who were taught with cooperative techniques and who learned with one another, achieved higher than the students taught traditionally and individually. However, the Class A

and Class B students have the same gain scores, which is indicative of the effectiveness of collaborative strategies to students regardless of their abilities. This is evident in the computed t-value of 0.49 (not significant), which is lower than the tubular value of 2.033 at 37 degrees of freedom: .05 level in the tow-tailed test. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the gain score is accepted. This finding runs counter to Sun et al. (2017) in a meta-analysis whereby they concluded that collaborative learning improves overall performance. In the case of the latter, it makes no difference.

Table 4.

Comparison of mean gain scores of both groups with the use of Collaborative Learning Strategies

Collaborative Learning Strategies	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Computed t-value
Class A	8.15	4.57	1.00	0.49^{ns}
Class B	8.84	4.34	0.99	

Difference between the test achievement of students with the Jigsaw Collaborative Strategies

The difference between the test performance of Class A and Class B students taught with the four collaborative strategies is displayed in Table 5. It could be gleaned from the table that Class B students having higher scores than the Class A students, outperformed the latter again in the four quizzes, aside from the pretest and posttest. This is seen in the pretest computed value of 6.17; posttest computed t-value of 7.23, Jigsaw computed t-value 5.07. The difference between BSA and BSE students is significant at .01 level.

Table 5.

Difference between test achievements of students with the collaborative strategies

Collaborative Learning Strategies	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Computed t-value
Jigsaw				
Class A	19.40	4.52	1.00	5.07**
Class B	25.00	1.94	0.45	

Critical value *t (df=37) .05.2-tailed tests) =2.033*
**= significant at 0.01 level

Difference between the test achievement of male and female students

Table 6 summarizes the difference between the test performance of male and female students. While the study hypothesized that there is no difference in students' achievement when grouped according to gender, it was also found that no significant difference statistically exists, which implies that whether the subject was male or female, his or her gender did not affect his or her

achievement. This finding agrees with the previous investigations on the gender differences in collaborative learning (Curşeu et al., 2018; Deveci, 2018; Park et al., 2019).

Table 6.

Difference between test achievement of male and female students in Jigsaw Technique

Test Achievement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	Computed t-value
Male	21.83	5.34	1.3	0.37^{ns}
Female	22.38	3.71	0.8	

Critical value t (df=37): .05.2-tailed tests) =2.033
**= significant at .01 level
**= significant at .05
 ns = not significant

Test of relationship between attitude and the achievement scores of students after using Jigsaw Technique

Table 7 exhibits the relationship between the post attitudes scores and the achievement scores of the students. It can be seen from the data that six variables are positively and significantly related to the posttest scores. They are: Pretest Jigsaw scores, Attitude toward jigsaw. These independent variables all exhibit a higher computed r-value of .013 with 38 degrees of freedom. .05 level, 2-tailed test. This implies that the higher the pretest scores were, the higher were the posttest scores achievement. It further means that the collaborative learning intervention somehow influenced the students' post-test scores and that through these collaborative learning strategies, learning took place. This finding of this study confirms the conclusion arrived at by Loes et al., (2017) when they explicitly declared that the attitudes of students are not related to their achievement. However, he wrapped up by admitting that cooperative learning has a better effect than the traditional method of teaching in terms of students' achievement.

Table 7.

Relationship between attitude and the achievement scores of Class A and Class B students under each collaborative strategy

Variables	Computed r-Value	Decision
Pretest	0.776	Significant at 0.1
Jigsaw Score	0.678	Significant at 0.1
Attitude toward Jigsaw	0.420	Significant at 0.1

Critical value *r (df=38): .05.2-tailed tests) =0.311*

Conclusion

This study set out to determine the cognitive and attitudinal effects of the jigsaw technique as a collaborative learning strategy in English literature classes. Based on the study results, the teaching of literature using jigsaw enhanced students' attitudes towards collaborative learning. It also enhanced achievement of students in English literature. Regardless of students' ability levels and gender, the effect of jigsaw as collaborative learning on achievements in literature is the same. However, students with more academic preparation are likely to benefit more from learning collaboratively.

Recommendations

The jigsaw technique as a collaborative learning strategy should be embraced by literature teachers in ESL/ EFL environments to further ascertain its effectiveness. Educators should use collaborative learning in other areas. They should try to change their metaphors in the classroom, be more innovative, and add collaborative teaching to their repertoire of strategies, keeping the real purpose of education in mind rather than merely carrying out the prescribed curriculum processes. School administrators should encourage faculty members to use collaborative learning strategies in literature classes to complement traditional techniques. They should conduct in-service training focused on collaborative teaching and learning because it is difficult to implement changes based on framework principles they do not practice in the present. Researchers should conduct similar studies using collaborative learning strategies on a larger scale and for longer durations.

References

Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H., & Alqasham, F. H. (2020). Saudi EFL learning and assessment in times of Covid-19: crisis and beyond. *Asian EFL Journal*, *27*(4.3), 356-383.

Alfares, N. (2020). The effect of using a self-regulated jigsaw task on female students' performance in the course of curriculum reading in English at Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, *11,* 519-533. doi:https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no4.33

Alghasab, M., Hardman, J., & Handley, Z. (2019). Teacher-student interaction on wikis: Fostering collaborative learning and writing. *Learning, culture and social interaction*, *21*, 10-20. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2018.12.002

Almansour, M. I., & Al-Ahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020). Enhancing the speaking proficiency of undergraduate ESP students through the use of blended learning approach. *Asian EFL Journal, 27*(3), 343-355.

Alter, G., & Ratheiser, U. (2019). A new model of literary competences and the revised CEFR descriptors. *ELT Journal*, *73*(4), 377-386. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccz024

Barbosa, E.., Jose, A. S., & Concepcion, M. G. R. (2020). Improving reading comprehension through jigsaw technique. *International Journal of New Economics and Social Sciences*, *11*, 347-360. Doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0014.3553

Berkes, F. (2017). Environmental governance for the anthropocene? Social-ecological systems, resilience, and collaborative learning. *Sustainability*, *9*(7), 1232. https://doi.org/10.3390/su9071232

Blazar, D., & Kraft, M. A. (2017). Teacher and teaching effects on students' attitudes and behaviors. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *39*(1), 146-170. https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0162373716670260

Bloomfield, B. S., Fischer, A. J., Clark, R. R., & Dove, M. B. (2019). Treatment of food selectivity in a child with avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder through parent teleconsultation. *Behavior analysis in practice*, *12*(1), 33-43. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-018-0251-y

Bozanta, A., & Mardikyan, S. (2017). The effects of social media use on collaborative learning: A case of Turkey. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, *18*(1), 96-110. https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.285719

Campbell, I., Macleod, A., Sahlmann, C., Neves, L., Funderud, J., Øverland, M., & Stanley, M. (2019). The environmental risks associated with the development of seaweed

farming in Europe-prioritizing key knowledge gaps. *Frontiers in Marine Science*, *6*, 107. https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2019.00107

Cheng, L., Ritzhaupt, A. D., & Antonenko, P. (2019). Effects of the flipped classroom instructional strategy on students' learning outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *67*(4), 793-824. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-018-9633-7

Curşeu, P. L., Chappin, M. M., & Jansen, R. J. (2018). Gender diversity and motivation in collaborative learning groups: the mediating role of group discussion quality. *Social Psychology of Education*, *21*(2), 289-302. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-017-9419-5

Dado, M., & Bodemer, D. (2017). A review of methodological applications of social network analysis in computer-supported collaborative learning. *Educational Research Review*, *22*, 159-180. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2017.08.005

Deveci, T. (2018). Student Perceptions on Collaborative Writing in a Project-Based Course. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *6*(4), 721-732. Doi: 10.13189/ujer.2018.060415

Egalite, A. J., & Kisida, B. (2018). The effects of teacher match on students' academic perceptions and attitudes. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *40*(1), 59-81. https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0162373717714056

Galama, T. J., Lleras-Muney, A., & Van Kippersluis, H. (2018). The effect of education on health and mortality: A review of experimental and quasi-experimental evidence. *NBER*, 24225. Retrieved from https://www.nber.org/papers/w24225

Herrera-Pavo, M. Á. (2021). Collaborative learning for virtual higher education. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, *28,* 100437. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2020.100437

Ibrahim, N., Shak, M. S. Y., Mohd, T., Ismail, N. A., Perumal, P. D., Zaidi, A., & Yasin, S. M. A. (2015). The importance of implementing collaborative learning in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom in Malaysia. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, *31*, 346-353. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(15)01208-3

Jiang, D., & Zhang, L. J. (2020). Collaborating with 'familiar'strangers in mobile-assisted environments: The effect of socializing activities on learning EFL writing. *Computers & Education*, *150*, 103841. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2020.103841

Jiang, Y., & Dewaele, J. M. (2019). How unique is the foreign language classroom enjoyment and anxiety of Chinese EFL learners?. *System*, *82*, 13-25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.017

Kaendler, C., Wiedmann, M., Rummel, N., & Spada, H. (2015). Teacher competencies for the

implementation of collaborative learning in the classroom: A framework and research review. *Educational Psychology Review*, *27*(3), 505-536. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-014-9288-9

Kukulska-Hulme, A., & Viberg, O. (2018). Mobile collaborative language learning: State of the art. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *49*(2), 207-218. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12580

Lin, L. (2015). Exploring collaborative learning: Theoretical and conceptual perspectives. *Investigating Chinese HE EFL Classrooms*, 11-28. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-44503-7_2

Lin, M., Preston, A., Kharrufa, A., & Kong, Z. (2016). Making L2 learners' reasoning skills visible: The potential of computer supported collaborative learning environments. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *22*, 303-322. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2016.06.004

Loes, C. N., & Pascarella, E. T. (2017). Collaborative learning and critical thinking: Testing the link. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *88*(5), 726-753. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2017.1291257

Loes, C. N., An, B. P., Saichaie, K., & Pascarella, E. T. (2017). Does collaborative learning influence persistence to the second year of college?. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *88*(1), 62-84. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2016.1243942

Magulod Jr., G. C. (2018a). Cognitive and attitudinal effects of movie poster making method in college classroom. *Journal of Educational and Human Resource Development*, *6*, 42-58. Retrieved from http://www.ijterm.org/index.php/jehrd/article/view/78

Magulod Jr., G. C. (2018b). Innovative learning tasks in enhancing the literary appreciation skills of students. *SAGE Open*, *8*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2158244018820382

Magulod Jr., G. C. (2019). Learning styles, study habits and academic performance of Filipino university students in applied science courses: Implications for instruction. *Journal of Technology and Science Education*, *9*(2), 184-198. https://doi.org/10.3926/jotse.504

Magulod Jr., G. C., Capili, J. D., & Pinon, R. M. (2019). Exploring the relationship and labels attached by students: How classroom management styles in a Philippine higher education institution prevail?. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *8*(3), 893-904. https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.8.3.893

Malmberg, J., Järvelä, S., Holappa, J., Haataja, E., Huang, X., & Siipo, A. (2019). Going beyond what is visible: What multichannel data can reveal about interaction in the context of collaborative learning?. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *96*, 235-245.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.06.030

Meijer, H., Hoekstra, R., Brouwer, J., & Strijbos, J. W. (2020). Unfolding collaborative learning assessment literacy: a reflection on current assessment methods in higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *45*(8), 1222-1240. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2020.1729696

Melis, L., Song, C., De Cristofaro, E., & Shmatikov, V. (2019, May). Exploiting unintended feature leakage in collaborative learning. *IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (SP),* 691-706. doi: 10.1109/SP.2019.00029

Molinillo, S., Aguilar-Illescas, R., Anaya-Sánchez, R., & Vallespín-Arán, M. (2018). Exploring the impacts of interactions, social presence and emotional engagement on active collaborative learning in a social web-based environment. *Computers & Education*, *123*, 41-52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2018.04.012

Myren-Svelstad, P. E. (2020). Sustainable literary competence: Connecting literature education to education for sustainability. *Humanities*, *9*(4), 141. https://doi.org/10.3390/h9040141

Nishioka, H. (2016). Analysing language development in a collaborative digital storytelling project: Sociocultural perspectives. *System*, *62*, 39-52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.07.001

Nyembe, B. Z. M., & Howard, G. R. (2019, August). The utilities of prominent learning theories for mobile collaborative learning (MCL) with reference to WhatsApp and m-learning. *International Conference on Advances in Big Data, Computing and Data Communication Systems (icABCD)*, 1-6. https://doi.org/10.1109/ICABCD.2019.8851042

Park, C., Kim, D. G., Cho, S., & Han, H. J. (2019). Adoption of multimedia technology for learning and gender difference. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *92*, 288-296. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.11.029

Pelobillo, G. (2018). Jigsaw technique in learning physics and problem-solving dimensions of senior high school students. *JPAIR Multidisciplinary Research*, *32*(1), 90-109. Doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.7719/jpair.v32i1.577

Ruantika, R. A., Nurweni, A., & Suparman, U. (2020). *Students' perception toward the implementation of the modified jigsaw technique for their writing ability* [Paper presentation]. The 2nd International Conference on English Language Teaching and Learning. Aula K, FKIP, Universitas Lampung. http://icon-eltl.unila.ac.id/proceedings/

Salubayba, P. J. C., Serrano, E., Baconguis, R., & Dicolen, E. (2018). The effectiveness of using the jigsaw technique in teaching cellular structure among selected grade 7 students of the Laguna College, San Pablo City, Philippines. *Journal of Human Ecology*, *7*(1), 89-99. Retrieved from https://ovcre.uplb.edu.ph/journals-uplb/index.php/JHE/article/view/309/282

Solehati, T., & Kosasih, C. E. (2020). Effect of jigsaw technique on the education of menstrual self-care behaviour to female adolescents. *Evidence Based Care*, *10*(1), 7-14. https://dx.doi.org/10.22038/ebcj.2020.43801.2185

Sun, Z., Liu, R., Luo, L., Wu, M., & Shi, C. (2017). Exploring collaborative learning effect in blended learning environments. *Journal of computer assisted learning*, *33*(6), 575-587. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12201