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The L1 in L2 Learning: Mauritian Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes

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Abstract

This study examines English language teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the pedagogic use of Creole in English language classes in Mauritian State Secondary Schools. It also explores their reasons for doing or not doing so and their perceived effects of the use of Creole in the students' English language learning. The data comprise English language teachers' responses to (i) questionnaires gathering their views regarding the use of Creole in English lessons, (ii) interviews concerning their general opinion about employing Creole in English classrooms, and (iii) classroom observations about what happens in their actual teaching. The findings and data analysis indicate that (i) there are three distinct types of English language teachers in Mauritius as far as the beliefs and attitudes towards Creole use in English classes are concerned; (ii) whereas using English solely in English classes can provide students with maximal exposure for language enhancement, Creole has a pedagogic role to play in such aspects as building rapport, catering for learners' diversity and facilitating students' understanding of grammar and abstract concepts; and (iii) although using Creole may reduce students' exposure to English, it can create an affective learning environment and encourage greater participation. It is therefore recommended that medium of instruction policy makers in Mauritius formulate helpful guidelines concerned with the systematic and purposeful use of L1 to promote language proficiency for all students.

Keywords: Language education, medium of instruction policy, role of L1 in L2 learning

1.0 Introduction

Issues related to language instruction have stirred much controversy in the education field. Within the many widely discussed topics, the role of the first language (L1) in second language (L2) learning and teaching has gained much attention (e.g. Eldridge 1996; Song & Andrews 2009). Given that teachers are the key personnel who implement and reflect continuously on the improvement of language teaching approaches in the classrooms (e.g. Stern 1983), it is useful to gather data regarding their views on the controversial issue of the use of L1 in L2 classes.

1.1 Sociolinguistic background of Mauritius

A brief sociolinguistic background of Mauritius will put this research in its proper perspective. Mauritius is a small island in the Indian Ocean, which boasts a remarkable ethnic and linguistic diversity. It is a Creole-speaking island – a Creole both acquired and used in daily life. It is French-based, but the island has English as the official language and official medium of instruction in the education system. Like many Creole-speaking communities, Mauritian Creole, the language of the overwhelming majority of the population, has traditionally had little status, no acceptability in official and formal contexts. Since January 2012, however, under the influence of local language activists, Creole has been officially introduced as an optional subject in Primary Schools on an equal footing with other optional Oriental or Asiatic languages – also known as ‘ancestral’ languages.

1.2 Language in education policy in Mauritius

Language education in Mauritius is interwoven with the issue of the medium of instruction (MOI). Language education is seen as vital to people in Mauritius as proficiency in English (and French, for that matter) gives access to socioeconomic benefits. Today the following directive from the Education Ordinance of 1957 still holds true:

“In the lower classes of Government and aided primary schools up to and including standard III, any one language may be employed as the language of instruction, being a language which in the opinion of the Minister is the most suitable for the public.

In Standards IV, V and VI of the Government and aided primary schools the medium of instruction shall be English and conversation between teacher and pupils shall be carried on in English, provided that lessons in any other language taught in the school shall be carried on through the medium of the instruction.”

For the first three years of primary education, then, there is no clear mandate concerning the language to be used in the classroom. From the first year onwards, schoolbooks are all in English, but the main spoken languages are Creole and French. Mauritians are very well aware of the international importance of English and French and are also conscious of the fact that knowledge of these languages leads to social mobility (Sonck 2005; Rajah-Carrim 2007). Although, from the fourth year onwards, English is the official medium of instruction, what actually happens in the classroom varies widely from school to school. One thing is certain; the use of English in schools is much more restricted than what might be expected when reading the Education Ordinance.

2.0 Literature Review

Teachers’ instructional practices in schools in Mauritius show that mixed code teaching is widespread. As Mauritius is a predominantly Creole-speaking society, it is natural that students use Creole for daily communication both inside and outside classroom contexts. They do not have a need to resort to English outside school and English still remains a ‘foreign’ language which students do not have a good mastery of. Any casual classroom observation in many schools will reveal that English tends to be the formal medium for presentation of lesson content while Creole tends to be used for the discussion and explanation of ideas and information initially presented in English.

2.1 Code-Switching in Language Classroom

A number of scholars (e.g. Chambers 1991, Duff & Polio 1990; Ellis 1994; Franklin 1990; Krashen 1982; Turnbull 2001) maintain the commonly-held belief that teachers should avoid using students' L1 in L2 classrooms mainly for two reasons; first, code-switching denies learners valuable L2 input, thereby subverting L2 acquisition; and second, exposure to as much comprehensible L2 input as possible is conducive to meaningful language learning and crucial for successful L2 acquisition. Nevertheless, others (e.g. Atkinson 1987, 1993; Cook 2001, 2008; Lin 1988, 1991; Luke 1991; Macaro 2001) suggest that appropriate teachers' use of students' L1 can play a supportive role in L2 learning and teaching; for instance, L1 can be used to check comprehension, give instructions, organize tasks, maintain discipline, build rapport and explain lexical items and grammatical concepts.

2.2 Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to guide my inquiry:

- (a) What are the English language teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the use of L1 in L2 classes in Mauritian secondary schools?
- (b) Why do they use Creole, if any?
- (c) How may they think the use of L1 would facilitate and/or hinder students' L2 learning?

3.0 Methodology

This study was conducted in two secondary schools in Mauritius where all students speak Creole as their L1. The first school, school A, is situated in an urban area and is a high-proficiency school while the second school, School B, is situated in a rural area and is a low-proficiency school. There were 20 participants in the study, 10 from each school, all English language teachers whose L1 was Creole.

The research adopted a mixed methodology – combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection and data analysis (Patton 2002). Data were collected from questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations.

4.0 Results and Analysis

The results obtained showed that there is a rather marked difference between how English teachers in School A and School B view the issue of the pedagogic use of L1 in L2 classes.

The first research question aimed to gain an understanding of the English teachers' beliefs and attitudes concerning the use of L1 and L2 in their classes. The beliefs and attitudes expressed by the participants can be broadly categorised into three types:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Type 1 | - Maximal advocates: teachers who advocate exclusive use of L2 and endeavour to find alternative ways to avoid using L1 during teaching; |
| Type 2 | - Pedagogic L1 advocates: teachers who are sympathetic towards the pedagogic use of L1 in L2 classes and are highly likely to supplement their L2 teaching with L1 as a last resort, based on their unique teaching context; and |
| Type 3 | - Optimal L1/L2 advocates: teachers are in-between the two. |

The following will provide a more detailed account of each type of teachers.

Type I – Maximal L2 advocates

Table 1

Selected teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards L1 and L2 use in L2 classes

		T1	T2	T3	T4
1.	To me it is best to only use English in English classes.	6	6	6	6
2.	I use some Creole and some English in my English classes.	1	1	1	1
5.	My students should be exposed to as much English as possible in English classes.	6	5	6	6
7.	It is more effective to use Creole to raise my students' awareness of the similarities and differences between Creole and English.	1	2	1	1
8.	I use Creole to explain a language point when all the other teaching strategies in English fail to work for my students.	1	1	1	1
16.	Using Creole saves my time in explaining an abstract concept.	1	2	1	1
17.	My use of Creole reduces my students' exposure to English.	6	1	6	6
23.	Supplementing a little bit of Creole when teaching vocabulary and grammar can facilitate my students' English learning.	1	1	1	1

The participants had to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the above statements. They had to circle only ONE response to each statement to indicate their opinion:

1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree

In general, this group of teachers (T1 to T4) are, ardent advocates of the exclusive use of L2 and believe that learners should be exposed to as much as L2 as possible. They do not quite value the potential benefits brought about by using L1. For example, although all the teaching strategies in L2 fail to work, they tend not to resort to the use of L1. According to one teacher (T4) in the interview, there can be two reasons. Firstly, he can foresee that if he starts to use L1, his students will become dependent on it (see Wong-Fillmore 1985). And secondly, he strongly believes that the use of L1 will reduce students' exposure to L2.

The factors that may influence the beliefs and attitudes of this group of teachers have to do with their teaching context and their previous L2 learning experience. In the questionnaires, this group of teachers rated their students' L2 proficiency as "fair" to "excellent". This may explain why they can maintain the use of L2 throughout the lessons, and have developed such a belief that L2 teaching is best conducted in L2. In his interview, one teacher (T4) cited his learning experience of French as being crucial in the formation of his belief (Macaro 2001). He said:

"When I studied French in Alliance Française, the teachers used complete French to conduct the lessons.... So I would say, when learning an additional language, it is more effective for teachers to treat students as learning another mother tongue and force them to think in that target language, without undergoing a translation process"

Type II – Pedagogic L1 advocates

Table 2**Selected teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards L1 and L2 use in L2 Classes**

		T10	T17	T18	T19	T20
1	To me, it is best to only use English in English classes	4	4	1	1	2
2	I use some Creole and some English in my English classes	2	4	4	1	6
5	My students should be exposed to as much English as possible in English classes	6	6	5	6	6
7	It is more effective to use Creole to raise my students' awareness of the similarities and differences between Creole and English	5	5	4	4	6
8	I use Creole to explain a language point when all the other teaching strategies in English fail to work for my students	5	5	5	6	6
16	Using Creole saves my time in explaining an abstract concept	5	4	5	6	6
17	My use of Creole reduces my students' exposure to English	3	4	3	5	5
18	My students become more dependent on Creole when I use it to explain difficult concepts	3	4	5	6	5
23	Supplementing a little bit of Creole when teaching vocabulary and grammar can facilitate my students' English learning	5	5	4	6	6

This group of teachers (T10, T17 to T20), possess different beliefs and attitudes towards L1 use in L2 classes. In general, the sole use of L2 is not valued as highly as the maximal L2 advocates. Nevertheless, they believe that learners should have as much exposure to L2 as possible. They show a more appreciative attitude towards the potential benefits of using L1 in L2 teaching; however, they too are sensitive to the potential drawbacks of using L1 (e.g. reducing students' exposure to L2). This awareness shows that they do not support the use of L1 blindly; rather, there could be other factors shaping their beliefs and attitudes such as teaching context and previous L2 learning experience.

As reported in the questionnaires, the L2 proficiency of students that T17 to T20 teach is either "bad" or "very poor". According to T18 and T20 in the interviews, this was one of the reasons why they needed to use L1 in their L2 lessons. These two teachers recalled, in their interviews, that their previous L2 learning experience was critical in shaping their beliefs.

Type III – Optimal L1/L2 advocates

Table 3**Selected teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards L1 and L2 use in L2 classes.**

		T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T11 1	T11 2	T11 3	T11 4	T11 5	T11 6
1	To me, it is best to only use English in English Classes	6	5	5	5	5	6	6	4	4	5	3
2	I use some Creole and some English in my English Classes	2	1	2	2	3	2	6	6	6	5	5
5	My students should be exposed to as much English as possible in English Classes.	6	6	5	5	6	6	6	5	6	6	5
7	It is more effective to use Creole to raise my students' awareness of the similarities and differences between Creole and English.	1	4	2	3	2	3	4	5	5	6	5
8	I use Creole to explain a language point when all the other teaching strategies in English fail to work for my students.	3	1	4	5	1	6	5	5	6	5	5
16	Using Creole saves my time in explaining an abstract concept.	3	4	4	5	3	4	4	6	6	5	5
17	My use of Creole reduces my students' exposure to English.	5	4	4	5	2	6	5	5	6	5	4
18	My students become more dependent on Creole when I use it to explain difficult concepts.	5	4	4	5	1	6	4	5	5	4	4
23	Supplementing a little bit of Creole when teaching vocabulary and grammar can facilitate my students' English learning.	3	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	6	4

Table 3 shows that this group of teachers (T5 to T9 and T11 to T16), are neither very positive nor negative about using L1 in L2 classes. In other words, the beliefs they hold and attitudes they exhibit are in-between the maximal L2 advocates (Type I) and pedagogic L1 advocates (Type II). Generally speaking, teachers in the high-proficiency school (School A) tend to be supporters of exclusive use of L2 while those in the low-proficiency school (School B) are likely to be the opposite.

4.1 Pedagogic Reasons for Using or Not Using L1

The second research question aimed to probe into the reasons why the participants use and/or do not use L1 in their L2 teaching. The findings are reported as follows.

The reasons for not using L1 includes (a) compliance with policies and parents' expectation, (b) provision of maximal L2 exposure for language enhancement, (c) existence of alternative teaching methods. One teacher suggested that when teaching vocabulary, for example, the teacher can use synonyms and /or antonyms (see McCarthy 1990; Thornbury 2002), or create a context for students to imagine the words involve some abstract concepts.

On the other hand, the reasons for using L1 include (a) facilitating understanding of grammar and abstract concepts, (b) managing misbehavior and engaging attention, (c) building rapport, (d) giving

feedback, (e) catering for learners' diversity, i.e. making adjustments in the teaching (in this case, supplementing the teaching with some L1) so that the less competent students can catch up, (f) saving time achieving learning objectives.

4.2 Potential Effects of L1 Use

After exploring the reasons why teachers choose to or not to use L1 in their L2 teaching, the final research question tries to understand their perceived potential benefits and drawbacks of pedagogically employing L1 on their students' L2 teaching. The results are reported as follows:

L1 hinders L2 learning

Dependence on L1

T4 said in the interview that, "I really hope that students do not look for excuses to use Creole. They should seize every opportunity to use English. This is the best way to improve". This teacher seems to agree with Edstrom (2004) who warns practitioners about the adverse consequences of over-reliance on L1 in L2 teaching; she suggests that using L1 might slow down or limit the development of students' understanding and interpretation of L2.

Reduction of Exposure

It is commonly believed that students can receive more input in L2 when L2 is used in class. With more input, they will get used to the target language more easily (e.g. Zacharias 2004). Thus, over 80% of the respondents indicated on the questionnaires that using L1 reduces students' exposure to L2 (e.g. see Tables 1 to 3). T3 wrote in her questionnaire that, "students and teachers should use English during the lessons and even outside classroom in order to provide an English-rich environment".

L1 facilitates L2 learning

Creation of an affective learning environment

In the questionnaires, some teachers in School B wrote that the students "simply turn off their learning 'engine' if the whole lesson is conducted in English". This may indicate that the anxiety level of those students is extremely high in L2 lessons. According to the affective filter hypothesis in Krashen's Monitor Model (1981, 1982), language anxiety has a powerful destructive effect on L2 acquisition. Thus, one way to create an affective learning atmosphere, according to some of the teachers surveyed, is to supplement L2 teaching with the use of L1.

Encouragement of greater participation

More than half the teachers surveyed reported in the questionnaires that their students were more willing to participate effectively and pay attention when L1 was used. When observing the lesson of T12, it was noted that when L2 was used, only few students volunteered to answer questions, but when L1 was used, they became energetic and constantly yelled out the answers. This shows that implementing the sole use of L2 in L2 classed may not be suitable and conducive to the learning of every student.

5.0 Conclusion

My conclusion is that a more helpful and effective medium of instruction policy, instead of being stipulated by a higher authority like the Ministry of Education, might be a school-based one, allowing the stakeholders of the schools to decide on the most suitable and effective course of action for the school. Hence, it would be wise to offer students the opportunities to express their opinions about whether or not L1 should be used in classrooms and, if so, how it should be employed strategically so

as to maximise and facilitate their learning, since this could be one of the prerequisites for successful L2 acquisition in the long run.

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The Development of Intelligence, Working Memory and Processing Speed During Childhood

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Abstract

Previous researchers have identified relationships between Intelligence, Working Memory and Processing Speed in adults. Developmental researchers have suggested there may be similar correlations between Intelligence, Working Memory and Processing Speed in children. However, the nature of the relationships among these constructs during childhood development is not clear. The aim of the current project is to identify whether these abilities develop in tandem and whether they improve in a consistent or in an up/down pattern. Using a longitudinal sequential design, children's performance on Intelligence, Working Memory, and Processing Speed tasks is measured three times across one year. Measures of physical growth are also taken at each session. First session data from 161 children aged between 6 and 12 years will be presented, including the pattern of relationships among the focal constructs (Intelligence, Working Memory and Processing Speed) and their interaction with age and physical growth. Parent's ratings of children's extracurricular activities (e.g., participation in sport, private tutoring), obtained prior to the first testing session, show some interesting relationships with the focal constructs. For example, significant differences between children who attended daycare and those who did not were observed for measures of fluid intelligence. Possible reasons for these findings will be considered. We used some different drawings and texts to show the abilities of children through which we did content analysis.

Introduction

Working memory is generally viewed as a limited capacity system responsible for the temporary storage and processing of information as is believed by Baddely. Working memory capacity is widely measured using complex memory paradigms, in which participants are required to combine memory for sequences of items whose presentation is interleaved by processing activities. The number of items to be remembered is increased until the maximum length at which memory accuracy is maintained. For example, in the reading span task developed by Daneman and Carpenter (1980), participants read a series of sentences while attempting to remember the sentence-final word (or some other target item) for later serial recall. There is comprehensive evidence that performance on such tasks is linked in both children and adults with key cognitive skills such as language comprehension offered by Daneman, or reasoning presented by oberauer.

The underlying cognitive processes that support working memory performance remain open to debate. According to the working memory model advanced originally by Baddeley and Hitch (1974) and developed subsequently by Baddeley and colleagues, working memory reflects multiple resources associated with distinct capacity-limited sub-systems. This model incorporates the central executive, which is associated with attention control, high-level processing activities, and the coordination of activities within working memory. Other components of working memory include two modality specify slave systems responsible for the storage of verbal (the phonological loop) and Visio-spatial material (the Visio-spatial sketchpad). A fourth component, according to Baddley, is the episodic buffer, responsible for integrating representations both within working memory and across the cognitive system more generally. Within this model, Baddley and others believe that the storage demands of complex memory span are suggested to depend on appropriate sub-systems, with processing supported principally by central executive resources.

The present research investigates a feature of working memory that has recently stimulated further theoretical development: interference between memory and processing activities in complex memory tasks. It has long been known by Baddley and others that combining memory with concurrent activities that involve distinct domains, such as remembering auditory presented words while performing an unrelated Visio-motor activity, causes only minimal decrements in task performance. More recent research has explored the conditions under which interference between storage and processing can arise in complex span tasks. In general, performance is disrupted when processing and storage stimuli are drawn from the same general content domain; for example, Bayliss, Jarrold, Gunn, Baddeley and others suggest that greater decrements in complex memory span for verbal material are found when the interleaved processing involves verbal than Visio-spatial processing. Such data fit well with multiple resource accounts such as the working memory model that incorporate domain-specific storage systems, according to which verbal recall is mediated by the phonological loop, and Visio-spatial processing is handled by either or both the Visio-spatial sketchpad and central executive. Daneman and Carpenter believe that it is less clear how such data could be handled by the notion of an undifferentiated working memory resource supporting both storage and processing.

A contrasting account of these findings is proposed here, according to which there is no dynamic process of interference between representations of processing and storage items in working memory. Instead, we suggest that the disruptive consequences of both types of stimulus tapping a common domain may arise from failure to discriminate between target and non-target representations at the later stage of retrieval. Processing and storage items that are drawn from different domains or highly distinct categories generate cues that can facilitate this discrimination and hence lead to improved recall accuracy. What, though, constitutes an effective discrimination cue? Conlin et al. (2005) argued that the cues will need to be highly salient, such as distinctions between storage and processing items on the basis of modality can be effective, (spatial, verbal etc.) that correspond to gross intrinsic features of item representations. They demonstrated that the membership of a small and highly familiar category such as digit names will also be useful cues for selecting and rejecting potential target items. In contrast, the within-domain manipulations of similarity employed by Oberauer et al. (2004) yielded less useful cues for discriminating potential target from non-target responses in the dissimilar conditions. In the spatial conditions, all memory and processing stimuli were presented in a 3 · 3 grid and thus were likely to generate visual and spatial attributes that were to some extent overlapping, irrespective of the designated similarity of the experimental condition. In the verbal conditions, target and processing items were differentiated in the semantically dissimilar condition by animacy of the nouns. The animacy category is extremely broad, incorporating the full range of concepts corresponding to plants and animals. Differentiation of items on the basis of animacy is neither highly familiar nor practiced in the same way as, for example, digit and non-digit names, and for this reason may not provide an effective cue for discrimination at retrieval.

Methods

Experiment 1

Participants include eighteen children were drawn from year 5 of a local primary school in Stockton-on-Tees, England. They were all native English speakers and their ages ranged from 9 years 9 months to 10 years 8 months (mean age 10 years 3 months).

Design and materials

A set of 144 words and 144 no words based on the from the norms of Gilhooly&Logie(1982), which all had a one-syllable consonant–vowel–consonant structure, were used as processing and memory stimuli. The words were taken at random from the MRC Psycholinguistic Database, with the constraint that the mean age of-acquisition for each word was under 5 years. This was to ensure a high degree of lexical familiarity with the word stimuli. Rastle et al. (2002) showed that the no words were drawn from the ARC No word Database. Of the 144 items in each set, 18 items had the onset phoneme /k/ (e.g., cap, keb). The word and no word sets were used to construct 42 lists for the processing task, each comprising three items. Each 3-item list contained zero, one, or two items with were presented auditory and visually (items appeared in print on the screen and were read aloud by the experimenter). A sequence of processing items preceded the first memory item. The recall task was to remember the memory items displayed on the screen in the same order as presented.

Children were also required to tap the table when they heard an item with the onset phoneme /k/ in the list of processing items.

In the articulator suppression condition, children looked at the blank screen for 3 s while repeatedly saying the word 'the' aloud. A metronome was set to pace the children to say one 'the' every 750 Ms. after 3 s, a memory item appeared on the screen and was read aloud by the experimenter. The children were instructed to suspend articulation while the item was on the screen. The memory item remained visible for 1 s; then the screen went blank. Again, children were requested to recall, in order, the items that had appeared on the screen.

The experimenter recorded on a response sheet whether responses were correct or incorrect. Testing began with three trials of two lists (i.e. two items for recall), followed by three trials of three lists, and so forth. The number of lists increased (to a maximum of five lists) until a child failed to recall correctly the memory items of all three trials at a particular level.

Testing was discontinued at this point. Each child practiced the monitoring task, the articulator suppression, and then one trial of processing plus recall, prior to testing. The onset phoneme /k/, is unpredictably within the list. The consonant composition of the remaining items within each list was as distinctive as possible, i.e. within each process in sequence, the items contained different consonants.

Recall stimuli were also drawn from the word and no word pool, but did not include any of the items with the onset phoneme /k/. There were three lists each of two, three, four, and five memory items (a total of 42 items). There was no phonological overlap between memory items within a single list. A two-way within-subjects design was employed with type of processing activity (word processing, no word processing, articulator suppression) and memory item (word, no word) as independent variables, and memory span as the dependent variable. The recall conditions were blocked; half of the participants completed the word-recall conditions first, the other half completed the no word-recall conditions first. The order of processing activities was counterbalanced across groups of participants.

Procedure

Each child was tested individually in a quiet area of the school. The experimental stimuli were presented on a laptop computer. In the word processing and no word processing conditions, the sequence of three processing items interpolated between memory items was presented auditory (read aloud by the experimenter) at a rate of approximately one item per second. The memory items were presented auditory and visually (items appeared in print on the screen and were read aloud by the experimenter). A sequence of processing items preceded the first memory item. The recall task was to remember the memory items displayed on the screen in the same order as presented. Children were also required to tap the table when they heard an item with the on set phoneme /k/ in the list of processing items.

Experiment 2

In this experiment Participants include sixteen children were drawn from year 5 of a local primary school in IRAN, Hamedan. They were all native English speakers and their ages ranged from 9 years 10 months to 10 years 7 months (mean age 10 years 4

months). None of the children had participated in Experiment 1. The adult sample comprised 16 postgraduate students, with an age range of 23 years 10months to 44 years 3 months (mean age 27 years 2months).

Design and materials

The processing and storage stimuli were identical to those used in Experiment 1. In this experiment, however the task was extended to include a no-processing control condition with a list of storage items only. As in the previous experiment, a two-way within-subjects design was employed with type of processing activity (word processing, no word processing, articulator suppression, control) and memory item (word, no word) as independent variables, and span as the dependent variable. The recall conditions were blocked; half of the participants completed the word-recall conditions first, the other half completed the no word-recall conditions first. The order of processing activities was counter balanced across participants.

Procedure

The procedure was similar to that of Experiment 1. In this experiment; however, task duration and presentation of stimuli were computer controlled. In the word processing and no word processing conditions, participants were instructed to look at a blank computer screen while a list of three items was presented auditory, from a recording, at a rate of one item per second. As in Experiment 1, participants were instructed to tap the table whenever a presented item had the onset phoneme/k/. Following presentation of the final item in each list, the memory item appeared on the computer screen, and was also played aloud. The memory item remained on the screen for 1 s; then the screen went blank again. At the end of a trial, a question mark appeared on the screen, prompting participants to recall in serial order the items that had appeared. The articulator suppression condition was almost identical to that in Experiment 1, except that here, the memory items were presented via an audio recording. In the control condition, participants were required to look at a blank screen for 3 s, after which a memory item appeared on the screen and was presented auditory from a recording.

Conclusions:

Significant differences between children who attended day care and those who did not were observed for measures of fluid intelligence. Possible reasons for these findings will be considered as social integrity and interaction. . Parents' ratings of children's extracurricular activities (e.g., participation in sport, private tutoring), obtained prior to the first testing session, show some interesting relationships with the focal constructs.

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The Teaching of Foreign Languages for Specific Purposes - How and Why

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Abstract

Mastery in foreign languages is considered, in today's world, not just an excellent tool to bridge gaps between people coming from different countries but above all an instrument that enables workers to considerably improve their career prospects. Multilingualism and using a language in specific circumstances and purposes is today considered to be one of the key elements for a modern Europe giving people a very strong bargaining power, especially in the labour world. In today's European society, languages and intercultural play a fundamental role in getting to know different people and in obtaining professional and economic development. There can be two main objectives for teaching/learning foreign languages: personal growth and professional growth. This is why today we teach foreign languages for specific purposes, be it for tourism, for call centres, for business, and others, focusing on acquiring the necessary terminological, interdisciplinary and intercultural skills needed for specific jobs. Such courses imply addressing the immediate and very specific needs of the learners involved, having as their driving force, both in the preparation stage and in the development stage, the needs analysis of the learners. The starting point is a study of the learners' needs, objectives and expectations for the course given that the needs of the learners vary considerably. This gives the teacher a new role - to equip the learners with tools and strategies that will empower them in a world where the teacher is only one of the many providers, or sources, of language exposure and communicative practice.

Every time I am asked to prepare an Italian course for specific purposes, be it a “Commercial Italian” course, an “Italian for Call Centres” course, “Italian for Hotel Front Desk People” etc, the first thing I do is ask myself the following questions:

- i. What is a language for specific purposes?
- ii. Who are my clients/ students/ my audience?
- iii. What are their objectives? What objectives would they like to reach?
- iv. What is their level of Italian?
- v. What should my role be in such a course?
- vi. What /which methods shall I adopt?
- vii. What shall I include in my course?

In other words: The teaching of a foreign language for specific purposes: How and why?

Balboni (2000)¹ describes a language for specific purposes as a linguistic variety used in scientific and professional sectors. Its objective is to help anyone belonging to that particular scientific or professional sector communicate in the least ambiguous manner possible. Dita Gálová (2007; viii) states that “globalization of the world economy requires professionals and specialists in various areas to communicate effectively in foreign languages. The success is conditional on their ability to manage language and cultural barriers, i.e. on the language skills and competences with respect to their professional areas”². Jesus Garcia Laborda (2011) is, maybe, even more specific, when he describes LSP as “the teaching of a language as a second or foreign language for certain groups of students to whom the syllabus, tasks, and methodology is especially tailored to their interests and needs”³.

Indeed, in today’s world, knowing how to use a language in specific circumstances and purposes gives people a very strong bargaining power, especially in the labour world. Whereas up to a few years ago, very few people considered speaking a foreign language an important prerequisite, today it has become of fundamental importance in all professional circles. In fact, in today’s European society, languages and interculture play a fundamental role in getting to know different people and in obtaining professional and economic development.

In the global marketplace that we now live in, language skills are becoming always increasingly important in organisations and businesses who want to remain competitive on an international level. Companies today require a versatile staff in order to communicate effectively and it is in their interest to employ speakers of foreign languages who are able to talk to clients, business partners, fellow employees in different countries in their own languages as this will not just help communication but, above all, it helps to make sales and to negotiate and secure contracts. As declared by the European Commission in one of its documents on multilingualism, entitled, “Languages mean Business!”, one of the main reasons why thousands of European companies lose out on concluding deals and contracts is their lack of linguistic and intercultural competencies⁴. This is also confirmed by the Bologna process: “If higher education programmes are to be relevant to the European labour market, graduates have to be able to communicate in a number of languages and to expand their repertoire in changing needs”⁵.

And this is exactly why today there exists an array of courses in foreign languages for specific purposes, be it for tourism, for call centres, for business, for commerce and so on, focusing on acquiring the necessary terminological, interdisciplinary and intercultural skills needed for specific jobs. This is confirmed by the CBI Education and Skills Survey (2009: 48) which states that “in an increasingly competitive job market, it is clear that foreign

language proficiency adds significant value to a candidate's portfolio of skills, and can give them a real competitive edge when applying for jobs"⁶. Furthermore, the Business Forum for Multilingualism established by the European Commission (2008: 8) declares clearly that "A significant percentage of European SMEs lose business every year as a direct result of linguistic and intercultural weaknesses. Although it appears certain that English will keep its leading role as the world business language, it is other languages that will make the difference between mainstream and excellence and provide a competitive edge"⁷.

Furthermore, several research studies not only show that a variety of languages are required on international markets but also that the most quoted barrier to intra-European mobility remains lack of foreign language skills⁸. It is no surprise that language skills are considered by employers as one of the ten most important skills for future graduates. This was confirmed by a recent Eurobarometer study⁹ where 40 % of recruiters in the industry sector highlighted the importance of language skills for future higher education graduates. Another study, about the internationalisation of European SME's published by the European Commission in 2010,¹⁰ shows how when companies start exporting, language and cultural barriers start being perceived as important obstacles.

This explains why today there exists a need to diversify the language training market with courses in foreign languages for specific purposes. Although the teaching of foreign languages in general and the teaching of foreign languages for specific purposes have a lot in common, there exist two main divergences, namely, (i) the learners and the reason why they are learning the subject and (ii) the aim of instruction. Usually, as we shall see, the teacher of foreign languages for specific purposes has 3 main tasks: (i) to carry out a needs analysis; (ii) to design the course; and (iii) to prepare original/authentic teaching materials.

Such courses in foreign languages for specific purposes imply addressing the immediate and very specific needs of the learners involved, having as their driving force, both in the preparation stage as well as in the development stage, the needs analysis of the learners. For this reason the starting point should always be an analysis of the learners' needs, objectives and expectations for the course, which can vary in their scope and focus¹¹. This includes forming a list of preferences of what the learners want and need to learn, as far as language and content are concerned, and of how they would like to learn them. This is by no means an easy task given that in the same group individuals may vary considerably in age, education level, motivation, aptitude for languages, work experience, self-discipline, etc. It therefore includes getting to know their knowledge in the language, their past work experiences (especially in countries where the target language is spoken) as well as their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This can be done either by means of an interview or a questionnaire or else by means of a writing task or an initial test. I consider this stage as fundamental since the needs of a learner studying, for example, a foreign language for scientific or technological purposes are totally different from those of another learner studying for medical purposes or legal purposes, or financial purposes. The same goes for individuals studying a foreign language for specific trades or occupations and others still concerned with finding a job. Even the skills required vary considerably. This usually helps me determine what to teach, how to teach it and what materials must I use to help the learners reach their goals. As a matter of fact, the people studying for commercial purposes usually need specific reading and writing skills – reading and understanding the contents of an email and replying to it; writing various letters of a different nature, be it a letter of complaint, of protest, of acceptance; taking minutes of an important meeting, etc. On the other hand, those studying the foreign language to work in a call centre are usually more interested in listening and speaking skills –

answering the phone; leaving a message; giving information over the phone, etc. What is important is that the language being taught should be presented in authentic contexts. This helps learners understand better and become acquainted with the particular ways in which the language is used in functions that they will need to perform in their jobs.

One must also take into consideration whether or not the learners already work in that particular field or if they are still concerned with finding a job. Those already in the job are the primary knowers of the content of the material and experts in the field. We need to keep in mind that we are not teaching them the job, but rather to help them communicate better about their work in the target language. The role of the teacher will therefore be to help, to facilitate communication in class, to provide the tools for the learners to develop and acquire the skills they need, to become autonomous learners. If, for example, there is a course of Italian for commercial purposes or for legal purposes, my role as a teacher is not to teach them the rules of business management or to teach them the laws of the country. There is no doubt that the learners are experts in the field. My role is to provide the learners with the necessary linguistic tools to be able to apply the concepts, interpret them, and above all communicate in the target language, not just with the particular jargon characteristic of that specific occupational context but also with the language of everyday informal talk, that allows them to communicate effectively regardless of the occupational context.

All this implies that such courses cannot be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology. Rather than talking about a subject to be taught we need to think of which approach to adopt and this implies flexibility on the teachers' part, negotiating with the learners how best to reach their objectives. In other words, the teacher needs to understand the requirements of the profession and be willing to adapt to these requirements. It is important to understand the context in which the language will be used as well as any specialist concepts and terminology, and this, in turn, implies the need for specific training, tailor-made courses and teaching the practical use of the target language. It is a known fact that language in different situations varies and therefore the teacher has to tailor make not just the curriculum and the methods, but above all the materials to be used for each and every individual course in accordance to its specific context and centred on its appropriate language. The fact that, very often, the teacher is asked to produce a course that exactly matches the needs of a group of learners, makes it practically impossible to either find suitably published material or to use a particular textbook without the need for supplementary material. This means that the teacher has to provide the material for the course himself/herself. Hutchinson and Waters (2009)¹² suggest three main factors that need to be addressed when designing materials for such courses, namely, (i) the criteria for implementing or modifying materials, (ii) the subjective criteria on what teachers and students want from that material, (iii) the objective criteria which is what the material really offers. Furthermore the teacher has to tailor make all the materials to be used for each and every individual course in accordance to its specific context and centred on its appropriate language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres (Stevens, 1988, Robinson, 1991, Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998)¹³. And as Nunan (1987)¹⁴ puts it, this requires time, skills and support. In fact this involves not just keeping abreast with the vast selection of published material and adapting it to the learners' needs, but very often it also implies developing a self produced resource bank of authentic materials.

From the point of view of the course contents, each course plan should be threefold: there should be the individual theoretical component of learning, which includes, amongst other things, revising some basic grammar notions and rules, becoming familiar with business

terminology, introducing the kind of language they will face and need to use in their profession, and writing letters; the individual practical component of learning, where, in collaboration with third parties (employers, banks, business communities, legal offices, hotels, [depending on the nature of the course], etc), each course participant is assigned a number of open-ended, supervised ‘hands on’ tasks (answering emails, writing letters, attending meetings, etc) which can be performed at his/her own level; the third component should consist in group work and team work – classroom discussions, role plays, etc. It is important to note that, given the heterogeneity of most of the groups of learners, most of the tasks assigned, both on an individual level as well as in team or group work, should be open-ended and the learners are free to adapt them according to their needs and abilities. At the end of each course, a detailed evaluation sheet should be distributed to the course participants in order to have their feedback on all the aspects of the course. I consider this exercise of fundamental importance as it helps the teacher reflect on what decisions need to be taken before starting a new course.

In an article entitled “Business Needs Language” *Language Magazine*¹⁵ explores ‘What Business Wants: Language Needs in the 21st Century’ and concludes that, within the American business sector, there exists a real need for a more systematic discussion of the role and value of foreign language skills, especially in the face of strong perceptions that English is — and will continue to be — the lingua franca of international business. Elisabeth Lord Stuart, Operations Director of the U.S.- Algeria Business Council, argues that an enormous barrier to increasing US participation in overseas markets is the lack of appropriate foreign language skills and abilities among U.S. businessmen. Indeed, a lingua franca can never be enough in today’s world to satisfy every communication need. Learning foreign languages for specific purposes, not only provide the keys to the cultures they represent but, above all, open doors to new markets and new business opportunities.

One last consideration. It is a known fact that the demand for foreign languages for specific purposes and communication skills is steadily rising on the European labour market and that very often employers demand diplomas/certificates as a proof of language competence. This means that the testing and accreditation methods connected to language competences for professional purposes are becoming ever so important and relevant and that the language skills acquired through such courses, usually outside the formal education system, should be formally acknowledged. In this sense, the Council of Europe’s Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)¹⁶, which provides the structure not just of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines but also for most of the assessment methods for language competences, provides transparent and authentic proof of appropriate skills acquired for various occupations.

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The Effect of Integrating Portfolio-based Writing Assessment on Students' Self-regulated Learning: The Case of 1st Year Students of English, University of Constantine1

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Abstract

Learning to write in a foreign language involves learning how to proceed while writing and what to exactly produce to achieve an adequate piece of writing. In this respect, integrating assessment portfolio within the writing instruction is believed to have an effective impact for we see that it allows the application of both the process and the product approaches to teaching writing, it reflects students' performances more adequately, and it promotes students self-regulated learning processes. To see into such an issue we set ourselves to conduct an experimental research during which we used two questionnaires and classroom observation techniques. Our sample was chosen randomly from the parent population of first year students of English. These followed the experiment treatment throughout two terms. The data obtained was tabulated and analyzed to check our research hypotheses.

Keywords: Assessment portfolio; process approach; product approach; reflection; self-regulated learning processes

Introduction

“Assessment is a major contributor to raising standards in schools in terms of teaching, learning, and students achievements” (Cohen, et al., 2004: 323). In this respect, assessment can be viewed as a central area of any teaching-learning situation that is said to be used for a variety of purposes. Yet, the crucial point about assessment is that it enhances students’ awareness of their own abilities that guides and shapes their own learning practices (Cohen, et al., 2004: 323). This means that assessment can provide learners with self-regulated learning processes which would help them develop their learning abilities and control their performances more effectively. The present investigation would then take a closer view at a new believe about writing instruction and instruction in general. It focuses the idea of “Assessment FOR Learning” and not “Assessment Of Learning” (Bryant & Timmins, 2002: ííí). It has to do with the integration of portfolios as a technique within the writing classroom to promote students’ self regulated learning processes.

Portfolios are regarded as an example of authentic assessment that could be applied while the writing instruction. A portfolio is “a collection of documents and other items that provides information about different aspects of a [student]’ s work” (Richards & Farrel, 2005: 98). This collection can be used in different ways. It can be a selection of (a) best work(s) and regarded as a” showcase portfolios,” or it can be just a selection of students productions within a period of time and viewed as a “collection portfolios,” or it can be used for assessment purposes and known as “assessment portfolios” (O’Malley & Pierce, 1996). Green and Johnson (2010) define three different appellations: showcase portfolios (best works collection), growth portfolios (collection of different productions over a period of time), and documentation portfolios (a purposeful collection designed for assessment). As far as the present research is concerned, assessment portfolios can be defined as a systematic, continuous, and purposeful collection of students’ written productions at the different stages of the writing process.

Within this research, portfolios are basically used for instructional purposes and assessment purposes. Being used for both purposes, assessment portfolios are said to involve the emergence of two different models. Process portfolio is regarded as a tool for teaching students how to perform and product portfolio is viewed as an instrument for providing content (Bryant & Timmins, 2002). Process Portfolio is said to reflect the various steps taken by the student to complete a given written product; whereas, product portfolio is said to provide a clear set of documents that reflects student’s growth over a period of time. Both models can be beneficial in writing classroom because they provide evidence about how students proceed and what they have produced.

The integration of portfolios within the writing instruction is believed to have an effective impact. Teaching learners to write involves both learners and teachers in the application of two different approaches to writing. The first approach is known as the process approach. This approach emphasizes the idea of a recursive pattern of stages that are planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Trrible, 1996); it focuses another idea that has to do with teaching learners how to become more “knowledge informers” rather than becoming “ knowledge teller” that try to avoid mistakes (Hyland, 2003). The use of portfolios at that level is regarded as beneficial because it

can be applied for process instruction i.e. teaching students how to move from one step till the other one in a strategic and purposeful way.

The other approach to teaching writing is known as a product approach. This views writing as a final product that is governed by structure, functions, and purposes. Any given text is constructed for a given purpose; it is produced in a way that is different from another text with different purpose (Harmer, 2004). Applying portfolios as a product would enhance students' productions as they can be faced and can be involved in the production of different rhetorical structures. This continuous aspect of assessment portfolio gives students opportunities to be engaged in a purposeful production of various texts. And being a collection serves as an evidence for both teachers and students to check students' growth and to evaluate their written performances, for such a collection can provide a reliable and a valid data for assessment. Reliability and validity of assessment portfolios depends on two criteria: systematization and purposefulness. Assessment portfolio is systematic when the teacher is responsible for what is to be included in the portfolio i.e. all the documents included are previously organized, and the content of portfolios is standardized.

The content of the portfolio, at this stage, can be said to be authentic because it covers the various objectives of a given course and it reflect students' outcomes. According to O'Malley & Pierce, The authenticity of portfolios is about "reflect[ing] student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes..." (1996:4). This means describing learners performances, abilities, attitudes in a "meaningful, challenging, and engaging [situations]..." (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996:5). Giving students the opportunity to perform in such situation would enhance their understanding of their own learning because the result is a reflection of their own learning processes. These reflections can lead students to promote their awareness about their own ways of learning, how to use these abilities perfectly in a strategic way, when to use some and when to exclude some (Murphy, 2001).

Having these reflections in hand learners can develop a self- assessment component that would help them improve their writing ability. "... self- assessment provides one of the most effective means of developing both critical self- awareness of what it is to be a learner, and skills in learning how to learn" (Nunan, 1988:116). This believe about assessment can be reflected in the use of portfolios. Richards and Farrell imply that portfolios can promote the components of "comprehensive self-assessment, collaborative learning, and demonstrates how learners learn" (2005: 98). Self-regulated learners are said to be active and responsible for their own learning for that self-assessment concept is regarded as a key characteristic. They are also believed to be collaborative learners and this component can appear at the stage of peer feedback provision when portfolios are used (Hump-Lyons, 2006).

This study aims basically at improving students' ability to produce correct, purposeful, effective, and efficient pieces of writing in a simple and organized way through engaging them in a continuous, systematic, and guided process of written production assessment. This means engaging students in assessment portfolio-based courses that would be integrated within the actual first year English writing curriculum at university of constantine1. It is then about improving students' self-regulated learning processes for performing better and achieving more when writing in a foreign language.

Based on a previous research at the University of Constantine1, it was found that most of students do not engage themselves in a written production because of two different reasons. First, they try to avoid production because it is not a text that would be corrected and marked by the teacher and this resulted in lowering students' motivation to write. Consequently, if the teacher does not ask his students to write and does not emphasize the idea that their works would be marked, students would not dare to produce a written text in an effective way. Second, some students tend to write, unfortunately, they cannot assess their own writing. Most of students lack the ability of self-assessment of their own reflections.

To avoid such problems, this research tries to involve both students and teachers in an alternative type of assessment that “help(s) integrat(ing) instruction with assessment, representing a coherent model of organizing writing processes and products for ongoing reflection, dialogue, and evaluation” (Hyland, 2009b: 130). This means involving learners in an active learning process through a type of assessment that involves a “collection “of students’ written production throughout a period of time. Students would be engaged in a cyclical process of learning (brainstorming activities- production of draft1- peer feedback- draft2- teacher’s feedback- final draft- self-evaluation-reflection) within each session of one hour and a half.

Thus, in the present study, we address four research questions:

- Does assessment portfolio enhance students’ motivation to write?
- Does assessment portfolio help students develop their Metacognitive abilities?
- Does assessment portfolio enhance students’ writing processes?
- Does assessment portfolio really enhance students’ effective and efficient productions?

Based on the research reviewed here and our previous experiences, we set two hypotheses

- *If English students are engaged in a portfolio system; then, their written productions would be promoted.*
- *If English students are engaged in a portfolio system; then, they would develop the key concept of self-regulated learning.*

Materials

The investigation took the form of a field experiment and it involved the use of pre-post tests, two questionnaires, and classroom observation techniques. The tests were seen crucial; they were designed to check the development of students written productions/performances (dependent variable) affected by the use of assessment portfolio (independent variable). The pre-test took place at the beginning of the academic year (2012-2013) to check the actual level of students. It took the form of timed paragraph writing. The post-test, on the other hand, was conducted at the end of the year i.e. at the fulfilment of the curriculum. It was on the form of paragraphs writing, so that to check students’ improvement within the writing skill. Questionnaires were used to investigate students’ attitudes after the use of assessment portfolio and to check the effect of the latter on the different learning processes. Questions in both questionnaires were of a closed nature for practicality reasons.

These were collected after we conducted the post-test.

During both tests and during the whole academic year, the researcher collected some data as structured notes when observing students reactions and performances during portfolio construction i.e. he had just to mention the appearance of predicted behaviours and attitudes. The researcher in this case is a complete participant observer where He would be involved in the whole process as the teacher. But, this data was not included in this research because it provided the same data as the questionnaires has provided. It would be a redundancy to provide the same observations.

The target population of the study was first year English students at University of constantine1. The size was about 1000 students. The samples contained 60 members chosen randomly from the parent population. The sample (60) was divided into two groups: a control group (30) and an experimental group (30). The control group was involved in the actual first year English Written Expression curriculum, whereas, the experimental group was engaged with assessment portfolio- based courses as integrated with the actual curriculum. Both groups were asked to answer the questionnaires and were observed for comparison purposes. After six months the investigation was finished. This means after a whole academic year (2012-2013) which implies two terms, each with the time frame of 3 months.

This investigation followed a given procedure, which considered the actual curriculum. All the lessons are divided into two main parts, knowledge focused sessions and practice-focused sessions. Knowledge-focused sessions are equal to one hour and a half; they implement different texts to be analyzed and snapshots to be memorized. Practice focused sessions included diverse exercises that were introduced to control group (X) mainly during three hours per session. The experimental group (y) was introduced to the same content i.e. knowledge focused sessions; whereas, practice focused sessions were devoted to portfolio construction. "Figure 1" clarifies the process followed during each session.

As it can be noticed, the teacher/ researcher implemented diverse elements. Reading comprehension activities included a model text that was analyzed for genre identification, register building, and cooperative learning through paired reading mainly. This type of activities help students practice more their reading skill because they can be engaged in model analysis, comprehension of content, scaffolding, feedback, "praise and other social reinforcement," promotes their self-management skills, enhances their reading strategies, and reduces anxiety (Topping; 2001). Hyland (2003a: 17) argues that "reading [provides]... more importantly... [students] with the rhetorical and structural knowledge they need to develop, modify, and activate schemata which are invaluable when writing." Content (knowledge of the world) and formal (knowledge of language) schemata are enhanced while reading i. e. background knowledge extension (Brown, 2000). Brainstorming and outlining activities, on the other hand, help students explore more the pre-writing stage skills through engaging them in an individual task completion for organization skills development.

Peer editing work sheets contains structured headings that guide students for peer correction and develop their self-assessment strategies. Besides, scoring rubrics included by the teacher at the last stage of evaluation engage students in the assessment process more properly. It provides information about what to exactly

focus on while evaluating the adequacy of their productions/ performances. At the end of each practice- focused session students end up with 9 to 10 documents to be included in their portfolio, yet their final paragraphs were assessed by the teacher and scores obtained were considered for summative purposes.



Figure 1

Results and discussion

On the overall results the experimental group subjects' scores(Y) were more significant, compared with the scores of the control group's students(X). Besides, the experimental group means (My=11.12/ My'= 13.21) were significantly better than the control group's means (Mx=11.08/ Mx'= 11.31). It can be noticed from the means (Mx / My) that levels of students were homogeneous. At this stage, it can be said that the Experimental group was sensitive to the use of portfolios as an assessment tool (My'= 13.21/Mx'= 11.31). The hypothesis was claiming that assessment portfolios can promote students' ability to produce effective written texts. It is worth mentioning that both groups received the same working conditions of time (one hour and half) and space (classroom setting) while performing the task of producing a paragraph.

The t-test value for related data was used to check the difference between sets of scores at the level of both the experimental group and the control group as separate groups. Considering "figure2", the t-test value is Tx= 0.81, degree of freedom is df=

29, and at 95% level of confidence which is equal to 0.05 level of significance for one tailed test, the critical

	X	X'	Dx	Dx ²
Total Sum	332,5	339,5	7.00	73.00
Mx	11,08	11,31		
(Dx)²	49.00			
N	30			
Degree Of Freedom= Nx-1	29			
Tx Value	0,81			
Critical Value	1.69			
Level Of Significance	0,05			
1Tailed Test				

figure2: pre-post tests data summary of the control group

value is 1.69. $T_x=0.81$ is lower than 1.69 value which fails to reject the null hypothesis that Assessment portfolio is not effective. On the other hand, “figure3,” T_y equals 4.12, degree of freedom is 29, and the critical value is 1.69 at 0.05 level of significance for one tailed test. $T_y=4.12$ is significantly higher than 1.69 value which rejects the null hypothesis that assessment portfolio is not effective. Both results show that we must accept the alternative hypothesis: effectiveness of assessment portfolios. It could leave us say, as a first probative result, that assessment portfolios can be used for summative purposes.

	Y	Y'	Dy	Dy ²
Total Sum	333,75	396,30	62,55	352,25
My	11,12	13,21		
(Dy)²	3 912,50			
N	30			
Degree Of Freedom= Ny-1	29			
Ty Value	4,12			
Critical Value	1.69			
Level Of Significance	0,05			
1 Tailed Test				

figure3: pre-post tests data summary of the experimental group

A t-test value for unrelated data was used to test the difference between the control and the experimental groups and to confirm our alternative hypothesis (figure4). With a level of confidence of 95% which equals 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test and with a degree of freedom equals to 29, the critical value is 2.01. T-test value (T_{xy}) is 3.93, significantly higher than 2.01(critical value). As observed, the results confirm the alternative hypothesis that is our first research hypothesis: “*If English students are engaged in a portfolio system; then, their written productions would be promoted.*”

Holiday and Hassan (1976; in Davies, 1995: 1-2) claimed the following:

A text is a unit of language in use...and is not defined by its size... A text is best regarded as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning. A text has a texture and that is what distinguishes it from something not a text. It derives this texture from the fact that it functions as a unity with respect to its environment.

A text is discourse; it is used for communication. ‘Discourse’ is usually used to refer to written and spoken language, but ‘text’ is usually used to refer to written language. This means long ‘Stretches’ of combined sentences (Salkie, 1995: ix). A text is a set of combined sentences that are used to communicate meaning in a written form.

For a paragraph to stand alone as an informing piece of writing, it must cover the different aspects of text construction. Control group members missed the ability to write grammatically correct sentences, to construct adequately the modes of a selected genre, and to convey the exact meaning compared with the experimental group. The continuous criteria of the portfolio system combined with its cyclical process aspect allow students to produce texts, to receive all kinds of available feedback (peers and teacher), and to receive reinforcement materials such as model texts. They involve an explicit presentation of concepts that is “a clear, systematic, and direct way that promotes students mastery” of text structure and register (Hartman, 2008: 384).

	X	X ²	Y	Y ²
Total Sum	339,50	3 956,00	396,30	5 323,29
Means	11,32		13,21	
(∑X)²	115 260,25			
(∑Y)²	157 053,69			
N_x	30,00			
N_y	30,00			
Df=				
(N_x-1)+(N_y-1)	58,00			
T_{xy}	-3,93			
Critical Value	2,01			
Level Of Significance for Two Tailed Test	0,05			

figure4: T- test (T_{xy}) data summary of both groups

Figure5: Self-regulated Learning Processes Questinnaire Results (SRLPQuest)			
Experimental Group		Control Group	
Observation	Frequency-%	Observation	Frequency-%
Low	0- 0%	Low	0- 0%
Medium	12- 40%	Medium	25- 83.33%
High	18- 60%	High	5- 16.66%

Questionnaires provided a wider data that was calculated using the scale adopted from Oxford’s scale used to calculated results of strategy inventory for language learning: SILL (1990).

“figure5” introduces a summary of the results obtained from the first questionnaire (SRLPQuest) that was adapted from the Oxfords’ SILL (1990) to the actual situation and the teaching of writing. *Self-regulated learners are believed to have control over their own emotions, cognition, motives, and behaviours (Johnson, Serap & Almansour, 2013:266).* For these reasons, it was divided into six categories trying to investigate: strategies used to remember, cognitive processes used while writing, compensation strategies, planning/ organizing skills and self assessment strategies, self-reinforcement skills, and social skills.

Results obtained revealed that the majority of the control group students (83.33%) developed their learning processes with a medium level and 16.66% developed a high level of ability. Most students engaged in a portfolio system of assessment (60%) provided a high level of self-regulated learning processes and 40% developed a medium ability. Besides, both groups were free from students with low or no ability i.e. all the students were able of promoting their learning processes to become either medium or high self-regulated learners.

Figure6 : Attitude Questionnaire Results (AtQuest)

Observation	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Scores	Frequency-%	Scores	Frequency- %
Low	1	0-0%	1	0-0%
	2	5- 16.66%	2	4-13.33
Medium	3	14- 46.66%	3	19- 63.33
High	4	9- 30%	4	6- 20%
	5	2-6.66%	5	1-3.33

« Figure6 » shows the scores’ frequencies that were gathered from the attitude questionnaire: AtQuest. This questionnaire is designed to contain 5 scores. Both groups of students show great interest in the educational techniques that were used in written instruction. On the other hand, a mode of 4 to 5 students showed indifference in the instructional techniques that were used. Comparing results, it can be realized that assessment portfolio is a motivating instrument. Besides, our second hypothesis can be said to be accepted because of the difference noticed from the data obtained. This means that *If English students are engaged in a portfolio system; then, they would develop the key concept of self-regulated learning.*

Conclusion

It has become clear that assessment portfolio can serve as an effective tool of assessment and learning i.e. it can be used for both summative and formative purposes. Giving students the opportunity to think about their own learning processes, to discover new skills, to try various strategies, and to monitor their processes can promote their responsibilities towards their performances and can lower their reliance on their teachers. This aspect is believed to help student switch from bad production

to efficient and effective production. As a matter of fact, Learning to write and assessing a written text should not be separated into two different stages; they are complementary. For students to promote their productions, they need to learn how to assess their productions and their way of producing to be able of correcting their own mistakes. This is exactly what the effect of Assessment Portfolio reveals.

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British Social Departments and Their Lively Language

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Abstract

The paper looks at the stylistic peculiarities of the texts published on three official British social departments' websites: Government Equalities Office, Department of Health, Department for Children, Schools and Families (now, the Department for Education). The author studies the interaction of official and informational functional styles in the departmental publications and comes to conclusion that such texts contain phraseological, idiomatic and euphemistic units typical of a more informal style. Key lexical units for each ministry combined by general componential meaning, depending on the respective sphere of business, are also envisaged in the paper.

The research focuses on the analysis of the official and informational functional styles studying the peculiarities of various publications on the official web sites of three British social departments:

- 1) *Government Equalities Office*
- 2) *Department of Health,*
- 3) *Department for Children, Schools and Families (currently, Department for Education).*

Twenty official texts for the period 2009-2011, including social campaigns and policies, were analyzed with the application of the following methods: random sample and elements of semantic and linguoculturological analysis. As a result, we may observe different phrasal verbs, idiomatic and euphemistic expressions even in the texts of the official governmental campaigns traditionally associated with greater formality, which makes the whole text sound really 'lively' (e.g. *to go extra mile, the most vulnerable, to break new ground, to back up etc.*)

Official functional style has always been regarded as dry, formal, containing a number of clichés as opposed to a more informal informational style marked by the presence of different metaphors, phraseological and euphemistic units (Antrushina 2008). It should be highlighted that the term 'functional style' correlates with 'register' which was interpreted by M.A.K Halliday and R. Hasan (1976) as "the linguistic features which are typically associated with a configuration of situational features – with particular values of the field, mode and tenor..." (Halliday, Hasan 1976).

However, the language is constantly changing reflecting the liberalization of the modern world. Therefore, in the official departmental publications we can witness the appearance of a new phenomenon *mediatext* as a certain result of the styles' interaction, i.e. official content on the one hand and media (web site) form – on the other. To a certain extent it's possible to observe a reciprocal influence of *Languages for Specific* and for *General Purposes* (LSP, LGP) which are usually opposed to each other (Hutchinson, Waters 2000). Nevertheless, both LSP and LGP are based on one and the same language. So between the language of daily contact and other varieties of language occurs a constant interchange of units. Therefore, it seems really hard to determine clear boundaries between the LSP and LGP in the departmental publications on the official web sites. As a result, there may occur such linguistic phenomenon as *determinologization*, when a term loses its conceptuality and monosemanticity and the notion becomes simplified. The word adjusts to LGP and becomes a member of the phraseological system (Nikulina 2004). The verb '*to entrench*' may serve as an example in this respect. According to 'Concise English Dictionary, 1896' it used to denote: *to dig or cut a trench as in fortification*; and could be traced only in military sphere as a term. Nowadays, word combinations with this verb are to be found on the official site of Government Equalities Office in the section 'Women and Work' (e.g. *entrenched collaboration, to be entrenched*) where they have the following meanings:

- 1) Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English: strongly established and not likely to change;
- 2) Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary: to establish something, especially an idea or a problem, firmly so that it cannot be changed;

3) Macmillan Dictionary: entrenched attitudes or feelings have existed for a long time and are difficult to change.

Different social departments also tend to use word combinations united by a general componential meaning depending on the respective sphere of business. Here we define semes in the word combinations reflecting the aims of the departments in their social campaigns. Now, let us focus on some of the following examples and descriptions of the social departments.

Government Equalities Office

It was established in 2007, fighting discrimination in all spheres as its main priority. The analysis of the news and policies revealed the prevailing number of phrases where the main element can be characterized by the following semantics: 'breakthrough', 'fight' or 'strength'. Some of the examples with such verbs as 'to fight', 'to make', 'to take', 'to entrench' are highlighted in the context in the following abstracts. All of them denoting actions, reformation and further development:

- *'We have **made great strides forward** in terms of women's representation in political life – in parliaments and in governments. There is now only one country in Europe which has an all male cabinet team. That is a big change from when I was first in parliament. I was one of only 3% women MPs and there was an all male cabinet. There were many countries that were in the same position. But though we have **made progress** we are still pioneers. We are still trying **to break new ground**. We are still in a minority. I believe we must move from a position where women meet ad hoc – to where the collaboration of women ministers across Europe is **entrenched**'.*
- *'To deliver for women in our own countries we need to be stronger. We are stronger when we all work together. I draw **strength** from knowing that Bibiana and Nyamko are **fighting the same battles** that I am'.*

Harriet Harman,

Minister for Women and Equality (2007- 2010)

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

As opposed to a quite 'fighting' Government Equalities Office - Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) between 2007-2010 didn't strive to present any radical reforms and changes in the already existing political pattern. Naturally, there were some improvements in the social sphere, such as e.g. the increasing role of fathers in the upbringing leading to more flexible work conditions and stability in families – making these two -'flexibility' and 'stability' - the key semes.

A couple of these examples reveal several idiomatic expressions – *one size fits all*, *to be bedrock*; and also such stylistic device as *contrast*, as it appears in the headline of a campaign – 'Parenting Together Apart' – an effective way to attract attention in a political document.

- *'The Government therefore proposes to pilot **Parenting Together Apart** sessions for separating couples. These pilots will look at how to make*

Parenting Together Apart sessions available to couples who have made the decision to separate' (Green Paper, January 2010)

- *'Working **flexibly** can bring many benefits to your work-life balance<...> **Flexible working** does not just mean part-time working'* (Dads at Work Campaign, March 2010)
- *'**Strong, stable families** are the **bedrock of** our society.'*
- *'The evidence is clear that it is **strong, stable relationships** between adults in the home — parents, grandparents and other caring adults — and among all these adults and the children in a family, that have the biggest impact on children's happiness and healthy development'*
- *'The sheer diversity of family life now rules out **'one size fits all'** approaches.*

(Green Paper, January 2010)

The general tone of the publications, however, changes after the elections, which results in renaming of this department into 'Department for Education' (DfE). One of the top priorities now is the improvement of teaching in the UK, which is reflected in the name a new campaign *'The Importance of Teaching'*.

Department of Health

In a close cooperation with DCSF functions another social department – Department of Health (DH), established in 1988; which promotes almost the similar values with emphasis on the fact that the UK is an ageing society and therefore focuses on mostly preventative measures to improve the life conditions of 'the most vulnerable' as it's slightly euphemistically mentioned in one of the headlines on the site. Thus 'prevention' and 'care' as key components can be traced in the following examples from the web site.

- *'New study to drive further improvements in health care for **the most vulnerable**'*
- *Common sense would say that a simple preventative and collaborative approach to older people's care could bring significant savings. A founding principle of the NHS was that it should improve health and **prevent** disease, and not just provide treatment for those who are ill.*
- *<...> Reform of the care and support system, and the **shift towards prevention**, is the only fiscally responsible strategy for the long-term – but it's also the only morally responsible strategy.*
- *<...> We must strive to give people more choice, convenience and control over their care, to put quality at the heart of our services, and to take more early, **preventative** action to keep them healthy and in their own homes – where we know the vast majority of people want to stay'*

(January 18, 2010; Partnerships for Older People Projects).

Undoubtedly, health sphere covers lots of delicate issues and can hardly be described without euphemisms, which substitute a mild term for one thought to be offensive. Some examples from the web site illustrate the 'disability' issue, as such word combinations tend to appear in the majority of the publications.



- *‘Children with a **disability or special needs**: ‘I am the only person who they trust to care for my disabled grandson when they go to work.’*
- *‘The Department has instigated a range of work in partnership with **disabled people**, their families and relevant organisations in order to map the current position, identify barriers to delivery and develop proposals to deliver this objective’*
(Departmental Report, June 2009).

Considering different social campaigns, there are several features from media style.

Illustrations in documents, for a start. The following guide ‘Family Life’ for grandparents is very user-friendly in terms of language and general design, gives advice on how to balance work and care and help families through difficult times.

Secondly, we can mention ‘catchy headlines’ as in ‘Dads at Work’ (GEO) campaign and ‘Parenting Together Apart’ (DCSF). There are others with parallel constructions and repetitions – ‘Keep Warm, Keep Well’, ‘Healthy Lives, Healthy People’ (DH) Were I to see all of this in a newspaper, it would be customary, as the main target of the informational functional style is to attract readers’ attention.

‘Family Life’ 2010

The fact that departmental official texts contain the same strategy was a pleasant discovery.

Summing up all of the above-mentioned language peculiarities it’s possible to outline the following tendencies: official texts on the departmental web sites experience a strong influence of this media format and compression of information resulting in a shift towards a less formal register, transforming into ‘mediatext’, marked by the presence of different phraseological and euphemistic units, stylistic devices such as *repetition, parallel constructions, contrast*. It creates a very user-friendly tone, making texts of social campaigns and official news sound more down-to-earth and the whole language – lively indeed.

The decision to choose such theme for the research was determined by the following factors: social sphere, in general, has always been a so-called ‘political minefield’, which sharply reacts to all reforms introduced by the government. The majority of national revolts and general disturbance are aroused by some not very successful innovations in this very sphere. Social departments, in this respect, take great responsibility because they advance the policy of the ruling party, elaborate different social campaigns, which are aimed at the general improvement in social sphere and the well-being of the people.

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Phrasal verbs: usage and acquisition

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Abstract

Phrasal verbs are a typical feature of English. Multiword expressions, and especially phrasal verbs, can assess the level of English language proficiency. However, learners of English tend to adopt a strategy of avoidance. Unpredictable, phrasal verbs can be difficult to both understand and remember for non-English speakers, which prompted Sinclair (1996) to call them *'the scourge of the learner'*. The role of multiword constructions has also been emphasized in theories of first language acquisition (Goldberg, 1995; Tomasello, 2003). They are indeed a rich and productive source of predication that children must master, doing so at very young ages. There is, nevertheless, a huge gap in the study of child language acquisition that has largely left unaddressed questions about how the child learns and acquires verb-particle constructions. The purpose of this paper is to explore the gradual development of verb-particle constructions in child language by examining longitudinal data from the spontaneous oral speech of Naima, an English-speaking girl from the Providence Corpus of the CHILDES database (MacWhinney, 2000; Demuth, Culbertson & Alter, 2006), between ages 0;11 and 3;10. My findings also support the claim that input and interaction play a major role in the language acquisition process. Indeed, by analyzing the emergence and usage of phrasal verbs by Naima, I will thus compare the top ten verb-particle construction types used by the child and the adult. Finally, I will show the correlation between the most frequently used phrasal verbs in adult speech and the earliest constructions acquired by Naima. Ultimately, this paper presents a wide-coverage investigation of the acquisition of phrasal verbs and their usage in child speech.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Definition and background information

Phrasal verbs are typical of the English language (Fraser, 1976; Moon, 2005, as quoted in Macmillan, 2005). As stated by McArthur (1989), they have always represented '*a vigorous part of English*'. Phrasal verbs indeed make up one-third of the English verb vocabulary (Li, Zhang, Niu, Jiang, & Srihari, 2003). Besides, there are about 3,000 established phrasal verbs in English, including 700 in everyday use (Bywater, 1969; McArthur & Atkins, 1974; Cornell, 1985). In addition to the great number of existing phrasal verbs, new ones are constantly being coined. As noted by Bolinger (1971), they thus constitute a highly productive category: '*an explosion of lexical creativeness that surpasses anything else in our language*'.

There is no universal definition of phrasal verb. Indeed, as underlined by Gardner and Davies (2007), '*linguists and grammarians struggle with nuances of phrasal verb definitions*'. One of the reasons for this lack of consensus (Darwin & Gray, 1999; Sawyer, 2000) is that some linguists qualify phrasal verb as the combination of a verb and a preposition or an adverbial particle whereas others only consider a phrasal verbs as a verb followed by an adverbial particle. Phrasal verbs have, however, traditionally been understood as consisting of a verb and an adverbial particle.

As regards to the meanings of phrasal verbs, they may range from directional, or literal, or transparent, (e.g., *stand up, take away*) to aspectual, or completive, (e.g., *burn down, eat up*) to non-compositional, or idiomatic, or opaque, (e.g., *face off, figure out*) (Live, 1965; Fraser, 1965, 1966; Bolinger, 1971; Makkai, 1972; König, 1973; Moon, 1997; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The semantic classes of phrasal verbs can thus be represented on a broad continuum between compositional (directional and aspectual) meanings and non-compositional (idiomatic) ones (Bolinger, 1971; Moon, 1998) (see Figure 1).

1.2. Phrasal verbs, '*the scourge of the learner*'

Many linguists and researchers have recognized the importance of multiword expressions as they attest to mastery of English (Klein, 1989; Folse, 2004; Wood, 2004). Phrasal verbs can thus assess the level of English language proficiency. Cowie (1993) views them as '*a nettle that has to be grasped if students are to achieve native-like proficiency in speech and writing*'. As for Cullen and Sargeant (1996), they explain that '*understanding and being able to use these constructions correctly in spoken and written English is essential if the learner is to develop a complete command of the language*'.

Nonetheless, only a limited number of languages possess phrasal verbs (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999), which necessarily limits the possibility of successful transfer (Kellerman, 1983) for those learners whose mother tongues lack verb-particle constructions.

There has been considerable discussion about the challenges imposed by phrasal verbs to foreign learners of English. Indeed, not only may verb-particle constructions have reduced syntactic flexibility, but they may also be semantically more figurative.

Accordingly, for some cases, the meaning of a phrasal verb turns out to be difficult to infer from its component words. For instance, the phrasal verb ‘to *play something down*’ does not have to do with a playing event and it rather means ‘to minimize the importance of something’, as the following example from the *British National Corpus* (BNC) (Davies, 2004-) illustrates:

- (1) The European Commission sought to **play down** fears yesterday that new European Community rules limiting imports of cheaper bananas from Latin America would force up prices for consumers.K59_1005 (BNC)

In addition, many phrasal verbs are polysemous, making the task of grasping their different meanings even more difficult for learners.¹ Therefore, interpretation of such ambiguous forms only can be solved by using the context. The following examples illustrate the case of *make up*, a highly polysemous phrasal verb:

- (2) “Come on, Annie. Let’s **make up**.”ALJ 2705 (BNC)
- (3) Full of cynical amusement, she continued to stare at herself until inspired, she started to **make up** her face carefully, emphasising her brown eyes with liner, and smoky eyeshadow, and dusting her high cheekbones with blusher.HGM 934 (BNC)
- (4) You could **make up** a whole story. On no real evidence. It would change all sorts of things.APR 1125 (BNC)
- (5) The girl in the chemist’s shop said the chemist would **make up** the prescription the minute he got back from the bank.H9G 2630 (BNC)
- (6) I understand life, and the family ties that **make up** almost all of it,
much less than I ever did.AE0 2910 (BNC)
- (7) “Give me time to **make up** my mind. I promise I’ll do everything I can to help the rest of you.”AEB 1717 (BNC)
- (8) “I’d be ever so appreciative if you could, lass. And as I’m putting you out on your half-day I’ll **make it up** to you, there will be something extra by way of a thank you in your pay packet on Friday.”AN7 304 (BNC)
- (9) Since the plant manager was never able to **make up** a day’s loss of output which pulled down his monthly overall efficiency figures on, which he was judged, it was never difficult for Clasper to prove his point.AC2 530 (BNC)

¹ It is interesting to note that, in an analysis of the *British National Corpus*, Gardner and Davies (2007) found an average of 5.6 different meanings for each of the 100 most frequent verb + adverbial particle

(10) “Here’s your chance to **make up** for the naughty things you’ve done to me.”^{B0B 2568} (BNC)

(11) “You hypocrite, stop **making up** to my sisters and playing the shining knight, I saw you go to communion today, and it made me sick. How could you? When you don’t even.... You looked like.... I saw you coming back from the communion rails, with your eyes down and your hands folded, as if you weren’t putrid inside, but I know. I know.”^{GUX 107} (BNC)

All these examples taken from the BNC clearly show that the context helps to eliminate ambiguity and make sense of the various meanings of *make up*: (2) to become friendly with someone again after an argument; (3) to put makeup on someone’s face; (4) to invent a story, often in order to deceive; (5) to prepare/arrange something; (6) to form/constitute something; (7) to come to/reach a decision about something; (8) to do something good that helps someone to feel better after you have caused him/her trouble; (9) to replace something that has been lost, to compensate for something; (10) to do something that corrects a bad situation; and (11) to be pleasant to somebody, to praise somebody, especially in order to get an advantage for yourself.

Given their complexity and their unpredictable nature, multiword expressions, and especially phrasal verbs, can be difficult to both understand and memorize for non-English speakers in the current language experience (Coady, 1997). They are a source of confusion and ambiguity - in terms of idiomaticity and polysemy, in particular (Cornell, 1985; Side, 1990; Moon, 1997; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Rudzka-Ostyn, 2003) - in such a way that Sinclair (1996) called them ‘*the scourge of the learner*’. Accordingly, second language learners of English tend to adopt an avoidance strategy with respect to phrasal verbs, preferring most of the time using single-word verbs of Latin origin. This idea of avoidance has been clearly emphasized by Bywater (1969):

‘The plain fact is that what distinguishes the writing and, above all, the speech of a good foreign student from those of an Englishman is that what an Englishman writes or says is full of these expressions, whereas most foreigners are frightened of them, carefully avoid them, and sound stilted in consequence. Foreign students who enjoy being flattered on their English can best achieve this by correctly using masses of these compound verbs.’

To highlight the ‘*under-representation*’ (Levenston, 1971) of this particular category of verbs that phrasal verbs constitute, greatly puzzling to non-native speakers, a quantitative corpus study of the use of phrasal verbs has been conducted to compare learners’ productions with native students’ writings. All phrasal verbs have thus been extracted from the *International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE)* (Granger et al., 2002), the largest essay collection of advanced learners from different mother tongue backgrounds (Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Polish,

Russian, Spanish and Swedish), and from the *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS)* (Granger et al., 1995), the control corpus complementing *ICLE*. Figure 2 shows the extent of over- and underuse of phrasal verbs by foreign learners with respect to native speakers. The results have been summarized in Table 1.

Phrasal verbs are not universally underused by advanced foreign learners of English. Indeed, German learners stand out from all the other learner groups and they even use more phrasal verbs than native students. This much has to do with the fact that speakers of German have phrasal verbs in their mother tongue. As for Dutch and Polish learners, they perform in the same quantitative range as native speakers, whereas all the other learner groups use fewer phrasal verbs than native students. Finally, avoidance has above all been identified in the English of learners with a Romance native language background (e.g., Spanish, Italian, French) - languages which lack phrasal verbs.

2. Purpose

Much has been discussed about the numerous challenges posed by multiword expressions, and especially phrasal verbs, to foreign learners of English, given their unpredictable nature and their complexity. Nonetheless, little or no study has been done on the acquisition of verb-particle constructions by young English-speaking children. Yet, phrasal verbs represent as well one of the most challenging areas for children acquiring English as their native language.

This study explores whether children shy away from using them when they communicate. In this paper, I will then report a wide-coverage investigation of the acquisition of phrasal verbs and their usage in child speech. Studies like these can inform the development of new areas of work for language acquisition.

This paper is structured as follows: section 3 describes verb-particle constructions and related works; section 4 presents the resources and methods used in this paper. The analyses of verb-particle constructions in child speech and in adult discourse are in section 5. I finish with conclusions and possibilities of further studies.

3. Related work

Multiword verbs such as phrasal verbs function as whole units. They are considered as a separate lexical unit, reflecting the semantic unit of the construction. This is indeed consistent with construction grammars, where content and form are paired to form a construction whose meaning is generally unpredictable (Fillmore, 1985, 1988; Lakoff, 1987; Langacker, 1987; Goldberg, 1995, 2003; Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2003).

The impact of such theories on our understanding of child language acquisition has consisted in emphasizing the importance of a construction built piece by piece, 'mosaic-like' (Robert & Chapouthier, 2006; Schmidtke-Bode, 2009), and based on lexical items rather than rules until very late. Tomasello's verb-island hypothesis (1992) thus states that the child first learns words in chunks in specific constructions. This assumption is in line with the Gestalt theory, which asserts that a perceived

global form does not match the sum of stimuli that constitute it, and the perception of a part fits with our understanding of the whole. Constructions are actually first understood as a whole; the analysis of a verb-island construction being primarily inseparable from the individual verbs previously learned by the child. Thus, children's early grammatical knowledge consists *'not of an abstract and coherent formal grammar but rather of a loosely organized inventory of item-based construction islands'* (Cameron-Faulkner, Lieven, & Tomasello, 2003; see also Rowland, 2007). Equally supported by MacWhinney (1975, 1982, 1988), the theory of item-based learning has been identified as one of the central processes for a correct language production. Ultimately, language acquisition is a gradual process: linguistic categories are not innately given to the child, but gradually built by him from his language experiences.

In this paper, I present a wide-coverage investigation of the acquisition of phrasal verbs and their usage in child speech. More specifically, this work aims to examine the gradual development of verb-particle constructions in child language.

4. Materials and methods

The analysis was carried out on the longitudinal spontaneous speech data of Naima, a monolingual English-speaking girl from the Providence Corpus of the CHILDES database (MacWhinney, 2000; Demuth, Culbertson & Alter, 2006), between ages 0;11 and 3;10. Audio and video recordings, which began at the onset of first-word production and took place for approximately one hour every two weeks, were collected during spontaneous interactions between Naima and her mother (sometimes her father) at home. The utterances were transcribed using CHAT conventions.

For the current study, I used CLAN programs to extract all child utterances containing verb-particle constructions. Since the adult corpus was not coded, I collected the data manually.

5. Verb-particle constructions in early child language

5.1. The development of verb-particle constructions in early child language

Movement and space are two inseparable entities; our conceptualization of the movement being indeed part of the concept of space. As stated by Vandeloise (1987), *'the movement is an aspect of the outside world and it is often inscribed in the linguistic structures'*.²

The child lives in a world in motion. The first child language constructions obviously arise from both the movement and space, which are especially salient for the child.

Child's early single-word utterances are called holophrases (De Laguna, 1927). They are attempts at a sentence and convey a holistic communicative intention which

² Quotation translated by my care. Original text: 'Le mouvement est un aspect du monde extérieur souvent inscrit dans les structures linguistiques'.

mainly corresponds to that of the adult language from which it was acquired (Barrett, 1982; Ninio, 1992). Generally, child's first productive holophrastic utterances consist in making requests or describing dynamic events involving objects.

What are the parts of adult language utterances that young children select when they produce their first holophrases?

As Slobin (1985) explained, the answer lies in the kinds of discourse children participate with adults. This has to do mainly with the fact that certain words and phrases in adult speech are more perceptually salient than others (Slobin, 1973; Shady & Gerken, 1999). Thus, child's initial holophrases consist of '*dynamic event words*' such as *up*, *down*, *on*, *off*, etc., since adults use these words when referring to particular events (McCune, 1992, 2006; Bloom, Tinker & Margolis, 1993). They appear quite early in child language: they are part of the first twenty lexical items learnt by English-speaking children according to Brown (1973), and are primarily spatial localizers.³ Many of these words will actually correspond to phrasal verbs in adult language (Leopold, 1939). Thus, the first stage of the development of verb-particle constructions in child language corresponds to the holophrastic use of adverbial particles, also called '*satellites*'⁴ (Brown, 1973; Slobin, 1973; Tomasello, 1987). Their frequency in final position in the input speech accounts for their use instead of verbs (Slobin, 1973; Smiley & Huttenlocher, 1995).

Consider the following utterances, extracted from the Providence Corpus (Demuth, Culbertson & Alter, 2006):

- (12) NAIMA: **up** Daddy. (1;4,03)
 FATHER: oh you wanna get picked up oh that was in the way.
 FATHER: that was in the way you wanted to get picked up and that was in the way?
- (13) MOTHER: oh oh oh not in the mouth please.
 MOTHER: we don't eat our trains in this house.
 MOTHER: yucky.
 MOTHER: are you a dog?
 MOTHER: are you pretending to be a dog?
 MOTHER: yeah you can take it out of your mouth yourself I think.
 NAIMA: **down**. (1;3,26)
 MOTHER: it did fall down didn't it?
 NAIMA: **train down**.
 NAIMA: **train down**.
 MOTHER: the train fell down.
 MOTHER: did it fall down?
 NAIMA: yy yy yy yy yy.
 MOTHER: think it did.
 MOTHER: train fell down.

³ The spatial location is indeed cognitively simpler.

⁴ Note that English is a satellite-framed language; the trajectory of the event being expressed in an element of the verbal periphery, or 'satellite'. By contrast, languages that express the path in the verb are called verb-framed languages (French, for instance).

Clearly, Naima's holophrastic use of *up* in (12) and *down* in (13) conveys a spatial meaning corresponding precisely to a vertical path, which is characteristic of the first uses of particles. Moreover, here, *up* and *down* are said to be 'coloured' particles because they are highly charged semantically, so that Tomasello (1987) considers them as 'verb-like'. Thus, the particle *up* used by Naima in (12) might actually be, in a way, the equivalent of a truncated phrasal verb and be glossed in '*pick me up*'. There would then be an implicit predicative relation in holophrases. Accordingly, in the acquisition of verb-particle constructions, the child's holophrastic stage, beginning at 0;11,28 and being predominant up to 1;4,03 in Naima's data (see Figure 3), does not so much mark a spatial relationship between objects and people but rather a child's query about an action to be performed. This is indeed particularly emphasized in (12) with the adding of '*Daddy*', which functions as an addition to Naima's holophrastic statement, thus clarifying her adult interlocutor. Besides, the video clearly shows Naima grabbing her father's T-shirt and straightening her arms up; thus confirming an orientation towards the purpose of the action.

As soon as the child is able to produce more than one word, his earliest multiword utterances refer to many of the same kinds of things he talked about previously with his holophrases (Damon & Lerner, 2006). Child's initial multiword constructions would thus ensue from his earlier holophrases. Indeed, this is especially the case in example (13) with Naima's holophrastic use of *down* and her initial two-word utterance '*train down*'; Naima commenting on a toy that has fallen down and that is now on the floor. The second stage of the development of phrasal verb constructions in child language usually follows the pattern *X up*, *X down*, *X in*, *X out*, *X on*, *X off*, etc., *X* being a noun phrase (Tomasello, 2003). This second period, starting at 1;3,26 in Naima's data and being predominant up to 1;6,21 (see Figure 3), reflects, in a way, the beginnings of predication since *down* is predicated of '*train*'. Again, like in (12), we have here, with '*train down*', the vertical trajectory prototypically expressed by *down* giving way to an orientation toward both the location at the endpoint and the result of the action. Similar examples can be found in the corpus:

- (14) NAIMA: shoes on.
- (15) NAIMA: microphone off.

Examples (14) and (15) can thus be respectively glossed in '*put my shoes on*' and '*turn the microphone off*'.

Finally, the last stage of the acquisition of phrasal verb constructions corresponds to the period when children are able to produce complete constructions combining a verb and a particle (with an object, if the verb is a transitive one). In the corpus, Naima produces her first phrasal verb at 1;3,12 ('*fall down*').⁵ Her verb-particle constructions seem to become predominant over the two previous stages by 1;6,21 (see Figure 3), and they are getting more complex as Naima is growing older:

⁵ Note that Naima is a particularly precocious child. Table 2 shows the age of production of the first verb-particle constructions. The analysis was carried out on children from the Providence Corpus and the McCune Corpus. The results clearly show variations in acquisition profiles. Obviously, English-speaking children produce their earliest phrasal verbs shortly after their first year of life, namely, at 14 or 15 months of age for the most precocious children. Generally, the initial verb-particle constructions appear, at the latest, before two years old (1;8-1;9).

- (16) NAIMA: Mommy **clean up** yy (1;8)
 (17) NAIMA: I **took** it **off** because I don't wanna have this on me (2;10)
 (18) NAIMA: I have to **watch out** for it so it yy doesn't go in the food (3;1)

The three stages of the development of verb-particle constructions are presented in Figure 3.

Interestingly enough, a close link can be discerned between these three stages of the acquisition of phrasal verbs and the child's mean length of utterance (or MLU⁶), as shown in Figure 4. Indeed, if we consider both Figures 3 and 4, we clearly see that the holophrastic stage is largely predominant up to 1;4,10-1;4,18 (before decreasing a lot and almost disappearing); which exactly corresponds to the period when the child produces only one word - or, to be more precise, less than two words. In Naima's data, we have, for instance, the holophrase '*down*' at 0;11,28, with a MLU of 1.64 (MLU<2). It is the same for the two-word utterance stage, beginning at 1;3,26 (MLU=1.97) and being predominant up to 1;6,21 (MLU=2.00), thus referring to the period when the child is able to produce two words but less than three words - with a MLU fluctuating a lot within this period. For example, we have the two-word utterance '*train down*' at 1;3,26, with a MLU of 1.97 (MLU≈2) and '*off Naima*' at 1;5,26, with a MLU of 2.04 (MLU>2). The last stage also confirms this relationship between the different stages of the development of verb-particle constructions in child language and the MLU. Indeed, Naima's verb-particle construction stage is consistent with the fact that Naima is able to produce at least three words. This can be clearly observed with, for instance, Naima's utterance '*just turn this off*' at 1;9,23, with a MLU of 3.43 (MLU>3). From 1;6,21 to 1;9,23, there is some kind of overlapping with the two previous stages, being still present, though in minority. However, by 1;9,23 and up to the end of the longitudinal study, Naima's data clearly show that the number of phrasal verbs is growing increasingly numerous as Naima is getting older, while the MLU keeps on increasing a lot. As a result, we can infer that, the more Naima's MLU is increasing, the more her verb-particle constructions are becoming complete constructions (in full sentences). Thus, the comparison of Figures 3 and 4 strongly supports the idea of a correlation between the three stages of the acquisition of phrasal verbs in child language and the MLU.

5.2. Verb-particle constructions in child language and the primacy of space

As seen earlier in this paper (Section 5.1), the primacy of space makes the understanding of space and movement one of the possible origins or anchor points explaining child language development.

Table 3 shows the proportion of verb-particle constructions in Naima's data according to their semantic classification. With a huge majority of directional phrasal verbs in Naima's data (81.80%), the results clearly show that the most fundamental, concrete meanings are acquired first in early child language. Indeed, the spatial location is

⁶ The Mean Length of Utterance (or MLU) was developed by Brown (1973) to measure children's linguistic productivity.

cognitively simpler. The aspectual and idiomatic phrasal verbs, respectively referring to 10.55% and 7.65% of the total corpus, are largely in minority. Accordingly, they will be acquired later; the most abstract, opaque meanings being cognitively more complex. Thus, the acquisition of verb-particle constructions goes from the simplest to the most complicated meanings. This idea is also confirmed in Table 2 since the first verb-particle constructions to appear in child language are exclusively directional. In Naima's data, the first phrasal verb to be acquired is *'fall down'* (1;3,12); the particle conveying a directional meaning. It is followed by *'knock down'* (1;4,03), *'lie down'* (1;5,02), *'climb up'* (1;5,26), *'get off'* (1;5,26), and *'pick up'* (1;6,09); all expressing a spatial meaning. Naima acquired her first aspectual phrasal verb (*'clean up'*) at 1;6,09, namely, three months after her first directional phrasal verb. As for her first idiomatic phrasal verb (*'dress up'*), it was uttered at 1;7,10, namely, four months after her earliest directional one.

The spatial world would thus have a privileged and critical status for cognition, as well as for the construction of language in language acquisition.

5.3. The influence of the input on the acquisition of phrasal verbs

Whether it be the language addressed directly to the child, or the language spoken around him, the input does not only have a triggering role, but it also plays a crucial role in the acquisition process.

The factors determining the acquisition of verb-particle constructions are related to language use and frequency of input (Rice, 1999). Naima's and her mother's data are summarized in Table 4.

This section examines and compares the top ten verb-particle construction types produced by Naima and her mother. The results are listed in Table 5. From these, 8 out of the 12 are exactly the same, differing only in the order in which they appear. The results obtained clearly indicate that the most frequently used verb-particle constructions in child data follow very closely adult usage. Besides, it is interesting to notice that the verbs used in the most frequent phrasal verbs in Naima's and her mother's data belong to the class of *'light verbs'*. And, indeed, it is not surprising since, given their frequency of use, they are acquired at a very early age by children and they act as centers of gravity from which more specific instances can be learnt (Goldberg, 1995, 1998, 1999).

Furthermore, the hypothesis that there would be a correlation between the most frequently used phrasal verbs in adult speech and the earliest constructions acquired by Naima is confirmed by the data, as shown in Table 6. Indeed, 19 out of 33 of the most frequent verb-particle constructions in the mother's data are acquired by Naima between 1;3,12 and 1;8,08, and it is greatly significant given that Naima was followed from age 0;11 to 3;10.

6. Conclusions

This paper explored the emergence and gradual development of verb-particle constructions in child language. The child's data show that the acquisition of phrasal

verbs by young English-speaking children generally follows three stages, from incomplete forms to complete constructions. First, child's initial utterances consist of holophrastic uses of adverbial particles, which seem to behave in a 'verb-like' manner and convey the meaning of an entire sentence. Secondly, the two-word utterance stage, combining a noun phrase and a particle, emerges as the beginnings of predication. Thirdly, the child is able to successfully produce complete verb-particle constructions. Furthermore, this study emphasized the close relationship between these three stages of the acquisition of phrasal verbs in child language and the MLU.

This work also examined and compared the top ten verb-particle construction types in Naima's data and her mother's. The results show that the child follows very closely adult usage in terms of the phrasal verb types and is sensitive to their frequencies, thus displaying similar distributions to the adult.

Finally, the hypothesis tested confirms the correlation between the earliest verb-particle constructions acquired by Naima and the most frequent phrasal verbs used by her mother.

The data from spontaneous dialogical contexts may thus give a new insight on how phrasal verbs develop in child language.

I would like to end this paper on a funny note by quoting Jerry Seinfeld (1998):

“Wait up!” That’s what kids say. They don’t say “wait”, they say “Wait up! Hey, wait up!” ‘Cause when you’re little, your life is up. The future is up. Everything you want is up. “Wait up! Hold up! Shut up! Mom, I’ll clean up! Let me stay up!” Parents of course are just the opposite. Everything is down. “Just calm down. Slow down. Come down here. Sit down. Put that down.”

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Tables

Table 1. Extent of over- and underuse of phrasal verbs by foreign learners in comparison to native speakers.

Corpus	Percentage of use
LOCNESS (control corpus)	0%
ICLE_German	+13.92%
ICLE_Dutch	-0.1%
ICLE_Polish	-0.87%
ICLE_Finnish	-15.4%
ICLE_Bulgarian	-17.59%
ICLE_Swedish	-18.41%
ICLE_Russian	-25.29%
ICLE_French	-26.98%
ICLE_Czech	-28.2%
ICLE_Italian	-30.39%
ICLE_Spanish	-44.57%

Table 2. Age of production of the first verb-particle constructions.

Child	Age	Utterances
Naima (Providence Corpus)	1;3,12 1;4,03	fall down knock [?] down
Alice (McCune Corpus)	1;6 1;7	sit down take hat off
Alex (Providence Corpus)	1;9,08 2;4,25	yy go away and pull it up , apple
Ethan (Providence Corpus)	1;2,18 1;4,00	fell [?] down [?] xx push down
Violet (Providence Corpus)	1;7,22 1;8,05	go away pick up

Table 3. Proportion of phrasal verbs in the child's data according to their semantic classification.

	Directional	Aspectual	Idiomatic
Number of phrasal verb tokens	705	91	66
Percentage of phrasal verb tokens	81.80%	10.55%	7.65%

Table 4. Verb-particle construction usage in the child's and adult's data.

Verb-particle constructions	Child	Adult
Number of phrasal verb tokens	862	4019
Number of phrasal verb types	185	472
Number of support verb types	109	246

Table 5. Top verb-particle constructions for the child and the adult.

Rank	Child VPC	Child Freq	Adult VPC	Adult Freq	Child Rank
1	take off	50	put on	219	2
2	put on	42	take off	199	1
3	fall down	30	clean up	125	7
4	put back	28	get out	114	8
5	come back	27	fall down	101	3
6	take out	26	take out	96	6
7	clean up	23	put back	93	4
8	get out	22	put in	89	9
9	come out	21	put away	80	23
9	put in	21	pick up	65	11
10	go away	20	wake up	64	10
10	wake up	20	come out	61	9

Table 6. Results of the hypothesis test.

Most frequent PVs (Mother)	Number of tokens (Mother)	Age of emergence (Child)
put on	219	1;6,21
take off	199	1;6,21
clean up	125	1;6,09
get out	114	1;7,00
fall down	101	1;3,12
take out	96	1;8,08
put back	93	1;7,10
put in	89	1;8,19
put away	80	1;7,17
pick up	65	1;6,09
wake up	64	1;8,08
come out	61	2;4,11
pick out	61	2;3,25
turn off	50	1;9,23
come back	49	1;6,09
sit down	48	1;7,10
take away	44	1;7,25
go down	43	2;6,11
come on	42	3;3,26
hold on	42	2;10,08
put down	42	2;4,26
hang up	40	2;1,10
get off	39	1;5,26
go back	39	2;5,17
go out	35	2;00,04
dress up	34	1;7,10
turn on	34	1;7,10
come off	33	2;5,20
find out	33	1;7,25
get down	33	1;8,01
fit in	32	/
figure out	31	2;11,14
go in	30	1;8,01

Figures

Figure 1. Semantic continuum of phrasal verbs.

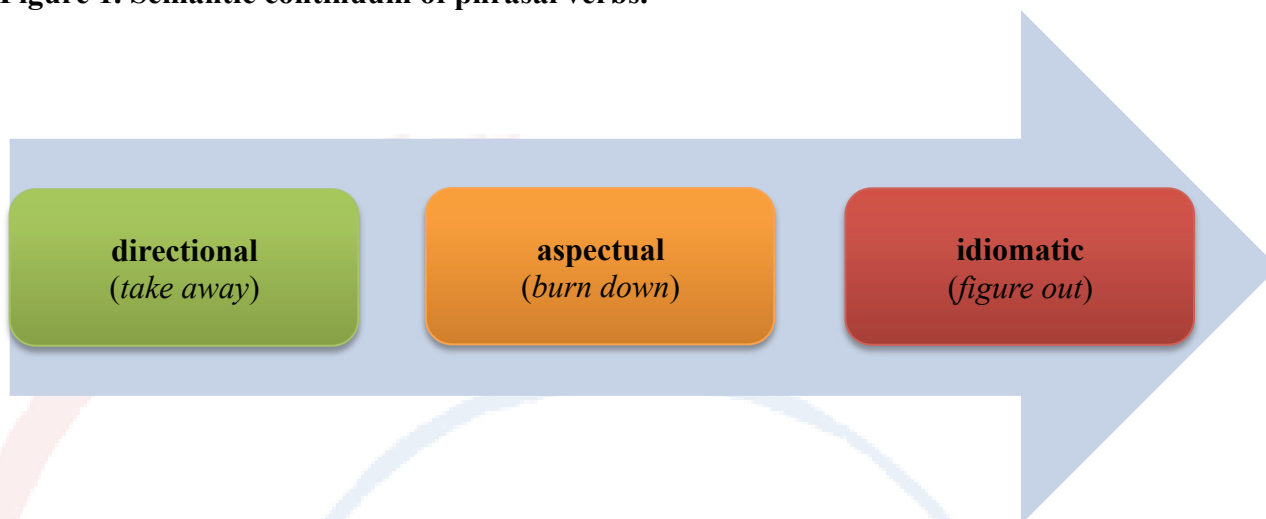


Figure 2. Extent of over- and underuse of phrasal verbs by foreign learners in comparison to native speakers.

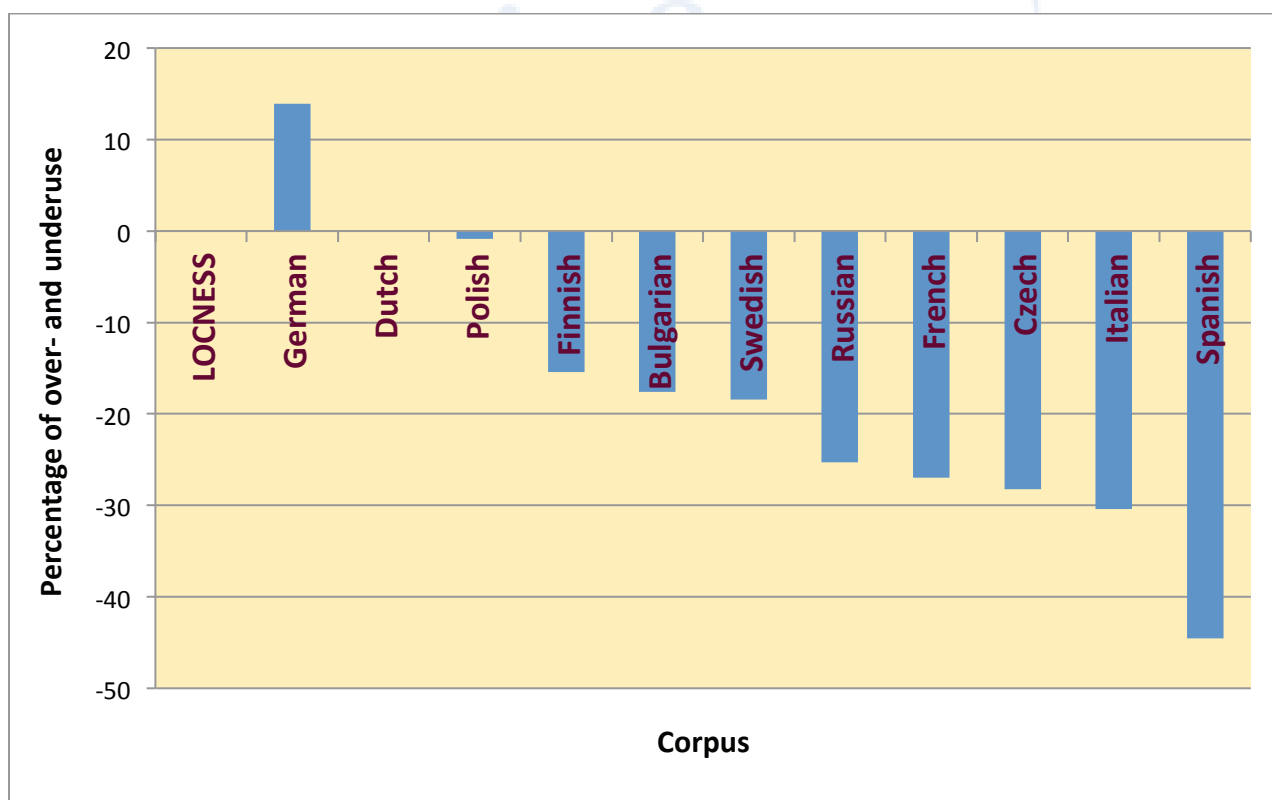


Figure 3. Gradual acquisition of verb-particle constructions by Naima (Providence Corpus)

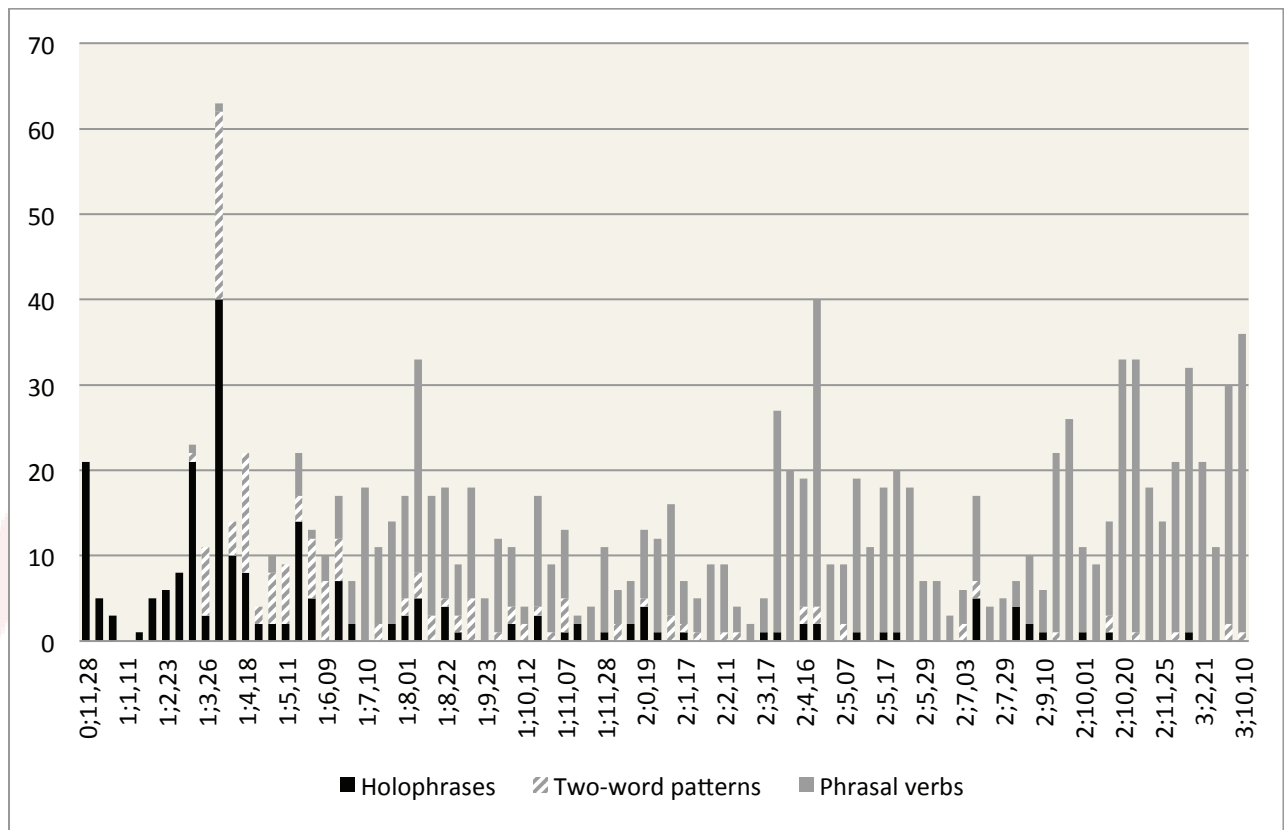
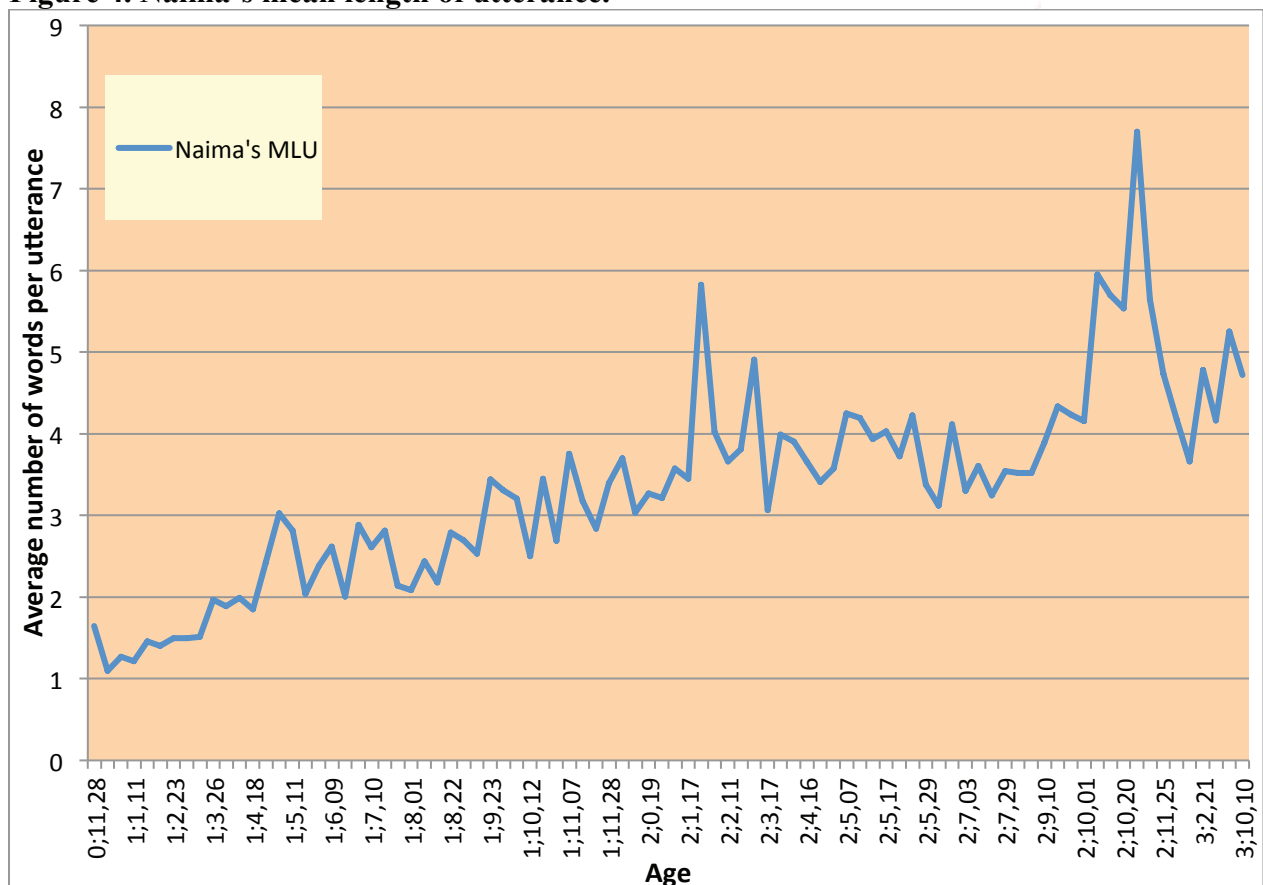


Figure 4. Naima's mean length of utterance.



National Stereotypes as Means of Connectedness, Identity and Alienation

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Abstract

The main target of this paper is to discuss national stereotypes of Russia and Russians as means of connectedness, identity and alienation between cultures.

Homogeneous stereotypes (self-stereotypes, i.e. stereotypes of the mother culture) are viewed as a means of connectedness. Stereotypes are, by origin, destined to reflect and to create connectedness, because they have their source in "in-group favoritism" social practice. As soon as a stereotype is born it becomes a means of mutual understanding between the representatives of this culture. For example, in Russian culture a sense of collectivity is very strong and with it a stereotype that only a strong political leader, a tsar, can effectively rule is connected.

Heterogeneous stereotypes are "them"-stereotypes, or stereotypes of other cultures. They are close to prejudices and are considered to be mental constructs which may be barriers for effective communication between nations. Thus they may be understood as means of alienation. For example, the American mass media deliver a stereotype that Russia is not democratic and doesn't want democracy. So, some actions of Russia may be interpreted in the way the stereotype dictates which is rather destructive for mutual understanding between the nations.

Identity stereotypes are intermediate type of national stereotypes which help nations to identify each other's cultural belonging. To this group refer banya, balalaika, bear and other stereotypes of symbolic nature. So, in the globalizing world the problems of alienation between nations may be examined through the prism of stereotypes.

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The main target of this paper is to discuss national stereotypes of Russia and Russians as means of connectedness, identity and alienation between cultures.

What is a stereotype? These are the recurring elements of life. In our view, the stereotype is included into the structure of the concept (frame) as one of its terminals (slot) and is marked as an “a priori” knowledge. Such understanding of a stereotype corresponds to the “frame” by M. Minsky (1975) and “stereotype” by H. Putnam (1975). “Minsky’s frames are equipped with *default values*. These are values for a slot that are used if no specific contextual information is supplied. For example, a default value for tigers will indicate that they are striped. A default value for gold will indicate that it is yellow. Default values define normal cases. But they can be overridden in non-normal situations. Thus, Minsky’s frames can accommodate stripeless tigers and white gold. Hilary Putnam has used the term *stereotype* for roughly what Minsky has described as a frame with default values. A *stereotype* for Putnam is an idealized mental representation of a normal case, which may not be accurate. What we have called social stereotypes are, in a sense, special cases of Putnam’s concept. In Putnam’s stereotypes, tigers have stripes and gold is yellow, despite the real-world occurrence of stripeless tigers and white gold” (Lakoff 1987, p. 116).

Where and how do we find it? We find a stereotype in a discourse frame. A stereotype is a discourse-conditioned mental-lingual construct. A certain kind of discourse poses special, peculiar only to this discourse stereotypes. This point of view is supported by the concept of discourse (and discursive process) by M. Pêcheux. According to Pêcheux, discourse is a material embodiment of ideological formation and determined by periphrastic relations ((inter)discursive processes) in a matrix of meaning inherent in a discursive formation (Pêcheux, Fuchs 1975). To our opinion stereotypes form a kind of “support” for the discourse in its development and provide the formation of the matrix of meanings. In every type of a discourse only particular frames are typically met. For example, if in an article Russian geopolitical behavior is discussed we can conclude that the frame ‘Russia – state’ is used here. The stereotypes concluded in this frame are called geopolitical as they are met in a geopolitical discourse and they are the minor terminals of the ‘Russia – state’ frame.

What stereotypes do we distinguish? P. N. Donets offers the following classification of stereotypes: personal (referring to individuals as members of certain social communities), and substantial (referring to things, events, countries, etc.); pragmatic (associated with reflection of emotions, judgments, etc.), and cognitive (reflecting purely rational information); **hetero stereotypes**, i.e., understanding of others, images of “aliens”, and **auto stereotypes**, i.e. the representation of ourselves as members of a certain ethnic group or culture, the images of “self”; intentional (deliberate) and spontaneous, positive and negative, intense and medial (Donets 2001).

Homogeneous (auto) stereotypes (self-stereotypes, i.e. stereotypes of the mother culture) are viewed as a means of connectedness. Stereotypes are, by origin, destined to reflect and to create connectedness, because they have their source in “in-group favoritism” social practice. As soon as a stereotype is born it becomes a means of

mutual understanding between the representatives of this culture. For example, in Russian culture a sense of collectivity is very strong and with it a stereotype that *only a strong political leader, a tsar, can effectively rule* is connected. So, we call this stereotype by the name the referent is marked in the Russian language – ‘tsar’. Where is it found? In a (geo)political discourse in a concept frame ‘Russia – state’.

What is ‘tsar’ for the Russians? When Russians speak about the ‘tsar’, the stereotype is marked often positively, seldom negatively. It’s a cultural homogeneous stereotype. The discourse under analysis is the American journalistic discourse, thus we deal with hetero stereotypes, but in some texts we see the endeavor of the Americans to understand the Russian culture. In ethno-linguistics the love of the Russian people to the tsar is called tsar-centrism. Stereotypes are rooted in the mentality, in the historical lifestyle of the people. Since the state was perceived by the Russian people as something alien, the relationships between them and the state were possible only due to the mediator and protector of the people – the tsar. So, it’s a characteristic of the Russian mentality to love the ruler, and Russians believed that if he punished he did it because of his ignorance or because of the intrigues of his environment, and he didn’t know the truth (Stefanenko 2003). Ineradicable belief in the tsar was shifted onto the Communist leaders, and then onto the presidents.

‘Tsar’ is a historically and culturally conditioned reality of the Russian life and Russian mentality. ‘Tsar’ is a stereotype that is a part of mega concept ‘Russia’, and is a kind of finalized knowledge (or an ‘a priori’ knowledge) about the historical forms of government in Russia, which still affects the mentality of the Russian people. The content of the stereotype ‘tsar’ may be obtained by synthesizing the most frequent meanings expressed by linguistic signs included into the syntactic structures with the word ‘tsar’. In the content of the stereotype we distinguish the notion, image and values. The notion is formed by the nuclear meanings fixed in dictionaries and most contexts; the image (or the figurative meaning) is formed by the context, i.e. the nearest syntactic environment of the word. The regulative meanings form the values of the concept.

«It is perfectly true that they are very ready to grumble – what peasantry is not? But the grievances are always laid at the door of the nearest master or official, and the fixed idea remains that if only the Father of his people knew the truth about all this he would set it right» (NYT April 9, 1882). This fragment reproduces verbatim the Russian myth: Father the Tsar (tsar-batyushka) does not know about the troubles of his people, and as soon as he finds them out, he will for sure comfort the people and ease their sufferings. An American journalist finds a good equivalent to transfer the myth – *Father of his people*. The ‘tsar’ is paternal to his subjects: *«The Czar, in his paternal tenderness for the Slave race, was ready for substantial backing»* (NYT July 19, 1853). We find the meanings ‘obedient’, ‘slavery’, ‘lazy’ in the Russian mass media discourse: *«Русские традиционно не только рабски покорны и ленивы, это еще и самый талантливый народ в мире, как никакой другой способный на аврал»* (Наша газета, 16 авг. 2005). *“The Russians are not only slavishly obedient; they are the most talented people in the world”*.

What is ‘tsar’ for the Americans? When Americans speak about the ‘tsar’ they mark it negatively, seldom positively and so we determine it as a national heterogeneous stereotype. We must state a very clear and unambiguous attribution of the concept ‘tsar’ to the Russian culture because we see that the word is borrowed. “Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English” gives the following definition of the word ‘tsar’: “tsar, czar, tsar – (until 1917) the male ruler of Russia” (LDCE 1992, p. 1139). The largest number of discourses with the included word ‘czar, tsar’ represents the first meaning of the word: “*Alexander II: The Last Great Tsar by Edvard Radzinsky*” (Free Press). “*Tsar Alexander II, who came to power in 1856, thought he would bring Russia into the modern age, but instead brought a world of hurt down on himself*” (Atlanta Journal Constitution 2005). This is the notion of the stereotype.

The image of the ‘tsar’ is identified by analyzing the meanings of the words surrounding the word ‘tsar’. First of all, in the American journalistic discourse the ‘tsar’ is endowed with social attributes of **will and power**: «*The Czar, says the News, knows our weakness; he has an eye on our one great sore, and whenever affairs in Europe come into such a state that it is not pleasant to have us watching their complications, he stretches out his Imperial finger and presses upon it till we wince*» (NYT Aug. 18, 1854). «*Then the Czar inspired South Carolina to kick up the Nullification muss, which the back-bone of General Jackson and the diminishing tariff of Mr. Clay were but just equal to*» (NYT Aug. 18, 1854); «*But Louis Napoleon is evidently by no means satisfied of the continuous support of the Czar. He is not certain that the jealous arms of Russia may not be turned against him if he shall become involved in an effort to extend his domination*» (NYT June 28, 1852). «*...and as the common soldiery believes absolutely that the Czar is the supreme and rightful disposer of events on earth, they only wait the word to march with alacrity wherever their master may bid them*» (NYT March 13, 1852).

The ‘tsar’ is endowed with social attributes of **talk**: «*Hon. Stephen A. Douglas went to Russia, and he had a good time and many a quiet and entirely confidential talk with the Czar*» (NYT Sept. 8, 1854).

The ‘tsar’ decides the questions of **war and peace**: «*The whole conduct of the negotiation had evinced a ready willingness on the part of the Czar to attain his ends by war, if not by diplomacy; and as no mediation can induce Turkey to forgo a position, for assuming and maintaining which she has secured the applause of the whole civilized world, war is the only alternative*» (NYT July 20, 1853).

The ‘tsar’ possesses vassals and empires: «*His sentiments do not concern American the people. If it should so suit him, he might proclaim himself a vassal of the Czar...*» (NYT May 31, 1853). «*The power of Russia seems really ubiquitous in the Northern hemispheres of the world. Wherever the nations turn, there they see that huge power towering and frowning before them. The Empire of the Czar marches with the most widely dissevered countries*» (NYT Oct. 28, 1852).

The ‘tsar’ stereotype is one of the mental constructs, which predetermine the perception of the most Russian leaders. It’s a tradition to compare Lenin, Stalin and other political leaders with tsars. So, in the American journalistic discourse Stalin is called ‘the Red Tsar’: «*Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar* by Simon Sebag Montefiore (Knopf). Montefiore uses fresh archival material to reveal more about the Soviet leader's private life and political purges and the sexual peccadilloes of his friends» (Atlanta Journal Constitution 2004). Even Chernomyrdin may be called a tsar: «*The Imperial Bank, for example, sprang from Gazprom, the gas monopoly run by oil and gas tsar Viktor Chernomyrdin before he became prime minister*» (Christian Science Monitor 1995).

The discourse, which was analyzed (the American journalistic discourse of the 19th century and the modern American journalistic discourse) suggests us an unambiguous evaluation of such a historical reality and a stereotype of Russian life as ‘tsar’. The Anglo-American culture, with its liberal values, love of freedom, independence, and individualism views the tsar almost exclusively from a negative point of view. The native cultural patterns are evaluated positively; foreign cultural models are evaluated negatively. The negative evaluation of the ‘tsar’ stereotype is seen vividly in the associations of the ‘tsar’ with despotism and tyranny: «*It is but a few short years since this same Nicholas landed upon English soil. Poland then, as now, lay desolate, and Siberia was aden with the sighs of exiles. He was then **the same despot of the North, the same mereiless tyrant** he is represented now – and yeall England pored out to bid him welcome. Her armies were reviewed; her beauty and chivarly gathered to do him honor; and from one end of he island to the other, high and low vied to do him reverence, and bowed in slavish adulation before him*» (NYT Sept. 8, 1854). But there is also another tendency, which is marked by some scientists. We see the ideological confrontation between the two polar states, powers-antipodes, each of which considers itself a messianic state. The Russian messianism is associated with the Orthodox religion and the idea according to which the tsar embodies the divine will: «*It has always been the policy of the Czars to invest themselves with the peculiar **sanctity of the priesthood**, along with the imperial purple. Their manifestoes always abound with assumptions that **as the chiefs of the Holy Russian Empire, they but execute the will of the Almighty** <...> The Czar does not speak in political character. His real political designs are not referred to. **It is the head of the Church, the vicegerent of God exhorting a vast nation to do battle for their religion.** The Cross and not the black eagle is to be the blazon of the fight: it is a crusade rather than a war*» (NYT July 20, 1851).

So, let’s resume. The representations of the concept-stereotype ‘tsar’ are the words ‘tsar’, ‘czar’. The notional meaning of the stereotype is ‘the ruler of Russia until 1917’, and it is implemented in most contexts. The Russian tsar is a symbol of despotic power and it forms the content of the American stereotype ‘tsar’.

In the American journalism we do not meet the images of wise tsars or zany tsars, which are characteristic of the Russian culture. However, in the discourse under analysis the concept ‘tsar’ is marked by the value ‘father’. The power held

individually is the basis for transferring the ‘tsar’s’ values onto the other leaders – presidents, communist leaders, etc.

Heterogeneous stereotypes are “them” –stereotypes, or stereotypes of other cultures. They are close to prejudices and are considered to be mental constructs, which may be barriers for effective communication between nations. Thus they may be understood as a means of alienation. For example, the American mass media deliver a stereotype that *Russia is not democratic and doesn’t want democracy*. So, some actions of Russia may be interpreted in the way the stereotype dictates which is rather destructive for mutual understanding between the nations.

For sure, this stereotype is connected with the ‘tsar’ stereotype. The love of the Russian people to ‘tsar’, their sense of collectivity and desire to obey somebody who is strong and clever means that Russia is not ready for the responsibility of democracy. Democracy in Russia is understood as a legal foundation of a state, equality and independence for everybody (Sergeeva 2005, p. 249). Stereotypically democracy is not characteristic for Russia. It is something **new** for her: *«The danger, next time around, is that awkward questions simply won’t be asked, never mind answered. **For Russia’s nascent democracy, that would be a far greater setback than any terrorist act**»* (NW Nov. 11, 2002 p. 19).

Russian journalists are denied to talk freely about the domestic situation, and thus we conclude that democracy for the Americans is connected **with freedom of speech**. *“Russia claims to be a member of the global community of democratic nations. **But democracy is not functioning when citizens are denied basic information with which to judge the actions of their leaders.** We are often told, for example, that the Russian government’s policies in Chechnya are “popular” at home. But can we hold Russian citizens responsible for what their country does if they do not know what it is really doing?”* (WP July 10, 2009).

‘Non democratic Russia’ is a stereotype which is associated with other stereotypes, for e.g. with geopolitical stereotypes. It’s widely spread ‘a priori’ knowledge that Russia is a vast country and it’s only a strong political will that could rule effectively over such big territories. A lot of Russians think so, too. So, **Russian big territories** are responsible for the absence of democracy in this country. *«Sergei Ivanov’s bluff was immediately called by U.S. Senator John McCain. **The Arizonan had accused Putin’s regime of a «creeping coup» against democracy within Russia, as well as a campaign to intimidate and reassert control over states – from the Baltics to Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine – that our victory in the cold war had liberated from Soviet rule**»* (NYT Feb.9, 2004). Of course, for Russia, which is in real world seeking for democracy such statements may seem to be accuses. Thus, sometimes negative stereotypes do not contribute into mutual understanding between the nations.

Identity stereotypes are intermediate type of national stereotypes, which help nations to identify each other's cultural belonging. To this group refer Russian stereotypes *banya*, *balalaika*, *bear* and other stereotypes of symbolic nature.

One of the stereotypes of Russian life is a stereotype 'banya'. **What is 'banya' for the Russians?** 'The Dictionary of the Russian Language' notes that the first meaning of the word 'banya' is as follows: special building or premises where people wash and steam. *Wash in banya. Russkaya b. Finnish b. (= sauna). White b. (with a stove, the chimney of which is on the roof, as opposed to black, where the smoke goes out through the door, and that's why it's black inside). Black b.; drink tea after banya.* The second meaning is formed with the help of mental operation of analogy: just as a person in the bath is steamed, so the products are processed with steam. *Heating smth. with the steam from the boiling water, the method of preparing food. Cutlets on a steam bath. Put the pudding in a water bath.* The third meaning is of metaphorical nature: to set a bath – 'задать баню' – to punish so that the person was sweating. *About strict punishment, scolding.*

In 'The Etymological Dictionary of the Russian Language' M. Vasmer gives the etymology of the word 'banya'. The word appeared in the 11th century, in the Ukrainian, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian there was the same root with the meaning 'wash'. By M. Vasmer, the word is borrowed from Latin – (Gr. βαλανετον; French. Bain, It. Bagno) (Fasmer 1986, p. 121-122). The dictionary 'Russia' refers to the fact that the first mention of 'banya' is found in the most ancient Russian chronicles 'The Tale of Bygone Years' (12th century). Since then, the design of 'banyas' has not changed, only the furnaces are made of steel now.

Thus, the notional meaning of the stereotype 'banya' is as follows: it is a wooden building, premises, where people wash and steam. When it is hot people go sweat and such a condition is associated with a visit to 'banya'; a special treatment of something with the help of steam is also called 'banya'.

Figurative meanings of the concept are found in the combinations of the name of the concept 'banya' and different verbs and adjectives. Thus, 'banya' acquires nationality signs: 'banya' may be *Russian, Turkish, Russian, Italian, Finnish, Roman*. Bath is evaluated aesthetically – it may be *wonderful*, from the utilitarian point of view it may be *useful*. In terms of normative assessment 'banya' may be *real, good*. The highest 'banya' evaluation is *super, excellent* 'banya'.

A good 'banya' is *well heated* and happens *on Saturdays*. From the time point of view there is a *weekly* 'banya', *regular* 'banya', *Christmas* 'banya'. 'Banya' is differentiated by gender: there are 'banyas' *for men*. Socially 'banyas' are divided into 'banyas' *for sailors*, *public* 'banyas', special 'banya' *for strollers*, *liberal* (not overheated), *own* 'banya'. 'Banyas' differ on the basis of locus – there are *city* 'banyas', but, as a rule, 'banya' is located *in the country, in the village*. From a geographical point of view *Siberian / Moscow* 'banyas' are distinguished.

Numerous contexts actualize the hedonic signs of 'banya' concept. 'Banya' brings a good mood, fun. 'Banya' has a direct access to the Russian soul. In our opinion, the denominative sentences are one of the syntactic forms of the stereotype actualization. In such sentences the connection of several stereotypes often happens: «*Dacha-banya-sneg-motocikli-otdih!*» (Komsomolskaya Pravda, 2006.02.28.)

Thus, it is possible to identify the chain of associations, containing the stereotypes associated with a specific concept. The chain 'Russia – Siberia – snow – 'banya' – vodka – dacha – samovar' may be updated in the discourse in the reverse order. In the discourse we may see an incomplete chain of associations, where the other stereotypical elements may be recovered from the context. For example: '*And what about this strange sauna where naked women beat naked men with brooms, then kick them into the cold water and give them vodka to drink?*' 'Banya' – *I laugh. 'Wonderful!'* (Komsomolskaya Pravda, 2007.03.23.)

'Banya' is considered to be a symbol of Russia. '*Whatever you say, vodka is a symbol of Russia, as well as 'banya', caviar and beauties in the headdress*' (Trud-7, 2007.01.31). These fragments demonstrate the relationship of the 'banya' stereotype with the other stereotypical elements of Russian life, such as caviar, icons, spinning-wheels, samovars, sledding, pelmeni, borscht. Some of these stereotypes are the symbols of Russia and numerous cultural meanings are attached to them. These symbols refer in general to the concept 'Russia'. Each of them is related to the central Russian concept 'Russian soul'.

In Russian culture 'banya' involves a lot of regulatory meanings. Thus, the dictionary 'Slavic Antiquities' shows the importance of Russian 'banya' in each stage of life – birth, marriage, death. 'Banya' is a place of devilry (a specific sort of evil spirit live in 'banya'), illness is left there, and the dirt is washed off and left there. 'Banya' is a place of deals with the devil, a place for divination and witchcraft.

The value component of the concept 'banya' is found in proverbs and sayings of the Russian people and phraseology. Phraseological unit 'to set a banya' has a meaning 'to strongly criticize, scold', in the same sense we use synonymous units «*давать духу*», «*давать пару*», «*давать жару*», «*давать жизни*». The Russians say *С лёгким паром!* 'enjoy your bath' *Прилип как банный лист* 'cling like a leaf from a birch broom'. Anteroom is a room behind the room of a boss.

So, the value component of the concept 'banya' is as follows: purification brings health; a process that is perceived as flushing off the evil may be not only physical, but also a spiritual cleansing. 'Banya' is not a place for human; it's a place of 'alternative' human existence where a human is only a guest, a visitor.

What is ‘banya’ for the Americans? The consideration of the concept ‘banya’ as a stereotype of Russian life in the American discourse should begin with indicating the status of this concept in the American culture. ‘Banya’ refers to the Russian cultural concepts, i.e. those that have a great significance for a definite (Russian) culture.

In the American English the stereotype ‘banya’ is represented by the borrowed word «banya». The exotic nature of the reality is emphasized by the borrowed word. So in the texts of the American journalistic discourse the word ‘banya’ is often surrounded by the synonymous language means. In English, the token «bath» is a means of explaining the concept ‘banya’. «Bath» (as we understand it) is a bathtub; the vocabulary fixes such phrases as *steam bath*, *Turkish bath*, *the bath of blood* (the latter is the same as the *bloodbath* in the Russian language).

‘The Etymological Dictionary of the English Language’ points out the Indo-European root *bhe – ‘to warm’ with the meaning ‘heat without water immersion’ (www.etimonline.com). The English word ‘bath’ is not enough to adequately update the concept, often additional methods of designating the stereotype are used: «*Throughout the New York City there are a handful of banyas, traditional Eastern European bath houses that can make for a hot date, literally, for those who know each other well*» (NYT Feb.11, 2011).

Different definitions attribute such conceptual features to ‘banya’ as: *traditional, Eastern European, Russian, Russian sauna*. So, the nationality of ‘banya’ is reduced up to ‘Russian’. Other ‘banya’ concept values are not as rife as in the Russian ‘banya’ concept. It is *wooden, steam bath, hot, nice, is located in the country, peasant, Slavonic*.

Since the concept is not well-known for the Americans in the American discourse the verbalization of the frame in whole is relevant: ‘Bath – brooms – stones – steam – hot – cold – vodka – washes – treats’: «*The idea for the **bath house, Russian Bath**, was born in 1980, when a friend told him about an apartment building in Sheepshead Bay that had an unused swimming pool in the basement. As far as Mr. Zaslavsky knew, south Brooklyn had no **Russian baths, or banyas**, as they are called, despite the fact that the area was home to a growing number of immigrants from the former Soviet republics. He leased the space, cleaned out the pool, and added the **steam rooms and saunas** that transformed the facility into a **traditional banya**, complete with **fiery rocks** over which water is poured to create **steam***» (NYT May 22, 2005).

In some discourses some frame elements may be omitted and it is important to note that the frame includes not only ‘banya’s’ articles, but also virtual components. The traditional character of ‘banya’ is emphasized; in ‘banya’ a special Russian discourse has developed; ‘banya’s’ ability to heal the body and soul is outlined. ‘Banya’ has been the focus of Russian life for centuries. «*...The **banya**, with its attendant rituals of eating, sleeping and massages, has been a focus of Russian life for centuries*» (NYT Dec. 21, 1997).

In addition, numerous fragments show how to wash in ‘banya’: «*The damp heat inside the **wood**-lined banya, or Russian steam bath, was prodigious. It stung the eyes and the flesh of the seven people who were sitting in their bathing suits, dripping sweat. "You are going to sit here," said Alex Beigelman, a 46-year-old office manager, explaining the process. "Then you take a **brush of leaves** and rub yourself ..." With that Mr. Beigelman **took a squat bouquet of brownish oak leaves soaked in water, waved it majestically and brought it flopping down on the back of his 25-year-old son, Eugene. After a few minutes the younger Mr. Beigelman left the banya and jumped into a cold pool***» (NYT 21 Dec. 1997).

There are fragments that describe ‘banya’ design: «*Inside a cabin with a sun porch on one side, there is a small parilka, or steam room, with stones heated by a wood fire ...*» (NYT July 8, 2007). Bath is a cause for borrowing other Russian words: parilka, bling, borsht, dacha, vodka, troika. These realities are included in the ‘banya’ frame because they are Russian, too, and could be met together.

‘Banya’ is endowed with sacredness. In 1994 the American magazine «Newsweek» published an excerpt from Boris Yeltsin's memoirs ‘The Struggle for Russia’. This publication describes how in a crowded Moscow ‘banya’ an inspiration came to Boris Yeltsin: he is no longer a Communist. There has been a kind of reincarnation: a member of the Politburo, Yeltsin became a politician: «*It Happened in a Steam Room. The year was 1989, and political maverick Boris Yeltsin had just returned from his first visit to the United States. In a crowded Moscow **banya**, revived by the goodwill of ordinary Russians, Yeltsin suddenly realized that he was no longer a communist. "That moment in the banya was when I changed my world view," he writes in his new memoir, "The Struggle for Russia." Yeltsin's book, exclusively excerpted in the pages that follow, is a deeply personal account of his pilgrimage from the comfortable clubhouse of the Soviet Politburo to the raw and risky frontier of political and economic reform*» (NW May 2, 1994).

Thus, the analysis of the two concepts, cultural stereotypes ‘banya’ in the Russian and English languages, allows us to make some conclusions about the differences in the perception of Russian ‘banya’ by the representatives of different linguistic cultures. The meaning of the word ‘banya’ is revealed through an inadequate equivalent ‘bath’ and a stereotype ‘banya’, which describes the washing procedure in the Russian ‘banya’. The figurative meanings of ‘banya’ are not as diverse as in the structure of Russian ‘banya’ concept. In the American journalistic discourse ‘banya’ is practically always Russian. The value of the concept is represented in Russian proverbs and sayings; banya has the status of a stereotype, as it is revealed through the procedure of washing in ‘banya’ and it is contained in the frame ‘banya’, which is represented in the narratives ‘I was attending a Russian ‘banya’ or ‘how to construct and what they do in the Russian ‘banya’.

Thus, we suggest

1) to view a stereotype as a concept (frame) terminal. Each type of frames appear in specific discourses: in geopolitical and political discourses we find geopolitical and political frames, geopolitical and political stereotypes. 'Tsar' stereotype is found in 'Russia – state' frame in a (geo)political discourse, 'no democracy' stereotype is found in 'Russia – state' frame in a political discourse, 'banya' stereotype is found in 'Russia – country' frame in a socio-cultural discourse;

2) to qualify stereotypes according to the culture they describe and belong to. Auto stereotypes are positively marked and describe our own cultures; they contribute to the nation connectedness. Heterogeneous stereotypes describe the perception of our cultures by the representatives of other countries. Until they do not describe politics they may be neutral and thus they identify a nationality (as in the case with 'banya'). Once they deal with politics and ideologies they acquire a negative mark and may become a means of alienation (as in the case of 'no democracy' stereotype).

So, in the globalizing world the problems of alienation between nations may be examined through the prism of stereotypes investigation.

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*The Study of the Degree of Effectiveness of Project-based Learning in
Relation to Improving the Language Learning Skills of KKU Students*

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Abstract

As a foundation for communication skills, speaking skills seems to be an important skill in the four-component of the English language. However, weaknesses in speaking skills and the development of other skills are found in a large number of learners. Learners cannot generate their knowledge in real life situations. These problems need to be immediately improved in order to achieve the goals of the National Educational Act of B.E. 2542. Many teaching approaches have been attempted to solve these issues, one of which is Project-based Learning.

This study investigated the effectiveness of Project-based Learning for the course 000102 English for Academic Purposes I at Khon Kaen University. The course component studied was speaking skills. The instruments used to evaluate this investigation included Likert rating scales questionnaire for quantitative data which was analyzed by percentage, mean scores, and standard deviation. The qualitative data was gathered by a group discussion of teachers in charge in the course.

The overall results of the study revealed that PBL approach presented a positive outcome. By using PBL approach, learners had an opportunity to evaluate themselves. It also developed learners' skills such as problem-solving skills and collaborative skills. This type of learning is valuable as it is connected to real-world issues and enables learners to demonstrate their knowledge in a practical way.

The weakness of this paper is that data from group discussion was too little compared to the overall number of teachers in charge in the course. To make the investigation more reliable, data from group discussion should be increased.

Introduction

Over the past decade, the student-centered method has been an important component in the educational system, and has played a key role in approaches to teaching and learning. However, at present, many educators have focused on the learners' ability in self-development. Therefore, educational management should focus on the self-development of learners. There are many reasons that teaching and learning focus on the above aspect. First, learners are able to generate organized and sustainable learning skills. They can employ the research process to develop and apply their learning in real life. Learners can also use the research process as a part of the learning process. It is believed that research is a path to wisdom and learning in society. It offers an opportunity for Thais to develop skills and create a lifelong learning. "Give a man fish, he eats it one day; teach him how to fish and he will never go hungry". This is very well known in the educational paradigm. If we teach learners how to learn, then they will not be at a loss in real-life situations, since they would be prepared to deal with whatever comes their way.

The Ministry of Education has planned and continuously developed English language teaching in order to be in alignment with present day, which focuses on real-world communication. However, regarding teaching and learning activities in the English classroom, in practical ways, teachers often stick with textbooks and use lectures as their teaching approach. This method focuses mainly on vocabulary and grammar rather than real communication. Nevertheless, the use of traditional teaching approach is far from improving communication skills or promoting teachers to understand and to be able to use the language in different situations. Because of the traditional approaches to teaching and learning English in Thailand, success has never come close to being achieved. The reasons affecting learner's speaking skills are a lack of confidence and self-esteem. Furthermore, teachers often use the L1 language in class. They also do not use an effective teaching approach in the classroom. Teachers should encourage learners to practice speaking in order to boost their confidence and change their attitudes toward learning language.

Based on developments in cognitive research and a changing modern educational environment, PBL has gained popularity. Project-based Learning is an effective approach that allows multiple skills to be developed through an integrated, meaningful activity. This type of learning is valuable since it is connected to real-world issues and enables learners to demonstrate their knowledge in practical ways. It also engages learners in sustained investigations and allows learners to participate in a variety of tasks that seek meaningful interactions. Therefore, it has become an important option in classroom teaching and learning approaches. Project-based Learning uses the research process in teaching and learning activities which will develop learners' skills such as problem-solving skills and collaborative skills. Also, PBL can help improve the social skills of the learners. The use of projects in the classroom is not a new one, and reflects a search for ways to make the learning of a foreign language as meaningful an experience as possible. Projects are a means by which learners become active participants in an experiential learning model. They also assist in the development of independent and cooperative learning skills. Learners are more likely to feel personally involved in the learning process and motivated by the tangible end product. Projects give teachers a means by which to involve the whole child in the learning process by involving the full range of skills

and talents available. It also provides a planning approach for multi-level classrooms. The flexibility of this approach also provides the teacher with cross-curriculum and language skill integration. PBL functions as a bridge between using English in class and outside the class in real-life situations. (Freid-Booth 2002). It does this by placing learners in situations that require authentic use of language in order to communicate. When learners work in teams, they find they need skills to plan, organize, and negotiate, and so on. Because of the nature of project work, development of these skills occurs even among learners at lower levels of language proficiency.

By studying a number of researches in Project-based learning, it can be observed that this approach provides much of the opportunity in learning independently, promoting language ability, and improving important skills such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and co-operative skills. Therefore, using the Project based Learning in English Language teaching could possibly improve the abilities of the learners in communicating in real-life situations, which is an element in learning English for communication successfully.

The purpose of this paper is to review recent research into the use of the Project-based Learning approach in developing learners' skills, especially in speaking, for the course English for Academic Purposes I for Khon Kaen University. The material chosen for this course was the researcher's own written textbook. Throughout this paper the abbreviation, PBL, will be used to refer to the Project-based Learning approach.

Literature Review

2.1 Project-based Learning

Learning English through the use of project work is an experience in which learners choose their own projects and create learning opportunities based upon their individual interests by using a variety of sources. Doing the project helps students to develop their language abilities and to be able to apply them in real-world contexts. PBL is classified as a child-centered approach.

PBL and the theoretical of child-centered approach

1. PBL is coherence with the theoretical and practical of child-centered approach because:

1.1 Learners choose the topics of the project by themselves.

1.2 Learners design their own learning style and choose their own sources.

1.3 Learners learn through hands-on experience.

1.4 Learners have opportunities to exchange knowledge with others.

1.5 Learners have opportunities to integrate their language skills with other disciplines.

2. *Key features of PBL*

2.1 Learners are encouraged to choose the topics that interest them.

2.2 Learners design their own learning style and choose their own sources.

2.3 PBL provides opportunities for the integration of language skills with other disciplines.

2.4 Learners improve their language skills and have opportunities to utilize them.

2.5 The project work is meaningful with an appropriate level of difficulty.

2.6 Learners are able to communicate ideas and findings to others.

2.2 Defining Project-Based Learning

Project-based Learning, so-called PBL, is not a new revolution in education. It has been around for many years; however, the practice has evolved into a more formally defined teaching strategy. It is a systematic approach to teaching that engages students in the sustained learning of knowledge and skills by real-world investigations. It is proving to be an effective method in classroom teaching and learning. Many definitions were given to PBL.

The Institute of Academic Development (2003) mentioned that PBL is a small piece of research. Learners try to solve problems or find the answers for the questions by using scientific process.

Project work is also viewed as "An approach to learning which complements mainstream methods and which can be used with almost all levels, ages, and abilities of students" (Haines 1989).

The Department of Curriculum and Instructional Development (1998) said that PBL is an activity that provides opportunities for learners to study and practice their abilities and interests by using the scientific process or other processes to find out the result of that topic. Teachers act as facilitators and advisors from the beginning of the project; choosing topics, planning the process and presenting the results.

From the definitions above, it can be determined that PBL is a teaching and learning approach that allows learners to study and practice independently under the observation of teachers by creating plans, designing the process, and evaluating the project. Learners are offered opportunities to study on the topics that interest them. They use the language skills and other skills naturally. PBL also promotes the learners' personal abilities in real-world situations. Learners learn through hands-on

experience. After the project is finished, they should be able to present the work and apply their knowledge in real world.

2.3 The Principles of Project-Based Learning

Haines (1989) mentioned the characteristics of PBL as follows:

1. Student-centered not syllabus-centered
2. Co-operative not competitive
3. Skills-based not structured-based
4. The importance of the end product

Many educators agreed that the important characteristics of PBL can be concluded as follows:

1. The project is interested by learners.
2. PBL is an organized process of learning.
3. PBL is an integrated learning.
4. Learners use a variety of abilities.
5. The project is in alignment with real-world situations.
6. PBL is an in-depth study through information processing from varied sources.
7. Learners are able to draw conclusions by themselves.
8. The project is appropriately presented in terms of processes and findings.
9. The findings can be applied in real-world contexts.

The Institute of Academic Development (2003) outlined the characteristics of PBL as follows:

1. PBL allows learners to choose the topics they interested in and the appropriate levels of difficulty.
2. PBL is an activity that utilizes scientific process in the investigation in order to solve the problems.

3. In PBL learners focus on planning, collecting and analyzing data, as well as, drawing conclusions from the study. Moreover, learners present the results of the study to the teacher who serves as an advisor.

4. In PBL, learners are provided an opportunity to show their talent.

5. Learners are able to benefit by spending their free time doing the project work.

The characteristics of PBL

1. Learners choose the topics they want to study.

2. Learners designed the process with their own sources.

3. Learners are learning independently through hands-on experience.

4. Learners are drawing conclusion by themselves.

5. Learners have an opportunity to exchange knowledge with others.

6. Learners can apply knowledge into their real lives.

There are several key features that assist to direct the use of PBL instruction within a classroom. It is important that the project has a real-world connection. The project needs to allow students not to only make real life connections, but also, to implement learning and apply new concepts by using their knowledge in a variety of education contexts. Working with others is also a key element of PBL. The core idea of PBL is that real-world problems capture the learners' interest as they acquire knowledge.

2.3 The objectives of using Project-Based Learning in language classroom

PBL is aimed at motivating learners to understand and use scientific processes in order to find out the results of the questions or problems using the English language. It also focuses on the independence of the learners and group work. The most important objective is that PBL is aimed at promoting the learners' motivation to learn.

2.4 Benefit of Project-Based Learning

Project-Based Learning offers a wide range of benefits to both teachers and learners. A growing body of academic research supports the use of Project-Based Learning to engage learners, increase their perception of knowledge, and to develop skills. For learners, the benefits of PBL are as follows: For many learners, PBL includes features such as variety, authenticity, enjoyment, and motivation. Learners are engaged in real-world activities that have significance beyond the classroom. Another reported benefit is improving language skills, they have opportunity to use language in a relatively natural context and participate in meaningful activities which require the use of authentic language. Because of project work progresses according to the specific context and students' interest, a further benefit is that students show enhanced

motivation, engagement, and enjoyment. Therefore, they increase interest, motivate students to participate, and can promote learning. Another set of reported benefits pertains to the development of complex skills such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and communication (SRI 2000). After the project work, students knew that being a team member entailed certain obligations. Most of them developed skills for resolving conflict within the group, and learned to be responsible in relation to the roles that had been assigned to them. Most importantly, regardless of language performance and motivation, a large number of learners had seemed to have developed cooperative skills.

In this investigation, it was found that students were more eager to experiment with new language, since they were less concerned with sounding silly. This was particularly important, since it is not uncommon for students to have little knowledge in speaking. This fact is true because they are not provided with opportunities to participate in real and authentic communication activities. PBL removes the gap between knowledge and skills. Learners are encouraged to choose topics that are relevant and interesting for them. They want to achieve a real, specific goal, and are personally involved in the activity. Apart from offering knowledge, project work, also encourages skills development.

For teachers, the additional benefits include enhanced professionalism and collaboration among colleagues, and opportunities to build relationships with students (Thomas 2000). Moreover, many teachers are pleased to find a model that accommodates diverse learners by introducing a wider range of learning opportunities into the classroom. Teachers find that the students who benefit the most from PBL: tend to be those for whom traditional instructional methods and approaches are not effective (SRI 2000).

2.5 Teacher's role in Project-based Learning

Being a teacher is one of the most responsible and demanding professions. Teachers are expected to help learners integrate into society, gain knowledge, develop skills and abilities, and establish a sense of morality. In Project-based Learning, a learner-centered approach, the teacher's role is to guide and advise students rather than direct them. Playing the role of facilitator, the teacher works with students to structure meaningful tasks and provide coaching in both knowledge development and social skills. The teacher's stage by stage role is clearly outlined by Simon Haines: Initially, the teacher should arouse interest and elicit students' ideas for thematic direction, methods of working, timetables, and suitable end product and resource implications. PBL is possible in the classroom where teachers support students by giving sufficient guidance and feedback. Teachers should direct learners on how to develop the project and encourage student motivation.

Levy suggested that effective PBL requires the teacher to assume a different role. During the project work, the teacher's role is not dominant, but he or she acts as a guide, an advisor, or a facilitator who is involved with becoming a source of ideas and advice. In implementing the project method, the focal points of the learning process moves from teachers to the learners and from working individually to working in groups.

On the whole, PBL requires the teacher to adopt a new, enthusiastic attitude, to acquire a wide range of skills, and to leave traditional position. It could be said that 'leadership' is replaced by 'partnership' the teacher who should really acts as a counselor, assistant, adviser, or consultant. The teacher should also be prepared to give advice and help with overcoming difficulties. It is the duty of the teacher to facilitate the entire process.

2.6 Students' role in Project-based Learning

Student roles in PBL are to build knowledge and to determine real-world solutions. PBL requires learners to engage in intelligently focused communication. This approach forces students to take ownership of their success. In the PBL model students generally work in small, collaborative groups. They find sources, conduct research, and hold each other responsible for learning and completing the tasks. Essentially, students must manage themselves in this approach to instruction.

2.7 Previous research on Project-based Learning

For many decades, a number of studies on Project-based Learning have influenced the teaching methods with many subjects.

Atikarn Thongmak (2009) conducted research on use of Project-based approach to develop English speaking and thinking skills. The findings reviewed that the learners' English speaking skills improved dramatically. The results showed that the students' thinking skills also improved.

Kanitta Naknoi (2005, p. 50-54) investigated the students' abilities in using English for Communication through the use of project work. The results showed that the students' abilities in using English for Communication in the project work learning experiment were at an average level. However, their ability in using English for Communication increased after using the project. The research also found that the level of the student satisfaction in studying English was dramatically increased.

Thomas (2000, p. 1-45) studied the research on project-based learning in 1999-2000. The results appeared that project-based learning is an effective teaching approach because it improved learners' thinking skills and language abilities. Learners' learning achievement increased significantly.

The above researches report positive outcomes and prove that PBL has enormous benefit in teaching approach. It has also been shown to benefit a variety of students'

skills development. These studies have shown that by adaptation and creativity, project work can be successful in language classes.

Methodology

This chapter presents the research design and methodology. It has been divided into three main parts: 1) the overview of the study, 2) the research questions, 3) research design and methodology.

3.1 Overview of the study

Currently, Thai students are facing with problems with the English language, especially speaking skills. The lack of proficiency in speaking skills is caused by a number of reasons. Moreover, times provided for learners to practice speaking in class might not be enough. Finally, a lack of practice in real-world situations is considered to contribute to the weakness. Many teaching approaches have been attempted to solve this problem; however, the advancement in the speaking skills of Thai students is still at an unsatisfactory level

The importance of these aspects have been taken into account, thus, the use of Project-based learning has been utilized in the speaking skills for the course English for Academic Purposes for Khon Kaen University students. The main purpose is to investigate the effectiveness of PBL since it is believed that Project-based learning is a flexible approach that allows learners to develop multiple skills such as research and social skills through a meaningful activity.

3.2 Research Questions

3.2.1 Research Question

The research question was to examine the degree of effectiveness of the Project-based Learning in Relation to improving the language learning skills.

3.2.2 Hypothesis

The main hypothesis of this study is that the Project-based Learning is effective in classroom teaching and learning because learners are not only developing language acquisition, but are also developing important skills, such as critical thinking skills, collaborative skills, and research skills.

3.3 Research Design and Methodology

3.3.1 Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 706 undergraduate students who were studying 000102 English for Academic Purposes I during the second semester of

academic year 2010, at Khon Kaen University. The sample was randomly selected from the total of 4,042 students.

3.3.2 *The design of the course under study*

The course under study was English for Academic Purposes I, which is a 3-credit course. The total number of students studying speaking course was 4042, which was divided into 3 blocks (See Table 3.1 for detail). In speaking skills, the project work was used in teaching and learning activities where learners worked in groups. They formed groups by using self-selection, where students chose their own group members.

Table 3.1: Number of students Studying Speaking Class each block

Block	Male	Female	Sub-Total
1	584	755	1339
2	403	605	1008
3	619	1076	1695

Time Tabling

The 12 hours of speaking skills was covered over four weeks. The schedule of speaking skills can be seen in Table 3.

Week	Hours	Activities	Unit	Remarks
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iafor

1	1.5	1.) Introduction to the course.		
	1.5	1) Practice Unit 5 and Unit 6: Discussion Skills	Unit 5-6	
2	1.5	1) Practice Unit 7 and Unit 8: Presentation Skills 2) Ss Do Exercise Task B (p. 40)	Unit 7-8	
	1.5	1) Ss discuss their topic I: Introduction and Methodology		
3	1.5	1) Ss discuss their topic II: Results and Conclusions		
	1.5	1) Ss discuss their topic III: Presentation Preparation		
4	1.5	Ss do Group Presentations		
	1.5	Ss do Group Presentations		

Table 3.2: The schedule of speaking skills

3.3.3 Data collection

In order to answer the research question, the instruments used to evaluate this investigation included Likert rating scales questionnaire and a discussion with the teachers in charge of the course. The following will explain a brief description of each data collection methodology. The questionnaire was constructed as a research tool consisting of four parts of questions and was used with learners in speaking class. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. (1) personal information, (2) students' opinions toward the use of PBL in teaching and learning, (3) students' opinions on benefits gained through the use of PBL (4) students' suggestions on the role of teachers and learners in terms of teaching and learning, content of the lessons, and teaching and learning activities was covered in the last part.

The questionnaire was randomly administered at some speaking classes and was carried out by the teacher of that class in all four week periods of the rotation schedule. Students did the questionnaire after they had finished the last lesson in the speaking class. Another method was a discussion was conducted with a group

of teachers in charge the course. The discussion topic can be classified into the aspects of PBL and the effect of PBL on learners. Both aspects have been divided into two sub-headings: advantages and disadvantages. The teachers in this group discussion were randomly selected from the total number of teachers teaching speaking classes.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

The methods used in analyzing data were both quantitative and qualitative. The data collected from the questionnaire was evaluated separately by totaling the answers per rating scales and then calculating the average scores. The qualitative information was grouped in different categories. The data was statistically analyzed by percentage, mean scores, and standard deviation of respondents answering each question. The results were tabulated so that the overall results of the investigation could be clearly viewed.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data was obtained from the group discussion among teachers whereas the questionnaire presented the quantitative data. In the following, the quantitative data was first presented with figures and commentary, followed by the qualitative data, which was categorized into different aspects. A total number of 4,042 students were in the course English for Academic Purposes I. Different groups of samples were selected by a simple random sampling method from those who responded to the questionnaire. Quantitative data from the questionnaire is presented below.

A total number of 4,042 students were in this course. Different groups of samples were selected by a simple random sampling method from those who responded to the questionnaire. The sample students answering and returning the questionnaire comprised 706 students, 266 being male students and 440 being female. The number represented around 17 percent of the total students studying this course.

Table 4.1: Number of students who responded to the questionnaire

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	266	37.7
Female	440	62.3
Total	706	100

Most of respondents were from the Faculty of Engineering (17.3%), followed by the Faculty of Management Sciences (13.7%), and the Faculty of Nursing (9.3 %) as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: The percentages of students answering the questionnaire

Faculties	Frequency	Percentage
1. Engineering	122	17.3
2. Management Sciences	97	13.7
3. Nursing	66	9.3
4. Agriculture	65	9.2
5. Sciences	50	7.1
6. Humanities and Social Sciences	49	6.9
7. Associated Medical Sciences	48	6.8
8. College of Local Administration	42	5.9
9. Fine and Applied Arts	38	5.4
10. Education	34	4.8
11. Veterinary	26	3.7
12. Public Health	25	3.5
13. Technology	24	3.4
14. Pharmaceutical Sciences	20	2.8
Total	706	100

Table 4.3 Number of student absences from the class

Number of absence	Frequency	Percentage
None	565	80.0
1-3 times	135	19.0
More than 3 times	6	0.9

Total	706	100
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80 % of respondents were always present at the class. Some students missed the class 1-3 times accounted 19 %, and another 0.9 % of students were absent more than 3 times.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 9 questions on the students' opinions toward the use of PBL in teaching and learning activity. There were five scales in the questionnaire for the students to choose, ranging from very effective, effective, somewhat effective, ineffective, to totally ineffective.

Analysis of the answer-based on the level of effectiveness in scores

Very effective	=	5	points
Effective	=	4	points
Somewhat effective	=	3	points
Ineffective	=	2	points
Totally ineffective	=	1	point

The scores obtained were averaged based on the following interpretation (Srisa-ad 2002, p. 99-100)

Average score 4.51-5.00	means very effective
Average score 3.51-4.50	means effective
Average score 2.51-3.50	means somewhat effective
Average score 1.51-2.50	means ineffective
Average score 0.51-1.50	means totally ineffective

Table 4.3 Students' opinion toward the use of PBL in teaching and learning

	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Level of effectiveness
1.	PBL motivate learners' creativity and expression	4.09	.784	effective
2.	PBL promote learners to discover their own learning style	4.03	.771	effective
3.	PBL connect learners' experience with their real-	3.91	.817	effective

	life situation			
4.	PBL focus on thinking skills and hands-on experience	4.24	.813	effective
5.	PBL build up relationship between teacher and learner	4.09	.850	effective
6.	PBL build up relationship among learners	4.21	.832	effective
7.	PBL emphasize on cooperative skills	4.54	.739	very effective
8.	PBL allow learners to evaluate their own work	4.24	.812	effective
9.	PBL introduce moral in teaching and learning activities	3.57	.887	effective

From Table 4.3, the results showed that PBL has a positive effect on classroom teaching and learning. Most students agreed that in the PBL approach, they had an opportunity to evaluate their work and practice important skills such as thinking skills, research, and so on. PBL also engage students through hands-on experiences (mean 4.24). The approach helps learners to establish interaction among them (mean 4.21). Most importantly, PBL emphasizes working in groups which promotes cooperative skills (mean 4.54).

Table 4.4 Students' opinion on the benefits gained through the use of PBL

	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Level of effectiveness
1.	Learners have an opportunity to develop problem solving skills and creativity	3.98	.760	effective
2.	Learners have an opportunity to practice research skills	4.08	.775	effective
3.	Learners have ownership of their learning	4.03	.803	effective

4.	Learners choose the project based on their interests	3.69	.883	effective
5.	Learners find pleasure in learning	3.81	.930	effective
6.	Learners have an opportunity to exchange knowledge and build relationship among themselves	4.16	.782	effective
7.	Learners have an opportunity to evaluate their work	4.10	.796	effective
8.	Learners understand and apply morals in their real lives	3.64	.849	effective
9.	Learners be able to apply knowledge in the real world	3.94	.836	effective

From the table above, it can be seen that learners' learning process is effective. The level of effectiveness can be ordered from high to low as follows: learners have an opportunity to exchange knowledge and build relationships among themselves (\bar{X} = 4.16), learners have an opportunity to evaluate their work (\bar{X} = 4.10), and finally, learners have an opportunity to practice research skills (\bar{X} = 4.08).

Qualitative data

Qualitative data was collected from a discussion with the teachers in charge of the Course 000102. Their comments of the outcomes can be classified into the aspects of PBL and the effect of PBL on learners. The results are as follows:

PBL

Advantages

- PBL is an interesting method. It's easy for students to understand the lesson.
- It promotes independent learning.
- The classroom environment is very comfortable and relaxed. Students are allowed to have discussions with members of their groups and move about the classroom freely.
- Students can actually apply the lesson in their real lives.
- The approach offers life-long learning.
- The approach reflects students' responsibilities.
- This approach introduces morals in activities.

Disadvantages

- The approach is quite physically and mentally demanding.
- A clear explanation should be given before assigning the project.

- The approach is time consuming.

Learners

Advantages

- Students learn from hands-on experience.
- Learners have an opportunity to practice important skills such as problem-solving skills, cooperative skills, critical thinking skills, etc.
- Learners enjoy the class.
- Learners can exchange knowledge and have a good relationship among themselves.
- Learners can apply this in real-life situations.

Disadvantages

- Learners focus on the project more than learning the language.
- Students struggle with the process of the project.
- Teachers should provide more information or examples before assigning the project.
- The time allowed to do the project was too short. It should be extended

According to the comments above, PBL provided huge advantages in teaching and learning activities, especially for learners. Many teachers agreed that Learners have an opportunity to practice important skills and learn by hands-on experience. The approach motivates learners by engaging them in their own learning and provides opportunities for them to pursue their own interests. PBL also makes learning relevant and useful to learners by establishing connections to their real-life issues. Although PBL is considered to be a profitable learning strategy, its implementation faces several challenges because projects are complex endeavors involving many different activities. Most learners have trouble relating to data, concepts and theories. Time limitation is another obstacle, and time should be extended for learners to complete the project.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The following conclusions can be drawn from the present study. From the questionnaire, it was found that most of the students agreed that the PBL approach is effective in classroom teaching and learning activities. Data from a discussion with the teachers was mostly positive. PBL provided huge advantages in teaching and learning activities, especially for learners. Many teachers agreed that learners have an opportunity to practice important skills such as critical thinking skills and independent

learning. They are engaged in learning through hands-on experience. This approach also motivates learners by engaging them in their own learning and provides opportunities for them to pursue their own interests. It makes learning relevant and useful to learners by establishing connections to their real life issues. Although PBL is considered to be a profitable learning strategy, its implementation faces several challenges as projects are complex endeavors involving many different activities. Most learners have trouble relating to data, concepts, and theories. Time limitation is another obstacle. It should be extended for learners to complete the project.

In spite of the fact that PBL shows vast advantages in teaching and learning, it is necessary to admit that some problems might appear in PBL as well. First, most students did not use the target language; in this case, English, to communicate while doing the project.

Another difficulty is that students were not familiar with the project work although a clear explanation was given at the beginning of the class. Teachers should monitor students throughout the period of project work. Moreover, when doing the project, students are focusing only on the project and not focusing on the target language. The most serious issue was some students felt uncomfortable with the new role of the teacher as a facilitator and adviser, instead of a source of knowledge.

An implication from further research is to investigate the relationship between short-time project work and students' communicative competence. The effect of the project work on the development of critical thinking skills of the students with low performance would be another interesting topic to be examined.

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The logo for the International Association for Foreign Language Research (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, serif font. The logo is surrounded by a large, faint, circular graphic composed of two overlapping arcs: a light blue arc at the bottom and a light red arc at the top.

On Career Planning for Newly-recruited English Teachers

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Abstract

College English teaching is an enterprise in China's higher education system, which has been a focus of social attention due to globalization and internationalization. Now a great number of teachers are engaging in the career with which administrators are dissatisfied because the course has taken up majority of students' time and effort. Meanwhile, college students spend great time and effort on it only to be discouraged by the poor outcome. Hence, most college English teachers are in a tight spot and have to face a severe career development since less course-workload, more effective teaching methods, higher diploma are all required. Many middle-aged teachers have encountered career-plateau earlier than before and spent a longer time to overcome it, which are pressing and pushing young teachers to strive forward. Confronted with the plight, young teachers under 35 are especially in need of a well-organized career planning for them to develop their careers. This research begins with the analysis of teaching background, social environment and population feature, based on which is the guide line for young teachers of English language in college to refer to. The guideline is followed by the method of self-evaluation, environment evaluation and goal-setting. The objective of the research is to provide a helpful tool for newly-recruited English teachers to ponder on the development of their careers. The ultimate goal of the career planning at beginning is to present a satisfactory teaching outcome, prepared for the forthcoming career plateau and create a positive and rewarding career for individuals.

Key words: career planning, career development, newly-recruited college English teachers,

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I Introduction

College English teaching in China is such a big enterprise that both students and teachers are pouring enormous energy and time in it. However, some studies have indicated unfavorable results. For instance, most graduates can't properly communicate with native speakers, nor can they translate between languages, let alone write in English. Those dissatisfactory results require college English teachers for more effective teaching methods and less course-workload and. As a result, many middle-aged teachers have encountered career-plateau earlier than before and spent a longer time overcoming it. Therefore, college English teachers, especially young teachers under 35 years old, are faced with an urgent demand for career planning.

Based on an analysis of teaching background, social environment and population feature, this paper aims to propose a well-organized career planning for college English teachers through the method of self-evaluation, environment evaluation and goal-setting, in the hope of presenting satisfactory teaching outcome, prepared for the forthcoming career plateau and create a positive and rewarding career for individuals.

II. College English teaching in China

The following part centers on the analysis of college English teaching in China. To begin with, the social environment and teaching background are provided respectively. Then a questionnaire based on the overall features of English teachers in a specific university and the psychological features of those young English teachers is presented, followed by a discussion of its result.

2.1 Teaching background

Teaching college students is not as easy as teaching primary school students, for many years of English learning before college have laid, to some extent, weak rather than strong foundations for students, which in turn, gives college English teachers hard times in changing their original knowledge framework. As a result, students with poor English proficiency still can't make much progress, for which college English teachers are blamed.

Most of the college students nowadays have engaged in English learning since primary schools. Over the period from primary school to high school, English is emphasized as one of the main subjects and is almost as important as Chinese. In order to be enrolled in college, English has to be tested and both students and teachers are making relentless efforts on it. However, this kind of test-oriented English teaching brings about poor outcomes in that students are good at making multiple choices, but poor at language communicative competence. The hope for improving this situation rests largely on college English teachers, yet the overemphasis of CET4 and CET6 put them in an awkward position once again and stress them out. Besides, college students usually are not motivated for learning communicative skills and have bad learning habits. With painstaking work by teachers, undesirable results are yielded.

2.2 Social environment

A. Failure in English teaching

There seems to be a tendency that English teachers in China are under greater pressure than before. English has always been a required course, thus more and more English teachers are needed, leading to a conspicuous increase in the number of people, especially young people who are lacking teaching skills, embarking on the career of English teaching, and then expectations from the society are put on them. The test-oriented English teaching in both high school and college has exhausted English teachers and impeded students' real language competence, thus has been misleading and even collapsing the entire enterprise of English education. For the awkward English education in China, college English teachers are scolded largely. Under such great pressure, plenty of English teachers, especially young college English teachers feel overwhelmed, and are experiencing disappointment at the very beginning of their careers. Middle-aged teachers are experiencing career-plateau earlier than before. With the purpose of avoiding being criticized and gaining confidence in overcoming career-plateau, a scrupulous and elaborate career planning for career development are increasingly needed for the young teachers.

B. Requirements for achievements in research work

In consistent with the competition of being a first-class college, more and more colleges nowadays in China are transforming from regular teaching-oriented colleges into scientific research-oriented colleges (Pan Yong Hua, 2005), which requires teachers to concentrate much more on their scientific research works apart from teaching. Therefore, more efforts, energy, time and research skills are in need, which makes many teachers, especially young unskilled English teachers, panic and even lose balance between teaching and researching. What's more, the achievements in research work are emphasized as crucial as a major part of assessment for promotion.

III Challenges for college English teachers in China

As previously stated, pressures from requirements for helping students passing the examination and the trend of reform in education make young English teachers in China hard to survive. Apart from those, college English teachers are also faced with problems or contradictions through their teaching experience.

A. Excessive workload, low accomplishment

The expansion of enrollment of college students forces English teachers to give lectures in a large classroom with students doubled, making the workload involving lecture preparation, lecturing and homework grading much more than before. Besides, the teaching outcome is hard to predict. In other words, teachers are constantly in an "excessive workload, low accomplishment" state, to the detriment of their health physiologically and psychologically.

B. Overemphasis on test-oriented teaching, ignorance of language communicative competence enhancing

Although administrators are aware of the great importance of enhancing students'

English language communicative competence, CET4 and CET6 are still highlighted in the society. Therefore, teachers are required by the administrators to change their teaching style in consistent with those tests, while students are usually only motivated by the desire of passing the exams. Being in this dilemma, most of them find themselves prepare their lectures in accordance with the tests most of the time as required. Most endeavors made to change this situation are always in vain.

C. More workload, less opportunities for career development.

The excessive time spent on enhancing the passing rate of CET4 and CET6 leaves college English teachers little time and less opportunities for career development. Even though they could feel the intense competition and their career crisis, they have no solutions to help themselves out of this plight.

D. Higher requirements for assessment, less objective feedbacks.

Nowadays, college teachers are appraised by various methods including their achievement both on teaching and research work, whereas, some of feedbacks from their appraisers are not objective enough. Some teachers who have great achievements are less valued for their less achievement on research work, while some with less achievement on research work dedicate themselves to teaching work, sometimes, only to be valued by their students who don't like their ways of teaching. This contradiction makes college English teachers disappointed and frustrated.

All the problems stated are so severe that many college English teachers in China are experiencing career plateau earlier than before. Hence, career planning for career development should be their top priority. Faced with the problems described above, college English teachers are challenged to make some changes. Generally speaking, they need to avoid being reproached with the poor outcome of English teaching by the society and the administrators, and improve their professional skills as soon as possible. Meanwhile, persistent efforts should be made on trying to be a good English teacher and a qualified researcher as well. In addition, they should demonstrate confidence when encountering career-plateau

IV Career planning for newly-recruited college English teachers in China

Young college English teachers, especially those newly-recruited ones, are under pressures due to the plight described above. Career planning is indispensable for those teachers' career development, which is also a process of self-identification, self-fulfillment and self-development. Through career planning, they could have a more accurate assessment of the gap between individual goal and the reality, get their potential into pull play, and conquer the blindness during career development, thus improve their competitiveness and win more opportunities for career success. The following parts concentrate on an in-depth career planning, in the hope of providing suggestions for the actual career planning of newly-recruited English teachers in China. The first part focuses on English teachers in a specific university. Through analyzing the demographic features as well as psychological features of the English teachers in this university by a questionnaire, typical problems are summarized and

hopefully, can even be generalized. In the second part, both internal and external factors influencing career planning are analyzed as the first step for career planning. Then, a set of goals suiting for different stages of career are suggested. The last part involves methods of carrying out career planning.

4.1 Demographic feature

The questionnaire has been carried out in a University located in northwest of China and almost all of the young English teachers under 35 years old in this university were involved, of which female teachers accounted for 79% of the entire respondents with only 21% of male teachers. Female teachers apparently dominate. Compared with male teachers, female teachers are at disadvantageous positions, for they usually are family-centered and have to undergo stages of pregnancy and baby-sitting which lasts at least 8 years. Cheng Fang and Zhou Erhua (2010) points out that woman less than 36 years old are in their “down times” of career. After this stage, competition is more fierce than before because of the recruiting of new teachers and new requirements for their teaching, thus constantly makes odds against them. Based on Cheng Fang’s study, comparatively speaking, the contributions female teachers have made to academic field are not as much as male teachers. Hence, career planning is especially necessary for female English teachers.

This questionnaire also demonstrates several critical problems among young college English teachers. First of all, 49% of them are uncertain whether they really like their career as a teacher or not. This uncertainty could lead to a lack of motivation to strive forward. Second, some of them can’t identify themselves clearly. For instance, 54% of them don’t know what their specialties are, and 36% of them don’t have a clear objective for self-development. Furthermore, 41% of them only get to know their career through discussions with their parents occasionally. Third, more than half of them (53%) have never thought about career planning in detail and 44% of them only have short-term objective for their future. However, there is a growing awareness of problems among them and career planning becomes an appeal, manifested by another group of statistics. Almost 35% of them conceive career planning important and worthy of concerns. The same number of people (35%) is stressed out by promotion. Large numbers of those teachers (47%) expressed their ideas of not wanting to be knocked out by the intense competition. Besides, those who are desirous of improving their professional skills account for 44% of all the respondents. The lack of the knowledge of their career and the growing awareness of lurking problems can be one of the determining factors for the necessity of career planning.

4.2 Factors analysis.

A. Self-evaluation.

Zhou Ming(2009) in his study viewed that self-evaluation or self-identification involves a comprehensive evaluation of individual’s interests, specialties, personality,

thinking pattern, capability of organization and management, affinity, professional skills, classroom management and values, which are the internal factors influencing career planning. Li Li Bo (2010) pointed out that self-evaluation should be done through the entire process of career planning to avoid vagueness and blindness. Wei Lin (2005) proposed one efficient way of conducting this process, which is called “5w” (Who am I? What will I do? What can I do? What does the situation allow me to do? What is the plan of my life and career?). Through self-evaluation, teachers are expected to get a better understanding of themselves, thus lays a foundation for the following steps of career planning.

B. Working environment evaluation.

College is the environment in which teachers work and survive. Every factor in this environment could probably affect their career development. Therefore, an evaluation of this environment could direct their career planning. According to Zhou Ming (2009), it is necessary for college English teachers to assess their working environment accurately including its geographical location, working culture, payment, opportunities for further study, potentials for development, teaching materials and equipment available and leaders' attitudes. This evaluation provides a clear picture of the merits and demerits of this institution so that newly-recruited teachers could quickly adjust themselves and accommodate the new environment, which, further directing their career planning.

4.3 Goals setting

Based on the assessment of internal and external factors, practical goals of career can be set as the second step. Career goals elaborately set contribute to achieving the expectations. Basically, there are four goals corresponding to four stages with regards to career development of college English teachers in China.

A. Short-term goal.

The setting of short-term goal during career planning is fundamental for future career development, which helps turn new hands teachers into proficient teachers. Short-term goals are made for the first seven years, including adapting to new working environment, establishing a harmonious relationship with students and colleagues, mastering professional skills, and becoming a qualified teacher.

B. Medium-term goal.

Medium-term goal starts from the 8th year to 12th years of their teaching career, playing a key role in overcoming career plateau. This goal involves improving the abilities of finding problems, seeking new teaching methods and solving problems in their teaching practices and becoming a qualified researcher and an initiative leader in teaching.

C. Long-term goal.

Long-term goal is the ultimate goal for every teacher for the third 8 years, serving for

the transition from professional teachers to expert teachers. To be specific, their teaching strategies are tending to perfection. Meanwhile, they ought to acquire a strong sense of social responsibility, deepening and specializing their knowledge, developing a far-sighted perspective, thus making themselves advanced or expert teachers.

D. Life goal.

Life goal is not for a specific period but for their lifetime, which means developing a value that could be a guideline for the rest of their lives. For college English teachers, they should not only learn how to be teacher but also learn how to be a civilian in the society.

4.4 Implementation of career planning.

To turn the well-organized career plans into reality, efforts from both English teachers themselves and the colleges in which they are working are required. For teachers, they should take advantage of all materials available and all chances provided to fulfill this plan, or specifically, enhancing their professional skills through participating in various professional training programs, such as seminars, inter-school exchanges and in-service trainings. Colleges, as one of exogenous stimulating factors (Lu Fei Bin, 2007), are expected to fully support their teachers through meeting the needs of their career development. For example, they could build a comprehensive and thorough safeguard system for implementation of their plan, and organizational guarantee, system guarantee, financial guarantee and incentive guarantee are among the essential ones. Besides, the good relationship between teachers and institutions are demanded for constructing a psychological contract (Lu Feibin, 2007) between them. Another effective measure is to establish a scientific and objective assessment system.

IV Conclusion

College English teachers in China are going through an unprecedentedly hard time in their career. For one thing, they are blamed for the poor outcome of English education of China, whereas, the real reason is the test-oriented pedagogical style before college and in college, resulting in the lack of language learning motivation and the development of bad learning habits on the part of students, and inappropriate teaching method adopted under the pressure of enhancing test passing rate from the administrators. For another thing, those teachers are overwhelmed by the high requirements of being qualified researchers and excellent English teachers at the same time. Furthermore, the large proportion of female college English teachers poses much bigger problems to the career development of the entire population of college English teachers in China. Meanwhile, the contradictions those teachers faced while working, such as contradictions between excessive workload and low achievements, the overemphasis on test-oriented teaching and the ignorance of enhancing language communicative competence, more workload and less opportunities for career development and higher requirements for assessment and less objective feedbacks, are making them losing balances in their careers.

All those problems, contradictions and challenges confronted by newly-recruited college English teachers in China make the need for an elaborate career planning so as to acquire career development much more urgent than before. To complete such a good career planning, this paper proposes that teachers are firstly needed to analyze internal and external factors that could affect their plan, followed by the setting of a series of goals. Finally, cooperation between teachers themselves and the institution for which they are working are in demand for the implementation of this plan.

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The Effects of using Cooperative Learning on EFL learners' performance.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of cooperative learning on EFL learners' performance in Saudi Arabia .The sample consisted of 32 students who were selected randomly from two classes of the second year secondary school students in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia .The experimental class was taught through cooperative learning for one semester with the methods of Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD). The control class was taught in the traditional method of Grammar Translation with some of the Audio- Lingual approach. Data were collected via observation and tests(pre-test and post-test). The researcher found that students taught through cooperative learning achieved better academic performance inside the classroom and in the final year exam; the researcher found that the use of cooperative learning method has positive effects on EFL learners' performance and cooperative learning approach is more effective than the other non-cooperative learning approaches.

KEYWORDS: Co-operation, Individualistic, Competition.

INTRODUCTION

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. Within cooperative activities, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. In the groups, students are expected to help each other to find answers to questions, rather than seeking answers from the teacher (Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1995).

Cooperative efforts result in participants striving for mutual benefit so that all group members gain from each other's efforts (Your success benefits me and my success benefits you), knowing that one's performance is mutually caused by oneself and one's colleagues (We cannot do it without you) (Deutsch, 1962; Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

Researchers report that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other teaching techniques. Now cooperative learning is applied all over the world, and is claimed to be an effective teaching method in foreign language education by scholars (Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1995).

It is generally believed that cooperative learning is the best option for all students because it emphasizes active interaction between students of different abilities and backgrounds and demonstrates more positive student outcomes in academic achievement.

The idea of Cooperative learning is simple. Class members are organized into small groups after receiving instruction from the teacher. They then work through the task until all group members successfully understand and complete it. In cooperative learning situations, there is a positive interdependence among students' goal achievement; students perceive that they can reach their learning goals if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach theirs. A team member's success depends on both individual effort and the efforts of other group members who contribute needed knowledge, skills, and resources (Deutsch, 1962; Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

Statement of the Problem

The researcher thinks that there is a weakness in enhancing EFL learners' performance. Most of Saudi EFL learners and teachers face difficulties in improving participation, interest, attendance, performance and promoting comfort and confidence within the classroom.

Objectives:

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of the cooperative learning approach on student achievement and to better understand the impact of small-group learning on students learning outcomes.

Literature Review

Several studies have examined the effects of cooperative learning methods on student learning. Humphreys, Johnson, and Johnson (1982) compared cooperative, competitive, and individualistic strategies in science classes and found that students who were taught by cooperative learning method learned and recalled meaningfully more information than students taught by the other traditional methods (competitive and individualistic). Sherman and Thomas (1986) also found similar results in a study involving high school general mathematics classes taught by cooperative learning strategy on one side and individualistic methods on the other side. Allen and Van Sickle (1984) used STAD as the experimental treatment in a study including low achieving students. They found that the cooperative learning group scored significantly higher on a world geography test. Perrault (1982/1983) found that cooperative learning helped the industrial arts students to gain significantly higher achievement at the knowledge and comprehension levels of Bloom's taxonomy. In a review of 46 studies related to cooperative learning, Slavin (1983) found that cooperative learning resulted in significant positive effects in 63% of the studies, and only two studies reported higher achievement for the other comparison group. Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, Nelson, and Skon (1981) conducted a meta-analysis of 122 studies related to cooperative learning and concluded that there was strong evidence for the superiority of cooperative learning in promoting achievement and improving performance over the other traditional strategies. So assuming that cooperative learning helps enhance EFL learners' performance, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of cooperative learning on EFL learners' performance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The researcher applied cooperative learning techniques in the experimental classroom. The teaching materials that the students studied were mainly from the government regular English curriculum for both the experimental class and the control class.

The intervention in the experimental class includes two major phases. During the first phase, time and effort are spent on getting the students familiarized with the cooperative learning structures. The role of the teacher during the first phase of implementing cooperative learning is to turn the traditional classroom into a cooperative learning context. One of the major turning points from traditional classroom to a cooperative learning one is the careful design of the learning climate.

First of all, the researcher (the teacher) sets the climate for cooperative learning by dividing the students into three heterogeneous groups based on the English grades from the previous semester. The principle of heterogeneous grouping in this study is to ensure that each group is composed of students with different academic achievements. The seating arrangement is also changed in the classroom. Instead of sitting in rows facing each other's back, the students sit face-to-face with their group members.

After the formation of six heterogeneous groups and the process of teambuilding, each member in the group was given a particular role to play. Role assignment for each group member in cooperative learning context is another major feature that

distinguishes cooperative learning from regular group learning. The job description of each role was explained clearly and explicitly to the students. Adapted from Kagan (1989), the responsibility of each role is explained in detail in this table.

Role Assignments and Job Description

Role	Job Description
Leader	The leader is the chairperson who hosts the group discussion and makes sure that each member is on task by participating in the discussion or any given task.
Reporter	The reporter is responsible for reporting the summary of his group's discussion to the class on behalf of his team.
Checker	The checker makes sure that each one in the group finishes the worksheet or assigned task in class. If someone in the group has a problem in completing the individual worksheet, the checker reports to the leader who decides what kind of help will be given to that member.

Each student has to rotate the roles every two weeks. The rotation is to ensure that each student has equal chance to experience all the roles and to share different kinds of responsibility.

The two classes received the same instructional material, taught by the same teacher (the researcher), who used the same course content and got back the same number of class assignments.

The experimental group was taught using cooperative learning strategies discussed above. The control group was taught through the traditional competitive strategies.

As a way to enhance the interdependence and individual accountability of all the students, the Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) is introduced to measure students' academic achievement. The participants are given a weekly quiz by way of STAD, which is a method to account for individual and group achievement at the same time. Therefore, they have to study hard for themselves as well as for their group members.

The teaching procedures and activities in the control class belong to the traditional method, which involve mainly the Grammar Translation and some of the Audio-lingual method. The integration of these two methods, according to the writer's point of view, is the most popular teaching methods used in EFL classes in Saudi Arabia.

Data Analysis

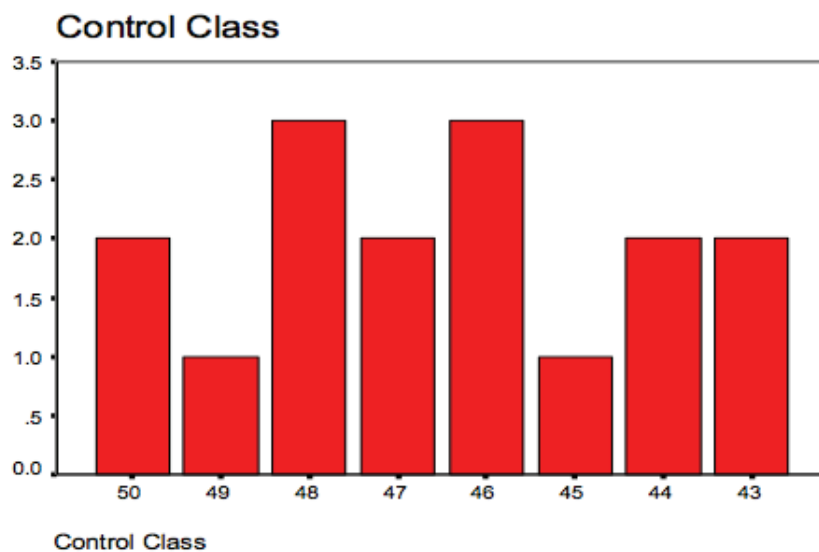
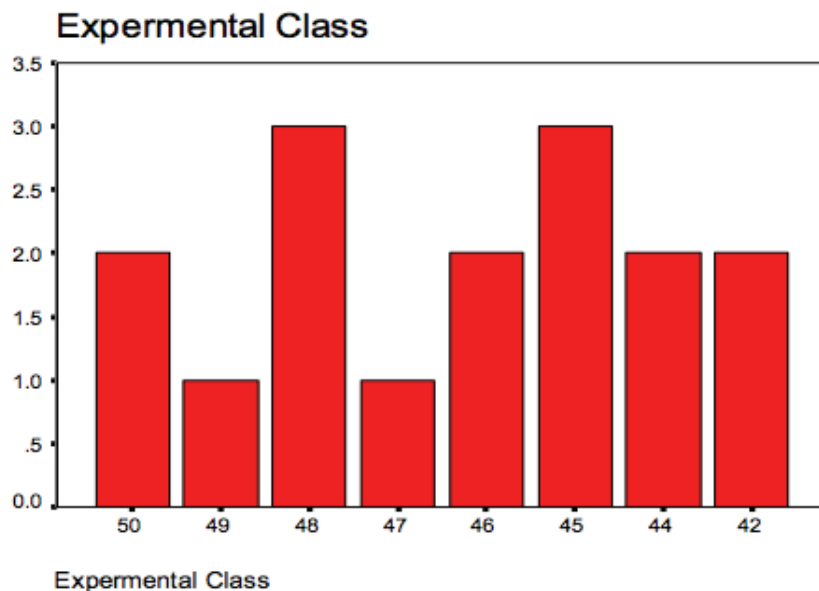
The study yielded statistical significant differences between the control and the experimental groups. Comparison between two groups in the pre-test

This table shows the result of independent T-test to Comparison between two groups in the pre-test.

Group	No	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-value	Df	Sig	Interpretation	Result
Experimental	16	43.31	5.10	0.071	30	0.944	Non-Significance	There is no difference between the two groups
Control	16	43.44	4.80					

The above table shows that there is no significant difference between the control and the experimental groups in the pre-test because probability value is more than 0.05. This shows that both the experimental and the control groups had almost equal English base knowledge before the applying cooperative learning.

These diagrams also show that both the experimental and the control groups had almost equal English base knowledge before the applying cooperative learning.

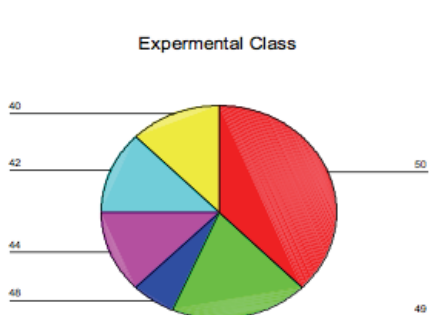
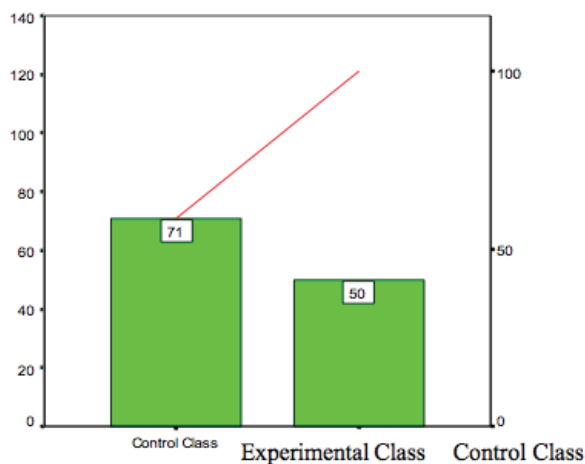


Comparison between two groups in the post-test

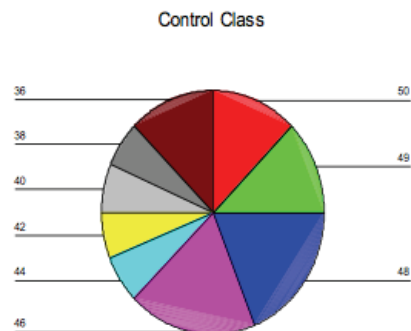
This table shows the result of independent T-test to Comparison between two groups in the post-test.

Group	No	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-value	df	Sig	Interpretation	Result
Experimental	16	47.06	2.98	2.42	30	0.016	Significance	There is difference for experimental groups
Control	16	43.31	5.10					

The above table shows that there is a significant difference between the post-test mean score of the control and the experimental groups. The experimental group performed significantly better than control group. This indicates that cooperative learning is more effective than regular traditional methods in improving the EFL learners' performance. The diagrams below also show the result of independent T-test to Comparison between two groups in the post-test and show that there is a significant difference between the post-test mean score of the control and the experimental groups.



8



DISCUSSION

From the researcher's observation inside the classroom, the use of cooperative learning had positively affected the performance of the EFL learners inside the classroom.

The study "The impact of using cooperative learning on EFL learners' performance in Secondary Schools" has shown that Cooperative learning strategy is more effective than other non-cooperative learning strategies in teaching EFL learners because of the following reasons:

1. Students like cooperative learning because it is student-centered.
2. In the cooperative learning classroom, they learn actively by exploring knowledge.
3. They do not depend on their teachers to learn but they depend on their classmates.
4. They are engaged in the learning process instead of listening passively to the teacher.
5. Cooperative learning is more interesting because teachers inspire students instead of teaching them.
6. The students are more enthusiastic because they treat the learning tasks as games.
7. Cooperative learning is not boring because students are motivated to learn.
8. In the cooperative learning classroom, students do not give up learning so easily and they can get support from their group members.
9. In the cooperative learning classroom students talk freely to their classmates in the classroom so they feel very happy.
10. They like their schools more.
11. They like their teachers more.
12. They like their classmates more.
13. After thorough discussion, they cultivate more interest in the subject and show better performance.
14. They share their success with their groups' mate, thus enhancing the groups' mate self-esteem.
15. They think cooperative learning is democratic because they are allowed to assess themselves, their groups and class procedures.
16. They have challenging and thoughtful learning experiences.
17. As they attempt to solve problems or answer questions, they involve in the process of exploratory learning.

18. They have ample chances to practice higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and evaluation.
19. They are trained to have better interpersonal skills such as communication, trust, leadership, decision making and conflict resolution.
20. They cultivate the habit of sharing resource materials with their members so they are not selfish.
21. They have different roles assigned by the teacher such as researcher, organizer, encourager, recorder, timekeeper, observer, facilitator, checker and reporter. They rotate their roles each time they work together and they learn quite a lot from different roles.
22. They develop skills in oral communication as they have to speak quite often during the lesson.
23. They develop their social skills and know how to respect others.
24. They can learn faster and more efficiently with the help of their classmates.
25. Group members stimulate the learning of others by asking them challenging questions.
26. In the cooperative learning classroom, they have ample opportunities to learn how to criticize ideas.
27. In the cooperative learning classroom, they challenge ideas of their group members and advocate their own ideas. They learn better debating skills.
28. They contribute to discussions and share their thoughts and reasoning. They are happy because their ideas are considered.
29. They learn how to compromise with their group members when they have different opinions so that they have agreement before they draw conclusions.
30. They develop problem-solving skills.

RESULTS

The most important findings are:

1. There is a significant statistical difference between the performance of the subjects (samples) who were taught through cooperative learning method and those who were taught through traditional methods.
2. The use of cooperative learning method has positive effects on EFL learners' performance.
3. Cooperative learning approach is more effective than the other non-cooperative learning approaches.

4. Cooperative learning improves students' participation, especially among those students who typically resist participation
5. Cooperative learning is an easy and useful teaching model for EFL teachers.
6. Cooperative learning is a good option for all students because it demonstrates more positive student outcomes in academic achievement.

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*Fostering teacher learning through practice, constructive feedback and
collaboration: Student-teachers' perceptions*

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Abstract

This study aims to unveil student-teachers' perceptions of the instructional approaches they have experienced during their initial Teacher Education as regards language teaching. Data were obtained through three focus group interviews with 18 student-teachers in their final year, from three different universities in Cyprus. Findings suggest that providing student-teachers with meaningful opportunities to form links between the taught theory and its practical application is a fundamental basis for a more holistic approach to Language Teacher Education. This study has also provided evidence that participants did not view teacher knowledge as being developed through practising the received knowledge, but, as being shared, negotiated and co-constructed in an environment which allows for a discursive reflection on their teaching practices. Therefore, their conceptions on how teacher knowledge develops does not reflect a need for a prescriptive approach to teacher learning, which seems to be what they have experienced, but a more reflective one which is based on discussion and reflective feedback. Findings could be used as a contribution to the development and use of more learner-centred approaches within teacher education curricula.

Introduction

In recent years, the nature of teacher learning has become a major research area in Teacher Education leading many researchers to look more closely at the structure and function of instructional practices which are prevalent in most TE programmes. This has generated a host of research and publications in this field which have sought to establish a clear understanding of how teachers learn to teach with particular attention to the factors and conditions that facilitate or hinder their learning during their initial education (Parsons & Stephenson 2005; Caires & Almeida 2005; Loughran & Berry 2005; Farrell 2007; Pelkalnli 2011, Ond'ondo & Borg 2011, Kourieos 2012). The present study builds upon a body of educational research by providing further insights into (in)effective approaches to teacher learning from the perspective of eighteen student teachers in the Cyprus context.

Background to the study

Freeman & Richards (1993, p.194) assert that “there cannot be universal consensus on what ‘good’ teaching is as this can be conceived in different ways depending on how the nature of the work and the role of the teacher are framed in different contexts”. These differences in philosophical conceptions are reflected in the choice of instructional practices used in Teacher Education programmes and the way these can be best used to enhance teacher learning.

Between the 1960s and early 1980s, effective teaching was seen as the mastery of a set of skills or competences and teacher learning was often viewed as a question of improving the effectiveness of delivery (Burns & Richards 2009). Through the processes of observation, simulation (microteaching) and teaching practice, experts aimed at enabling trainees to master new techniques with the hope that they would transfer them into their classrooms and eventually incorporate them into their repertoire of teaching strategies, and hence, become better teachers (Richards 1989). Teaching was then viewed as a transmission process within which the trainee was seen as a technician who was expected to observe and imitate accurately the behaviours of teacher educators who were considered the only source of new ideas and information. While emphasis on manipulating discrete classroom behaviours can be a useful part of educating language teachers, it is limiting as it encourages trainees to isolate, practice and master specific behaviours (Larsen-Freeman cited in Gebhard, 2009, p.251) which may be of very little relevance to another context (Grenfell 1998). The conception which underpins this approach to teacher education, implies, that learning to teach is an individual process and, supports the view that there is only one best way of doing something, ignoring the complexity and the influence of the context within which this activity takes place.

Inadequacies of the transmission model have led to a belief that a newly qualified teacher should be more than a technician who can achieve a list of standardized competencies (Parsons & Stephenson 2005). Based on this belief, there has been a gradual shift over the past two decades to the process of learning to teach, with an emphasis on the notion of reflective practitioner. Contrary to traditional views to LTE, as described earlier, more recent views concentrate on developing student-teachers' individual, internal long term needs and assumes that teachers will need to think for themselves and respond to teaching dilemmas and societal changes that cannot be anticipated (Kennedy 1987; Lange 1997; Fullan 1999). This, in its turn, requires an approach to educating teachers which goes beyond mere exposure to modeled activities and experiential practices and one, which assumes that the latter can be improved if student teachers are made aware of

the options available to them and the principles by which they can evaluate the alternatives (Ellis 1997). This view of learning draws on sociocultural theory within which, teaching and learning are seen as social rather than individual activities and which acknowledges the 'situated' and social nature of learning (Lave & Wenger 1991). From a sociocultural perspective, teaching is viewed as creating conditions for the co construction of knowledge and understanding through social participation (Burns & Richards 2009). Key concepts of sociocultural theory are Vygotsky's notions of zone of proximal development (ZPD) and mediation theory which view learning as a process within which trainees collaborate in social practices with supervisors, cooperating teachers and peers to acquire and construct new forms of interaction and thinking (Vygotsky 1978). Adopting such an approach to teacher education certainly implies a change in the roles of those involved in the programme and an examination of how the instructional practices used in Teacher Education programmes can be enhanced in order to help trainees raise their awareness and consequently improve their teaching behaviours.

Most teacher learning in Teacher Education programmes takes place in both the University and the school settings and as Richards (2008) asserts, these different contexts for learning create different potentials for learning. Campus-based learning is contingent upon the activities set by University lecturers and the opportunities the latter provide student teachers with to make sense of language teaching through collaboration and peer dialogue. During field experiences in the school, learning takes place through close observation of the cooperating teacher, peer observation, actual teaching and discussion seminars. However, such field experiences "do not always lead to analysis, reflection, and growth on the part of the student teachers" (McIntyre, Byrd & Foxx 1996, p.171) if they are approached from a training perspective. Instead, such experiences should have a developmental focus, providing student teachers with assistance to make explicit their needs and concerns for teaching and develop the core competences of a language teacher, which include observation skills, self-reflection, critical thinking and decision-making (Kalebic 2005; Nilsson 2008). In this sense, learning in schools is contingent upon the relationships with mentors, peers and interaction with experienced teachers who, according to Velez-Rendon (2006, p. 321), should adjust their role according to the student teachers' needs, thus serving both as instructional models and as sources of guidance. A plethora of studies has therefore been generated on the role of teacher educators who are expected to adopt a more collaborative approach to teacher education which encourages student teachers' professional growth through engaging them in collaborative tasks based on critical reflection and constructive feedback (Borko & Mayfield 1995; Bailey 2007; Hyland & Lo 2006; Nilson & Van Driel 2010; Ong'ondo & Borg 2011; Kourieos 2012).

The Cyprus context

In Cyprus Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for primary school teachers takes place via a four-year university programme of study leading to a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree. The three Universities where this study took place follow similar curriculum and Teaching Practice organization. Students on the BEd programme attend generic courses in educational psychology, philosophy of education and general pedagogy, which provide them with skills in classroom management and the management of public school systems as well as with knowledge of the basic concepts and of contemporary teaching

methods which underpin the teaching of most subjects in the primary curriculum. The English modules offered within the Teacher Education programme in these universities are compulsory and aim at the improvement of student teachers' language skills rather than their language teaching skills, as it is the case with the rest of the subjects in the programme.

This programme also includes supervised field experiences (the practicum) in a variety of grade and subject areas. The practicum involves an observation component, which usually takes place in the second year, during which student teachers are required to observe classroom teachers conducting real lessons in schools. It also involves a practice component which takes place in the third and fourth year of the programme. For one semester during the third year, student teachers are required to prepare and teach a few lessons whereas in the fourth year they are required to prepare lesson plans for all the subjects they teach on a daily basis for a whole semester. Usually three university lecturers, who are not subject-specialist, are assigned to be the TP supervisors, which means, they have to observe and supervise students during their field experience. However, because of time constraints, they rarely observe each student more than twice. Their role is mainly to assess the way student-teachers conduct the lesson on the day they are observed. Lesson plans, which have to be prepared by student-teachers during the whole semester, are also a major source for determining student teachers' grades. Their visits to schools are often pre-arranged so the students are informed about the day of their being evaluated beforehand. Part of their role is also to organize a pre-practicum and a post-practicum seminar; the former is mainly informative and student teachers are given instructions in relation to the number and structure of the lesson plans they are expected to prepare and the aspects of their teaching which they will be evaluated on. The post-practicum seminar is in the form of a shared discussion between all the student teachers and the three TP supervisors and takes place after the teaching practice has been completed. The aim of this seminar is for the student teachers to share their views of the practicum experience and report any kind of difficulties they may have encountered, which, however, are usually associated with discipline and classroom management problems as well as possible shortcomings of the particular school where they completed their field experience.

The TP supervisors are not the only ones responsible for guiding student teachers during the practicum. Another important element in the supervision process is the classroom teachers in the placement schools, who are supposed to observe all of the teaching done and unlike the TP supervisors, they do not formally assess the student teachers but should provide advice on planning and teaching and feedback on completion of every lesson conducted by the student teacher. However, the appointment of the cooperating teachers is largely decided on by head teachers in schools and the former are not always fully briefed on their role. This means, that, in many cases student teachers take over whole lessons whose methodology and content are dictated by the classroom teachers, yet, in the absence of the latter, leading them to conduct unsupervised lessons with no feedback on their performance. It is also important to mention that cooperating teachers are most of the time inadequately or inappropriately qualified to teach English to children as this kind of training (related to English language teaching) was absent from their initial education.

Methodology

Aim of the study and research questions.

This small qualitative study attempts to unveil Cypriot student teachers' experiences and expectations of the instructional approaches they have been exposed to during their initial education in relation to language teaching. Based on the aims of the study the following two questions were developed.

1. To what extent do student-teachers feel that the instructional approaches they have experienced during their initial education prepare them for the realities of language teaching?
2. Apart from these instructional approaches how do student teachers feel prospective primary teachers should be prepared for language teaching?

Sample

The participants in this study were 18 student teachers (12 female and 6 male) in their final year of study, enrolled in Teacher Education programme in three different Universities in Cyprus. They were chosen based on year of study, language teaching experience during the practicum, interest in participating in the study and accessibility.

Data collection and analysis

Focus group interviews seemed an appropriate instrument of data collection for the purposes of this study for reasons given by Morgan (1997) and Lynch (1996). The comparisons which participants make among each other's experiences, comments and behaviour are a valuable source of insights into complex behaviours and motivations and allow the discussion to roam more freely, with the possible emergence of new themes related to the research topic. In order to encourage more free expression of views and a more honest sharing of experiences, the student teachers were divided into three focus groups based on friendship groupings.

As the interviews were semi-structured, participants were asked the two research questions outlined above and were offered great freedom in expressing their views on the issues raised. Interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and were conducted in Greek as this would encourage participants to express their thoughts and feelings and elaborate on their responses in their mother tongue. All the interviews were recorded in order to avoid distraction, forgetting and to provide credibility and reliability to the collected data (Silverman 2001; Kvale 2007).

Following guidelines in Braun and Clarke (2006) and Dornyei (2007), the data were transcribed and analysed thematically. Data were primarily grouped in relation to the two research questions and subsequently, based on participants' overlapping responses/comments, they were classified into three more focused categories. Relevant ethical issues such as confidentiality, anonymity and permission to withdraw from the study were fully considered during the process of data collection, analysis and interpretation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007).

Findings and discussion

What was common in participants' comments was their evident dissatisfaction regarding the extent to which they were prepared for language teaching during their initial education. They noted that there was an overemphasis on the improvement of their

language skills which had little bearing on their future needs as primary language teachers. The majority of the participants felt that the English-related modules they attended at university were irrelevant to the teaching profession arguing that while they were treated as language teachers in schools, they were treated as language learners at university. This, as they claimed, left them rather unprepared for the practicum experience, which was their only opportunity to develop their language teaching skills. Considering participants' responses to the two research questions (see methodology section), it became evident that they were not solely concerned with developing their practical classroom know-how but also with developing an understanding of particular issues through reflection and evaluation (Ellis 1997). Special emphasis was placed on opportunities student teachers should be given both in university classes and at schools during field experience to engage in more focused observations of cooperating teachers and to develop an awareness of their teaching practices through reflective feedback and discussions with those involved in the process of learning to teach (peers, TP supervisors and cooperating teachers).

Since this study is concerned with investigating students teachers' perceptions of what instructional practices are considered effective in preparing teachers to teach English at primary level, data drawn from both questions will be organized in the next sub-section under the following categories: 1) Classroom observations, 2) School-based teaching and 3) Campus-based teaching.

Classroom observations

There was a consensus among participants that an effective way of gaining an understanding of how an English lesson should be conducted was observations of cooperating teachers. The majority (12 out of 18) admitted that they were particularly helped by having the opportunity to observe such lessons because these showed them how to deal with situations encountered in a real classroom as they were based on the current English books used in primary schools and also raised their awareness of a teaching approach that they had not been familiar with before and which, at the same time, they were expected to use. Seven participants argued that, being given the chance to watch how another teacher delivered a lesson in a real class and see that some methods or activities really worked well in practice enabled them to use some of these methods and activities in their own teaching during their teaching practice. Classroom observation was also perceived by five participants as a good opportunity to get ideas from more 'experienced' and 'knowledgeable' others.

However, while the majority of the participants claimed to have benefited from observations of cooperating teachers, they expressed some dissatisfaction regarding the extent to which such an approach was always effective, pointing out its shortcomings. Three participants explained that a major shortcoming is that Teaching Practice supervisors and student teachers' unfamiliarity with EFL methodology often led the latter to carry out observations which focused once again on general pedagogical skills rather than on language teaching skills. Another shortcoming was reported by five participants who commented that the English lessons they observed were carried out by teachers who lacked the knowledge and skills and as participants claimed, they did not represent a good model to follow. What was particularly interesting in the findings was that all participants criticised negatively the fact that classroom observations were in very few cases followed by discussions between the TP supervisors and the student teachers, which participants felt they were essential in helping them raise awareness of

certain aspects of the lesson. They all stressed the importance of being involved in post-observation ‘fruitful’ and ‘constructive’ discussions with their teacher and peers where comments and ideas for alternative activities could be shared as a way of evaluating the effectiveness of what was observed instead of passively adopting a set of prescribed techniques and activities. Richards (1996, p.14) insists on the importance not only of including teaching observation in training programmes, but also of ensuring that there is adequate discussion of it, an argument that is supported by the findings of this study.

While showing to student teachers examples of teaching practice sounds a great way of familiarizing them with the technical skills of the craft, it does come with a number of shortcomings and limitations. Teaching observation in schools is an approach that is promoted in teacher education programmes in Cyprus but whose aim seems to be shortsighted; student teachers are asked to observe a number of lessons in schools before going into actual teaching with the aim of gaining a better understanding of how experienced teachers conduct their lessons, something which inevitably suggests an unquestioned faith in whatever these teachers do. However, these lessons as explained earlier in this paper are done by teachers who are rarely experts and hardly trained to teach English. This means that student teachers are likely to adopt the wrong techniques used by some of these teachers, which they will then transfer into their own classroom. Allwright and Bailey (1991, p. 28) note that “[what] happens in the classroom is crucial to language learning” and argue that observation of authentic classroom practice is necessary if teacher trainers are to provide training programs that meet the real needs of teachers. However, classroom-based observation is likely to be of little real value unless it is based on robust criteria derived from an understanding of what constitutes effective language teaching. Such an understanding seems to be largely dependent on the skills and support the TP supervisor provides student teachers with while engaging them in effective observation tasks.

School-based teaching

For all participants the practicum was considered to be one of the most important experiences in their learning to teach but emphasized that its effectiveness was subject to a number of factors other than the opportunity they had to experience real teaching.

Their reported feelings indicated that they did not ‘interpret’ the practicum as a learning opportunity but as an assessment period during which their successes depended on the extent to which they managed to teach the lesson in a way that was considered ‘right’ by the cooperating teachers and TP supervisors and their mistakes were turned into low grades rather than learning opportunities. The TP supervisors were negatively criticised by eleven participants, who argued that the fact that they were not specialized in the subjects they were asked to evaluate prevented them from giving student teachers any useful advice or feedback on the methods or activities they used which were specific to the particular subject. Verbal feedback was rarely given but when it was, it centred around the aspect of general pedagogy and classroom management issues and was in the form of vague comments on their overall approach such as “good lesson today” or “not very good today, you could have done better” without really getting into more detail. This, as they claimed, did not leave much space for improvement because they were never aware of what aspects of their teaching needed to be improved and which ones went well. The comment of one student teacher regarding the feedback he was given indicated that it did not help him in any way develop professionally:

Personally, I would like the TP supervisors to give us more constructive feedback; I would like to know the criteria based on which I am evaluated. Getting a grade which I don't know what represents is not helpful at all! It's really not a matter of getting A, B or C but a matter of knowing how the supervisor ended up giving me this grade.

These comments reveal a need for awareness-raising activities which could serve as an important step towards the development of novice teachers' teaching practices.

Despite the fact that the great benefits of receiving guidance and feedback on their teaching by the cooperating teacher were acknowledged by a great number of participants (N:15), only seven reported to have been given this opportunity during their field experience. A greater number (N:13) expressed their obvious dissatisfaction with the cooperating teachers they were supposed to work with. One reason for that had to do with the fact that cooperating teachers were rarely in class when student teachers delivered the lesson and when they were, they were busy correcting their pupils' homework or preparing for the next class. One participant commented: "I was never aware of my mistakes; even if I felt that something did not go well in my lesson, there was nobody there to give me feedback which I could later use for improvement". Because of the significance attached to the cooperating teachers' contribution in the process of helping student teachers learn to teach, participants stressed the importance of them being adequately trained and willing to responsibly take on their mentoring roles, which, as they reported was rarely the case. Six participants argued against the prescriptive nature of the practicum asserting that they were given no freedom regarding any aspects of the lesson, expressing the need to take risks and experiment with new materials. For them, the practicum seemed to serve as an opportunity to use those prescriptive practices which they were 'dictated' to perform by the TP supervisor or the cooperating teacher, most of the time without any form of observation or feedback. This inevitably turned the practicum into a stressful, disempowering and unproductive experience for participants whose aim became to please 'significant others' in order to get a good grade.

Bearing the shortcomings of their practicum experience, participants felt that student teachers would have benefitted more from post-observation discussions in which they would have had the chance to explain and discuss their views and perceptions of their teaching with both, their TP supervisors and generally share ideas about the whole experience. Three other participants thought that peer observation during teaching practice would be a really rewarding experience as student teachers would have the opportunity to give and receive feedback on their teaching and generally share their experiences, exchanging views and ideas in a less stressful classroom environment. They also argued that feedback from their peers would be reinforced if there were a discussion after the lesson between student teachers, the TP supervisor and the classroom teacher. Generally, participants' comments revealed that they did not view teacher knowledge as being developed through practicing the received knowledge, but, as being shared, negotiated and co constructed in an environment which allows for a discursive reflection on their teaching practices.

Campus-based teaching

Some participants (N:8) also commented on the usefulness of simulated practice (microteaching) in their learning to teach, bearing the limitations of the practicum as discussed in the previous sub-section. Despite the fact that they acknowledged its decontextualised, unrealistic nature, they still perceived it as a useful way of testing the theory in a safe environment (Richards & Farrell 2011).

Three other participants pinpointed that microteaching could turn into a meaningful and invaluable learning experience if it occurred in a guided but at the same time supportive learning environment where student teachers could discuss, share their teaching experiences and exchange ideas in a less threatening learning environment. This view was shared by two participants who argued that during microteaching activities, student teachers should be also given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the English textbooks used in schools, by teaching particular units in groups. One of them added that a classroom discussion would be very useful in evaluating the approach adopted by each group, discussing problems and suggesting solutions. Forbes (2004) investigated the effectiveness of a reflective model of peer feedback in the professional growth of teachers. The results underlined the fact that interactive peer feedback serves to provide participating teachers with a sense of support and companionship as well as the opportunity to give and receive technical feedback. He adds that “the reciprocal nature of peer feedback fosters communication and trust, serving to alleviate isolation and burnout and eventually leading to confidence in risk-taking and professional growth” (p. 221). Two participants argued that student teachers would benefit greatly if these microteaching activities were recorded and were then observed by all trainees in class. This, as they explained, would give them the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching and identify strengths and weaknesses on more specific aspects of their lesson and discuss these with their peers who could give them feedback and perhaps ideas for alternative activities or materials.

The importance of peer feedback highlighted by the participants has undoubtedly important implications for the teacher educator’s role and his ability to engage students in constructive post-observation tasks. Structured in this way, microteaching sessions are likely to raise student teachers’ awareness of knowing and doing, increase an emphatic understanding of students as learners, and teach observation and feedback skills (Allen & Ryan; McIntyre, McLeod & Griffiths, Wabda cited in Legutke & Ditfurth, 2009, p.213).

Conclusions and implications

Viewed within the Cyprus educational reality and culture of teaching, the results of this study have made it evident that the transmission model of teaching is still prevalent in teacher education programmes. Participants expressed the need to move beyond this model of teaching based on knowledge-transmission from the expert to the trainee and on the concept of the apprenticeship of observation which treats learners as passive receivers of knowledge. Instead, their perceived needs support the sociocultural view of learning outlined above which views teaching as creating conditions for the co-construction of knowledge and understanding through social participation. This reflects a more holistic approach to teacher education where learners are ‘assisted’ to develop themselves to the fullest extent possible by being exposed to more collaborative, awareness-raising tasks which will enable them to make more sense of the teaching act and eventually take responsibility for their own teaching. The role and importance of an

awareness-raising component in teacher education programmes was investigated and highlighted in a study carried out by Tuzel and Alkan (2009) who found that systematic language awareness activities which occurred under the guidance of TP supervisors and cooperating teachers have helped student teachers gain confidence in risk-taking and identify their needs and problems in a more focused way. This has important implications for the role of teacher educators who need to move away from their prescriptive, assessing roles to the adoption of more assisting, mediating roles (Wiles & Bondi 1991; Scaife and Scaife 1996; Richards 1997; Bailey, 2007; Mason, Johnson cited in Malderez 2009, p.260).

Although the importance of teaching practice was highlighted by most of the participants of this study, its shortcomings have generated a number of implications for Teacher Education programmes. Classroom observation, which is the first component of the teaching practice, needs to become more meaningful and relevant to student teachers' needs and expectations. This primarily requires TP supervisors to develop student teachers' observation skills by equipping them with appropriate knowledge which will enable them to distinguish between the general pedagogical skills used by the classroom teacher and his/her pedagogical skills specific to EFL teaching. TP supervisors should also put more effort into visiting and supporting student teachers during practicum by providing them with as much feedback as possible regarding the strengths and weaknesses of their lesson, instead of simply assessing it with a grade or a comment on their overall pedagogical approach. This inevitably requires TP supervisors to have a sound knowledge of the subject-matter they are supervising and of appropriate subject-related methods and activities. Cooperating teachers should take more responsibility for their advisory roles and should be made aware that their presence in the classroom and their continuous support of the student teachers are essential components in their preparation (Borko & Mayfield 1995; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann 1987). They should also be more flexible and allow or even encourage student-teachers to experiment with new methods and ideas. It would also be advisable for both TP supervisors and cooperating teachers, whose role, I believe, is the most crucial in the process of helping student teachers learn to teach, to be provided with some kind of training for their supervisory and mentoring roles. Finally, university lecturers can better prepare student teachers for the realities of real teaching in schools by creating similar learning environments in University classrooms.

The importance of good communication and cooperation between those involved in the education of prospective teachers should also be acknowledged. He (2009) views mentoring as a collaborative effort between university teacher educators, cooperating teachers and pre-service teachers. This implies that there should be ample opportunities for discussions and exchange of ideas in both school and university settings. Continuing collaboration between these two settings is a necessity for the improvement of the Teacher Education programme and it requires strong leadership from the university mentors and the school principles to implement and support these changes.

The findings of this study could be used as a contribution to the development of more learner-centred instructional approaches within language teacher education curricula. They also highlight the importance of listening to the voices of those directly involved in primary language teaching (student teachers) and to consider their views on the most effective instructional practices used in pre-service language teacher education programmes. Encouraging them to reflect on and interpret the teaching situations they

are engaged in is surely a fundamental basis for quality in Teacher preparation programmes.

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Linguistic Landscape in the the State Railway Station of Thailand: The Analysis of the Use of Language

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Abstract

International airports and main railway stations of many countries can be considered as the meeting points of passengers from all around the world. Through this lens, we can see the diversity of language and culture portrayed and conveyed by both passengers and particularly the citizens of the host country. This paper, therefore, aims to explore the linguistic landscape of the State Railway Station in Bangkok, Thailand. This was to be done by analysing the data (about 250 pictures) collected from public signs, advertisements, posters, and billboards around the station. The results obtained may reveal the variation of the use of language by the linguistic landscape actors, i.e. public organisations, companies, and local shops. This study may show that linguistic landscape can provide valuable insight into the patterns of language usage in Thai context and how Thai organisations and private sectors cope with the demands of internationalisation. The researcher hopes to shed light on the awareness of the need of English in the globalisation era because in the near future the state Railway Station of Thailand will be an important place to receive passengers from ASEAN and other foreign countries.

Introduction

The public space is the excellence place where different languages come into contact. When walking around, one can often see expressions in several languages on shop signs, posters, in graffiti etc. (Edelman, 2010). According to Backhaus (2007), signs are used in order to disseminate messages of general public interest such as topographic information, directions, warnings, etc. Public signs also appear in commercial contexts like marketing and advertising, where their function is to draw attention to a business or product. Apart from the messages that these public signs intent to convey as mentioned earlier, we can also learn the diversity of language and culture underlying in the messages because public signs are a type of semiotic sign in that they too stand for something other than themselves (Akindele, 2011).

In the 21st century where globalization has been dominated as the global mainstream, we can see that every part of the world has been easily connected without the time and space barrier. All knowledge and innovations can wildly spread and develop unlimitedly and people can communicate each other more and more. To achieve the goal of communication and widen the knowledge of the world, travelling to other countries is one of the activities that the world citizens cannot avoid. International airports or public railway stations are the central points where people from all around the world will meet each other. As the citizen of the host country, the public signs are created as the medium to convey the message to the visitors. This paper, therefore, aims to explore the linguistic landscape of the State Railway Station in Bangkok, Thailand. It may provide valuable insights into the linguistic situation and may reveal the variation of the use of language by the linguistic landscape actors, i.e. public organisations, companies, and local shops.

The Study of Linguistic Landscape

According to Gorter (2006), language is all around us in textual form as it is displayed on shop windows, commercial signs, posters, official notices, traffic signs, etc. Landry & Bourhis (1997) define linguistic landscape as the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region. Specifically, the notion refers to: The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration. The most unique feature of LL is that it refers to text presented and displayed in the public space. In other words, LL research investigates “public uses of written languages” (Pavlenko: 2010). Rey (2004) emphasizes that the study of linguistic landscape enables conclusions to be drawn regarding, among other factors, the social layering of the community, the relative status of the various societal segments, and the dominant cultural ideals’.

In many studies a distinction is made between signs placed by government agencies and signs placed by private persons. The signs that the linguistic landscape consists of can be categorized according to what Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) term the ‘linguistic landscape actors’ (Ben-Rafael et al. 2006). By ‘linguistic landscape actors’, they mean: the actors who concretely participate in the shaping of the linguistic landscape by ordering from others or building by themselves linguistic landscape elements according to preferential tendencies, deliberate choices or policies. The linguistic elements provided by these actors can be divided into two categories: the linguistic

landscape elements “used and exhibited by institutional agencies which in one way or another act under the control of local or central policies”, and “those utilized by individual, associative or corporative actors who enjoy autonomy of action within legal limits” (Ben-Rafael et al. 2006: 10). Later, Shohamy and Gorter (2009) proposed the terms to distinguish the LL signs into two streams i.e. the top-down and bottom-up items. Top-down LL items include those issued by national and public bureaucracies and include public sites, public announcements and street names. Bottom-up items on the other hand include those issued by individuals’ social actors such as shop owners and companies, including names of shops, business, signs and personal announcements.

Cenoz and Gorter (2006) state that the linguistic landscape can provide information about the sociolinguistic context and the use of the different languages in language signs can be compared to the official policy of the region and to the use of the language as reported in surveys. The study of the linguistic landscape can also be interesting because it can provide information on the differences between the official language policy that can be reflected in top-down signs such as street names or names of official buildings and the impact of that policy on individuals as reflected in bottom-up signs such as shop names or street posters. The study of the linguistic landscape is also particularly interesting in bilingual and multilingual contexts.

For this study, in order to classify the signs, the researcher has adopted the ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ terms and to categorise the language patterns the terms ‘bilingual’ and ‘monolingual’ will be used.

Language Situation in Thailand

At the present, Thailand is similar to many other countries in the world, it is influenced by the process of globalization which has often also been related to the spread of English. According to Pennycook (1994) and Philipson (2003), the use of English around the world is a mark of globalization defined in economic terms of markets, production and consumption. By using English businesses aim at increasing their sales and thus its presence is motivated by economic reasons. The use of English also raises the issue of identity and power and thus can have consequences for the balance between the different languages in multilingual situations.

Wiriyachitra (2002) describes the role of English in Thailand that it is quite important as it is in many other developing countries. New technology and the adoption of the internet have resulted in a major transition in terms of business, education, science, and technological progress, all of which demand high proficiency in English. With the economic downturn in Thailand a few years ago, a large number of Thai companies have embraced cooperation regionally and internationally. Mergers, associations, and takeovers are common and English is used as the means to communicate, negotiate and execute transactions by participants where one partner can be a native speaker of English or none of the partners are native speakers of English. Recently, the spreading of English is very prominent when the government announced the launch of ASEAN Community in 2015. With the demand in the market, the rising number of schools and programs teaching and training English has increased strikingly. To compete with other neighbor countries, Thai people have to work harder to improve their English skills in order to perform their competence professionally. At the national level, the phenomenon of ‘the demand of English’ can be found everywhere not only in schools or universities but we also can find from the environment surrounding us. The

simplest way is to observe from signs, advertisements and billboards in the cities, particularly in the centre of Bangkok. Those signs are written in both Thai and English or Thai and Chinese or Japanese. In terms of business, it may aim at increasing their sales and thus its presence is motivated by economic reasons due to the increase of foreign and local investors and visitors in the city.

Methodology

Data Collection

Since linguistic landscape analysis relies on photography and visual analysis. In December 2012, at the State Railway Station of Thailand (SRT), the researcher took photographs of all tokens of environmental print found in the area including signs, names on buildings, advertisements, commercial shop signs and public signs on SRT buildings. About 250 pictures of every visible sign were collected, and examined for languages displayed whether public or private. After that, the researcher classified them in terms of language used and language functions.

Data Analysis

For this study, the pictures were classified into these following groups based the actors, languages, and functions and patterns.

- a. Linguistic landscape actors: They are created by public organisations (top-down) or companies and local shops (bottom-up).
- b. Languages: The languages used are classified into monolingual and bilingual.
- c. Functions and patterns of language displayed

It is noted here that quantifying and presenting the data by using percentage to show the portion of the pictures for each group will not be used because in order to gain the appropriate size and obtain optimum information of the signs some pictures were sometimes repeatedly taken.

Findings:

The findings of the study can be summarized into two main parts. The first part presents the LL items created by public sector which is the State Railway Station of Thailand (SRT). The second part shows the LL items created the companies and the local shops at the station.

a. Linguistic landscape actors: top-down items

Table 1 shows the language functions and language distribution of the signs created by the State Railway Station of Thailand. Six language functions were found. They are providing general information such as labeling the names of the room offices or places, greetings and presenting farewell messages to the passengers, giving directions, warning, prohibitions, and advertising the organization by using slogans. According to the table below, in terms of the appearance of languages, it was found that Thai and English appear together in five language functions except SRT advertising which are presented in Thai only. Thai and Bahasa Maley appears once on the sign showing the shower room. English appears only on the signs which aim to

warn the foreign passengers to be aware of the strangers who may disguise themselves as the SRT staff and may mislead the passengers to use other modes of transportation or even give incorrect information. The signs of prohibition which appear in Thai only were found also and Thai was used because they aim to convey the information to Thai passengers only. For example, the Thai senior citizen whose age is above 60 can buy a train ticket for the half fare. The findings suggest that the SRT is aware of the objectives of the signs, the use of language and the audience.

Table 1: Language functions and language distribution in Signs created by SRT

Language Functions	Monolingual	Bilingual
a. Proving general information	-	Thai and English Thai and Bahasa Maley
b. Greetings and farewell messages	Thai	Thai and English
c. Giving directions	-	Thai and English
d. Warning	English	Thai and English
e. Prohibitions	Thai	Thai and English
f. SRT advertising	Thai	-

These are examples of signs created by the State Railway Station of Thailand.



Picture 1: giving general information



Picture 2: warning



Picture 3: farewell Message



Picture 4: giving directions

b. Linguistic landscape actors: bottom-up items

The companies which run their business at SRT are a bank, a convenient store, baggage services, food chain companies, book shops, and travel agencies. The local shops which mostly found are a book stall, food stalls, food shops in the food court and kiosks. Similarly to the signs created by SRT, the language used are bilingual i.e. Thai and English. However, it was found that English appears only on the signs created by the companies because their target is the foreign customers only. For local shops, since most of them sell products of food and the target groups are both Thai and foreigners; therefore, the signs are displayed in both Thai and English and Thai only. However, the occurrences of Thai and English signs are found dominantly.

Table 2: Language functions and language distribution in Signs created by companies and local shops

Language Functions	Monolingual	Bilingual
a. companies	English	Thai and English
b. local shops	Thai	Thai and English

Pictures 5-8 are examples of signs created by companies and local shops.



Picture 5: book shop



Picture 6: donut shop



Picture 7: menu from food shop



Picture 8: menu from food shop

Discussion of findings:

Language used and business types

From the findings, it can be seen that both linguistic actors – public organization (SRT) and private sectors (companies and local shops) mostly use bilingual signs to convey information to the audience. The language functions used by the SRT may be varied based on the content and information the organization wants to convey. However, it reflects the bilingual language policy which could be found in almost every sign. For the private sectors, since their aim is to sell the products, they thus cannot avoid using bilingual signs as well. The interesting point that we found from this study is that the bilingual signs created by chain companies appear to be more professional than the ones created by the local shops. Nevertheless, the attempt of created the bilingual signs by the local shops is a good sign which shows that local people have more awareness of the importance of English and its obvious roles in the economic process. This suggests that the use of different languages in the sign also reflects power, status and economic importance of the different languages in the SRT.

Internationalization

As mentioned earlier that the use of English as an international language, which has often been related to the process of globalisation, is a key factor that encourage people in the countries whose first language is not English pay more attention on the use of languages around them. Thailand is one of those countries. If we look for the meaning of the term ‘internationalisation’ from the dictionary, it simply means ‘the process of becoming or making something international in scope’ (Collins online dictionary (2013)). The findings from this study may reveal that in almost every part of organization both private and public, they are aware of this term. The signs and the use of English may be the good indicators because English not only has largely symbolic value, but also carries distinctive connotations. First and foremost it conveys notions of internationality, success and Western orientation (Muth, 2010). The bilingual signs created by the SRT may signify that the SRT is aiming for being internationalized organization. With the use of bilingual signs, it creates mutual understanding between the host and the visitors. It lights up welcoming atmosphere and raise positive attitudes towards the countries.

7. Conclusion

This study of linguistic landscape in the State Railway Station of Thailand has shown that with the result of economic activities and globalization, it has truly influenced on the use of foreign language in the society. The study shows that bilingual signs created appear dominantly in both top-down context and bottom-up context. However, business run by the more professional sectors tend to use more bilingual or monolingual (English) signs than the local ones. In terms of top-down signs, it can be seen that the SRT has attempt to put almost of the signs in bilingual because the growing of the presence of the foreign passengers has increased gradually especially when the doors at the borders near neighbor countries like Laos, Burma and Malaysia will open to welcome visitors from all around the world. Additionally, in the future it might be interesting to conduct research on the attitudes of the foreign visitors towards the signs created by the host or it might be interesting to check if they understand the signs labeled in the station or not.

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Making Reading Content Comprehensible for Intermediate Language Learners

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Abstract

Due to the interrelatedness of reading and language learning, assisting language learners in becoming voluntary readers sets them on a path to second language fluency. However, language teachers must first scaffold reading experiences for their students in order to develop their skills and confidence in reading in a new language. This article provides specific examples and the theoretical framework of the before, during, and after reading activities language teachers can employ to scaffold their intermediate foreign language students' early efforts at reading and viewing narrative material in the target language.

Key Words: language acquisition, classroom techniques, reading, film, and poetry

Your intermediate language learners have entered your classroom from beginning level courses ready to make the next step in their quest for foreign language fluency. The research suggests the best method language teachers can undertake to help students become true intermediate language users, able to use the language outside the classroom in everyday situations, is to teach them to become voluntary readers of material in the target language (Krashen 2004). However, language teachers must provide adequate scaffolds to ensure students can access reading content during early efforts at reading in the target language. Language teachers can make reading comprehensible by incorporating before, during, and after reading activities designed to build vocabulary, introduce grammatical structures, provide visual connections, and develop schemata. Ideally, the reading experiences enjoyed by the students in the classroom lead to the development of students who read for pleasure and knowledge in their free time.

Foreign Language Literacy Development

Language acquisition comes from comprehensible input (Krashen 1983). Therefore, the same literacy development techniques utilized in first language acquisition, work equally well in second language acquisition. Hearing and discussing children's picture books in a child's early years of formal schooling greatly impacted their literacy development in their native language. The commonly used vocabulary development, comprehension, and reading fluency development activities that scaffold early reading experiences in first language acquisition – for example, echo reading, choral reading, paired reading, and readers theater - should also be used in second language acquisition. Echo reading involves a fluent reader, often the teacher, reading a sentence or logical chunk of text aloud and the learners repeating - echoing the pronunciation, rate, and rhythm of the fluent reader. Choral reading involves the students and teacher reading the same text in unison, like singers in a choir singing the same material together. Paired reading or partner reading involves students reading aloud to each other in pairs. Readers theater provides students, working in groups, the opportunity to develop a script based on a text read in class. Then, the students, reading directly from their newly created script based on the original text, perform their piece in front of the class. Repeating these activities in the rereading of children's picture books allows students to move from single word fixations to reading phrases of meaningful units in a single fixation, thereby, improving reading rate, expression, and ease of reading (Cohen 2011).

Talking about and eliciting students' reactions to the setting, characters, plot, and themes of these stories increases their comprehension of the material. These activities coupled with limited direct teaching of grammatical structures and vocabulary at the point of need can support natural language acquisition, especially for older students. These first language teaching techniques work equally well on children and adults alike in second language acquisition (Krashen 2004). Furthermore, scaffolding new reading experiences reduces students' anxiety and makes the reading experience fun for students, thereby, lowering the affective filter which allows for natural language acquisition. Finally, exposing language students to reading begins the development of their own writing style as they absorb the structures of writing modeled by the writers of the books they read.

Poetry

Besides offering students an enjoyable reading experience, poetry provides language learners with rich learning opportunities in language, content, and culture. The

rhythm, rhyme, familiar language patterns (found in poetry in song lyrics and poetry in the students' native language), and repetition of key words and phrases in poetry provides support for students learning the language utilized in the poem. Reading and rereading poetry aloud promotes the development of sight word vocabulary, pronunciation, and reading fluency. This activity mimics native language learners developing the same skills by singing nursery rhymes in the early grades of their school-based learning. In addition, the conciseness of poetry provides a bridge to transition into more complex and longer texts. Narrative poetry contains the elements of fiction – setting, characters, conflict, plot, theme, and point of view – in a concise, expressive format perfectly suited to teach in one class period. Finally, studying the poetry of published poets leads naturally to students creating poetry based on own experiences, emotions, and beliefs.

Selecting Poetry

When selecting poetry for classroom use, language teachers must consider their students' independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels. With scaffolding provided by the teacher, poetry at the students' instructional level can introduce students to new vocabulary, phrases, and content in the target language. Poetry for beginner/intermediate language students should consist of an accessible format, simple grammatical structures, manageable vocabulary, easily recognizable imagery, and minimal use of figurative language. Poetry written in simple language - based on familiar, everyday experiences – can evoke the readers' senses as powerfully as more complex poetry.

Classes for advanced language learners should resemble language arts classes for native speakers (Krashen 2004). Therefore, a teacher-scaffolded study of poetry containing figurative language, multifaceted themes, and cultural references can provide intermediate language learners the opportunity to interact with the target language in a progressively more sophisticated manner.

Before Reading Activities

The key tenet of second language acquisition is to provide students with comprehensible input (Krashen 1977). Therefore, language teachers must establish their students' instructional reading levels for in-class guided reading activities and their independent reading levels for free reading during sustained silent reading sessions. Texts at a student's instructional reading level contain content accessible by the student with scaffolding provided by the teacher. Texts at a student's independent reading level contain content readily accessible by the student. The greatest language gains occur when students read material with the assistance of a teacher just beyond their independent comprehension level (Vygotsky as cited in Berk & Winsler (1995) & Krashen 1987).

Thematic prereading activities that build students' prior knowledge and introduce potentially prohibitive vocabulary prepare language students to read texts at their instructional reading level. Language teachers can screen excerpts from films and documentaries to establish the cultural and historical significance of the novel or poem they intend to read during the guided reading session with the class. Also, displaying photos of the setting of the novel or poem provides students with visual images to draw upon during later reading. An introduction to potentially prohibitive vocabulary should include visual images and contextual uses of the vocabulary.

Finally, a discussion of the genre of the novel or poem builds a link to the students' first language conceptual knowledge that can easily transfer to a second language.

During Reading Activities

Language teachers can scaffold the first reading of a novel or poem with visual and audio support. Electronic children's picture books and dramatic interpretations of novels and poems are readily available online. Scaffold a second reading of a book or poem with audio support, for example, utilizing audio books, choral reading, echo reading, and paired reading. Class discussions, led by the language teacher, should include plot specific topics related to the setting, characters' personalities, physical appearance and motivations, and making predictions. Complex topics of theme, voice, and figurative elements can wait. Enjoy the story for the story.

After Reading Activities

After reading narrative poetry, class discussion topics could include the poem's themes, message, most startling lines, most vivid images, and poetic devices. As a comprehension assessment, students could work in pairs to paraphrase/summarize an assigned stanza of a narrative poem. Encouraging students to watch films based on the poetry and poets studied in the classroom reinforces acquired language and can encourage students to become avid viewers of subtitled films in the target language. In addition, acquiring the skills to understand and appreciate the literary content of poetry in the target language provides students with the tools to similarly access the poetic content of foreign language films. Research indicates that students who enjoy a good story on the silver screen equally enjoy high quality tales told on the pages of a book (Krashen 2004).

Free Voluntary Reading

One of the best ways to acquire a second language is through reading engaging materials in the target language. According to Krashen (2006), "Free reading is the source of our reading prowess and much of our vocabulary and spelling development, as well as our ability to understand sophisticated phrases and write coherent prose" (par. 2). Reading builds language structures, contributes to schema development, and establishes a language base for written and oral language skills. Krashen's (2004) review of 41 research studies on Free Voluntary Reading (FVR) revealed that FVR improves: reading comprehension (both narrative and expository), writing style, vocabulary, spelling, control of grammar, oral/aural language skills, second language acquisition, and reading speed. In order to expose language learners to the powerful effects of reading, language teachers must establish an educational environment conducive to free voluntary reading. Language teachers should focus on the enjoyable aspects of reading - entertainment, learning about humanity, relaxation, and escape - rather than peripheral activities like book reports, end of chapter questions, and vocabulary exercises. Language learners should feel free to choose their own books and change books if they find the book uninteresting (Krashen 2004). Reading for pleasure reduces students' anxiety, thereby, lowering their affective filter. Lowering the effective filter is a key instructional methodology in creating an environment that allows students to acquire language skills subconsciously.

Language teachers, who provide the structure for Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) sessions, expose students to a wide variety of reading material, assist students in

selecting books at their independent reading level, and read books during SSR to model the activity. Finally, establishing sustained silent reading sessions as a regular part of language instruction provides students with a fun, powerful language acquisition tool they can utilize outside the classroom.

Conclusion

Once students develop the skills and confidence to read for enjoyment in a new language, massive language gains, enjoyment, and lifelong learning follow. Scaffolding reading experiences and providing access to gateway literary materials – including audio books, children’s picture books, comic books, graphic novels, teen romance novels, magazines, and electronic books – promote additional free voluntary reading. School based sustained silent reading programs promote pleasure/free-time reading. Language teachers’ best practice to support students to achieve genuine language fluency is to encourage and support students to read for pleasure in the target language. This best practice includes providing students with interesting, comprehensible reading and viewing materials in the target language, scaffolding reading and viewing experiences of material that is just beyond students’ independent reading level, and being a positive reading role model by reading, enjoying, and talking about books, poetry, and films in the target language. Finally, language teachers should also encourage students to become avid readers in their first language because advanced literacy skills in one language transfer to acquiring literacy in additional languages.

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Portfolio as an assessment tool: An alternative to students' learning success

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Abstract

The need to use portfolio as an assessment tool has been developed with the aim of optimizing the culture of assessment. Many educators have come to recognize that alternative assessments are crucial as a means of gathering a dynamic picture of students' abilities to acquire, understand and critically interpret information; use creativity and innovation in solving problems; and express ideas succinctly and effectively. This present study was carried out to examine the effect of using portfolio as an assessment tool on students' learning, explore what students learned and how they learned. The participants were 15 ESL upper secondary school students who volunteered to contribute their views pertaining to portfolio assessment. In-depth interviews, student's individual portfolios and student's self-reflections were used to find out the effect of using portfolio assessment on students' learning. Significantly, the students divulged that portfolio assessment allowed them to assess their own learning via self-assessment and they were able to inform teachers about their strengths and weaknesses in learning through self-reflection. The results of the study have implications for assessment, teaching and learning of English as a second language.

Keywords: Portfolio, Portfolio Assessment, ESL Instruction and Assessment, Alternative Assessment

Introduction

The concern for students' achievement in English has received a lot of attention. The problem of mastering English does not involve students alone. The English language teachers are also affected. The nature of assessment plays a crucial role in English language curriculum in the schools. Teachers use assessment to assist students to attain the aims of English language curriculum by comprehensively accounting students' learning over a period of time. As such, assessment of students' learning should not be interpreted as the end point of students' learning experiences; instead it serves as a mean to attain educational goals (Webb, 1993). Teachers have realized that the current design of the evaluation procedures does not truly reflect students' capabilities in the English language (Mohtar, 2010). The fact that evaluation has been generally in the traditional approach, which holds the philosophy that one test will represent all students despite individual differences. The stakeholders including school board, parents, staff and students are highly concerned about the examinations scores as they use them to show how diligent students are and how well teachers perform. Consequently, teachers have great anxiety preparing students for examination rather than focusing on the curriculum and needs of the students under these circumstances. Thus, teachers are on the lookout for an alternative form of evaluation which allows for effective teaching and learning. Thus, teachers have resorted to alternative assessment as a means to modify their teaching and make learning more meaningful in the classroom. Teachers of English as a second language use portfolios a non-traditional form of assessment as a means of gathering information on their students to examine achievement, effort, improvement and the process of self-assessment. While many proposals have been made on how portfolios can be implemented, there is a need to seek teachers' views on the use of portfolio as an assessment tool in the classrooms. Teachers use portfolios to complement the traditional examination in order to assist students to improve their learning.

Theoretical Framework

Vygotsky and social constructivists view that learning builds on what learners already know; such as learners need to create their personal meaning from any learning situation or social context without relying too much on the teachers (Best & Thomas, 2007). Vygotsky's theory has direct application as teachers work with students in the portfolio process. The interaction between teacher and student or between student and student helps to provide the scaffolding necessary for student to move in the direction of more abstract and scientific learning. Assessment in a whole language context is based on the idea that assessment is continuous and process-oriented, anchored in the kinds of developmental changes by Piaget and Vygotsky (Rhodes & Shaklin, 1994). The significance of Vygotsky's ZPD to the learning theory, the use of portfolio as an assessment tool for classroom learning is that learning happens when students see their potentials rather than achievement. Nevertheless, Brown (2004) argues that learners of all ages and in all field of studies including second language students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds can still benefit from the actual, hands-on nature on portfolio development.

Portfolio tracks the students' performance in class where examinations do not always tell teachers about what students have learned but rather what students have learned to pass the tests or to achieve certain grades. Portfolio encourages students to be autonomous and independent by taking charge of their own learning. Their ability to make decisions and assessing their own work will make them actively involved in the learning process and become active learners. This forms the basis of social constructivism as proposed by Vygotsky (1978) in which students' cognitive and social constructs are accomplished in different pace and measure. Another important aspect of Vygotsky's ZPD and social constructivism in this study is that it makes students to charge, be responsible to think about their learning through the use of portfolio as an assessment tool.

Literature Review

The need to study the overwhelming aspects of standardized test has received attention from many educators and scholars. For more than three decades, standardized testing has been criticized and challenged. These tests were not able to measure problem solving skills and higher-order thinking as they result in teachers teaching to the test (Bracey, 1989; Shepaz, 1991). Very often, standardized tests have had great pressure and influence on students which cause "a sense of futility" and force students to give up learning (Stiggins, 1991). (Hizwari et al., 2008; Huerta-Macias, 1995) reported that students were more worried about failing the standardized tests which will halt a student's performance at a particular time.

According to Chiam (1984), the education system in Malaysia put much emphasis on public examination results as crucial determinants of students' progression to higher levels of education or occupational opportunities. (Marimuthu et al., 1984) reported that the examination-oriented education system governed the learning behavior of nearly half the students in their study. The primary function of schooling was seen as a stepping stone to employment and the certificates were seen as controlling entry into privileged jobs. As a result, students, teachers and parents were more interested on performing well in public examination, which were considered the only valid measures of academic attainment. Other important aspects, values and attitudes that reflect the national philosophy of education were considered irrelevant in this context. This is another deficiency identified in current testing practice that test can mislead as an indicator of student performance. Students' true abilities are not always reflected in the test scores that they obtain (Hughes, 2003).

To compensate for limitations associated with using standardized tests, the need to use a combination of formal and informal assessment techniques for monitoring students' learning is essential. Portfolio assessment represents the combined and integrated form of formal and informal assessment that will allow teachers to monitor student language development (Ahmad Sharifi and Hassaskah, J, 2011).

Portfolio Assessment

Portfolio assessment in the language arts has emerged as an alternative form of assessment recently (Farr & Tone, 1994; Valencia, 1990; Wolf, 1989). Portfolio assessment is also perceived as an alternative to standardized testing which has been the traditional means of evaluating students (Worthen, Borg, & White, 1993). Portfolios are considered to be compatible with the process-oriented and meaning construction view of learning (Wiggins, 1993). One of the most prominent results of portfolio assessment is that it approves the reliance on teacher and student judgment (Farr & Tone, 1994). In their classroom research, (Kaur & Samad (2013) found that student self-assessment helped teachers to understand the problems students faced in learning English. The self-assessment is designed based on the learning objectives that had to be achieved by each and every student in the class. So, when students submit their self-assessment form to their teachers, teachers were able to track the problems students faced in learning. This opportunity supported teachers in terms of understanding the weaknesses of their students and allowed teachers to be resourceful and creative in assisting weak learners. Through the students' portfolio reflections and goals, (Kaur & Samad, 2013) gained insights that led to instructional adjustments based on student needs. They concluded that portfolios are not only meant to assess students' growth in learning but it assisted teachers to improve and make crucial decisions with regards to their instruction. A study conducted by Husseinali (2012) to examine the validity of using portfolios as an L2 assessment procedure and to ascertain the effectiveness of portfolios as an L2 learning tool provided a detailed explanation on the use of portfolio as an assessment tool. The test results show that portfolio grades significantly correlated with written test grades ($r = 0.86$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, portfolios grades significantly correlated with oral interview grades ($r = 0.86$, $p < 0.001$). These results indicate that portfolios are a reliable assessment tool in L2 instruction. This finding is significant in validating using portfolios for L2 assessment.

Method

Since the main objective of this study was to examine the effects of portfolio assessment on ESL student learning; hence the use of qualitative method offers greater opportunities for conducting exploratory and descriptive research that uses the context and setting to search for a deeper understanding of the person being studied (Troudi, 1994, Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Maxwell, 1996; Silverman, 2000; Radnor, 2001). The learning context is the Malaysian secondary school ESL classroom. This study embarks on a case study which is descriptive in nature and the focus is on a natural setting which is the classroom. It is interested in the meanings, perspectives and understanding by examining the effects of portfolio as an assessment tool on ESL student learning. The primary data for this study are in-depth interviews. Student's individual portfolios and student's self-reflections are used to complement the interviews conducted on fifteen selected ESL students. The research question addressed at this juncture was:

Sample

The students interview groups comprised of sixteen years old, have completed their PMR in the previous year, and fifteen years old. Prior to interview, the researcher distributed a profile form for students to fill out. The form required them to provide information pertaining to their name, form (class) former primary school attended, UPSR (Primary School Examination) overall grades, and in particular grade for English subject, last secondary school attended, PMR (Lower Secondary Examination) overall grades and also grade for English subject, and finally their grade for the previous year English subject.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using multiple analyses. Thematic analysis was used for the student's interviews, to get a common theme or themes throughout the materials. This is one of the most frequently used analytic approaches in a qualitative study (Ely, 1997). This method of analysis was employed to understand the effects of portfolio as an assessment tool on ESL students' learning. The student's individual portfolios and student's reflections were analysed using the content analysis technique. Content analysis is a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases and meanings (Leedy & Ormrod 2005; Neuendorf 2002). It allows researcher to reveal the content in a deeper manner than usual reading. These data were also triangulated to strengthen the accounts of the research data and to enhance the validity of the research methods used in combination to achieve a similar bearing of results (Woods, 1996).

In depth Interview

Research Question:

How do ESL students respond to portfolio assessment that is being used in the classroom?

To answer this question, the students' interview data, student's individual portfolio and student's self-reflection were analyzed and interpreted. Next, the student's portfolios were examined and analyzed. These portfolios were the student's work, amassed over a period of time (officially based on the school calendar). The contents of portfolios were used to explain and describe students' respond towards the assessment that is being used in the classroom. This question relates the relevancy of using portfolio as an assessment tool on students' learning which frames the analysis and interpretation of the data. ESL students' respond to portfolio assessment refer to the effects of it on students' learning. After doing exhaustive data organization, breaking them into manageable units and searching for patterns of meaning in view with the research question, the following themes emerged from the data.

Findings

It is essential for students to know and prepare for the lesson that would be taught by their teacher. In their reflection, the students shared how portfolio as an assessment tool has an impact on their learning. The students were asked to recite the poem with

full emotion and the correct pronunciation. The students admitted that they couldn't recite the poem with full emotion but was able to recite it with the correct pronunciation. To overcome this problem, both students and teacher demonstrated how to recite the poem with full emotion and helped those who had problem at it. The students could not grasp at first, but after a few attempts they were able to recite it with full emotions and the correct pronunciation. Although the student (Rashid) shared that his attempt went futile when he tried for the first and second time, he did not give up instead he tried for the third time and he was able to recite the poem correctly. He wrote the following:

Transcript 3: student self-reflection

I didn't success at my first try nor second try but at my third try, I did it.
I felt so happy and proud at myself to have a friend and teacher like them. (#rashid-self-reflection,lesson 2#)

The help extended by his friends and teacher meant a lot to the student as it made him very proud of himself and the achievement he acquired. The teacher taught and went through the poem's literal and figurative meaning with the students thoroughly. The teacher explained what figurative meaning is and handed some worksheets for the students to complete. The reflections submitted by the students indicate how they learn in the classroom and how their teacher makes sure students have understood what have been taught. After her teaching, the teacher distributes the self-assessment to students check their understanding on the topics taught. In the self-assessment form, the students are required to tick in the columns in which the teacher had list down the specific learning outcomes to be achieved. Most of the students ticked all the columns and this showed that they have understood what the teacher had taught and at the same time the teacher had achieved her learning outcomes. The students can state their personal opinions about the topic taught in self-assessment form, below is an example of the comments given by the student:

Transcript 4: student self-assessment

-the activity /task provided by the teacher is different than other which is much easier to understand.#rashid-self-assessment activity 1#
- I can understand each stanza better by answering questions #self-assessment activity 3#
-because the activity makes me able of describing the time, the setting of the story and I can narrate confidently with a little bit of teacher's help #self-assessment activity 4#
-i can understand the characters better by describing.....with my friends & help of teacher #self-assessment activity 5#

The above comments provided by the students revealed the potential and benefits of using portfolio as an assessment tool. The comments above demonstrate how portfolio can provide a continuous picture of student progress. The learning interest of the students shifts from time to time as portfolios provide a broader picture of

students' progress and give us an idea about what students know and can do on a variety of measures. As described above, portfolios provide a rich source of information because they can include documentation of a student's educational background and multiple examples of student work.

Discussion

a. Students' Involvement in Assessment

According to Anness & Darling-Hammond (1994) portfolio assessment is one of the few assessment approaches that accommodate a wide range of learner abilities. Because portfolios are designed to be inclusive and contain authentic descriptions of what students can do, even weak English language learners can participate. For example, the student from (Group C) adhered to his teacher's instructions that it was crucial for him to participate during classroom activities so that the teacher could assess his performance. Portfolios can result in improved student learning. The most compelling reason for teachers to implement portfolios as an assessment tool is that they can improve student learning. By using portfolios as an assessment tool, teachers can include students in the process of setting educational goals and developing scoring criteria in the form of rubrics, checklists, and rating scales. Students can become involved in assessing their own and others' work based on the scoring criteria, thus focusing on the academic goals they are trying to achieve. A growing body of literature indicates that self-assessment and self-regulation of learning are powerful forces that help students improve their learning (Rudd & Gunstone, 1993; Smolen, Newman, Wathen, & Lee, 1995; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). Because the research demonstrates the efficacy of self-assessment, advocates of assessment portfolios and school reform enthusiastically support portfolios (O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996).

Transcript 7: Student's interview

contoh, teacher bagi saya banyak essay, bagi saya marks. Mula-mula marks saya kurang kurang 17, selepas tu makin lama saya buat essay makin lama saya meningkat markah saya, so daripada essay itu yang buat, banyak banyak essay itu, saya dapat improve la. (line 58-60, group B)

The student shared that teacher gives her a few essays to do and gives marks. At the beginning, the students scored 17 marks but as she writes and submits more essays, she noticed that she has improved .

At first, I get B in 1st exam but I was not satisfied and I didn't get A in bi but after that I tried my best to get better (line 18-19, group E)

I get 82 on my 1st exam but in ppa 1 I got 71, dropped because of the short stories I was not interested in scoring there (line 20-21, group E).

b. Self-assessment

The students learnt how to do self-assessment from their teachers. They shared that by doing the self-assessment they were able to tell their teachers how they have mastered the lesson. At first, they students have to complete the tasks given by their teachers and the task may vary in different forms. After completing the task, the students have to do the self-reflection based on the tasks they did. The students have to indicate their ability in attempting the tasks and also write some comments if they found the task challenging. The teachers will read the comments to help the students. According to the students, sometimes the teachers provide one to one feedback and very often the teachers summarize in the form of a conclusion what they have taught before leaving the class. Below is an example of students' understanding of self-assessment and what is expected of them when the teachers instruct them to do it. Students use self-assessment as a bridge to convey problems they faced in learning, what they liked the best about learning and their ability in comprehending and achieving the learning outcomes specifically for learning English literature.

Transcript 8: Student's interview

I write what I think I do my essay then, I write at the self-assessment,(line 27, group B)
 What I like the best, the most difficult part(line93, group B)
 For example she just like can I recite the poem more better, can I recite the poem with feelings, can I read the poem with the correct pronunciation, with correct stress and rhythm.(line 55-57, group A)

Students can become better learners when they engage in deliberate thought about what they are learning and how they are learning it. In this kind of reflection, students step back from the learning process to think about their language learning strategies and their progress as language learners. Such self assessment encourages students to become independent learners and can increase their motivation. A growing body of literature indicates that self-assessment and self-regulation of learning are powerful forces that help students improve their learning (Rudd & Gunstone, 1993; Smolen, Newman, Wathen, & Lee, 1995; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990).

c. Peer-assessment

The students shared how peer-assessment helped them to improve their learning by correcting errors and demonstrating better ways that they could improve better. The students knew that the reason for the teacher to carry out the peer-assessment was not meant to criticize nor search for their errors instead it was used to guide each other in terms of improvising their understanding of the topic. The students were aware of their weaknesses and strengths in learning and they believed that their peers would be able to identify and help them to improve at it, for example as shown below how the students commented about peer-assessment during the interview:

Transcript 9: Student's interview

R:How do you do peer-assessment?

S:I do peer-assessment with my friends. saya menilai kawan saya punya kelebihan dan kelemahan
(I assess strengths and weaknesses of my friend's work)

Kawan saya pulak menilai kelebihan dan kelemahan saya.
(my friends assessed my strengths and weaknesses)

R:After that...

S:After that my friends will help me.

R:Good. Do you think peer-assessment is important is good?

S:Yes, very good.

R:Ok, give examples how your friends help you.

S:my friend helps me how to write essay, introduction, ah how to make a point, how, what is my point...(line98-112, group B)

The interview data above revealed about the peer-assessment process the students have experienced. The students took turns to read each other's essays and then they identified the strengths and weaknesses. For example, the students were able to share and helped each other in promoting learning by correcting the mistakes they made in their writing. The student mentioned that the peer was able to help in terms of giving tips on how to write the essay, the introduction and how to elaborate the points further for the writing an essay. They found the activity very helpful. At the same time, the students shared that when the teacher gave them the self-assessment guide, they have to inform the teacher about their goals. The goals refer to the learning outcomes which the students would like to improve at, for example, the student below mentioned that his main goal was to improve his grammar. By improving his grammar, the student knew that he could come up with better sentence structures and paragraphs to produce a better essay.

Conclusion

The most useful aspect of portfolio assessment is that it is learner-centered. The portfolio provides students an opportunity to construct their experiences in language learning, and this experience can prompt students to be more involved in the classroom activities via group discussion, role-play and individual presentations because they feel that they have control in their own learning rather than just having the teachers giving notes, inform them what they have to learn and depend solely on memorization to excel. Portfolio gives students a sense of accomplishment after they complete their work and compile them in the portfolios. It seems that language learning can be further enhanced through the use of the portfolios as agreed by all the teachers because it can be a good way to keep students' progress in check. For language learning, it is important for students to keep their work so that they can see them whenever they want to and their teachers can do the same too.

Students knew that they do not simply compile materials into their portfolios. They realized that each material compiled into the portfolios serves a meaning for their own learning. They were aware that the portfolio assessment offered them a way to monitor their own progress they make in learning. If the students felt that they have not learned enough or the teachers had identified their mistakes and weaknesses, the students could still indicate it in their self-assessment. When the teachers read student's self-assessment, they would then try to explain again to the students by giving detailed explanation or provide them with more remedial worksheets. Two experimental studies conducted by Fontana and Fernandes (1994), and Frederikson and White (1997) have shown that students who have opportunities to reflect on their work and self-assess themselves show greater improvement than those who do not. Other studies done by McCurdy and Shapiro (1992), Sawyer, Graham and Harris (1992) also show performance gains related to reflection and self-assessment.

In addition, students are able to record their own learning track. They were conscious about their own learning as well as their achievement. To this end, they were able to indicate what skills they had improved and not improved. Students understand that portfolio assessment could boost their academic development and to make this happen, their cooperation is needed. Therefore, this indicates that the portfolio can be a valuable tool for students to establish their own learning expectations.

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Role of Cultural Empathy in the Fusion of Horizons in Translation

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Abstract

Currently, the study of translation is increasingly oriented towards its cultural perspective. According to Hans-Geroge Gadamer's approach to hermeneutics, it is obvious that the subjects of translation, namely, the author, the translator and the reader, bear different horizons due to their different cultural and historic backgrounds. Based on the theoretical study, the present paper would discuss the role of cultural empathy in the process of interpretation and understanding and conclude that empathetic translators would be able to activate the dialogue between the receptive and the other culture during the process of translation and realize the fusion of horizons to the utmost level.

Keywords: Cultural empathy, Fusion of horizons, Reception Theory, Translation process

INTRODUCTION

Translation, in nature is both a linguistic and cultural phenomenon. According to Gadamer, understandings occur in language event, and translation can be well defined as such kind of cross-cultural communicative event. Gadamer views interpretation as an ongoing dialogue between one's horizon and the object's horizon, thus, translating source text into an understandable meaningful piece into target language and culture is a continuous process. The fusion of horizons among the interpreter, text and the future readers determines a successful translation work.

Reception theory believes that text itself does not have any established meaning, while the interpretation based on socio-cultural and historical context done by the translator makes the text dynamic in meaning. Cultural empathy is the ability of awareness and understanding of the cultural attributes of a given society and how they differ from one's own culture. Given the process of translation, capacity of empathy affects the translator in the ongoing understanding and interpretation; hence empathy plays a crucial part in the fulfillment of the goal of intercultural translation.

I. EMPATHY

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, empathy is the action or capacity of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner. It is the act of constructing for oneself another person's mental state (Hogan 1969), which is based on self-awareness and avoidance of judgment in communication. In simpler words, it refers to the psychological process and capacity in which a person shows a great consideration of the thinking and feelings of others by putting oneself in the others' position.

Cultural Empathy requires one's acute observation of the other and the capability to draw oneself out of native cultural stereotypes that has been long rooted as one's development in life; it also entails the capacities for understanding and compassion.

Translation, as a cross-cultural phenomenon, is an open field of activity, which is affected by multiple factors, among which socio-cultural and historical contexts consist of the major external factors. Such factors at the same time perform their influence on translators as well.

Eugene Nida believes that a good translation relies more on the command of the two cultures involved than that of the two languages, for words only adopt meaning in the certain culture environment. Thus, Translation is now compared as cultural portraiture. A successful translation agrees with the original work in letter and in spirit as well.

This is the ultimate goal pursued by all the translators.

Similarly, Marianne Lederer (1994) pointed out the common feature of translation is perception of the original meaning and reproduction. There are two steps in such a process: to understand the text and to express the meaning in another language. Lederer believes that both the understanding and the reproduction steps not only happen in the linguistic level but beyond it. To understand the text requires more than linguistic knowledge from the translator. Given the process of translation, empathetic capacity of the translator is undoubtedly a crucial element in determining the success of translation.

II. FUSION OF HORIZONS

Hans-Geroge Gadamer establishes himself in philosophical hermeneutics and considers human prejudice as indispensable factor of interpreting and understanding meaning. He argues that people have a 'historically effected consciousness' and that they are embedded in the particular history and culture that shaped them. Thus interpreting a text involves a fusion of horizons where the scholar finds the ways that the text's history articulates with their own background.

Gadamer believes that understandings occur in language-event or through language, and his approach to hermeneutics is of the trilogy of language, understanding, and dialogue. Gadamer sees understanding as process of a dialogue, in which obtaining an agreement is of great importance. After all, only when an agreement is reached, would there be mutual understanding, otherwise it is a failed communication. Gadamer believes that "Understanding is, primarily, agreement. Thus people usually understand each other immediately, or they make themselves understood with a view toward reaching agreement."(Gadamer, 2004)

One's horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point, according to Gadamer; he sees the process of understanding an ongoing negotiation between one's own horizon and the text's in a hermeneutical dialogue. Interpretation of a text is, thus, a continuous process in which the interpreter's horizon (pre-understanding) keeps making inquires to the text and the responses are elicited from the text's horizon. Understanding does not occur in a vacuum, the hermeneutic process is dynamic and the movement towards a fusion of horizons is constant. The interpreter is always projecting the meaning initiated by his fore-meanings and fore-structures which themselves are constructed or in a better term raised by the horizons projected by the thing (cited in Gadamer, 2004). The dialogue continues till both horizons extend to which a fusion of horizons occurs and hence a hermeneutic understanding is attained.

Some linguists like Leonard Bloomfield, Antoine Meillet, Colin Cherry, etc. have all done theoretical study concerning the determination of meaning and some of them

proposed that meaning is reproduced during communication. For instance, Bloomfield believed that meaning of a remark consisted of the situated environment of the remark and the reaction from the message receiver (Bloomfield, 1995). But it is Gadamer who first asserted that human mind is always in a state of processing hermeneutic interpretation of the environment around him and human understandings are in fact a kind of interpretation. He rationalized the so-called prejudice and believes that the interpreter cannot break away from his "situatedness", the social, cultural and historical environment he is in, and always interprets the world based on such situated prejudice. The text itself does not have any established meaning. Interpretation of the text is always made within the socio-cultural and historical context which affects the understanding of the interpreter.

Cultural aspect of translation is gaining more attention and observation in recent studies. From a global perspective, the "un-translatability" is mostly originated from the cultural aspect of the text, so cultural untranslatability, or insufficient readability does not allow the value in the source culture to manifest itself well in the target one. In reality, such a process of hermeneutic interpretation in translation takes place when the source culture is decoded in target language and received as something exotic in the target culture, and it requires such a dialogue between different cultures and finally a kind of "fusion of cultural horizons".

III. HOW COULD FUSION OF HORIZONS BE ACHIEVED IN TRANSLATION

Culture is the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression (Newmark, 1988). As a result, culture is mostly identified by its manifestation in certain language and is deeply rooted in the community of the language users. This is evident in the work of translation.

1. Translation

Roger T. Bell (1999) thinks that translation involves the transfer of meaning from a text in one language into another language. It seems to be a very simple definition of translation. While Eugene Nida (1983) makes it a bit complex by asserting that translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style."

Since the study in translation takes on the cultural orientation, it is obvious that translation shall not only aims at the linguistic transfer of the printed message from the text, but to transfer an understanding to those in target language in order to arouse the most similar impact from the audience as the original work does.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1992) considers translation as "the most intimate act of reading", she argues "unless the translator has earned the right to become an intimate reader, she cannot surrender to the text, cannot respond to the special call of the text". Translation is viewed as an intelligent activity involving complex processes of conscious and unconscious learning, and it requires creative problem-solving in novel, textual, social, and cultural conditions (Robinson, 1997).

Such opinions above from Spivak and Robinson place the translator to a crucial position in translation, making high standards and criteria, assigning great mission for them. Thus, translators, constantly making the interaction with the language and culture involved in translation work, are simultaneously doing the decontextualization and recontextualization work. Since translator plays the major subjective role in translation, translation could never be as innocent as a scientific research.

From the perspective of hermeneutics, Gadamer (2004) raises that "every translation is at the same time an interpretation. We can even say that the translation is the culmination of the interpretation that the translator has made of the words given him.". Given that understanding and interpretation are viewed as an ongoing process of dialogue or negotiation, translation could also be analyzed from the process of the conduct.

2. Process of translation

Marianne Lederer (1994) believes that the nature of translation process is universal regardless of different works and different languages, and she proposed that translation process is to understand the original text, break away from the original language form and use another language to express the understood content and perceived emotion.

George Steiner (1975) proposed that to understand is to decipher. To hear significance is to translate. On the premise that translation is a kind of cross-cultural communication, he proposed understanding as translation. He believes that translation process includes "trust", "aggression", "incorporation" and "retribution" four movements; among them "trust" and "retribution" honour the original work including the author's intentions, while "aggression" and "incorporation" describe the dynamic interpretation process conducted by the translator.

Chinese writer Yu Guangzhong (2002) propose that there are similarities between the intelligent activity of translation and creation, and strictly speaking, it is not possible to eliminate creation from the process of translation. In terms of the performance of translator's creativity, Chinese translator Ye Jianjun (1998) proposed that in order to do translation, one has to understand the author's feeling, and this can only be done through the conjecture based on the literal meaning of the text, and the perception of the spirits and meaning between the lines.

Apparently, study of translation process values understanding of the translator, who is playing an indispensable role in the realization of fusion of horizons in translation. Study of philosophical hermeneutics offers enlightenment to the study of translation, particularly in its cultural orientation. Translation process is a hermeneutic process as well. Hermeneutic analysis of the process of understanding and interpretation is instructive in the well management of relationships between the translator, the interpreter, with other subjects of translation, namely, the author (text) and the target reader.

Based on the philosophical hermeneutics, scholars from the Constance School, namely, Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss, proposed Reception Theory argues that absolute interpretation of the meaning of a text does not exist because the reader plays a subjective role in the reading process. The Theory places reader to a very important position as to the interpretation of the text. In the process of translation, translators are interpreters, and are privileged readers. Their understanding and interpretation of the text determines the success of a translation work.

3. Fusion of horizons in translation by empathetic translators

Culture is the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (Newmark, 1988, p.94). As a result, culture is mostly identified by its manifestation in certain language and is rooted in the community of the language users.

3.1 Interrelation between culture and translation

Bassnet and Lefevere (2000) argue that culture and translation are interrelated and merged especially in today's globalized world, thus, cultural turn in translation theory and practice occurs as it is supposed to be. Consequently, the study of translation shall take broader issues into consideration, such as the social and cultural context, historical and conventional situation, etc.

In the case of intercultural understanding and interpretation, fusion of horizons is made by way of translating the Other into the Self. From the perspective of translation process, translators are digging the hidden meanings from the original text, making it understandable to themselves, and interpreting the message in target language. Since culture and translation is interrelated, translation not only conveys linguistic messages among languages but also makes cultures understandable among one and another. The scope of translation shall be expanded from a message transfer to the transfer of cultural connotation under specific social and historical context.

3.2 Reading conducted by the translator

During the process of reading, translators are constantly interacting with the text. According to Louise M. Rosenblatt's text *The reader, the Text, the Poem* (1978), during the act or event of reading,

A reader brings to the text his or her past experience and present personality. Under the magnetism of the ordered symbols of the text, the reader marshals his or her resources and crystallizes out from the stuff of memory, thought, and feeling a new order, a new experience, which he or she sees as poem. This becomes part of the ongoing stream of the reader's life experience, to be reflected on from any angle important to him or her as a human being.

Rosenblatt also asserts that the relationship between the reader and the text is not linear, but transactional. Accordingly, reading of a translator is an event that happens under a certain context in which the text and the translator condition each other. Within such transaction, meaning, which does not exist within the text itself or in the translator's mind, is created. Translators usually bring their own "temperament and fund of past transactions to the text and live through a process of handling new situations, new attitudes, new personalities, [and] new conflicts in value. They can reject, revise, or assimilate into the resources with which they engage their world." (Rosenblatt, 1978) In the meantime, via such transactional experience, translators consciously and unconsciously amend their own world view.

3.3 Realization of fusion of horizons by empathetic translators

The fundamental prerequisite for every valid understanding is a dialogue. "Conversation is a process of coming to an understanding. Thus it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says." (Gadamer, 2004)

In addition, understanding could not be made without the fore-meanings about the things require an understanding. The fore-meanings are the basis on which a valid interpretation is made. Cultural interpreter is bound to his situatedness and socio-cultural stances in order to project these fore-structures to the horizons of the text.

Besides, Gadamer addressed the importance of prejudgments in understanding as follows: Of course this does not mean that when we listen to someone or read a book we must forget all our fore-meanings concerning the content and all our own ideas. All that is asked is that we remain open to the meaning of the other person or text. But this openness always includes our situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it (Gadamer, 2004)).

Accordingly, Gadamer (2004) holds that reaching an understanding needs the fore-projection of meaning for the thing to be understood. In fact, the person who wants to understand the present thing is equipped "with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. Working out this fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding

what is there".

On the other hand, Gadamer also believes that misunderstanding would occur if the interpreter is distorted by his fore-meanings; however, if he could work out such fore-meanings in the process of hermeneutic movement, his prejudgments, in stead of the presumptions, would guide him into the right path to the cultural understanding and valid interpretation.

Given the fore-meaning and fore-projection of the thing to be understood, empathetic translator would constantly move from the whole to the part of the text and back to the whole. In the domain of translation, hermeneutic process of understanding finally leads to the agreement among cultural horizons. Such agreement, the interpretation of the text, takes place in the process of the interaction between the horizons until the hermeneutic understanding arrives.

As Gadamer views understanding as a matter of negotiation between one's own horizon and the text's horizon, empathetic translators, in the hermeneutical dialogue of coming to an 'agreement' about the text, would be in a better position to initiate their fore-meanings and make fore-projection and negotiate with the text, which, in turn, would offer feedbacks from text's own horizon. During such continuous process, the capacity of empathy of the translator would facilitate the interpreter's horizon growing close to the horizon of the text, and finally the fusion of horizons would be able to be fulfilled to the utmost level.

Similarly, translation involves a dialogue between the translators and the translated work, which is to be read by target readers. The ongoing negotiation would also be true between these two horizons in picture. The ultimate fusion of horizons in question is made by the three, otherwise, translation could not be completed.

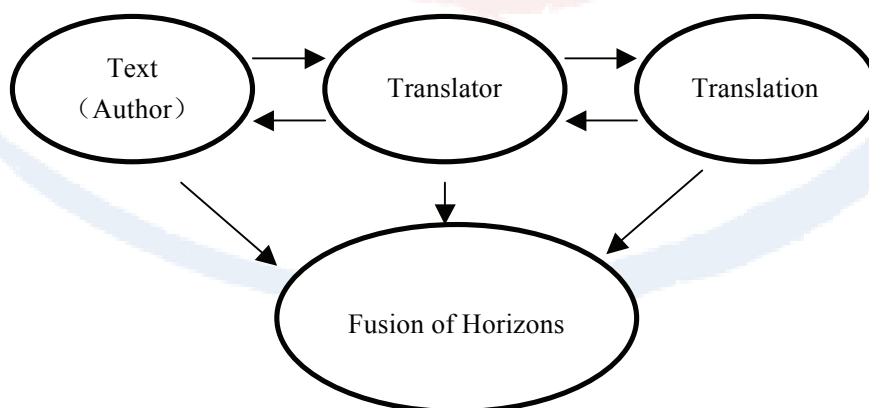


Figure 1

As is shown in figure 1., translator is positioned in the center of a translation process. As interpreter, his fore-meaning and projection towards the text from his prejudgment, is inevitable and crucial to the understanding of the text. Though such prejudgment is subjective, it is dynamic and open to change as his horizon is dynamic. Two similar processes of interaction would occur when the text is understood and when the understood text is interpreted in the target language. Empathetic translators have a better stance and are more readily to make the fusion of the horizons involved in translation.

Based on the theoretical study above, the role of cultural empathy in the process of translation mainly takes on in the job of the translator. Empathetic translators tend to shift from paradigms or stereotypes within their inherent mode of thinking more readily, show tolerance and understanding towards the thoughts and feelings of the author, hence better comprehend the author's intentions in creation; besides, empathetic translators would make considerate speculation of the target readers' aesthetic orientation and cultural acceptability, and finally, accomplish, to the maximum extent, the fusion of horizons by their empathetic perception and interpretation.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this trend of globalization, the world is in dynamic complex changes everyday. As Prof. Huntington brought out earlier, the conflict in 21st century would most frequently and violently occur from cultural rather than ideological differences, tolerance and agreement among cultures seems indispensable for the world in every aspect. Translation, as a complicated and multi-faceted activity, a socio-cultural phenomenon, presented itself as a bridge among cultures and is of great importance in cross-cultural communication. Concerning the importance of an adequate translation, Bates (1943) proposes in his book that, "nothing moves without translation . . . No change in thought or in technology spreads without the help of translation." While comparing Chinese culture to an everlasting running river, Prof. Ji Xianlin also value translation as the vital stimulus to the development and progress of Chinese civilization (cited in Xu, 2009).

Adequate and fine translation should fulfill the same function in the target readers as the original work did in the source language readers. In an increasingly interrelated world today, the predicament in translation would no longer lie in the dissimilarities of languages, but in the complexity of cultural conventions and orientations. Well management and elimination to the most extent of such predicament is the primary task for translators today.

Translation is such an open forum where every hidden cultural phenomenon shall becomes understandable by a kind hermeneutic process in which a translator equipped with his prejudices (fore-projections) approaches the text situated in other

socio-cultural and historical context, to understand and interpret it. As the nature of translation process is universal and featured the translator as the major subject who performs a vital part in understanding and interpretation of the text, development of empathetic capacity would facilitate translators in the fulfillment of fusion of horizons while conducting translation, particularly the minimization of cultural untranslatability or low readability. [Supported by the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities]

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The logo for the International Association for Applied Linguistics (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, hand-drawn style arcs. The upper arc is a light red color, and the lower arc is a light blue color, matching the text. The arcs are thick and have a slightly irregular, brush-like texture.

Influence of First Language (Mother Tongue) on Variant and Deviant Nigerian English Lexes in The Written Composition of Nigerian Undergraduates

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Abstract

Nigerian English (Nig.E) is a variety of English that has resulted from the contact of English with the indigenous languages. This research investigates the relative proportion of variant and deviant Nig.E lexes, and the influence of the first language on the written composition of Nigerian University Undergraduates. The population for the study comprises students from three Federal Universities within the three linguistic zones in Nigeria (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, a Hausa/Fulani speaking area, University of Ibadan, a Yoruba speaking area and University of Nigeria, Nsukka, an Igbo speaking area). The target population consists of 200 (300 level) students randomly selected from each of the universities. A researcher-designed instrument was used for data collection, while an intra-rater reliability assessment of a two-week interval was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The percentage is used to analyse data on Research Question 3, while the Chi-square (χ^2) is used to test the hypothesis, at 0.05 confidence level. The findings indicate the dominance of deviants in the written English of the respondents. The study shows that the first language phenomenon affects significantly the respondents' use of variant and deviant lexes as the volume of usage varies amongst the three major linguistic groups. The need to provide appropriate language improvement strategies to enhance the proficiency of Nigerian students, especially in the area of the English language vocabulary and expressions is recommended.

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INTRODUCTION

The Anglo-Nigerian trade contact is believed to have started as far back as the fifteenth century, while the English language made its debut in what is now known as Nigeria in the sixteenth century, as a foreign language (Banjo 1996). The Christian missionary activities in Southern Nigeria during the period of informal colonization, and the subsequent British colonial administrations in Nigeria, were therefore responsible for the establishment of English language in Nigeria (Awonusi 2004). Despite its colonial origin, English language is socio-linguistically very important to Nigeria. It occupies a unique place in Nigeria due to its significant role in the life of the nation; it is the language of all official businesses and a vital link between the numerous ethnic nationalities in Nigeria (Mohammed 1996). The inestimable role of English in a multilingual Nigeria is summed up thus:

Of all the heritage left behind by the British at the end of the colonial administration, probably none is more important than the English language. This is now the language of government, business and commerce, education, the mass media, literature and internal as well as external communication (Bamgbose, 1971:35).

Nigeria is diverse and regionalized just as its languages. The number of ethnic groups in Nigeria has been put at about 250 (Afolayan 1984 & 1995). It is the most populous black nation on earth, multilingual and multi-ethnic. Though linguists rarely agree on the exact number of languages spoken in the country, Nigeria is believed to be endowed with about 400 languages which are not mutually intelligible (Bamgbose 1997).

The phrase “Nigerian English” came into being about the last four decades (Ogu 1992). Nig.E is an aggregate of heterogeneous grammatical structure common to Nigerian usage, having varying pronunciation peculiarities as well as constrained usage of some lexical items (Akere 1982). Nig.E has been defined variously: The English language in its dynamism has undergone modifications in the Nigerian linguistic environment. It has been nativized, acculturated and adapted to express unaccustomed concepts and modes of interaction; the end product is the Nig.E which is at par with other world Englishes (Jowitt 1995). Nig.E is therefore, a distinct variety with a standardized syntax, unlike the ‘pidgin’ which is deviant especially in syntax. It is not bad English as some people would like to call it. Rather, it is a legitimate national variety that has evolved, over several decades, out of contact/multilingualism in the nation.

Nig.E is further fragmented into regional variations as seen in Fig. 1 below:

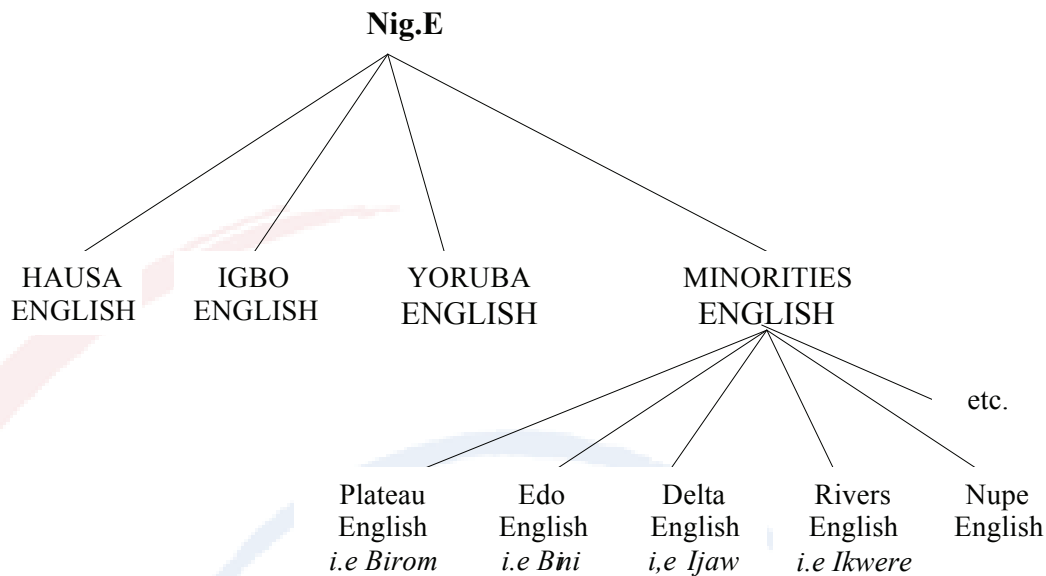


Figure 1: Ethno-linguistic Fragmentation of the English Language in Nigeria (Adapted from Ohia, 1997)

Variation and deviation are features of second language learning. Though the line between ‘variant’ and ‘deviant’ forms in Nigerian English (in non-literary domains) is increasingly unclear and almost relative, an attempt would be made to differentiate them. Certain questions are crucial to the delineation of Variants and Deviants:

- (a) At what point will an expression be a marker of Nig.E?
- (b) At what point does it become a deviant form?
- (c) When does it become a variant?

A *variant* is a non-standard English form used to fill the semantic gaps that exist between the English and Nigerian cultures. It does not violate the rule of English grammar and it is rather a depiction of innovation and creativity that brings out uniquely Nigerian ideas and cultural elements. Variants come in form of coinages, idioms, collocation, loan words and vocabulary items: such are acceptable even to native English speakers, if their meanings are explained. Examples are: *cash-madam*, *long-leg* and *town crier*. However, some variants are intelligible to native English speakers without explanation. In summary, the *variant* form is used when there is no positive alternative and thus a vacuum is created.

On the other hand is the *deviant* Nig.E usages, which are outright errors, and thus, unacceptable to native users and even the educated Nigerian users; they are the product of faulty teaching and/or learning. Deviant written expressions are manifested at the lexical, syntactic and semantic levels, e.g. *bagged a degree*, *tight friend*, *borrow me*, *I am going market*. Some deviant usages, over a long time eventually become variants, e.g., “... for the upliftment of the country” instead of “... for the uplift of the country”, *executive governor* and *garage* for motor-park. When a writer wants to make his language creative or inventive, he uses the

language unconventionally and gives his readers unexpected surprises and makes a strong impression on their minds. This kind of the creative use of language is technically called linguistic deviation; Leech (1969) calls it foregrounding e.g. *executhieves*, connoting executive fraud, and *demoncrazy*, denoting defective practice of democracy.

English language has loaned words liberally from Latin, French and other European languages. The lexicon of the English language is gradually being enriched with vocabulary from the third world. In Nigeria for instance, culturally-induced usages, like *kunu*, *agbada*, *fufu*, *dodo*, and *chewing-stick* have been accepted into Nig.E lexicon. Some lexical variants are derived from idioms, neologisms and compounding (*Cash madam*, *bottom power*, *chase*, *move with*, *not on seat*, *long leg*, *horse-tail*, *town-crier*, *bean-cake* and so on (Alo 2005).

It is assumed that ethnicity has a significant influence on the respondents' use of variant and deviant forms. Igboanusi (2002) recounts aspects of viewing Nig.E, through the linguistic process of transfer and translation.

Statement of the Problem

The target variety in Nigeria is the Standard British English (SBE), which, as a result of contact with several indigenous languages, produced the Nig.E. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, the available literatures on Nig.E have extensively dwelt on issues about definitions, identifications, classifications and the need for codification. (Banjo 1993). Most of these studies have been based on intuitive judgments rather than empirical investigation. There is not much done on the linguistic problems (if any) caused by variation and deviation in Nig.E based on empirical investigation. The influence of ethnicity on variant and deviant expressions has not received adequate empirical attention.

There is therefore the need to empirically investigate and analyse the variant and deviant Nig.E lexes inherent in the written English composition of University undergraduates on the basis of respondents' ethnic background.

Conceptual Framework

Nig.E is a domesticated variety of English spoken and written in Nigeria. Due to the differences that exist between the Nigerian languages and English, the L₂ learners encounter some basic difficulties. The variations and deviations in a language evolve from the linguistic, social, cultural, political and economic realities of a people, especially, in the language contact situations as in Nigeria. It is part of the Nigerian culture to observe *naming ceremonies* for newborn babies or say *well done* to people performing some duties. These expressions may not be intelligible to an L₁ speaker of English, but when the existing semantic and syntactic resources of the English language are incapable of serving ethno-linguistic communicative needs, new words or phrases are invented, or there will be an extension of meaning that is absent in the original language.

Research Questions

1. What are the variant Nig.E lexes in the written composition of Nigerian University undergraduates?
2. What are the deviant Nig.E lexes in the written composition of the students?
3. What is the relative proportion of “variant” and “deviant” Nig.E lexes in the written English of Nigerian University undergraduates?
4. What is the influence of ethnicity on the use of “variant” and “deviant” Nig.E expressions in the written composition of Nigerian

Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis below was generated to guide this study:

- Ho** Ethnicity has no significant influence on the use of ‘variant’ and ‘deviant’ Nig.E lexes in the written composition of Nigerian University undergraduates.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research type was adopted in this study. The target population was 300 level students from the faculties of Arts, Sciences and Education in the Federal Government owned universities within the three major linguistic zones of the country viz: (Ahmadu Bello University in the hausa/Fulani speaking area of the north; University of Ibadan, Ibadan in the Yoruba speaking area of the south west; and University of Nigeria, Nsukka in the Igbo speaking area of the east). 600 respondents (200 per institution) were randomly selected on account of faculties.

The instrument for the study consisted of a structured test. Section A of the questionnaire elicited demographic information while section B contained 5 essay topics. Each respondent wrote an essay of between 250 and 300 words. An intra-rater reliability assessment of a two-week interval was used to validate the instrument and the reliability co-efficient for the variant forms was 0.87 while that of the deviant forms was 0.88.

The instrument was administered through the General Studies (GNS) staff in the Universities. The deviant forms (DF) and Variant forms (VF) were identified per script and were compiled (see Appendices 2 & 3 for selections), while the chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 confidence level.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The Tables and Summary of Findings are given bellow:

Table 1: *Percentage Distribution of Variant and Deviant Nigerian English lexes used by respondents*

Gender	Variant Forms		Deviant Forms	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	515	48.8	1,472	55.4
Female	541	51.2	1,185	44.6
Total	1,056	100	2,657	100

Table 1 shows the dominance of deviant lexes in the usage of the respondents. A total number of 1,056 variants forms were used as against 2,657 deviant forms. Though the concern of this study is not the influence of gender on Nig.E expressions, it may not be out of place to mention the frequency of use by the male and female respondents. 48.8% variant forms were used by male respondents, while the females used 51.2%. On deviant forms, males accounted for 55.4% while 44.6% went to the females. This implied that the female respondents used more variant expressions than male. The female respondents' use of more variants than their male counterparts was an indication of their innovativeness.

Table 2: *Percentage Distribution of Variant and Deviant Nigerian English lexes based on Ethnicity*

Ethnicity	Variant Forms		Deviant Forms	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Hausa-Fulani	297	28.13	567	21.34
Igbo	331	31.34	1,023	38.50
Yoruba	428	40.53	1,067	40.16
Total	1,056	100	2,657	100

Table 2 shows that the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba speakers accounted for 28.13%; 31.34% and 40.53% variant Nig.E lexes respectively, while they also used 21.34%; 38.50% and 40.16% of the deviant Nig.E lexes respectively. This showed that the Yoruba exhibited more variant and deviant Nig.E lexes than the Igbo and the Hausa-Fulani. The Igbo respondents used more variant and deviant Nig.E lexes than the Hausa-Fulani. The findings implied that the Yoruba respondents were farther away from the norm (Standard English) than their Hausa and Igbo counterparts.

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Hypothesis (Ho): Ethnicity has no significant influence on the use of variant and deviant Nigerian English expressions in the written composition of University Undergraduates.

Table 3: *Influence of Ethnicity on Variant and Deviant Nigerian English lexes of University Undergraduates*

	Hausa/Fulani	Igbo	Yoruba	Total	df	Cal χ^2	Tab χ^2	Remark
Vf frequency	297(246)	331(385)	428(425)	1056				
Df frequency	567(618)	1023(966)	1067(1070)	2657	2	25.83	5.99	S
Total	864	1354	1495	3713				

P > 0.05

Table 3 above shows the results of the analysis of the influence of the ethnic backgrounds of respondents, on the use of variant and deviant Nig.E lexes in their written compositions.

The Chi-square result of 25.83 was significant at 0.05 alpha level, necessitating the rejection of the hypothesis. Therefore, ethnicity had a significant influence on variant and deviant forms of the respondents' written English. These findings tended to confirm the earlier findings in Table 2, indicating that the Yoruba respondents used the highest number of variant and deviant Nigerian English expressions. This could be due to the qualitative education of the British colonial administration as imparted in the northern schools by native English speakers to a limited population (children of Emirs, the powerful and the influential) as against the quantitative education anchored by Nigerian teachers in the western schools (Adejare 2005, Brownson 2007) . The rich culture of the Yorubas as depicted in the works of Yoruba literary artists like Wole Soyinka, Ola-Rotimi and others could have influenced the innovativeness of the respondents in their use of variants to fill the semantic gaps that exist between Nigerian (Yoruba) and British cultures.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. There was an avalanche of variant and deviant NigE lexes in the written composition of Nigerian undergraduates (see appendices1 &2).
2. There was dominance of deviant forms in the written composition of the respondents (see table 1).
3. It was found that ethnicity had a significant influence on the use of variant and deviant NigE lexes in the written composition of university undergraduates (see table

4. The Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba respondents used 28.13%, 31.34% and 40.53% of the variant forms, respectively; they also used 21.34%, 38.50% and 40.16% of deviant forms respectively (see table 2) .

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Discussion

The findings indicated that the corpus of Nig.E expressions used by undergraduates is dominantly marked by deviation. This further justifies the notable lack of proficiency that characterizes the usage of many Nigerian graduates (Adeniyi, 2005; Alo, 2005). Since errors can be re-taught/corrected at any educational level or age, purposeful remediation should be given serious attention.

The study found that ethnicity had a significant influence on the use of variant and deviant lexes among Nigerian university undergraduates, with the Yoruba respondents exhibiting the highest number of both variant and deviant forms. This implies that the English expressions of Yoruba students are full of both functional innovations as well as lexico-semantic errors. This finding supports the views of Hamers and Blanc (1989) and Holmes (1992) that groups within a society may be identified in terms of ethnic, cultural and linguistic characteristics.

Conclusions

1. Among the three studied ethnic groups, the Yoruba used more variant and deviant forms.
2. Ethnicity had a significant influence on variant and deviant NigE Lexes.
3. The critical factor of deviation and variation in the lexes of Nigerian undergraduates would thus, seem to be their ethnic background.
4. The implication of these inferences is that the use of variants and deviants by the respondents must have been influenced by their exposures at their formative years.

Recommendations

1. Major stakeholders in language education should take practical steps to arrest the declining standard of English.
2. Only variant forms should be codified, while deviant forms, be remedied through pedagogical attention.
3. There is the need to improve the linguistic competences and pedagogical skills of teachers of English at all levels. They should be groomed to teach the core World Standard English and the Nigerian variants.
4. Examination bodies such as WAEC and NECO should examine the norm that is taught (SBE and Nigerian variants) and not even the popular deviant forms.
5. Use of English course should emphasise remediation of common and observed errors. The large classes need to be reduced to give room for necessary individual attention and regular grading of students' language activities including provision of desired feedback.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE
Department of English, Federal College of Education, Okene

9th October, 2012.

Dear Respondent,

Questionnaire on the influence of first language on Variant and Deviant Nigerian English lexis in the Written Composition of University Undergraduates

I am a researcher studying the occurrence of variant and deviant Nigerian English lexis in the written composition of Nigerian University undergraduates.

Kindly respond honestly to this questionnaire. This effort is aimed at contributing to improved teaching of English language in Nigeria. Your candid contribution will be a major effort in achieving this goal.

Yours faithfully,

Funmi Oniemayin Ph.D

Section A (Bio data)

Instruction: kindly tick or fill in the necessary information in the spaces provided below

1. Gender: male female
2. State of Origin: _____
3. Ethnic Group: _____
4. Name of Institution: _____
5. Faculty: _____
6. Department: _____
7. Course of Study: _____
8. Year/level of Study: _____

The logo for the International Association for Language Acquisition Research (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The logo is partially enclosed by a large, light blue circular arc that starts from the bottom left and curves around the right side. A red arc is also visible on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the blue one.

Section B

Instruction: Kindly write a composition of between 250-300 words on one (1) of the following topics:

1. Your preference between military and civilian rule
2. Write a letter to your friend who lives in London telling him/her of the developments in Nigeria in the last ten years.
3. My favourite festival
4. Three aspects of our culture that fascinate me
5. Bad habits and good manners.

Thank you.

The logo for the International Association for Foreign Language Research (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, serif font. The logo is partially enclosed by a large, light blue circular arc that starts from the bottom left and curves around the right side. A smaller, light red circular arc is positioned above the 'iafor' text, partially overlapping the blue arc.

Appendix 2:

Variant Nig.E lexis Identified in the Written Composition of the Respondents

The logo for the International Association for Applied Linguistics (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, serif font. The text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two overlapping, hand-drawn style arcs. The outer arc is a light red color, and the inner arc is a light blue color, matching the text. The arcs are not perfectly closed, creating a sense of movement or a stylized 'O' shape.

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1. Agbada outfit
2. Gangan drums
3. Ijere masquerade
4. Juju music
5. Atilogwu dancers
6. Danfo drivers
7. Danshiki dress
8. Ogbanje spirit
9. Iwuye ceremony
10. Ogoro drink
11. Bush meat
12. Beer parlour
13. Introduction ceremony
14. Flowing gown
15. Okada riders (commercial bike riders)
16. Long-leg (personal influence)
17. Pure water (sachet water)
18. Second burial (commemoration ceremony)
19. Area boys (social miscreants)
20. Long throat
21. Town crier
22. Low current
23. Put to bed
24. Red cap chief
25. A big man (wealthy man)
26. Khaki men
27. Pull my self together...
28. Yellow fever (traffic warden)
29. Met his absence
30. Go-slow
31. Head gear
32. Pepper soup joint
33. To wash his electoral victory (celebrate)
34. Expo (examination malpractice)
35. Bottom power (female influence through sexual gratification)
36. A Born-again (A Christian convert)
37. Settle them after the work (offer bribe)
38. Self-contained apartments
39. Eating government money (embezzle).
40. From the bottom of my heart
41. My future partner (engaged)
42. Second-hand (clothes, cars)
43. Ready-made (clothes)
44. Family house
45. Riding flashy cars
46. Giraffing (copying in examination)
47. Business Center
48. Vibrant sectors (of the economy)
49. Face-to-face (apartment)
50. Warmest regards

Appendix 3

Deviant NigE lexes Identified in the Written Composition of the Respondents

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. To barb my hair (hair cut) | 22. Still yet (still or yet) |
| 2. To be a cog in the wheel of progress (clog) | 23. As regard to (as regards) |
| 3. I have not seen him of recent (of late) | 24. Everybody were there (was) |
| 4. Should in case (should or in case) | 25. Congratulations for your appointment (on) |
| 5. Lives in an upstairs (storey building) | 26. John as well as his wife were there (was) |
| 6. I convinced him to buy the car (persuaded) | 27. The perfume has a good smell (fragrance) |
| 7. scaled many huddles (through) | 28. The meal tasted sweet (delicious) |
| 8. wanted him to borrow me his car (lend) | 29. I use to know (used) |
| 9. For the upliftment of the country (uplift) | 30. Politicians eat money (embezzle) |
| 10. He suffered me (He made me suffer) | 31. prefer military than civilian (to) |
| 11. Stop making (a) noise | 32. I dropped from the car (alighted) |
| 12. They deceived themselves (one another/each other) | 33. She is in abroad (she is abroad) |
| 13. English alphabets (letters of the alphabet) | 34. I suppose to (I am supposed to) |
| 14. He pregnanted the girl (impregnated) | 35. We are managing (i.e making do with the situation) |
| 15. My wife has just delivered our third baby (been delivered of) | 36. The general public (the public) |
| 16. He is a very social person (sociable) | 37. Shoe maker (cobler) |
| 17. In his days, the late man was a philanthropist (in his day) | 38. Travelled to overseas (oversea) |
| 18. My car will not kick (start) | 39. He seldomly comes to class (seldom) |
| 19. The trouble shooters were arrested. (peace makers) | 40. He is a rascal student (rascally) |
| 20. Equipments (equipment) | 41. Reason why (the reason) |
| 21. So therefore (so or therefore) | 42. Return back (return) |
| | 43. Voice out (speak out) |
| | 44. In all works of life (walks) |
| | 45. My senior brother (elder) |
| | 46. Danced slowly slowly (slowly) |
| | 47. Comprises of (comprises) |
| | 48. We are tight friends (intimate) |
| | 49. He asked for you (after) |
| | 50. He was not chanced (did not have the time). |

Taboo Words Vs Social Deixis: A sociolinguistic Analysis of a play from the Theatre of Ridiculous

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0153

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Abstract

This paper is devoted to discuss two linguistic concepts and make a logical and a linguistic connection between them. These two concepts are: taboo words and honorifics of social deixis. By studying a piece of a literary text, the researcher aims at finding how taboo words used in the dialogues of this play violate the honorifics as a social deixis. The researcher finds it necessary to start with the meaning of taboo words before giving a full discussion on deixis and their types. 'Taboo', originally spelled as 'tabu', was borrowed from Polynesia into the English language (Steiner, 1967). Hutton (1942:2) describes 'taboo' as "a prohibition... an object 'taboo' or 'tabooed' is an object under a prohibition; 'to taboo' is to put under a prohibition". Adler (1978) considers 'Taboo' to be 'subject to its cultural environment. It is language specific and is not universal or timeless... .' Taboos occur in all kind of environments, from ancient to modern, and at all levels of civilization. The term deixis is "borrowed from the Greek word for pointing or indicating".(ibid.) And etymologically, deixis is a technical term (from the Greek word "dayicksis" to mean pointing via language. (Yule, 2003; 130). Therefore, the researcher finds that it is necessary to study the violation of social deixis by finding taboo words in a play written by the American playwright, Kenneth Bernard, entitled *La Justice or The Cock that Crew*.

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Introduction

This paper is devoted to discuss two linguistic concepts and make a logical and a linguistic connection between them. These two concepts are: taboo words and honorifics of social deixis. By studying a piece of a literary text, the researcher aims at finding how taboo words, used in the dialogues of this play, violate the social deixis honorifics.

The researcher finds it necessary to start with the meaning of taboo words before giving a full discussion on deixis and their types.

Taboo, originally spelled as 'tabu', was borrowed from Polynesia into the English language (Steiner, 1956). Hutton (1942:2) describes *taboo* as "a prohibition... an object 'taboo' or 'tabooed' is an object under a prohibition; 'to taboo' is to put under a prohibition". Adler (1978) considers *Taboo* to be "subject to its cultural environment. It is language specific and is not universal or timeless... ." Taboos occur in all kind of environments, from ancient to modern, and at all levels of civilization. In other words, every culture has taboos.

It is dangerous to draw critical conclusions on the basis of the use of specific words isolated from their co-text, socio-historical context, and the attention of the speaker/writer. In other words, social context affects the hearer/reader responses to a certain word which is considered taboo in its context of situation and according to the culture of the society in which it is used. And since some words in the language cannot be interpreted at all unless the physical context of the speaker is known (Yule, 2003: 99), therefore, the study of the relationship between language and context is reflected in the structures of language themselves. It is done through the phenomenon of deixis (some linguists call it *deictic*). (Levinson, 1983: 54)

The term deixis is "borrowed from the Greek word for pointing or indicating".(ibid.) And etymologically, deixis is a technical term (from the Greek word "dayicksis" to mean *pointing via language*. (Yule, 2003; 130). It is divided into five types: 1- person deixis, (pronouns: I, you, him...) 2- time deixis, (now, then, yesterday...) 3- place deixis, (here, there,...), 4- discourse deixis, (anyway, this chapter, next paragraph...) and finally 5- social deixis (types of honorifics) which will be the core of this research in all its types and will be discussed later in details. (ibid.: 89)

The main point of this paper is to find out how taboo words violate social deixis in a play selected from the theatre of the ridiculous written by the American playwright, Kenneth Bernard, entitled *La Justice or The Cock that Crew*.

The Concept of Taboo

Webster's New World College Dictionary defines taboo as "1) proscribed by society as improper or unacceptable: taboo words, 2) set apart as sacred; forbidden for general use; placed under a prohibition or bar, 3) a prohibition or interdiction of something; exclusion from use or practice, 4) the system or practice of setting things apart as sacred or forbidden for general use, 5) exclusion from social relations; ostracism, 6) to put under a taboo; prohibit or forbid, 7) to ostracize." (Agnes; Sparks 1999).

The term 'taboo' entered the English language and the whole western world when Captain James Cook introduced it after his visit to Tonga in 1771. The term is of Polynesian origin, and it meant originally the "prohibition of an action or the use of an object based on ritualistic distinctions of it either as being sacred and consecrated or as being dangerous, unclean, and accursed." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*.

In language, taboo is associated, in particular, with words and expressions which are not said and not used. This means that there are inhibitions about these words and items. Even if these words are not said, they remain in the language.

Taboo words occur in most languages and exist in different kinds of societies and are visible in different forms. In some societies, it includes prohibitions on various areas in the society, such as entering certain places, hunting or picking fruits at certain seasons, touching or talking to chiefs or certain other persons, and failing to adhere to often strict rules governing their use can lead to punishment or public shame.

Wikipedia

Taboo is also perceived as a socio-cultural phenomenon highly related to superstition, cultural conventions, and the sense of hierarchies in power. Serious results such as complete shame, illness, social banishment, or even death may be a result when one fails to observe the cultural norms of taboos. (ibid.)

Racial terms that are used with intent to offend or that are deemed offensive by their targets acquire taboo qualities. Like sexual and scatological obscenities, they are widely used in certain contexts (for example, bars, some workplaces, and football crowds) but are also socially stigmatized. The term *black* was a taboo word but in the late 1960s, it was changed from stigmatized to a neutral or highly positive term. Some political and religious groups called themselves *Black Panthers*, and *Black Muslim*. *Nigger* is another taboo word even when, it is used by African Americans who object to its use by others. Another example of taboo words is *gay*, which has a sexual context referring to homosexuals. The *incest* taboo is acknowledged in anthropology as universal. However, it is imposed differently depending on the society, and breaking it provokes different reactions depending on the society.(ibid.)

Generally, the prohibition inherent in a taboo contained the idea that breaking of taboo automatically causes some kind of trouble to the offender, for example, lack of success in hunting or fishing, sickness, or the death of a relative. Usually, these sorts of misfortunes would be considered accidents or bad luck. However, at times the person or society searched for reasons behind the misfortunes, and thus inferred that they in some way had committed a breach of taboo. *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*.

Palmer (1981:9) says that a great deal of changes occur in the historical developments of words. He considers *taboo* as one of the main causes of fast change. He defines this word as "a word used for something unpleasant" which is replaced by another and that too is again replaced later, as part of the change process that happened with certain words. He gives an example of such change in the English terms *privy*, *W.C.*, *lavatory*, *toilet*, *bathroom*, etc. and more recently, *loo*. He (ibid.: 92) says that "words become associated with certain characteristics of the items to which they refer". For example, "woman" has the connotation 'gentle' and "pig" the connotation 'dirty'. He further says that:

People will change names in order to avoid such connotations, and there is a natural process of change with taboo words. Because the word is associated with a socially distasteful subject, it becomes distasteful itself, and another word, a 'euphemism', takes its place. But the process is, of course, unending since it is essentially the object and not the word that is unpleasant.

Bloomer and Bloomer (2007: 102) consider raising taboo topics or uttering taboo words as one of face threatening acts in the process of talk management. They state that "all languages have taboo words: words which are socially proscribed and whose utterance can give offence." The offence, according to them, varies according to the context of situation- the speaker, the place where the word is uttered, the person spoken to and anyone who might overhear.

Trudgill (1974: 29) considers the values of the society can also have an effect on its language in addition to environment and social structure. The most interesting way in which this happens is through *taboo*. He defines *taboo* as "the behaviour which is believed to be supernaturally forbidden, or regarded as immoral or improper; it deals with behaviour which is prohibited or inhibited in an apparently irrational manner".(ibid.)

He (ibid.: 30) further says that "the type of words that is tabooed in a particular language will be a good reflection of at least part of the system of values and beliefs of the society in question."

Harris (1990:421) says that there is an increasing frequency of taboo terms in Britain and he predicted a gradual breakdown of the distinction between private English (taboo?) and public English, resulting in a lack of means of linguistic identification of class, level of education, and age. "We live in an age where bad language can become worrying not because it is getting worse, but, paradoxically, because it is no longer bad enough".

Sigmund Freud provided an analysis of taboo behaviors, highlighting strong unconscious motivations driving such prohibitions. In this system, described in his collections of essays, *Totem and Taboo*, Freud postulates a link between forbidden behaviors and the sanctification of objects to certain kinship groups. He also states here that the only two "universal" taboos are those of incest and patricide, which formed the eventual basis of modern society. (Cited in *Wikipedia*)

Types of Taboos

No taboo is known to be universal, but some (such as cannibalism, exposing of intimate parts, intentional homicide, and incest taboos) occur in the majority of societies. Taboos may serve many functions, and often remain in effect after the original reason behind them has expired. Some have argued that taboos therefore reveal the history of societies when other records are lacking. *Wikipedia*

Furthermore, breaking a taboo is considered to cause misfortune in different today's societies. A taboo breach does, however, carry certain consequences. Depending on

how big the taboo breach is considered, the other members of the society may punish the breaker of a taboo with isolation and ostracism. In such cases as incest, legal punishments also follow. Even if the taboo break would not cause a strong reaction from the other members, the taboo breaker him/herself may feel guilty, disgust and shame (Schröder, 1998).

Taboos exist in different kinds of societies and are visible in different forms:

- 1- Restrictions on sexual activities and relationships,
- 2- Restrictions on bodily functions,
- 3- Restrictions on the use of psychoactive drugs,
- 4- Restrictions on the state of genitalia such as (transsexual gender identity, circumcision or sex reassignment),
- 5- Exposure of body parts (ankles in the Victorian British Empire, women's hair in parts of the Middle East, nudity in the US),
- 6- Restrictions on food and drink. Various religions forbid the consumption of certain types of food. For example, Judaism prescribes a strict set of rules, called *Kashrut*, regarding what may and may not be eaten. Islam has similar laws, dividing foods into *haram* (forbidden) and *halal* (permitted). Hinduism has no specific proscriptions against eating meat, but Hindus apply the concept of "ahimsa" (non-violence) to their diet and consider vegetarianism as ideal. *Wikipedia*
- 7- Restrictions on the use of offensive language which will be the main point of this research.

The Concept of Deixis

"Nearly all sentences in natural languages encode point of view by means of deixis" (Brown & Levinson (1987: 118). Deixis has to do with the way the sentence is said to show certain aspects of its contexts of utterance including "the role of participants in the speech event and their spatio-temporal and social location". (ibid.)

Fillmore (1971b, 1974, 1975) was the first who "developed a set of distinctions that characterize the ways in which sentences are deictically anchored in this way". (Cited in ibid.)

Levinson (1983: 54) defines deixis as:

"the single most obvious way in which the relationship between language and context is reflected in the structures of languages themselves, is through the phenomenon of *deixis*. The term is borrowed from the Greek word for pointing or indicating... Essentially, deixis concerns the ways in which languages encode or grammaticalize features of the context of utterance or speech event, and thus also concerns ways in which the interpretation of utterances depends on the analysis of that context of utterance."

This deixis information is important for the interpretation of certain utterances in certain contexts of situation. The lack of such information makes the following sentence un-interpretable:

I'll be back in an hour.

Since we do not know *when* it was written, we cannot know when the writer will return. (ibid.)

What can be drawn from this example as an important point is that deixis concerns the encoding of many different aspects of the circumstances surrounding the utterance, within the utterance itself.

Levinson (ibid.: 62) refers to the existence of the traditional categories of deixis as “person, place, and time”:

- 1- Person deixis: “concerns the encoding of the role of participants in the speech event in which the utterance in question is delivered: first person is the speaker’s reference to himself, second person is the speaker’s reference to one or more addressees, and third person is the encoding of reference to persons and entities which are neither speakers nor addressees of the utterance in question” (ibid.)
- 2- Place deixis: “concerns the encoding of spatial locations relative to the location of the participants in the speech event.” (ibid.) most languages differentiate between closer and distant spatial locations. And this is grammaticalized by the use of the demonstratives *this* vs. *that* and in deixis adverb of place like *here* vs *there*.
- 3- Time deixis: “concerns the encoding of temporal points and spans relative to the time at which an utterance was spoken (or written) (ibid.). Time deixis encodes times on which the utterance is said or written. Time deixis is grammaticalized by the adverb of times like *now*, *then*, *yesterday*, *this year* but above all it is grammaticalized by tenses.

To these three traditional categories, he (ibid.) adds two more: discourse (or text) deixis and social deixis:

- 4- Discourse deixis: “has to do with the encoding of reference to portions of the unfolding discourse in which the utterance (which includes the text referring expression) is located” (ibid.). Examples of discourse deixis are the use of *that* and *this* in the following:
This is what phoneticians call creaky voice. (ibid.)
- 5- Social deixis: “concerns the encoding of social distinctions that are relative to participant-roles, particularly aspects of the social relationship holding between the speaker and addressee(s) or speaker and some referent.” (ibid.)

The existence of these categories in the communicative events is constituting the *deictic center*, as follows: 1- the central person is the speaker, 2- the central time is the time at which the speaker produces the utterance, 3- the central place is the speaker’s location at utterance time, 4- discourse centre is the point which the speaker is currently at in the production of his utterance, and 5- the social center is the speaker’s social status and rank, to which the status or rank of addressees or referents is relative.(ibid.: 64)

Among these five categories of deixis, social deixis is to be the main concern in this paper and will be elaborated in details in the next sections of this research.

Social Deixis and Honorifics

Social deixis in many languages means showing distinctions in the relative ranks between the speaker and the addressee either by using, for example, morphological system, in which case honorifics is followed to mark the level of relationship or by

using pronouns, summons forms, or vocatives, and titles of address in these languages. (ibid.: 63)

Fillmore, (1975: 76) defines social deixis as "that aspect of sentences which reflect or establish or are determined by certain realities of the social situation in which the speech act occurs".

Here Fillmore includes the theory of speech acts, thus he waters down the concept of social deixis, while (Levinson, 1983: 89) restricts this term to include the following aspects: 1- social identities of participants, or 2- the social relationship between them, or 3- the social relationship between one of them and persons and entities referred to. These aspects can be grammaticalized by using 'polite' pronouns and titles of address and other ways of showing social deixis.

Honorific System:

In linguistics, an honorific system is a grammatical or morpho-syntactic form that encodes the relative social status of the participants of the conversation. Distinct from honorific titles, linguistic honorifics convey formality, social distance, politeness, humility, deference, or respect through the choice of an alternate form such as an affix, grammatical case, change in person or number, or an entirely different lexical item. *Wikipedia*

Brown & Levinson, (1987: 178) as they discuss the strategies of negative politeness, consider the fifth strategy of negative politeness *Give deference* in which they state that difference has two sides; the first is by which the speaker (henceforth S) humbles and abases himself and second, where S raises the hearer (henceforth H) and pays him a positive face of a particular kind which satisfies H's want to be treated as superior. In both cases the H is represented as a person of higher social status than S. (ibid.)

This double sided system (either the raising of the other or the lowering of oneself) is clearly shown by the honorific systems of many languages. The honorific phenomena realize the most conspicuous intrusions of social factors into language structure, for example, the use of plural pronouns to singular addressees. This is derived from the strategy of impersonalization as it is used in tu/vous (henceforth T/V) pronoun system in order to impersonalize. (ibid.: 179)

By 'honorifics' in an extended sense we understand "the direct grammatical encodings of relative social status between participants, or between participants and persons or things referred to in the communicative event." (ibid.)

Fillmore (1975) has suggested "that honorifics are properly considered part of the deictic system of a language." So as the use of *here* and *come* are to refer to the spatial properties of the utterance, *vous* and *Professor Fillmore* are used to refer to the social properties of the participants in the event. (Cited in Brown & Levinson, 1987: 179)

After Fillmore, comes Comrie (1976) who argues that there are three main types of honorifics in the form of axes on which the system is built. He has elaborated the honorific system and distinguished between addressee and referent honorifics and made them two instead of one axis as traditional descriptors did. They are:

1- The speaker-addressee axis: the relation of speaker to hearer (addressee honorifics)

- 2- The speaker-referent axis: the relation of speaker to things or persons referred to (referent honorifics)
- 3- The speaker-bystander axis: the relation of speaker (or hearer) to ‘bystanders’ or overhearers (bystander honorifics) (Cited in Brown & Levinson, 1987: 180)

Comrie (ibid.) surprisingly considers the T/V pronoun system, which is widely used in the European languages, as a case of referent honorifics and not addressee honorifics as might be supposed. According to this system, as in all systems based on speaker-referent axis, it is not possible to express respect to H without *reference* to him or her as plurality signifies respect throughout the pronominal system of reference.

Later on, Brown & Levinson, (1987: 181) add another axis to Comrie’s honorific axes. It is, namely, the speaker-setting axis because there is a relationship between speakers and situations or in other words between social roles assumed by speaker and audience, to be:

- 4- The speaker and setting (formality levels)

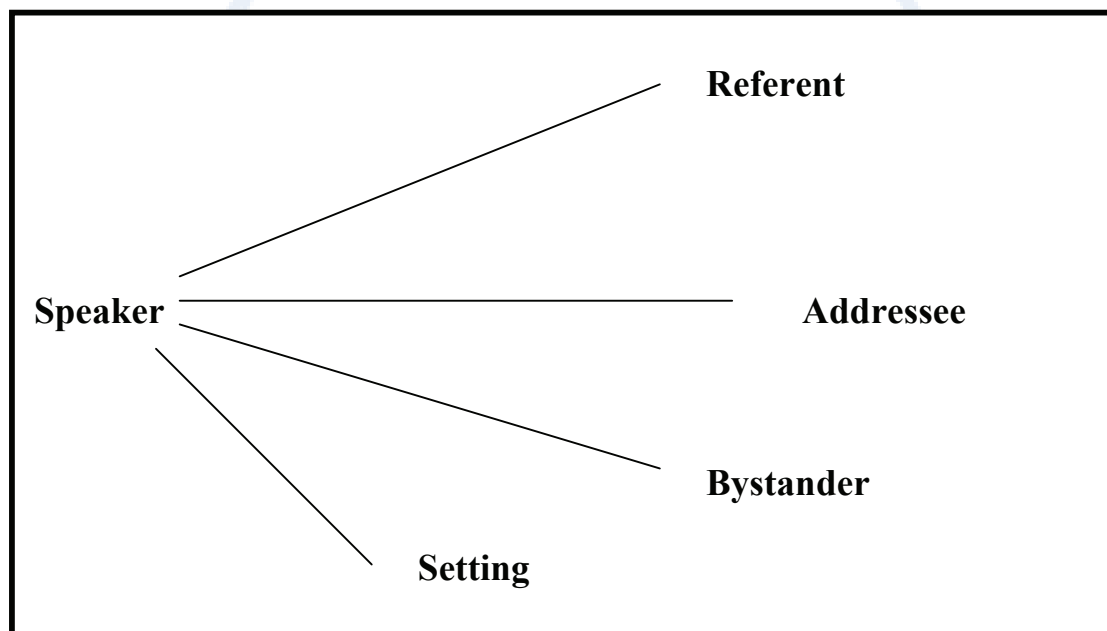


Figure (1): Honorific axes (Brown & Levinson, 1978: 181)

Referent honorifics express the status of the person being spoken about. In this type of honorific, both the referent (the person being spoken about) and the target (the person whose status is being expressed) of the honorific expression are the same. This is the most common type of honorific, and is exemplified by the T/V distinction present in many Indo-European languages, in which a different 2nd person pronoun (such as *tu* or *vous* in French) is chosen based on the relative social status of the speaker and the hearer.

Addressee honorifics express the social status of the person being spoken to (the hearer), regardless of what is being talked about. They depend on the status level of the person spoken to.

Bystander honorifics express the status of someone who is nearby, but not a participant in the conversation (the overhearer).

A fourth type, the speaker and setting honorific, does not concern the status of any participant or bystander, but the circumstances and environment in which the conversation is occurring. The classic example of this is diglossia, in which an elevated or "high form" of a language is used in situations where more formality is called for, and a vernacular or "low form" of a language is used in more casual situations. *Wikipedia*

We can talk of honorifics in 1-3 when the relation concerns relative rank or respect; but there are many other qualities of relationship that may be grammaticalized, for example, kinship relations, totemic relations, clan membership, etc. Thus the familiar T/V type of distinction in singular pronouns of address is really a referent honorific system. (Levinson, 1983:90)

While T/V systems as referent honorifics give respect directly to H, other referent honorifics can provide inferences that indirectly give respect to the addressee. For example, the second member of pairs like John/ Dr. John, eat/dine, man/gentleman, give/bestow, book/volume encode greater respect to the person, activity or thing. By using the second alternative of these words or things associated with the H means that one gives respect to H:

Example (1): We look forward very much to [dining/eating] with you.

Example (2): The library wishes to extend its thanks for your careful selection of [volume/books] from your uncle [Dr. Snuggs's/Snuggs's] bequest. (Brown & Levinson, 1987:181)

In English sentences like the following one can humble himself when serving a meal; Example (3): It's [not much,/ not elaborate,] I'm afraid, but [it'll fill our stomachs/ it's protein].

In giving a present:

Example (4): It's not much, it's just a little thing I picked up for a song in a bargain basement sale in Macy's last week, I thought maybe you could use it.

In asking for help:

Example (5): I think I must be absolutely stupid but I simply can't understand this map.

In accepting congratulations:

Example (6): Gosh, I was sure I flunked that exam. (ibid.: 185)

These four axes will be the model of this paper in analysing the data of the research.

The Data

The data of this research will be Act One of the play of Kenneth Bernard *La Justice, or The Cock That Crew* (1979). Before doing the analysis of this data, the researcher

finds it necessary to give short introduction about this playwright and his theatre. In the words of Muna Al-Alwan, "Kenneth Bernard is an American playwright, short story writer and critic. His Theatre of the Ridiculous is considered a postmodernist offshoot of the theatre of the Absurd. Ridiculous, as a theatrical form, aims at undermining dramatic and social conventions, and political, psychological, sexual and cultural categories. It makes us recognize the world as 'ridiculous,' a world full of barbarities and humiliations, a world of freaks, clowns, and victims." (Alwan, 2006: 206)

Far from being "ridiculous," this theatre is very serious and disturbing. Behind its clownish and seemingly "ridiculous" shows there lies a deep irony, a scathing criticism of American and Western systems and institutions. It is the theatre that is meant, using Bernard's words, to "genuinely offend," "disorienting rather than titillating. (ibid.)

La Justice or The Cook That Crew, chosen for this paper, is often considered Bernard's best play. In this play, the trial, a mock-judge given to weeping over his domestic troubles, a "gaudy, leering," "silly" jury who during the play "jerk and bobble and gabble like a collection of balloon-heads gees, puppets, spastics, irrepressible children" (p.66 of the play), a pompous prosecutor who tap dances, a comically ostentatious defense attorney who declares himself the saver of the world, and one comic witness in two disguises. In addition, there is a big cock in a cage that perches over the prosecutor and elicits a lot of comments about cocks. But the accused who is vilified as "devoid of morality and sentience," (p. 70 of the play) never appears, and his "vile crime" (67) is never specified. To our surprise, the guilty man, the perpetrator of the crime, is discovered to be the Judge himself. (Alwan,2006:215)

The model adopted for the analysis in this research will be the four honorific axes of (Brown & Levinson, 1978: 181) which shows the violation of the honorific system appears in the play as followings:

- 1- The speaker-referent axis: the relation of speaker to things or persons referred to (referent honorifics)
- 2- The speaker-addressee axis: the relation of speaker to hearer (addressee honorifics)
- 3- The speaker-bystander axis: the relation of speaker (or hearer) to 'bystanders' or over hearers (bystander honorifics)
- 4- The speaker and setting (formality levels)

The scenes' description in this play and the dialogues taking place between the actors show a great deal of violation of honorifics by utilizing linguistic taboos and by violating the theatre norms as well. The researcher chooses Act One only, as a sample, to analyse the taboo words used as means of flouting the social honorifics in all its types. It is worth mentioning here that the word (Jury) is used sometimes as a singular and sometimes as a plural. This inconsistency reflects the chaotic appearance of the court and its informality in all its settings and behaviour of the staff member in the court, in consequently, it reflects the abnormality of social conventions. It makes us recognize the world as 'ridiculous,' a world full of barbarities and humiliations.

Settings	Type of honorifics' violation	Description of taboos
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<p>(1) Half light in theater. The JUDGE steps out before the curtain or on stage in street clothes. As he recites, he dresses himself in his court robes, wig, etc. (p.63)</p>	<p>Axis no. 4: Setting honorifics</p>	<p>The court, symbol of law and order is degraded as the judge appears in street clothes and he dresses himself on the stage as if he were at home. This means he violates the setting honorific and the theatre norms.</p>
<p>Dear friends and flowers of the stage, I greet you in a barbarous age. (p.63)</p>	<p>Axis no. 1: referent honorifics</p>	<p>The relation of speaker to things or persons referred to. The speaker here is referring to the age they live in as a barbarous age.</p>
<p>There, now. I'm dressed. I've had my say; so let's get on with this darned play. (p. 63)</p>	<p>Axis no. 1: referent honorifics</p>	<p>In this sentence the speaker shows his relation to things referred to, i.e. the play.</p>
<p>From behind the audience the people of the play enter, in reverse order of importance. One of them carries a cage with a cock in it. (p. 65)</p>	<p>Axis no. 4: setting honorifics</p>	<p>The circumstances and environment in which the conversation is occurring does not permit such an appearance of one of the people of the play carrying a cage with a cock. The appearance of the cock in the court is a way of degrading the court. The cock perches over judge and prosecutor alike.</p>
<p>The jury box bursts open, and the jury's heads and torsos spill over and out. They are closely bunched, rather like a cluster of over-bright flowers...they are in white-face, with bright red lips and cheeks, have elaborate hair styles, and wear ballroom finery at least a century out of date. Throughout the play they jerk and bobble and gabble like a collection of e.g. balloon-heads, gees, puppets, spastics, irrepressible children. They have fans, handkerchiefs, decanters and goblets, etc. During the play they take snuff, spray perfume, smoke from long-</p>	<p>Axis no. 4: setting honorifics</p>	<p>The circumstances and environment of the court and the jury do not permit such appearance of the jury members. This court is a formal place for the jury to appear in a formal appearance not like clowns with dandy clothes and coloured faces dancing and spilling over and out. The court, as it is a symbol of law and order, is grotesquely degraded.</p>

stemmed holders, clean lorgnettes, leer, stare, and make faces at the cast and Audience, read newspapers, drink wine and eat delicacies... (p. 65-66)		
Jury: Why, look at that cock! The size of it! Where! I can't see any cock. My dear, you never see cock. [They laugh] At all, at all. Do you have a bobby pin dear? He must be guilty. Who? Have you no imagination? Of course! It's written all over his face! [They laugh]. (p. 66)	Axis no. 4: setting honorifics	As it is known that nobody can speak in the court while it is in session unless the judge permits that. But here there is a long ironic conversation taking place between the jury members without paying any attention to the court formalities. They keep on talking and laughing.
Jury: But of course, darling! We must have order. It's <i>essential</i> . Order is the visible paradigm of civilization. I feel it in every arthritic bone. [Shushing the others, e.g. tapping their noses with fan] Tut! Tut! Come on, now, you silly ganders. Tut, tut [They shush each other. Silent] (p. 66-67)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics Axis no. 4: setting honorifics	Conventionally, it is not common to use the word 'darling' while addressing someone in a formal situation. Here, the word is used ironically as they refer to the word 'order' ironically too. The second violation in this speech is the setting honorifics. They behave by their own selves and try to hush others. Such action should be performed by the judge only. By this, they clearly breach the setting honorifics.
Jury: [Bursting out laughing] Oh, bravo! Simply marvelous! So well educated! And do look at his cock! Oh, at last a cock I can see. [They laugh again, The JUDGE gavels] (p. 67)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics Axis no. 4: setting honorifics	As the prosecutor stands and starts saying his speech, the jury interrupts him by these words. He says nothing but few words then the jury breaches the norms and start laughing and praising him. This behaviour violates the court norms and violate addressee honorifics as they are making fun of the speaker.
Defense: [Rising] objection, your honor! Jury: <i>You</i> object? <i>Who</i> , pray	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	The jury shows disrespect to the defense and by this behaviour they show

tell, are you? Your clothes are a positive illumination of your low, <i>low</i> connections, I'm sure. (p. 69)		impoliteness and violate the addressee honorifics.
Jury: Answer, you dummy . I think he's terribly presumptuous . <i>I think he's cute.</i> But so savage . [they giggle. The judge gavel]. (p.71-72)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	Again the jury shows impolite behaviour towards the prosecutor as they are in a court and they must follow the norms in effect in this environment.
Jury: ...stepped in a pile of shit ... stop that, you pig . (p. 73)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	The jury addresses the prosecutor with these words as a way of humiliating and underestimating him.
Jury: [Cackling] your Eminence.... Old cabbage soup , he used to be called, when he played rugby. Gorgeous. (p. 74)	Axis no.2: addressee honorifics	Here the jury is trying to belittle the defense by describing him as an old cabbage soup.
Defense: In all situations in life there is— Jury: A negligible factor. Defense: — the accused — Jury: Bravo. Defense: — and the accuser, the tormented— Jury: Very deep. Defense: —and his tormentor— Jury: Sainted sassefras! Defense: [Pointing] —the up and the down. (p. 74-75)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	In this segmented dialogue, the jury interrupts the defense several times and do not let him continue his speech. This shows misbehavior of the jury towards the defense as they violate the conversation's turn taking strategies.
Defense Assistant: Look! Oh, Look! Turn not your head From this vision of you dead; We mortals must the mirror seek That through the veil will let us peek. Jury: What utter horse shit . (p. 76)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	The Jury makes fun of the defense assistant speech. He is trying to show up his ability to tell sonnets by heart but they describe this piece of poetry as (shit)
Defense: Hear me! [He sings something indefinable, operatic] Hear my song! [He sings] Jury: Oh, my gut . Defense: Hear the sweetness of it, the beauty, the strength! [He sings] (p. 76-77)	Axis no. 4: setting honorifics Axis no. 1: referent honorifics	It is not expected to hear a defense singing in the court room. This is far away from his job. So, it is considered a breaching of the court norms. Besides, the word (gut) shows disrespect to the

		defense deed and it may be used to describe the song.
Daughter: Papa. Are you really our father? (p. 77)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	A daughter asking her father in this way seems awful. She suspects him and wondering if he is her father or not is not eligible.
Daughter: A true father would not scream at us like that. Who are these men you send here every day? (p. 77-78)	Axis no.2: addressee honorifics	Still it is not acceptable to hear a daughter talking to her father in this rude way. She makes him feels offended by telling him that there are too many men come to his house while he is outside.
Judge: [Nervously to his wife] What men? What men is she talking about that I send here every day? Wife: Bah. Forget the men, husband. What about the crockery? Son: The window cleaner, Papa. Judge: What? The window cleaner? Daughter: [Lewdly] The milk man, Papa. Judge: Milk man?[To wife] What do they mean? Are they crazy? Who are these people? Wife: The milk man must be paid, no? (p. 78)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	The wife tries to give her husband a hint that she betrays him with the milk man by saying that the milk man must be paid for the milk he brings every day for her children as the husband cannot stand this consumption of milk, as he says.
Son: Papa, we must grow. Judge: you grow too big! Everything grows too big! I am surrounded by pigs . [He pauses, collects himself]. (p. 78)	Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	The judge here describes his son as a pig. This word denotes dirtiness and greediness if it is said to a human being.
Judge: Hah, That is the question, is it not? Who conspires against whom? Oh, if we only knew. If only I knew. Some of them are swine . (p. 79)	Axis no. 1: referent honorifics	He is referring to the prosecutor, the defense and the jury. He says that all those conspire against each other. He describes them as <i>swine</i> . This word is usually used to denote dirtiness and filthiness.
Daughter: Papa. There is a boy at the school who wants	Axis no. 2: setting honorifics	A daughter telling her father such things is

<p>to study with me. Daughter: I don't think this boy wants really to study. (p. 79) Daughter: Papa. I do not trust this boy. He is always licking his lips and moving his fingers. But he is very persistent. My friend Helga says that he wants something from inside my pants. Papa. What do you think he wants? (p. 80) Note: all these questions made by the daughter while the father is busy with his wife and he does not pay attention to his daughter's speech.</p>		<p>considered a linguistic taboo. The daughter is neither care for her father's reputation nor for the family setting in which she should be more polite and respect others sharing her the dinner.</p>
<p>Judge: [To wife] Listen. We have time. Come into the bedroom with me. Wife: but the bed is made. Judge: [Grabbing his wife's leg] We can do it on the floor. Forget the bed. Wife: husband, the children are watching. Judge: [Moving his hand up her leg] We can shut the door. We can shut the door, yes? (p. 79) Judge: [Urgently] Nadia. My suit is already wrinkled. Come with me into the bedroom. We will have an Anschluss, yes? A blitzkrieg? A one-two-three boom boom? Wife: no! Tonight. Tonight I will go with you to the bedroom. Judge: [laughing] You promise? Wife: I give you my word.</p>	<p>Axis no. 4: setting honorifics</p>	<p>This long conversation between the judge and his wife takes place in front of their children. They do not care for their presence and do not mind to speak frankly about their bed adventures in front of their little son and daughter. The setting does not permit to have such a critical matter which should be sacred and secret.</p>

<p>Judge: In the bed? We will do it in the bed? (p. 81)</p>		
<p>Jury: Stop! My god, stop! I'll never bear it! I'm gagged and agog! Good heavens. How we do earn our keep. [pause] Well. I certainly am flattered a jackass, dear. Nasty! Brute! [they fight briefly, until the others break it up] (p. 83)</p>	<p>Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics</p>	<p>The jury is using all these adjectives to personalize the judge. It is abnormal to hear such filthy words to be used in the court between the high ranking staff member of the court.</p>
<p>Jury: He's crazy Buggers Absolutely. (p. 83)</p>	<p>Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics</p>	<p>The jury again uses dirty words to describe the judge. All these words are, linguistically, taboo words. They show disrespect of the jury towards the judge.</p>
<p>Jury: How disagreeable, It's a court of law, stupid, not a police station. Jew: Hey, you got a face just like an egg. You want a pill? (p. 84)</p>	<p>Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics</p>	<p>The Jew, as a witness, appears in the court in an abnormal appearance which is considered against the formal status of the court. The jury again addresses him in a rude way. And the Jew shows his vulgarity in his answer.</p>
<p>Jury: Oh, dear. That cock again. So naked. And red Dis-gusting. Judge: Mr. Prosecutor, is this...relevant. The bench confesses a certain...curiosity. Where...is this leading us? – and how soon? How soon?[He looks around anxiously] ... Prosecutor: Your honor, the cock is essential. Jury: How true. A frank statement. (p. 87)</p>	<p>Axis. No. 1: referent honorifics</p>	<p>The cock in this play is used to denote sensual meaning. It refers to the sexual power of the judge.</p>
<p>Judge: [To the prosecutor] Can the Prosecutor simulate?—I'm afraid the dawn is long since passed.</p>	<p>Axis no. 4: setting honorifics</p>	<p>It is not supposed for the prosecutor to behave in such a scornful way and mocking himself in front of the court staff member</p>

..... Prosecutor: [Simulating] Puk. Puk. Puk. Puk. Puk! (p. 88)		in this formal setting. It is considered a setting taboo.
Judge: Milk man? Milk? That sounds so familiar. [clutching his chest]—Oh, how I suffer! Why? Why!—Nadia?—Nadia?...What is it about milk— [His wife enters, her arms full of shoes, etc,] Nadia, have you ever heard of a Jew milk man?—What are you doing? Wife: I am cleaning out the closet. Judge:[petulantly] Damn you! I don't want the closet cleaned. Wife: [Coldly] And are you going to be on the bottom, husband, yes? (p. 90)	Axis no. 4: setting honorifics. Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	All these private talks which be done between husband and wife in their bed room. The setting honorifics are completely vanished. The judge calls his wife (damn) and this is a way of offending others.
Daughter: Papa. I'm getting older. I do understand. Will I die soon? I know what is in my pants ? [They laugh together] Son: papa. What is in her pants ? Judge: No, no, no, You're too young. But soon...(p. 95)	Axis no. 4: setting honorifics And Axis no. 2: addressee honorifics	The daughter speaks to her father in a disrespectful way during the family meal and she doesn't show some respect to her father as a father who should not hear such words from her little daughter.

Results and Conclusion

The analysis of Act One of the play shows that there are many examples of flouting social deixis in its four axes.

The stances of breaching social deixis will be summerized in the following table:

No	Referent	Addressee	Bystander	Setting
1	5	17	Nil	12

Looking at the results, the researcher finds violation of addressee honorifics occurs seventeen times, setting honorifics occurs twelve times, of the and of referent honorifics occurs five times while the bystander honorifics are not found.

From these results, we can infer that people of the play use too many taboo words in addressing each other, and that is clear from the higher frequency of the addressee honorifics violation shown in the above table. Then the participants in this play show disrespect to the setting of the play. A court should be a place where law and order predominate and the people involved appeared in a far way of appearance in this formal setting.

The purpose behind such attitude of the people involved in this play is that Bernard, the play writer, aims at showing the truth about the world we live in, a world of arbitrary ruthless powers, of butchers and helpless victims. The ultimate objective of Bernard's theatre of *The Ridiculous* is to face the butchers with an "uncompromising look," "to laugh at them, mock them, struggle with them, perhaps get nicked by them, but not succumb." (*Clown At Wall*145) (Cited in Alwan, 2006:206)

Far from being "ridiculous," this theatre is very serious and disturbing. Behind its clownish and seemingly "ridiculous" shows there lies a deep irony, a scathing criticism of American and Western systems and institutions. In his plays, Bernard seems to say that our life is a cruel carnival, a brutal show, ending in barbarous violence. (ibid.:221)

These results give us the impression that these social deixis represented by the four axes of honorifics can be flouted and violated by taboo words in a literary discourse exactly as it happens in our everyday language.

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*Impediments Encountered in Developing Writing skills of the undergraduates of
University of Jaffna*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine whether L1 had an impact on the ESL (English as a Second Language) writings of the undergraduates of university of Jaffna. Students writing in a second language are also faced with number of problems such as their L1, social and cognitive challenges related to second language acquisition. Most of the scholars in the fields of language learning and teaching give evidence for the L1-L2 comparison by the learners when they confronted with difficult grammatical forms and it is natural for the learners. Since this comparison is implicit, it may result in the formation of wrong rules due to an incomplete L2 knowledge. In this study, an investigation was made to identify the impact of L1 on ESL writings of the undergraduates of the University of Jaffna. The study involved qualitative methods of data collection. The data collected from the subjects' responses were analyzed, and the findings were derived. The findings show that there are number of problems which are found to have impact on the learners' ESL writings. Evidence provided by the written samples suggests that L1 played a role in the process of beginning ESL learners' writing in English. Understanding linguistic differences between students' L1 and English may help the learners reduce the impact of L1. It can be argued that a focus on the writing process as a pedagogical tool is only appropriate for second language learners if attention is given to linguistic development, and if learners are able to get sufficient and effective feedback with regard to their errors in writing.

Key Words: - . L1 (Mother Tongue), ESL writing, L1-L2 comparison, Difficult Grammatical Forms Linguistic differences.

Introduction

All language learners can develop different sorts of linguistic knowledge. They can develop a Chomsky-competence and /or universal intuitions about their first language or about a foreign language that they are learning. There is a second sort of linguistic knowledge people can have. They can develop meta-cognitions of their personal versions of their mother tongue (MT) and the second or foreign language quite separately. Still, there is another sort of knowledge to take into account and that is the knowledge of relationships holding between one's languages; it can be the same thing as cross-linguistic awareness in the process of learning another language. All these three kinds of linguistic knowledge could be right or wrong. We can see positive or negative L1 transfer within L2 learners.

For adult learners, learning a foreign language is a complex process. The confusion of language transfer and mother tongue interference are more common for the beginning of EFL learners. Beginning English learners will be benefited if provided with systematic and well-designed grammar instruction in connection with their first language, through which language differences were indicated. Employing technology to facilitate language instruction is educator's new responsibility in today's technological age to bring about greater learning. The various types of views on the teaching as well as the learning of a second language have been given below.

According to Lado, (1957), the view of grammar as grammatical structure opens the way to a comparison of the grammatical structure of the foreign language with that of native language to discover the problems of the student in learning the foreign language. The results of such comparison tell us what we should test and what we should not test, it helps us devise test items and techniques that also look quite acceptable from a commonsense point of view, and this is the important consideration we can actually test the control of the language on the part of the student.

Vildomec (1963) proposes that the influence of the mother tongue on the learners' language may also vary according to the sociolinguistic situation. He observes that the interference between the bilingual's languages is generally on the productive rather than the receptive side. People often report instances of intrusion of elements of their mother tongue in speech production but rarely in their understanding of another language.

Background of the study

Writing is a complex process even in the first language. It is even more complicated to write in a foreign language. Many studies indicate that, for ESL students, there tends to be interference from their first language in the process of writing in English (Chen & Huang, 2003; Lado, 1957). A better understanding of the L1 influence in the process of ESL writing will help teachers know students' difficulties in learning English. It will also aid in the adoption of appropriate teaching strategies to help beginning ESL students learn English.

The language contact may cause a structural change in one or both of the languages concerned and this tendency of changing the structure is termed as interference

(Suntharesan, 2002). In other words, the violation of the norms of any of the languages involved by the individual in his speech as a result of language contact is known as interference. Interference may result into rearrangement of the definite organized structure of a language from the introduction of foreign elements such as phonemic system, morphology and syntax and certain part of vocabulary.

The learning problems and the amount of interference depend on similarities of the language in contact. Accordingly the extent of interference may vary whereas the mechanism of interference remains the same between any languages.

The need for contrastive study

In Sri Lanka, since the introduction of English to the school curriculum as a second language in the early 1950s, the Direct Method followed by Grammar-Translation Method was used for teaching English. The Direct Method teaches the target language in the target language context while the Grammar-Translation Method teaches the target language in the students' mother tongue. However, experience shows that these methods have not been successful in improving English proficiency of Sri Lankan school students (Karunaratne, 1993). This view is further supported by the study on the students' proficiency in English at tertiary level (Sunthareswaran, 1998). His findings show that at the tertiary level in Jaffna, students learning English as a second language do not have equal proficiency in the English language skills, i.e. as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

At this juncture, it has been noticed that teachers of English language ask themselves why students are unable to excel in learning English and why they struggle or ignore it. Teaching English language to the students cannot be considered an easy task. Every teacher of English language finds teaching English a pedagogically strenuous task.

Notwithstanding enough serious efforts have been taken in all aspects of the educational setup, still there are some bottlenecks in the road of learning English language. There are host of factors, which come into play in second language learning. The factors such as teacher's competence, motivation and attitude of learners, teaching methods, instructional materials, the structural similarities and differences between L1 and L2 etc, can be the variables that can significantly affect second language learning and teaching.

One of the common and accepted approaches to language teaching is through contrastive method. In other words, the language specific features of both mother tongue of the learner and the second languages are studied thoroughly before and an attempt is made to teach the second language and to prepare instructional materials for second language teaching. The contrastive analysis emphasizes the influences of the mother tongue in learning a second language in phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. Examination of the differences between the first and second languages helps to predict the possible errors that can be made by L2 learners (Krishnaswamy, Verma, Naharajan 1992).

Morphosyntactic features of English and Tamil for contrastive study

The case for contrastive analysis of morphosyntactic features of English and Tamil is worth attempting. The learners of English have a great deal of problems in modifying one pattern into another due to the differences, which are too many between English and Tamil. The sense is conveyed not only by the dictionary meanings of words, but also by their arrangement in their patterns. A sentence is not just a linear string of words; it is a sequence grouped in a particular way. The way groupings are ordered is important for understanding the sense. Each linguistic community has its own rules and procedures for transforming its “inner concepts” into “outside manifestations” as speech or writing. Selection of restriction features is to be observed for all natural languages. In case of syntactic feature in the languages, a category, for example, English “preposition” can be used in Tamil as “postposition”. While the former occurs before nouns, the latter is used after nouns in sentence.

Literature Review

Contact and Interference

Suntharesan. (2002) has quoted that the language contact may cause a structural change in one or both of the languages concerned and this tendency of changing the structure is termed as interference. In other words, the violation of the norms of any of the languages involved by the individual in his speech as a result of language contact is known as interference. Interference may result into rearrangement of the definite organized structure of a language from the introduction of foreign elements such as phonemic system, morphology and syntax and certain part of vocabulary.

The learning problems and the amount of interference depend on similarities of the language in contact. Accordingly the extent of interference may vary whereas the mechanism of interference remains the same between any languages.

The comments of Agesthalingam (1966) on the difficulties of a Tamil student of ESL are presented below.

“Another kind of problem that one has to encounter while teaching English to Tamil students is due to the difference in the structure of Tamil and English. While learning a second language in adolescence and in adulthood it is very difficult to get rid of the influence of the structure of one’s own mother tongue. We try to find out one to one correspondence between the target language and the mother tongue.” (p.506)

A Tamil student of ESL may form grammatically wrong sentences by using a wrong preposition. For example, he may construct a sentence, “Mohan comes to school in bus.” instead of the correct form, “Mohan comes to school by bus.” This wrong sentence construction is the result of the student’s positive transfer from Tamil into English. In Tamil, the form, “Mohan paaTacaalaikku pasil vatukiraan” (Mohan comes to school by bus). is grammatically correct. Here in this sentence, the inflection ‘-il’ occurs with the word, ‘pas’ which is an English borrowing in Tamil, meaning ‘bus’. The direct and usual English prepositional equivalent of this inflection ‘-il’ is ‘in’.

Similarly, in another instance “I am drawing a picture by a pencil.” Here again, the Tamil –aal as found in the Tamil sentence, “naan pencilaal otu paTam vataikireen.” (I am drawing a picture with a pencil.) is replaced by the English ‘by’.

Wrong selection of preposition is caused by generalization also.

e.g. She goes to the office by bicycle. (Instead of “She goes to the office on bicycle.)

The students’ familiarity with the sentences such as, “He goes to school by bus” etc. makes him generalize the prepositional rule in this manner.

Gunasekara. (2000) has investigated the morphosyntactic errors of fluent speakers of English in Sri Lanka and her study has yielded clues on the influence of Sinhala and Tamil syntactic structures on Sri Lankan English. She has identified the problematic areas of the tendency to pluralize collective or mass nouns, the problem with subject-verb agreement, the overuse of prepositions, the active passive confusion etc.

Some features of the system of Sri Lankan English

Suntharesan. (2002) has quoted some features of the system of Sri Lankan English in grammar, collocation, lexis and phonology.

In Grammar, the interference of the first Language leads to deviation in Sri Lankan English. The mother tongue interference is identifiable in interrogative sentences and tag questions. There are instances when the position of subject and auxiliary verb is not changed

E.g. (1). Where you are going?
(2). When he is returning?

In English, a tag question is formed by a statement and an attached tag. An affirmative main clause has a negative tag and a negative main clause has an affirmative tag. This rule is often neglected and tag questions are structured in a wrong manner in Sri Lankan English.

E.g.:- He is bathing, isn’t it?
(instead of “isn’t he?”)

Sivagurunathan. (1993) has also quoted the mother tongue (L1) interference in learning English. When we learn a second language it is likely to be influenced by our mother tongue. If the target language is a foreign language and if there are no similarities between the target language and the mother tongue, then, there is all the likelihood of inference of the mother tongue in the target language. Weinreich (1979) defines “interference” as follows:-

“Those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language, i.e. as a result of language contact will be referred to as interference phenomena”

In the case of learning of English by Tamil students, the target language does not belong to the Dravidian family of language. It belongs to the indo-European family and both languages have different phonological, morphological and syntactic systems. Hence, the target language bound to be interfered with.

Most of the Tamil students have difficulties in constructing English sentences. The syntactic structure and the grammar are found to be influenced by their mother tongue. Thiru Kandaiah (as cited in Sivagurunathan, 1993) has given the following example for Lankan English (English that is influenced by the native language, Tamil).

- 1) Five years his brother spent on the course.
- 2) The talk is at what time?
- 3) Today no news paper
- 4) Straight away shall I do it?
- 5) All the books the boy collected and went home.
- 6) Mangoes he likes very much.
- 7) For the smell the rats must have gone. (P. 113)

The students mostly formulate the structure in Tamil and construct English sentences. They adopt mostly the Tamil word-order for English too which is said to be Sri Lankan English.

Shanmugas. (1982) has investigated the concord between subject and predicate in English and Tamil sentences. Concord is found to be essential when words are arranged as constituents. In English, concord is formed on the basis of number between subject and predicate. For example, the singular, subject 'He' takes the singular verb 'runs' but the plural subject 'they' takes the plural verb 'run'. This type of concord is found only in the present. At the same time, there is no concord between the subject and predicate in the past tense. For example,

He ran.

They ran.

On the other hand, In Tamil, the concord is formed on the basis of grammatical categories such as animate/ inanimate, gender, number etc.

- e.g. ava□ van□aal. 'She came' [aval-animate, female, 3rd person singular]
 avan van□aan. 'He came' [avan- animate, male, 3rd person singular]
 a□u van□a□u 'It came' [a□u- inanimate, 3rd person singular]

The gender classification found in nouns as subjects has concord with the gender classification formed in verbs as predicate in Tamil. This feature is absent in Sinhala and English.

Rationale for the study

The present study is primarily intended to identify the impediments the students of ESL [English as A Second Language] whose first language is Tamil, encounter while learning the ESL and to suggest solutions to the learning problem. Since the researcher is a lecturer in English in the University of Jaffna where Tamil students are following degree programme it is hopefully assumed that he will be able to personally observe the attitude and classroom behavior of students. The objective of the study is to identify the learning difficulties of students of ESL in relation with linguistics and social issues and to suggest remedies to overcome such problems so as to enable them to achieve a good proficiency in English.

Statement of the Problem

A grammar is an attempt to expose the structures of the sentences of a language. In order to communicate meaningfully, the learner must account for all and only the grammatical sentences of the language. Most of the scholars in the fields of language learning and teaching assert that, when confronted with difficult grammatical forms, learners often conduct an L1 – L2 comparison and this comparison is implicit, it may result in the formation of wrong rules due to an incomplete L2 knowledge (Selinker, 1992; Robinson 1995). It provides a kind of interlingual comparison on the basis of contrastive analysis database. Such an approach may facilitate the learning process especially if the structures are difficult with respect to the learners' L1.

The most important objective in contrastive analysis is the notion of difficulty based on the difference of the native language patterns. The deviant realizations of the target language system in the language behaviour of the learner are ascribed to the mother tongue interference. The areas of difficulty experienced by the learners are also known as "blind spots." Such problem obtained by contrastive studies should be tested against the actual performance of the learners with a different language background.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

To attempt to identify, describe and categorize errors in English essay writing of Sinhala speaking undergraduates and thereby make efforts minimize the difficulties encountered by them.

Hypotheses

Negative L1 transfer/interference is the major cause for errors in the English writings of Tamil speaking undergraduates.

Negative L1 transfer/interference is not the major cause for errors in the English writings of Tamil speaking undergraduates.

Research Methodology

The subjects in the research were 150 students in the second year. The subjects were all Tamil speakers of English. They were selected randomly from a group of male and female students studying in the Faculty of Arts and the faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna. At the very first stage of the research, it was intended to estimate the general status of the students for determining the possible areas of difficulty as to grammatical knowledge. In order to accomplish this task, three different instruments were utilized.

First, a questionnaire was distributed among the 100 students in order to confirm the results. In this questionnaire, the students had been asked to verify in which areas of grammatical structures, they had difficulty in learning and internalizing the rules.

A second task was also done in order to confirm the results. A validated General English proficiency test was administered to the 50 students randomly selected from the same faculties of University of Jaffna in order to further confirm the results

derived from the questionnaire. The test involved six items consisting of 10 questions in each item.

A third task was carried out through the informal conversations with the students, the study of their answer scripts, observations and the discussions with the Lectures/Instructors in English Language.

Findings

Data analyzed from the study of questionnaire distributed to the students shows that the difference between Tamil and English is greater (see figure 1) when compared with sameness.

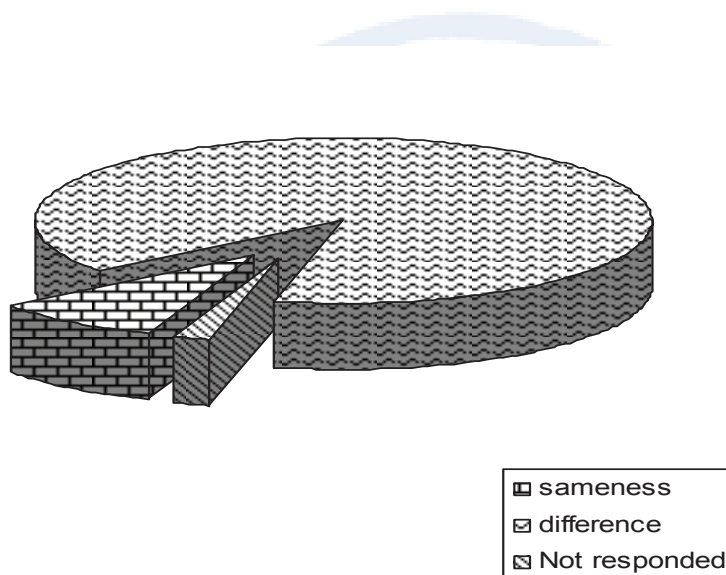


Fig. 1 Difference and sameness between English and Tamil grammatical features

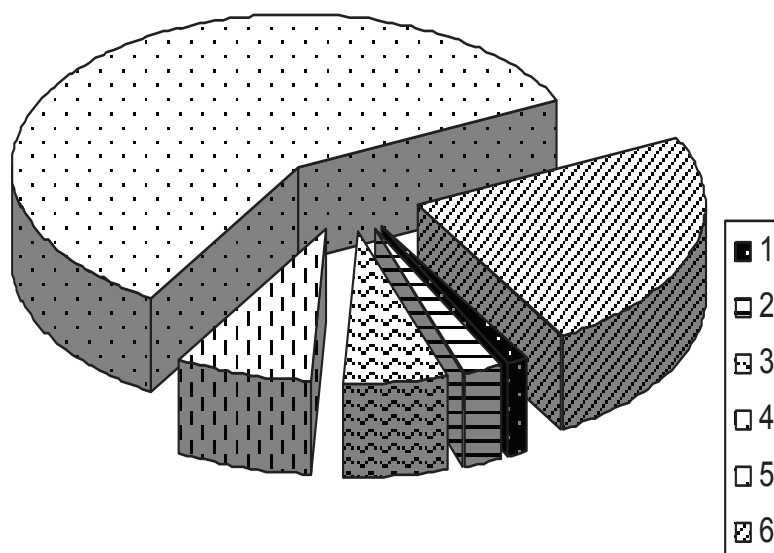
At the same time, the table given below shows the percentage of the student’s inability in writing in their day to day situation due to various reasons.

Student samples 100	
Students’ ability to write in English language in their day-to-day situation.	
Able to write in English language.	Unable to write in English language
12%	88%

Table 1. SS’ behavioral results to write in English language in their day-to-day life. In response to the item of the questionnaire (if no, what is the reason?) out of 88% of the students, 52% of the students say that they have to think something in Tamil and then translate it into English.

Student Samples 100					
Reasons for students' inability to write in English language					
Makes Mistakes in using conjunctions	have difficulties in using adjectives and adverbs	makes mistakes in using prepositions	Make mistakes in using correct tense	Think something in Tamil as their translate into English	All the above
1%	2%	5%	7%	52%	21%

Table 2. SS' behavioral results to the reasons for the inability to write in English language in their day-to-day life.



Reasons for students' inability to use the language

1. Make mistakes in using conjunctions.
2. Have difficulties in using adjectives and adverbs.
3. Make mistakes in using prepositions
4. Make mistakes in using correct tense
5. All the above.
6. Think something in Tamil then translate it into English.

Analysis of common errors of students of ESL

To collect data to study the specific features of common errors prevalent among students of ESL and to confirm the data collected from the questionnaire, a model question paper was designed and it was distributed to randomly selected group of 50 students who were from among the 150 respondents of the self-administered

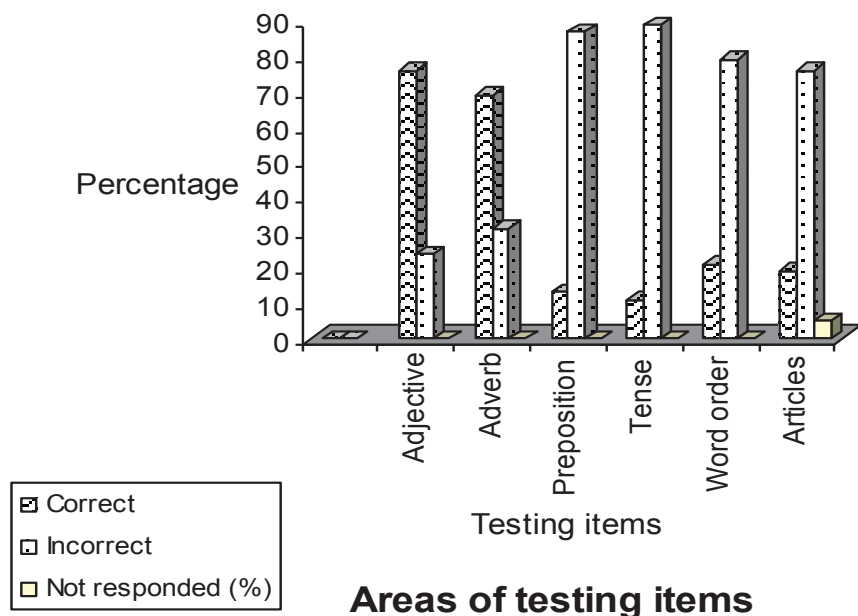
questionnaire including 75 students from the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce and 75 students from the Faculty of Arts in the 2nd year, of the University of Jaffna. The researcher revealed the purpose of this test to the students to assure them that this test is not affiliated with their degree programme, by any means so that they could attempt the paper with confidence.

After carefully marking the answer scripts, the researcher noted the common features of the errors made by the students and explained the cause of errors, based on his personal observation of the students' performance.

The bar chart shown below indicates the percentage of students who have ticked the correct and the incorrect answers in each section of the General English Proficiency Test.

Student Sample 100			
Areas of testing items	Correct (%)	Incorrect (%)	Not responded (%)
Adjective	76	24	0
Adverb	69	31	0
Preposition	13	87	0
Tense	11	89	0
Word order	21	79	0
Articles	19	76	5

Table 4.16 SS' performance to the areas testing items in the proficiency test.



Conclusion

It was found that the most frequent errors from this data were on the morphosyntactic and lexical levels with inadequate lexical and morphosyntactic knowledge leading to the errors, which have been ranked according to the level of difficulty. The error categories identified by the researcher based on the greatest number of errors that occurred are as follows. 1. Tense and subject-verb agreement 2. Preposition 3. Word order 4. Articles 5. Adverbs 6. Adjectives. It has been observed that most of the errors are due to the differences between Tamil and English. Within these errors, mother tongue interference and the structural transfer of L1 have been detected. These errors may result from the inadequate learning as well as the complexity of structures between Tamil and English.

In conclusion, the errors made by the students are related to language transfer. It causes problems for them in learning English language and makes the English writing process even more complicated. At the same time, it has been observed that ESL students with different English proficiencies may have different learning difficulties. More advanced learners are found to have errors, which are not related to language transfer. L1 related errors are more prevalent for the students who have less proficiency in English and are the beginners of English.

Recommendation

Communicative competence is a linguistic term which refers to a learner's L2 ability. It not only refers to a learner's ability to apply and use grammatical rules, but also to form correct utterances, and know how to use these utterances appropriately. The term unites the view of language learning implicit in the communicative approach to language teaching. So the grammatical proficiency is the foundation of better writing and speaking ability of ESL learners. Efficient grammar instruction, especially for adult learners, helps to learn English more effectively. Therefore, understanding students' learning difficulties and providing appropriate grammar instruction is the key to effective teaching for ESL teachers.

This study indicates various errors and these errors have been ranked the most frequent error categories, which can be an indication for ESL teachers to better understand what errors their students could make and provide instruction thereby. Many errors found in this study were considered L1- related. It is apparent that L1 plays an important role in the process of learning English. The participants of this study were the undergraduates of the University of Jaffna who are all eligible to express their ideas in a clear way. However language transfer caused problems for them and made the English learning process even more complicated.

Clarifying learning difficulties can be the first step that helps beginning ESL learners master English grammar. Language interference is apparently a common problem for beginning ESL learners. English teachers can help beginning ESL learners reduce language interference by specifying the differences between Tamil and English in order to make English grammar instruction more effective. Errors in the use of tense and prepositions in this study, for example, were ranked as the number one error categories where the greatest number of errors occurred. Such errors should be paid attention by ESL teachers. In addition to explaining grammatical rules of English tenses, prepositions etc. ESL teachers may also compare the differences between Tamil and English.

It has been observed that ESL learners with different English proficiencies may have different learning difficulties. When more advanced learners may have more errors which are not related to language transfer, L1- related errors are prevalent for beginning learners. English grammar instruction with comparison of Tamil and English can be a good option for ESL teachers.

To prevent L1 interference on L2 sentence, various sentence types of both L1 and L2 should be differentiated and distinguished and should be made known to the students. The sameness about sentence types of both languages will automatically eliminate the errors in syntax. Thus, effort has to be taken to create syntactic awareness among the students. To prevent the agreement problems, the relationship between words should be taught and if the problems are due to L1 structure, the relationship and variation between L1 and L2 in sentences should be indicated to the students.

The teacher should identify the differences between English and Tamil in terms of morphosyntactic features of these languages. To this effect the structural elements found in English but not found in Tamil should be well marked. Similarly structural elements found in Tamil but not found in English also should be highlighted. The areas where structural contradictions occur between these two languages should be underlined. These are steps that would make students well aware of the structural dissimilarities between English and Tamil. Then the teacher should be conscious of the problem areas of students which are generally caused by the structural variations. Now the teacher should adequately focus on designing tasks, and activities and exercises for students in order to enable them to overcome such problems. In this process, graded drills are recommended so that the students will be able to make progress gradually and firmly. Simultaneous concentration on the development of the four language skills, with specific focus on the problem areas caused by structural differences would effectively lead to successful learning.

For adult learners, learning a foreign language is a complex process. The confusion of language transfer is more common for beginning ESL learners. Beginning ESL learners will be benefited if provided with systematic and well-designed grammar instruction in connection with their first language, through which language differences were indicated. Aside from the comparison of Tamil and English which may facilitate the students' learning of English grammar, employing technology to facilitate language instruction is teachers' new responsibility in today's technical advancement to bring about greater learning.

The present study revealed the importance of contrastive instruction in learning English and in the light of the findings, contrastive approach and contrastive linguistic input (CLI) can be viewed as a foreign language learning facilitator of such difficult grammatical forms in foreign language settings. The study also revealed the area / areas of difficult grammatical features, which have to be taken into consideration in teaching and learning a foreign language. The importance of sound knowledge of L2 grammatical forms for the development of language skills which the learners of foreign language expect to develop for their communicative competence is strongly felt from this study.

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What is the role of “language classes” in autonomous learning? : The implications from Japanese language learners’ L2 activities outside the classroom

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Abstract

The opportunities for second language (L2) learning and use outside the classroom have been viewed as important factors in mastering target languages. There have been multiple studies undertaken on this topic from the perspective of autonomous language learning. Recently, a growing number of studies has particularly examined the social and contextual influence on learners’ L2 learning and usage opportunities, and revealed that various factors affected the opportunities for out-of-class language learning. However, the influence of language classes themselves on language acquisition in out-of-class language learning and use has been relatively unexplored, although many learners have mentioned that they still learn target languages predominantly in classroom settings.

This paper discusses how language classes affect L2 learners’ out-of-class language learning, based on my study of L2 literacy practices of learners of Japanese at an Australian university (Inaba, 2011). Data were collected from these participants in the form of “learning diaries” about their L2 learning activities, as well as the materials which they utilised. These data sources are coupled with background interviews about students and stimulated recall interviews. Drawing on Activity Theory (Leont'ev, 1978; Engeström 1999, 2001), this study revealed that the participants’ language classes had various influences on their out-of-class language learning, such as triggering learners’ interests, providing language resources, and creating opportunities to notice the effectiveness of their voluntary activities. Based on these findings, this paper argues that language classes are, in fact, able to encourage autonomous learning outside the classroom.

Introduction

Opportunities for learning and using a second language (L2) outside the classroom have come to be viewed as one of the most important factors in achieving a high level of proficiency in target languages. Although many researchers have claimed that classroom research takes priority in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (e.g., Benson 2011; Firth & Wagner 2007), a growing number of studies into out-of-class L2 activities have been undertaken from the perspective of autonomous language learning. In particular, a number of scholars have recently started to examine the influence of social and contextual factors on opportunities for L2 learning and use outside of the classroom (e.g., Yap 1998; Hyland 2004; Palfreyman 2006, 2011). These studies reveal that various factors affect learners' out-of-class activities in L2. However, the influence of the language classes themselves on language acquisition out of class has remained relatively unexplored.

The link between instructed language learning and actual L2 use outside the classroom has also come to be viewed as a vital factor to accelerate L2 acquisition. For instance, based on previous studies on form-focused instructions, Ellis (2008) postulates that “learners progress most rapidly when they experience both form-focused instruction and communicative exposure” (p. 855). Similarly, in the field of Japanese as a Second Language (JSL), Miyazaki (2006) claims that language acquisition could be promoted by formulating a connection between three forms of management: teacher-management (e.g., classroom activities, homework and assignments), learner-management (i.e., autonomous learning outside the classroom, for instance, learners' extracurricular learning activities) and non-management (e.g., naturalistic acquisition through using L2). However, as Higgins (2009) points out, little research has investigated the links between instructed language learning, which is closely related to language classes, and second language use outside the classroom.

Based on the findings of research undertaken into the L2 literacy activities of learners of Japanese outside the classroom at the tertiary level in Australia (Inaba, 2011), this paper argues that language classes can facilitate autonomous language learning in out-of-class contexts. The many previous studies on out-of-class language learning have examined quantitative data, collected by means of questionnaires, with the aim of identifying particular types of language learning activities and where these activities take place (e.g., Freeman 1999; Inozu, Sahinkarakas & Yumru, 2010; Pearson 2004; Pickard 1996; Spratt, Humphreys & Chan, 2002). This study, however, employs a qualitative approach to examine the influence of social and contextual factors on learners' L2 learning outside the classroom. In order to achieve this, the study draws on the concepts of Activity Theory, a sociocultural approach to learning developed by Leont'ev (1978) and Engeström (1999, 2001). Among the various influencing factors found in the study, this paper focuses in particular on the roles of Japanese classes in learners' out-of-class L2 learning and use activities.

There is still on-going debate surrounding the definitions of terms related to autonomy, such as “autonomous language learning” and “out-of-class language learning” (cf. Benson 2011; Hunter & Cooke 2007); this debate falls beyond the

scope of this paper due to space constraints. However, in this study, “autonomous language learning” will be used to refer to both learners’ learning activities and their actual target language usages, because it is often difficult to distinguish language learning activities from activities using target languages for different purposes.

Theoretical framework: Activity Theory

As mentioned above, this study draws on Activity Theory (Leont’ev, 1978; Engeström, 1999, 2001), which derives from the work of L.S. Vygotsky. The key notion in Activity Theory is mediation (Lantolf, 2000: 1). Vygotsky (1978) argued that humans rarely interact with the world directly, but utilise various artifacts in order to approach objects in the social-material world. The interaction between subjects (humans) and objects is mediated by these artifacts, which include physical and symbolic tools (e.g., books, pictures and technology) and cultural concepts (e.g., numeracy and logic).

Based on this notion of mediation, Leont’ev (1978) constructed Activity Theory. Leont’ev defines activity as comprising of three levels: activity, action and operation. In this hierarchical distinction, activity is the highest level as well as the fundamental unit of analysis, and is inextricably connected to the concept of motive, which is the biological or social need or desire to lead human activity towards a specific object.

This concept of motive in Activity Theory differs from traditional conceptions of motivation for language learning. In SLA, research on motivation has tended to employ quantitative methods to examine why learners study target languages in relation to language learning achievements and language learning behaviour (see also Ushioda 2001). Although a number of prominent researchers in the area of L2 learning motivation have acknowledged that motivation can change over time and be influenced by contextual factors (see Dörnyei 2001; Ushioda 2001), motivation in SLA has often been understood as a relatively stable psychological trait or state of language learning in general (Spence-Brown 2007). In contrast, in Activity Theory, a learner’s needs (or purposes) behind a particular task are viewed as motives for an activity (Leont’ev 1978). In other words, a motive could be understood as a factor which drives a language learner to undertake a particular class-related task (e.g., homework) or leisure activity (e.g., watching a movie for fun).

Engeström (1999, 2001) further developed Activity Theory in order to explore human behaviour in broader contexts. In order to do this, he developed the theory of the multi-layered activity system. An activity system includes at the level of a community (communities), the relationships with other members of the community (that is, division of labor) and the rules of the community (refer to the diagram in Engeström 2001). A central activity system (targeted activity system) is linked to multiple neighbouring activities which influence the elements of the activity system, such as subject, rules, material and symbolic tools, and also future activity in which the outcomes of a central activity are embedded (Engeström 1987). Russell and Yañez (2003) call these activity systems “linked activity systems” (pp. 340-341). Language

classes can be viewed as one of the communities related to the learners' out-of-class language learning if we see learners' language learning activities both in and outside the classroom as a whole. However, we can also see language classes as a linked activity system that influences another activity system for out-of-class language learning. In this paper, the latter standpoint is employed in order to clarify the influence of language classes on out-of-class language learning.

Engeström also points out that misfits and conflicts often occur between the elements within activity systems or between different activity systems: he terms these "contradictions". These include, for instance, differences between what students want to learn and what they actually learn in the classroom. Contradictions are considered to be an impetus for change and development in activity systems, and are essential in order to understand what prompts individual concrete actions within an activity system (Barab, Barnett, Yamagata-Lynch, Squire, & Keating, 2002). However, contradictions are often invisible to those inside the activity system because the tensions seem too ordinary to be recognised, or are too embarrassing and uncomfortable for the members to discuss (Capper & Williams 2004). In such cases, outsiders (e.g., researchers) may facilitate the resolution of these contradictions by identifying them and suggesting learning innovations (Cross 2009). Therefore, this paper also addresses the contradictions between classroom-based language learning and out-of-class language learning in order to provide pedagogical suggestions.

Methodology

(i) Participants

The participants in the initial study (Inaba 2011) were 15 Australian university students. During the data collection period, they were enrolled in intermediate to advanced Japanese classes at an Australian university. These students were chosen because they were potentially able to undertake various reading and writing activities. Ten out of the 15 students started studying Japanese at primary or high school. Moreover, only three students had experienced a long-term stay in Japan, for example a one-year exchange study at a university. In other words, the majority of the participants had been studying Japanese in foreign language contexts as well as in formal education settings. This paper uses a pseudonym for each participant.

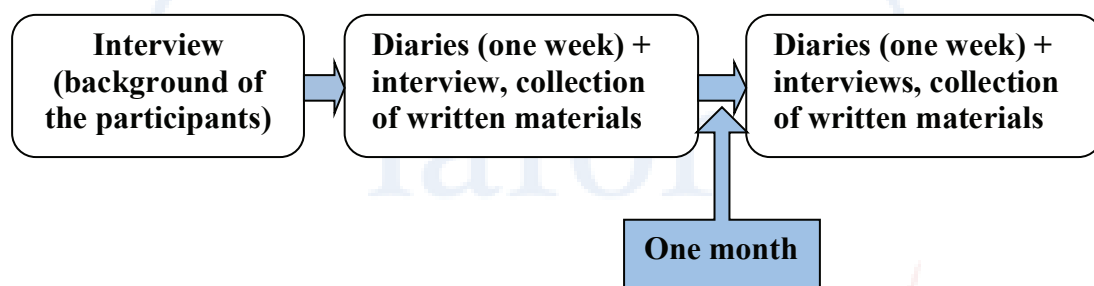
(ii) Data collection procedure

In order to explore L2 out-of-class activities comprehensively, the study incorporated a triangulation of a diary study which incorporates photos, collection of written materials, two types of interviews (semi-structured interviews and interaction interviews) from the participants. The data was collected from September 2008 until July 2009. Firstly, the participants were invited to participate in semi-structured

interviews to elicit detailed information about their backgrounds. Subsequently, the participants maintained a diary for a period of one week twice or three times during the data collection period, in which they reported detailed information concerning their language learning and actual L2 use outside the classroom.

After each diary collection period, interaction interviews were conducted in order to elicit more detailed information about the participants' out-of-class activities in L2. The interaction interview has been utilized in order to examine what happens in a particular situation in cases where data collection methods such as observation or audio/video recording are unavailable (Muraoka 2002). In the interaction interviews, the participants' diary entries and other materials (e.g., copies of books, magazines and the information about websites) were submitted to the researcher and were utilised as stimuli, and the researcher thus asked for detailed information about their diary entries. Figure 1 below shows the basic procedures of the data collection.

Figure 1: Basic procedures of data collection



The interview data was transcribed by the researcher based on the transcript conventions of DuBois (1991), which were simplified and modified (see Appendix 1). The transcribed data was qualitatively analysed based on the key concepts of Activity Theory by utilising Nvivo 8, a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis program. Although the original study examined data both on class-related tasks and self-regulated language use outside the classroom, this paper specifically examines the latter type of activities in order to explore how language classes can facilitate voluntary L2 activities outside the classroom.

Findings and discussions

(i) Overview of L2 activities outside the classroom

The analysis of the diary entries and interview data found that the participants undertook a variety of activities in the target language outside the classroom. These

activities could roughly be divided into two groups: class-related tasks and voluntary activities which were not directly related to the Japanese classes.

Class-related tasks included preparation and revision for the classes, homework, and preparation for assessment tasks (e.g., quizzes, exams and essays). Although the students undertook these tasks physically outside the classroom, these tasks were closely related to their language learning in the classroom.

Many participants also reported various types of voluntary activities in Japanese: for example, using Japanese on Twitter and Facebook, reading Japanese books and *manga* (i.e., Japanese comic books), browsing websites, listening to Japanese pop songs, and watching a variety of materials, such as movies and *anime* (i.e., Japanese cartoons), often with English subtitles. Table 1 below shows the types of the participants’ voluntary activities in Japanese (for more detailed information, see also Inaba 2011).

Table 1: The participants’ voluntary activities in Japanese

Reading	Writing	Online communication	Viewing	Others
Novels, a bilingual bible, a bilingual book, <i>manga</i> , specialised magazines, fashion magazines, newspapers, a picture book, host family’s blog posts, articles of Wikipedia, lyrics of pop songs	Diaries, weblogs	Email, Facebook, Mixi (a Japanese social networking service), Twitter, online chat	<i>Anime</i> , TV serials, movies, variety shows	Listening pop songs, listening radio, video games

Twelve out of 15 students mainly utilised their time for class-related tasks, and occasionally undertook voluntary activities. This result should not be seen as atypical. As the participants were university students when the data was collected, they were of course under the influence of the structural context of the university, which emphasizes assessment, even when they were outside the walls of the classroom.

Despite this, it was found that the students’ language classes had a number of interesting influences on their voluntary activities. The following sections reveal some concrete examples of these as reported by the participants.

(ii) The role of language classes 1: Trigger learners’ interests

Students' interest in specific topics can be triggered by the content of language classes, provoking voluntary activities in L2 outside the classroom. For instance, one of the participants, Scott, reported voluntary reading activities inspired by the topics covered in the Japanese classes. In the first semester of the data collection, Scott was studying Japanese in the intermediate course, which employed a textbook, and undertook a reading activity based on what he learned in the classroom:

Excerpt 1

The textbook passage we looked at today in my Japanese seminar mentioned Gregory Clark, and our teacher said he was formerly an Australian diplomat and now an academic in Japan, which sounded interesting. English Wikipedia does not have an entry for him, so I tried to read the Japanese entry.

(Scott's diary entry on 4th, September, 2008)

In the second semester, furthermore, Scott searched for a website on Japanese pop songs. He checked the lyrics and the English translations of several Japanese pop songs played in Japanese video games and *anime*. This reading activity was again triggered by one of the topics discussed in the content-based course on Japanese popular culture:

Excerpt 2

The week before in the seminar, we discussed it, *nihongo no kashu to uta* ((Japanese singers and songs)). So, I was listening to some Japanese songs and I wanted to know the meanings ((of the lyrics)).

(Scott, interview 4)

Scott already knew the songs from having played Japanese video games. However, as Excerpt 2 indicates, undertaking study of Japanese songs in the classroom ultimately prompted him to check the lyrics and try to understand the meanings. From an Activity Theory standpoint, these examples indicate that students' temporary interests, which can be understood as motives for specific tasks, can be socially constructed by the influence of Japanese-related communities, in Scott's case, the Japanese classes. According to his diary entries and interviews, Scott mainly undertook class-related tasks (e.g., preparation for classes and homework) during the data collection period. In other words, it seems that he did not actively seek possibilities to learn or use Japanese. Consequently, it is highly probable that Scott's Japanese classes played an important role to generate extra opportunities for him to utilise the target language outside the classroom.

(iii) The role of language classes 2: providing language resources for out-of-class activities

Explicit teaching of grammar and vocabulary in the classroom tends to be seen as the traditional approach to teaching L2, and often attracts criticism in the field of SLA (Jin & Cortazzi 2005). However, the participants' comments indicate that the formalized study of grammar and vocabulary was perceived as an important part of

the language classes, and that the language classes facilitated out-of-class activities by providing linguistic resources upon which students could draw during their authentic language activities. From the perspective of Activity Theory, these linguistic resources can be regarded as important “tools” to achieve a goal.

Joshua, who was studying in the intermediate level class, undertook many types of writing activities in Japanese, such as writing messages on social networking services (SNSs – e.g., Facebook and Twitter), blog posts and personal diaries on his computer. In these activities, Joshua actively utilised the grammar patterns and expressions which he learned in his Japanese classes.

For instance, in his personal diary, Joshua utilised the set phrase “*han de oshita yoo ni*” (“without exception”) and the grammar pattern “*-ni chigainai*” (“must”), both of which Joshua had recently learned in his Japanese class. Joshua explained his reason for using these expressions as follows:

Excerpt 3

I sometimes, like I would try to be more expressive, so I think of that, a certain expression something like that. (...) I was trying to be, as you said literary, so I was thinking about the expressions that I used, which is just probably why I ended up using “*han de oshita yoo ni*” just because it’s a kind of, sounds of like something great.
(Joshua, interview 3)

This statement indicates that Joshua drew on the knowledge that he learned in his Japanese classes to polish his writing.

There is another interesting example of Joshua’s writing activities with regard to the characteristics of Japanese as a language. Japanese has various stylistic registers, and selecting an appropriate style depending on context is crucial. For communication with peers, casual speech style is the most suitable. Since Joshua employed a casual speech style on Twitter and Facebook, it was suspected that he learned such casual expressions through communication with Japanese native speakers on SNSs. However, Joshua claimed that he was utilising knowledge gained in his previous upper-beginner Japanese classes, rather than gaining this knowledge by initiating communication with Japanese native speakers on SNSs.

The example of Joshua illustrates how Japanese classes can serve as an “instrument-producing activity” (Engeström 1987) – a linked activity system for providing necessary tools for voluntary writing activities performed outside the classroom. This seemingly obvious finding seems to be often overlooked in research on out-of-class language learning, because insufficient attention tends to be paid to the link between language learning in and outside the classroom (Higgins 2009). In addition, the case of Joshua implies a connection between learning in the classroom and actual use of the target language outside the classroom, which Ellis (2008) claims is an important factor to accelerate the second language learning process.

(iv) The roles of language classes 3: providing opportunities to realise the positive outcomes of leisure activities

The analysis of the interview data suggests that language classes can facilitate learners' out-of-class activities in L2 by enabling them to notice the link between their classroom-based language learning and voluntary activities. However, this link differs from the case of Joshua, outlined in the previous section. More concretely, a number of the participants reported that they often found the vocabulary or expressions which they gained from enjoying pop culture materials in the textbooks and materials for their language classes. In this case, from the viewpoint of Activity Theory, it can be said that their leisure activities were functioning as a linked activity system providing them with linguistic tools to accelerate their classroom-based language learning.

For instance, Melissa, who was studying in the intermediate classes during the data collection period, provided a concrete example where she recognised a particular word in a class vocabulary test which she had previously heard in a Japanese pop song:

Excerpt 4

... for instance, on today's test, there is *yaburu*, "to tear". I didn't know what it was, I wouldn't know if I just looked at it at the test. But I learnt *yaburu* by listening to a song, because I understood all of the sentences except for *yaburu*, so I looked it in a *jisho* ((dictionary)) and it said *yaburu*...
(Melissa, interview 1)

This excerpt indicates that Melissa recognised how her use of Japanese outside the classroom positively influenced her Japanese studies, in this case, a vocabulary quiz. One of the participants who studied in advanced classes, Thomas, also remarked on the positive effect of watching *anime* on his Japanese study in the classroom:

Excerpt 5

Because, you know, sometimes you would learn new vocabulary in the class and from the vocab list, but it's like, I sometimes have already heard that from *anime* or something, and I would already know, and I think that helps me to just study ((vocabulary)) quicker.
(Thomas, interview 1)

Both students' comments imply that they recognised the connection between their L2 activities for entertainment and their classroom-based language learning. It can be reasonably assumed that they possessed beliefs about the usefulness of such entertaining activities for learning Japanese in formal education settings because of such positive experiences. In other words, language classes, including assessment tasks, might provide learners with viable opportunities to encourage them to realise the outcomes of their leisure activities in the target language. Considering the fact that both students consistently watched *anime* and listened to pop music in Japanese, language classes could play an important role in promoting students' authentic language usage outside the classroom.

(v) The roles of language classes 4: influence of learner's beliefs

According to Barcelos (2003), several previous studies have claimed that learners' beliefs about effective ways of language learning influence their choice of learning strategies or approach to language learning. From the perspective of Activity Theory, learners' beliefs can be viewed as a subject-related factor that is formulated and developed based on their past activities. Engeström (1987) refers to education and schooling as examples of subject-producing activities. The experiences of Melissa and Thomas, illustrated above, could also be understood as examples of subject-producing activities. Another student, Grace, explained how the language class altered her beliefs about language learning.

Grace was studying Japanese in the same course as Melissa; all of her out-of-class L2 activities were related to Japanese classes, including extra learning activities, such as compiling her own vocabulary lists and composing example sentences in order to practise the grammar points covered in the textbook. During the semester holidays, Grace participated in an intensive in-country programme provided by the Japan Foundation. This programme employed a specifically structured curriculum which focused on productive practices such as discussions and presentations. Several opportunities to use Japanese with local people, such as visiting a primary school and a Japanese university, were also arranged as part of the programme. In her interview after she came back from Japan, Grace maintained that she was impressed by the fact that the curriculum did not include any lessons on Japanese characters and grammar, but rather encouraged her to learn new vocabulary and expressions:

Excerpt 6

Before I went there, I had all the information saying it would be no, there would be no grammar or *kanji* (Japanese characters) classes, so I was like how I might get progress without ((explicitly learning Japanese characters and vocabulary in the classroom)). But, it was about using it ... so we didn't have to be actually taught vocab or be taught to memorise or tested on it, but when you were listening to that ((Japanese)) the whole time, I took on much more vocab than probably even in normal class.
(Grace, interview 3)

This excerpt shows that Grace had believed that explicitly learning vocabulary and grammar items was important in acquiring Japanese skills, and her extra studies before she participated in this intensive programme had reflected the above beliefs. However, as the excerpt also reveals, her beliefs concerning the best approach to learning Japanese changed because of the experiences she gained during the programme. As a result, in the following semester, Grace sought opportunities to actually use Japanese, such as reading a bilingual book and listening to Japanese pop songs. In her interview, she postulated that using the target language outside the classroom is a "constructive, effective" (interview 3) way to learn a language.

The intensive in-country programme heavily influenced Grace's beliefs about the effectiveness of a certain language learning method, and eventually encouraged her to use authentic materials outside the classroom. Grace's example thus demonstrates an

important function of language classes, that is, formulating learners' positive beliefs, in the facilitation of out-of-class activities in second languages.

Learners' difficulties and problems

Despite the potential of language classes to facilitate autonomous language learning outside the classroom, it was also found that not all the participants gained such benefits from their Japanese classes. For instance, Eric, an upper-intermediate level student, occasionally watched *anime* and read *manga*. However, he tended to quickly give up these activities when he faced linguistic difficulties such as unknown words and difficult grammar. In his interview, Eric explained:

Excerpt 7

I always kind of felt that it wasn't doing anything. I would watch *anime*, and I would read *manga*, and I do it, thinking like I have to do this to get ((my Japanese)) better. But the vocabulary like in the *anime* and that sort of stuff, to be honest, I probably wouldn't even use it in class...it will make me better ((at)) Japanese, but I'm not sure how much it actually helped my Japanese.

The last sentence of the above excerpt implies that Eric believed his voluntary activities would improve his Japanese language skills, but ended up doubting the effect of these activities on his Japanese grades. These doubts seemed to result in his decision to discontinue these activities. Eric's example stands in contrast to the reports of the aforementioned students who noticed a connection between their actual L2 usage outside of the classroom and their classroom-based language learning.

Several other students who studied in an intermediate course also commented negatively on the usefulness of vocabulary and expressions for their language use activities outside of the classroom. According to these students, the topics presented in the textbook were too specific. It seems it was difficult for these students to recognise the link between their language classes and out-of-class language use activities. Because of the specificity of the topics, moreover, it might be difficult for the students to become interested in the contents of the textbooks.

These problems are what Engeström (1987) called "contradictions". In both Eric's case and the case of the students in the intermediate classes, the contradiction was the discrepancy (or disconnection) between their Japanese classes (e.g., the vocabulary and the topics in the textbooks), and the language which they used or expected to use outside the classroom. As we have seen, however, a number of the participants were able to identify the connection between activities in and outside the classroom. With teacher support, Eric and the students in the intermediate classes might be able to recognising the usefulness of their Japanese classes in relation to their voluntary activities outside the classroom, and *vice versa*.

Conclusion and implications for second language learning and teaching

The starting point of this study was to examine how language classes could promote autonomous language learning outside the classroom. The analysis of the qualitative data illustrated several potentialities in this regard: 1) triggering students' interests in various topics, 2) providing them with linguistic resources, 3) providing them with opportunities to notice positive outcomes of their voluntary activities outside the classroom, and 4) influencing learners' beliefs about effective language learning methods. The question is, how can language teachers integrate these points into language classes?

It should be acknowledged that data from 15 students is not enough to make any substantial generalisations about all language learners. However, several pedagogical implications can be inferred from these findings. For instance, allowing learners to select materials in language classes or for assessment tasks may be one beneficial way of stimulating their interest. The Internet should be utilised in the classroom as a tool which enables learners to gain/access on-the-spot materials related to their interests. The use of the Internet in the classroom also enables teachers to arrange individually orientated activities. Such in-class activities could become a model for learners' voluntary L2 activities outside of the classroom.

Making use of materials which learners (want to) read and watch in their daily lives for in-class activities may also be effective in enabling learners to recognise the concrete rewards of their L2 activities outside the classroom. This is important in order to foster learners' positive beliefs/attitudes towards extra out-of-class activities in L2. In such cases, teachers' instructions are crucial in illustrating what students can learn through authentic materials because students may easily overlook the connection between their classroom-based language learning and extra L2 activities outside of the classroom, as Eric's experience indicates.

It is also reasonable to assume that many students could be overwhelmed by the amount of new information contained in authentic materials, and such difficulties may create an effective block to their out-of-class activities in the target language. This is another reason why utilising authentic materials with teachers' assistance in the classroom may be beneficial. Indeed, as the present author has reported elsewhere (Inaba forthcoming), the students were able to recognise how much vocabulary they knew in a Japanese drama by engaging in a class activity intentionally arranged for this purpose. A number of the students participating in this study reported that they went away and watched the rest of the drama. In other words, this in-class activity eventually triggered out-of-class activities in L2.

Research into L2 activities outside the classroom in relation to the connection with language classes provides us with useful insights to facilitate autonomous language learning. However, as mentioned previously, this topic is still underexplored. There is a need for further research into the links between language learning in and outside the classroom, including learners' authentic L2 activities. The out-of-class L2 activities of beginner students represent a particularly important area for future research: a few participants even started to watch Japanese *anime*, movie and TV serials with English subtitles before commencing their Japanese study. The analysis of beginner students'

out-of-class language learning may thus be especially beneficial in creating connections between activities in and outside the classroom at the early stage of language learning.

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Appendix 1 Transcription symbols for the interview data

.	Final intonation
,	Continuing intonation
?	Appeal, rising intonation
...	Omission
<@@>	Laugh quality
(())	Researcher's comment
<X X>	Uncertain hearing

A Contrastive Analysis between Bangla and English Phonology: Some Pedagogical Recommendations

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Abstract

This study is a contrastive analysis between the phonological patterns of standard colloquial Bangla (an Indo-European language widely used in Bangladesh and the eastern part of India) and British English at both segmental and supra-segmental levels. This study will contrast Bangla phonological system with the English one and will attempt to point out possible difficulties that native Bangali learners might face in learning English as an L2 because according to the contrastive analysis hypothesis, structural features of the target language that are similar to those of the native language will be easy to learn while those that are different will be difficult. This study will use the perceptual assimilation model to delineate how different phoneme-contrasts in English might be perceptually assimilated to Bangla phonemic contrasts by a native Bangali learner. There are distinct points of differences between Bangla and English phonological systems: differences in the vowel and consonant phonemes, syllable structures, and stress patterns. The perceptual assimilation model would be used to categorize relative difficulty levels that a Bangali EFL/ESL learner might face in perceiving and pronouncing different English phonemes depending on how those contrasts with different Bangla phonemes. Such a contrastive analysis might help pedagogical practitioners in Bangladesh to point out the aspects to be emphasized while teaching English pronunciation. In this regard, the study will propose some pedagogical approaches that teachers can use to help native Bangali learners acquire those aspects of English pronunciation that are more problematic for them.

Introduction

This study is a contrastive analysis between the phonological patterns of Bangla and English languages. Bangla is an Indo-European language and of similar linguistic lineage as English and other Indo-European languages although of a different branch (the Indo-Iranian) of the family (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976). Although the immediate origins of Bangla language are somewhat obscure, it might originate directly from 'an Eastern variety of an Indic language closely related to Sanskrit' (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976, p. ix). Bangla is spoken by more than 100 million people in Bangladesh and in the Eastern part of India, and this language has rich literary heritage (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976). Although Bangla has many dialectal variations, this study will focus on the standard colloquial Bangla that is intelligible to and spoken by the educated Bangali people in both Bangladesh and in the Eastern states of India.

On the other hand, English is a more widely spoken language in the world than Bangla, and English is also an international language. Therefore it is natural for Bangali speakers to want to learn English not only for study purposes but also for professional and personal development. A large number of Bangali students come to the English-speaking countries such as U.S.A., U. K., and Australia for higher studies, and a good command in English is also a necessary prerequisite for professional development of Bangali speakers. Although there are many varieties of English including American English, British English, or Australian English, this study will follow the phonological norms of British English, which is widely accepted as the standard variety of English in Bangladesh. A contrastive analysis between the phonological systems of standard colloquial Bangla and British English might be helpful for the pedagogical practitioners in Bangladesh in pointing out the aspects of language they should emphasis on while teaching English pronunciation to Bangali learners.

According to Lado (cited in Gass & Selinker 2008), the contrastive analysis hypothesis is based on the belief that learners transfer the habits of their native language in learning a second/foreign language, and thus, the structural features of the target language that are similar to those of the native language will be easy to learn while those that are different will be difficult. In this hypothesis, the grammatical and phonological systems of two languages are contrasted to predict what kind of difficulties a native speaker of one language might face in learning another as a second language or L2 (Gass & Selinker 2008; Wardhaugh 1970). As this study is a contrastive analysis between Bangla and English phonology, it will contrast Bangla phonological system with the English one and will attempt to point out the possible difficulties that native Bangali speakers might face in learning English as an L2. There are distinct points of differences between Bangla and English phonological systems- differences in the vowel and consonant phonemes, syllable structures, and stress patterns, which might be challenging for native Bangali learners who are learning English as an L2. This project will attempt to point out the difficulties that native Bangali learners might face in learning English pronunciation by contrasting the phonological systems of standard colloquial Bangla and British English at both segmental and supra-segmental levels. This study will also propose some pedagogical approaches that teachers can use to help learners acquire the appropriate pronunciation of the phonemes and stress patterns of English.

Sound Inventory and Descriptions

Sound Inventory of British English

A descriptive account of British English vowels and consonants is given below.

British English consonants: Consonants can be classified based on how they are pronounced and in which part of the vocal tract the obstruction is created while articulating a consonant sound. A chart of English consonant phonemes is given below:

Table 1

		Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	Voiceless	p			t			k	ʔ
	Voiced	b			d			g	
Fricative	Voiceless		f	θ	s	ʃ			h
	Voiced		v	ð	z	ʒ			
Affricate	Voiceless					tʃ			
	Voiced					dʒ			
Nasal	Voiced	m			n			ŋ	
Lateral	Voiced				l				
Approximant	Voiceless	ɱ							
	Voiced	w			ɹ		j		

[Source: Adapted from Roach (2000)]

As can be seen in the chart above, in addition to the voiced and voiceless bilabial, alveolar and velar plosives, English also has one glottal plosive /ʔ/, which Bangla does not have. English has more fricatives than plosives. English distinguishes between voiced and voiceless labio-dental and dental fricatives (/f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/), which are absent in the Bangla language. As can be seen in the chart above, English voiced and voiceless fricatives are in contrastive distribution with each other, and this feature could be different from the phonemic inventory of many other languages such as Bangla that does not have any voiced fricative. English also has two palato-alveolar affricates (/tʃ/and /dʒ/), which are termed as ‘complex consonants,’ as they ‘begin as plosives and end as fricatives’ (Roach 2000, p. 48). As can be seen in the chart above, English has the approximants: /j/, /ɹ/, /w/, and /ɱ/. In the pronunciation

of these approximants, the articulators come very close to each other, but there is no touch or contact between them to produce a complete consonant like plosive or fricative (Roach 2000). Such approximants might not be common in other languages of the world such as in Bangla that has no approximants in its phonemic inventory.

The table below provides minimal pairs distinguishing between English voiced and voiceless phonemes:

Table 2

Plosive		Fricative		Affricate	
/p/ and /b/	pan [pæn] ban [bæn]	/f/ and /v/	fan [fæn] van [væn]	/tʃ/ and /dʒ/	chet [tʃet] jet [dʒet]
/t/ and /d/	tin [tɪn] din [dɪn]	/θ/ and /ð/	wreath [rɪjθ] wreathe [rɪjð]		
/k/ and /g/	cot [kɒt] got [gɒt]	/s/ and /z/	sip [sɪp] zip [zɪp]		
		/ʃ/ and /ʒ/	mission [mɪʃən] vision [vɪʒən]		

British English vowels: Vowels function as the nucleus of syllables, and in pronouncing a vowel there is no obstruction of the vocal tract (Ladefoged 2001). Roach (2000) divided the British English vowels into 7 short vowels and 5 long vowels. The short vowels are shown in the table below:

Table 3

	Front	Central	Back
High	ɪ		ʊ
Mid	e	ʌ	
Low	æ		ɒ

[Source: Roach, 2000]

Long vowels of British English are shown in the table below:

Table 4

	Front	Central	Back
High	i:		u:
Mid		ɜ:	ɔ:
Low			ɑ:

[Source: Roach, 2000]

Minimal pairs distinguishing long /u:/ and short /ʊ/:

Pool /pu:l/

Pull /pʊl/

Minimal pairs distinguishing long /i:/ and short /ɪ/:

Bit /bɪt/

Beat /bi:t/

English diphthongs: Diphthongs are sounds that ‘consist of a movement or glide from one vowel to another’ (Roach 2000, p. 21). There are 8 diphthongs in English (Roach 2000). These are as follows:

Centering diphthongs: There are three centering diphthongs that end with a glide to the central vowel /ə/; these are as follows: /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/ (Roach 2000).

Closing diphthongs: There are five closing diphthongs that end with a movement towards the close (high) vowels /ɪ/ or /ʊ/; these are as follows: /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /əʊ/, and /aʊ/ (Roach 2000).

Example words with these diphthongs are given in the table below:

Table 5

Centering Diphthongs		Closing Diphthongs	
/ɪə/	fierce [fɪəs]*	/eɪ/	face[feɪs]
/eə/	scarce [skeəs]	/aɪ/	nice[nɑɪs]
/ʊə/	tour [tʊə]	/ɔɪ/	voice[vɔɪs]
		/əʊ/	home[həʊm]
		/aʊ/	gown [gaʊn]

(* in British English, post-vocalic [r] is not pronounced)

English Syllable Structure

The syllable structure of English language is different from that in Bangla. In English syllable structure, it is common to have consonant clusters in onsets and codas; for example, in the words black [blæk], ask [æsk], and bump [bʌmp], [blæk] has two consonant clusters in onset and [æsk] and [bʌmp] each has two consonant clusters in codas. In English, there can be a cluster of maximum three consonants in a syllable-onset and a cluster of maximum four consonants in a syllable-coda (Roach 2000).

But such complex clusters in syllable onsets and codas are non-existent in Bangla language.

Sound Inventory of the Bangla Language

Bangla consonants. In terms of the manner of articulation, Bangla consonants can be divided in the following classes: stops, nasals, laterals, flaps, and spirants (fricatives) (Dimock, Bhattacharji, & Chatterjee 1976; Islam 1970).

On the basis of the place and manner of articulation, Bangla consonants can be shown in the chart below:

Table 6

		Labial		Dental		Palatal		Retroflex		Velar		Glottal
		un-asp	Asp	Un-asp	Asp	Un-asp	Asp	Un-asp	Asp	Un-asp	Asp	
Stops	Voices	p	p ^h	t	t ^h	c	c ^h	ʈ	ʈ ^h	k	k ^h	
	Voiced	b	b ^h	d	d ^h	ɟ	ɟ ^h	ɖ	ɖ ^h	g	g ^h	
Nasals		m		n						ŋ		
Laterals				l								
Flaps				ɾ				ɽ				
Spirants/Fricative				s		ç						h

[Adapted from: Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976]

[Note: Unasp: Unaspirated
Asp: Aspirated]

As can be noticed in the table above, aspiration is a distinctive phonemic feature in Bangla, as aspirated and unaspirated stops have contrastive distribution. This aspect of Bangla language is in contrast to English, as English has aspiration as an allophonic variation of the voiceless stops /p/, /t/, /k/, which are aspirated only when they occur at the beginning of a stressed syllable. In English, as opposed to in Bangla, aspiration is not a phonemic feature because the occurrences of aspirated or unaspirated stops do not make any difference in meaning.

The Bangla stop phonemes are classified below according to their places of articulation with minimal pairs that show contrasts between the phonemes:

Labial: /p/, /b/, /p^h/, and /b^h/ are labial stops.

Minimal pairs: <pata> [paʈa] (stone slab)
 <p^hata> [p^hʈa] (to crack)
 <bata> [baʈa] (to smash)
 <b^hata> [b^hʈa] (ebb) (Islam 1970).

Dental: /t/, /d/, /t^h/, and /d^h/ are dental stops (tongue-tip is pressed against the upper-teeth).

Minimal pairs: <tan> [tan] (musical note)
 <t^han> [t^han] (bolt of cloth)
 <dan> [dan] (gift)
 <d^han> [d^han] (rice paddy) (Islam 1970).

Palatal: /ç/, /ʃ/, /ç^h/, and /ʃ^h/ are palatal stops.

Minimal pairs: <chal> [cal] (custom/fashion)
 <c^hhal> [ç^hal] (skin/hide)
 <jal> [jal] (net)
 <j^hal> [ʃ^hal] (spicy) (Islam 1970).

Retroflex. /ʈ/, /ɖ/, /ʈ^h/, /ɖ^h/ are retroflex stops.

Example words: <tok> [tɔk] (sour)
 <t^hok> [t^hɔk] (cheat)
 <dok> [ɖɔk] (dock)
 <d^hok> [ɖ^hɔk] (a sound) (Islam 1970).

Velar. /k/, /g/, /k^h/, and /g^h/ are velar stops.

Example words: <kal> [kal] (yesterday/tomorrow)
 <k^hal> [k^hal] (canal)
 <gal> [gal] (abuse)
 <g^hal> [g^hal] (injury) (Islam 1970).

Minimal pairs of the two voiced flaps: /ɾ/ and /ɽ/:

<pora> [pɔra] (“to wear”)
 <pora> [pɔɽa] (“to read”) (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976).

As can also be noticed in the table above, Bangla has only three fricatives /s/, /ç/, and /h/ all of which are voiceless. Thus, contrary to English, Bangla has no voiced fricative.

Bangla vowels: The vowel sounds used in Bangla are the following:

Table 7

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e		o
Lower-mid	æ		ɔ
Low		ɐ	

[Source: Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976]

Each of the above oral vowels has its corresponding nasalized form: /ĩ/, /ẽ/, /ã/, /ẽ̃/, /õ/, /õ̃/, /ũ/ (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976; Islam 1970; Kostic & Das 1972). In Bangla, nasalization is a phonemic feature, as oral and nasal vowels are in contrastive distribution (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976; Kostic & Das 1972). For example,

e/ẽ

<kacha> [kʌçɛ] ‘wash (cloth)’

<kãcha> [kẽçɛ] ‘young’

o/õ

<phota> [p^ho tʌ] “(to) bloom”

<phõta> [p^hõtʌ] “mark on forehead”

i/ĩ

<c^hhit> [c^hit] “printed cloth”

<c^hhĩt> [c^hĩt] “slightly eccentric”

e/ẽ

<geo> [geo] “singer”

<gẽo> [gẽo] “rustic”

æ/ã

<tako> [tæko] “bald headed”

<tãko> [tãko] “corner of sari (a kind of dress)”

ɔ/õ

<boti> [bɔti] “pill”

<bõti> [bõti] “instrument for cutting fish or vegetable”

u/ũ

<kuri> [kuɾi] “twenty”

<kũri> [kũɾi] “bud”

(Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976; Kostic & Das 1972, p. 34).

However, in English, nasalization of vowels is not a phonemic feature, as nasalization of vowels cannot make a meaning difference.

Although all the vowels of Bangla can be short or long, the length of vowels can make no meaning difference; hence, vowel length is not considered to be phonemic in Bangla (Kostic & Das 1972). This feature of Bangla vowel system contrasts with that in English, as vowel length is a phonemic feature in English; for example, <ship> [ʃɪp] (a kind of vessel) and <sheep> [ʃi:p] (a kind of mammal).

Bangla Syllable Structure

In Bangla language, ‘medial consonant clusters are frequent, initial consonant clusters are rare, and final clusters are almost nonexistent’ (Ferguson & Chowdhury 1960, p. 45). The onset consonant clusters occur rarely and infrequently in ordinary colloquial Bangla¹. Bangla syllable structure allows syllable codas; for example:

<jal> [jal] (net)
<tok> [tɔk] (sour)

In Bangla language, medial consonant clusters are common and frequent (Ferguson & Chowdhury 1960). One characteristic feature of such medial consonant clusters is that almost every consonant in Bangla language can be doubled, which means they can occur geminate (Ferguson & Chowdhury 1960; Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976). This feature of Bangla language contrasts with that in English, as in English, there is no such geminate words. Minimal pairs with doubled consonants are given below:

<b ^h ago>	[b ^h ago]	‘(you)	go	away’	
<b ^h aggo>	[b ^h aggo]	‘luck’ (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976).			
<chokor>	[cɔkor]	‘a	kind	of	bird,’
<chokkor>	[cɔkkor]	‘round’ (Islam 1970, p. 29).			

Therefore, such doubling of consonants is a phonemic feature in Bangla.

Segmental Issues in L2 Acquisition

Issues with Consonants:

1. In Bangla, there is a voiced palatal stop (/j/). But in Bangla, there is no voiced alveolar fricative /z/ or voiced post-alveolar fricative /ʒ/, as Bangla has no voiced fricative phoneme. However, the Bangla palatal stop [j] sounds almost identical to the English voiced palato-alveolar affricate [dʒ] probably because both are voiced palatal phonemes. On the other hand, it might be difficult for Banglai learners to differentiate between English voiced alveolar fricative [z] and voiced post-alveolar fricative [ʒ], which might sound similar to the Bangla voiced palatal stop [j] but actually represent two different phonemes of English (/z/ and /ʒ/). In this case, two separate L2 phonemes (/z/ and /ʒ/) are perceived by native Bangali learners as being similar to the one L1 phoneme /j/, and according to Best’s theory of perceptual assimilation model (PAM), ‘if the L2 contains a phonemic contrast in which both members are perceived as a single native language sound, establishing different categories for the L2 will be extremely difficult’ (Ioup 2008, p. 49). Thus, this type of discrimination, which is known as the ‘Single Category Pattern,’ would be most problematic for L2 learners where two contrastive target language sounds are mapped onto one native language sound (Major 2008; Strange and Shafer 2008, p. 170).

2. In Bangla, there is no labio-dental fricative /f/ or /v/. The closest Bangla phonemes are the aspirated labial stops /p^h/ and /b^h/, which are quite different in features of articulation from the labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/. In pronouncing the stops /p^h/ and /b^h/, the lips are pressed

together to form the stricture, which is then followed by the plosion and aspiration. However, in articulating the fricatives /f/ and /v/, there is no plosion or aspiration, but the upper teeth touch the lower lips, and the air escapes through a small passage. Therefore, it is possible for Bangali learners to mispronounce /f/ and /v/ more forcefully as aspirated stops (as they have no fricative /f/ and /v/ in their L1 Bangla), and thus, they can mix up the pronunciations of /f/ and /p^h/ and /v/ and /b^h/. In this case, according to Best's perceptual assimilation model, 'the contrasting L2 phones are perceptually assimilated to separate L1 categories,' which is known as 'two category pattern' (Strange and Shafer 2008, p. 171). In such a case, the 'discrimination' is supposed to be very easy to overcome because the contrasting L2 phonemes (for example, /f/ and /v/) are connected to similar (but not identical) L1 phonemes (for example, /p^h/ and /b^h/) (Strange and Shafer 2008, p. 171).

3. Similarly, In Bangla, there are dental stops /t^h/ and /d/, which are similar to the English dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/. However, in articulating the Bangla stops /t^h/ and /d/, there is plosion, and /t^h/ also involves aspiration while the articulation of English /θ/ and /ð/ involves no plosion or aspiration but only weak fricative noise, as the tongue-tip is placed behind the teeth (Roach 2000). Therefore, the Bangali learners might pronounce the English fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ more strongly as plosives whereas the articulation of /θ/ and /ð/ only involves weak fricative noise. According to Best's perceptual assimilation model (PAM), this is also known as 'two category pattern,' in which two contrastive L2 phonemes (/θ/ and /ð/) are 'perceptually assimilated' to two similar L1 phonemes (/t^h/ and /d/), and such a discrimination is supposed to be easier to overcome (Strange and Shafer 2008, p. 171).

4. It might be difficult for Bangali learners to pronounce the English alveolar approximant /ɹ/ in which the articulators come very close to each other, but there is no contact or touch between them (Roach 2000). In Bangla, there are two similar phonemes both of which are flaps (tongue-tip tapping once on the point of articulation): /ɽ/ and /ɽ̠/ where /ɽ/ is dental and /ɽ̠/ is retroflex, but neither of these is approximants. Therefore, it might be difficult for Bangali learners to pronounce the English approximant [ɹ] sound, and they might mispronounce this approximant [ɹ] as the flaps [ɽ] or [ɽ̠].

5. Bangla 'has complete series of aspirated and unaspirated stops both voiceless and voiced' whereas 'aspiration in English is connected for the most part with voiceless stops, and non-aspiration with voiced stops' (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976, p. 7). It might be difficult for Bangali learners to learn the rule that the English voiceless stops (/p/, /t/, /k/) are aspirated only on a certain occasion (in the beginning of a stressed syllable) because in Bangla, the unaspirated stops /p/, /t/, /k/ and their aspirated forms /p^h/, /t^h/, and /k^h/ are all distinct and separate phonemes, which can occur at any position in a word (initial, medial, or final). Therefore, it might be difficult for Bangali learners of English to learn to aspirate the English voiceless stops /p/, /t/, and /k/ at the appropriate environments. Even if they are successful in producing such aspirated forms, they might over-generalize the rules of aspiration and might end up producing aspirated forms of /p/, /t/, /k/ even in situations when they do not aspirate (for example, in a cluster with the phoneme /s/ or in word-final positions) (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976).

Issues with Vowels:

1. The length of vowels is not a phonemic feature in Bangla (Kostic & Das 1972). But in English, vowel length is a phonemic feature. Therefore, it might be problematic for Bangali learners to perceive the differences between the English long and short vowels and pronounce those appropriately in words to make it clear to a listener whether a long or short vowel is being pronounced in a specific context (for instance, “ship” or “sheep”), as their native language Bangla does not have any such feature.

2. Pronouncing the English vowels [ə] and [ɜ:] could be problematic for Bangali learners of English, as these vowels do not have any exact equivalents in Bangla (although [ə] is not a phoneme but an allophone for unstressed vowels in English, it is heavily used in English pronunciation and sounds like a mid-central vowel). Although Bangla vowel inventory does not have any mid-central vowel such as [ə] or [ɜ:], Bangla has one low-central vowel /ɐ/ (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976). Therefore, Bangali ESL learners of English might possibly have difficulty in pronouncing English words with vowels like [ə] and [ɜ:], as they might pronounce [ə] and [ɜ:] as [ɐ], the only central vowel in Bangla vowel inventory. According to Best’s PAM theory, this can also be an example of ‘single category pattern’ where two L2 sounds ([ə] and [ɜ:]) are perceived as ‘equally good exemplars’ of a single L1 sound (/ɐ/), and it is supposed to be very difficult for L2 learners to discriminate between those sounds (Strange and Shafer 2008, p. 171).

3. Pronouncing the English diphthongs might be problematic for Bangali learners of English because the vowels of Bangla, for example, /i/, /e/, /o/, /u/ are pure vowels—that is, they are pronounced without an off-glide’ (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976, p. 48). Therefore, pronouncing the English diphthongs (for example, /ɪə/, /eɪ/ etc.) where there is ‘a movement or glide from one vowel to another’ might pose difficulties for Bengali learners of English, and they might very well substitute monophthongs for diphthongs (Roach 2000, p. 21).

Syllable structure: The differences between Bangla and English syllable structures can create problems for Bangladeshi learners of English. As discussed before, English syllables can have complex consonant clusters in onsets and codas. On the contrary, in Bangla, onset consonant clusters are rare, and coda consonant clusters are non-existent (Ferguson & Chowdhury 1960). Therefore, English words with clusters of more than two consonants in onsets or codas (for example, “Next” [nekst], “Lapsed” [læpst], “String” [stɪŋ]) might be problematic for Bangladeshi learners of English to pronounce because of their unfamiliarity with such complex onset and coda clusters in their L1.

Prosodic issues in L2 acquisition: Stress

According to Roach (2000, p. 134), English has ‘stress-timed rhythm,’ that means, ‘stressed syllables will tend to occur at relatively regular intervals whether they are separated by unstressed syllables or not.’ Roach (2000, p. 96) identified three levels of stress while describing English stress system: primary stress (the ‘strongest type of stress’), secondary stress (weaker than the primary stress but stronger than unstressed syllables) and absence of any stress. English stress system is complex, and stress on a particular syllable can be dependent on whether that syllable is heavy (having a long vowel, or diphthong, or a vowel followed by a coda) or light (having a short vowel without any coda), whether a word is morphologically simple or complex (having one

or more affixes or a compound word), or what the historical origin (French, German, Latin etc.) or the grammatical category of a particular word (noun, verb, adjective etc.) is (Roach 2000).

On the contrary, in Bangla language, ‘all syllables of a multi-syllabic Bengali word are, for all practical purposes, stressed equally’ (Dimock, Bhattacharji & Chatterjee 1976, p. 54). Bangla seems to have a ‘syllable-timed rhythm’ in which all syllables ‘tend to occur at regular time-intervals’ (Roach 2000, p. 135). Thus, in Bangla, there is no distinction between syllables with primary, secondary, or no stress. Therefore, it might be difficult for Bangali ESL learners to master the accent of English with correct stress pattern, as their L1 lacks such stress-timed rhythm, which is a characteristic of English. Therefore, Bangali learners might end up stressing all English-syllables equally while speaking in English, thus, having a strong foreign accent. Additionally, Bangladeshi ESL learners might also have difficulty in hearing the unstressed syllables (for example, the initial unstressed syllables in words like ‘around’ [ə 'raʊnd] or ‘about’ [ə 'baʊt]) in casual native speech, which might hinder their ability to successfully communicate with native English speakers.

Possible Pedagogical Approaches to Facilitate Bangali Learners’ Acquisition of English Pronunciation

1. To teach learners the correct pronunciations of English fricatives such as /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, and /ʒ/, teachers can explain learners how these phonemes are pronounced. For example, teachers can explain that the upper teeth should be in touch with lower lip in pronouncing /f/ and /v/ (explaining that the lips should not be pressed together as in Bangla /p^h/ and /b^h/). Teachers can act as role-models in this case, as they can model the correct pronunciations of those phonemes to learners; if possible, learners should also be exposed to native speakers pronouncing those sounds so that they can build up the accurate mental models of those sounds. Teachers can also use visual illustrations to show learners the differences in articulation between, for example, /f/ and /p^h/, /v/ and /b^h/, /θ/ and /t^h/, /ð/ and /d/, /z/ and /ʒ/, and /ʒ/ and /ʒ/. Such use of pictures or visual illustrations of articulators could help learners perceive how those Bangla and English phonemes, which sound similar (but are actually different), are pronounced differently. Thus, such “explicit instruction” of the pronunciation of non-native sounds could help, as learners need to spend their effort to acquire those sounds (Bradlow 2008, p. 287).

Teachers can also use minimal pairs to help learners perceive the differences in the pronunciation of different English phonemes. For example, teachers can use minimal pairs to help learners practice the correct pronunciations of the target sounds [z] and [ʒ]. In this regard, presenting these sounds in a variety of phonetic contexts (beginning, middle, end of words) would be helpful for learners because when learners are presented with the target sounds in variable or different contexts, they can develop their sensitivity to perceive necessary contrasts in those sounds. Some of these minimal pairs could be like the following:

Composer [kəmˈpəʊzər] (a person who composes)

Composure [kəmˈpəʊzər] (calmness)

Rues [ruːz] (to feel sorrow or regret)

Rouge [ruːʒ] (a kind of cosmetics)

Such minimal pairs could also be placed in the context of longer texts to facilitate learners' successful acquisition of the target sounds because practicing 'contextualized speech samples' (for example, 'full sentences and larger discourse units') rather than 'isolated words' are more helpful in this regard (Bradlow 2008, p. 301). Thus, teachers can use tongue-twisters like the following:

"A composer composes in composure."

"She rues the loss of the rouge."

Minimal pairs can also be used to help learners perceive the differences between English long and short vowels. In this regard, teachers can use minimal pairs like the following:

Still [sti:l] (motionless)

Steel [sti:l] (a form of iron)

Bid [bɪd] (to command/direct)

Bead [bi:d] (an ornamental part of necklace)

Additionally, recordings of multiple native speakers pronouncing multiple words or sentences with the target sounds such as the fricatives [z] and [ʒ] can be used with learners so that they can perceive the exact pronunciations of those phonemes in different contexts and can attempt repeatedly to produce those themselves. Such 'high variability approach' (as it involves multiple words/sentences produced by multiple speakers) can help learners perceive those target sounds when used by any other speaker, and such perceptual ability could ultimately assist learners in accurate production of the target sounds (Bradlow 2008, p. 299). As classroom activities, learners can be asked to identify (from among a given sample of minimal pairs) which words are pronounced with which phoneme (for example, /z/ or /ʒ/), and they can also be asked to discriminate between different words (containing the target sounds) by pronouncing those correctly. While designing such activities, care should be taken so that learners are gradually introduced from easier to more difficult stimuli (Bradlow 2008).

2. To help beginner or intermediate level learners master the rules of aspiration, teachers can introduce them to the following English sounds: [p], [t], [k], [p^h], [t^h], [k^h]. Then, teachers can prepare a list of example words (possibly accompanied with images) with the phonemes /p/, /t/, and /k/ at different positions of words (initial, medial, and final), and they can show learners which of the above-mentioned six sounds should occur when. For example:

Pan	Spin	Hoop
Top	Stop	Light
Car	Scar	Back.

Teachers can model the correct pronunciation of these words by showing that "Pan" should be pronounced as [p^hæn], but "Spin" and "Hoop" should be pronounced as [spɪn] and [hɒp] respectively, and they can do the same with other words in the list. Learners can imitate teachers (follow the correct pronunciations of the voiceless stops) while reading such word-lists aloud. Such word-lists should contain as many words as possible so that learners can get enough opportunities to practice producing the aspirated and unaspirated stops of English in appropriate environments without being introduced to the complex rules of aspiration. However, advanced level learners

could be introduced to the rules of aspiration of English stops, as according to Bradlow (2008), instruction and effortful learning can help L2 learners acquire the non-native sound contrasts.

3. For young learners, stress can be taught as a property of individual words, and thus, learners would learn to pronounce English words with the correct stress pattern at the same time they are learning the meanings and use of those words (Roach 2000). The more learners can practice speaking English words with the correct stress pattern, the better their accent will be, as after puberty, adults have to learn a foreign language 'through a conscious and labored effort' (Gass and Selinker 2008, p. 406).

Computer-based technologies and videos can also be used to help learners perceive the pitch contour or stress patterns of English speech because 'visual display of a pitch contour' can more effectively facilitate learners' production of English accent than 'auditory-only input' (Chun, Hardison & Pennington 2008, p. 330). Thus, computer software can be used to provide learners with visualization of the pitch contour of their own speech (words/sentences or longer discourse), which can help both learners and teachers assess how their accents approximated to that of a native speaker, and then, teachers can provide learners with necessary feedback to improve their perception and production of stress patterns of English. Such visual input can also help learners improve their use of stress and intonation patterns in longer discourse, as in natural contexts, more often they have to produce connected speech than isolated words/sentences (Chun, Hardison & Pennington 2008). However, successful use of technology in classroom depends on several variables such as availability of technological resources, availability of time, proficiency of instructors, and so forth. Learners can also be encouraged to watch English movies, listen to English news or other programs (such as talk shows) on radio/television or You-Tube, which can help them perceive the stress patterns in rapid English speech. If possible, learners should be given the opportunity to interact with native English speakers that can help improve their ability to comprehend casual native speech and to make their own speech comprehensible to a native speaker. Thus, the aim or focus of pronunciation teaching should be to 'promote intelligibility' of learners' speech and to improve their comprehension level of casual native speech so that these can ultimately have positive impacts on their ability to communicate successfully with native or proficient non-native speakers of English (Munro 2008, p. 197).

Conclusion

This project discusses the differences between Bangla and English phonology, which could create problems for Bangali learners of English as an L2. This study also proposes some pedagogical approaches for facilitating Bangali learners' acquisition of those aspects of English pronunciation with which they are unfamiliar in their L1 Bangla. In proposing the pedagogical approaches, the focus is on increasing the comprehensibility or intelligibility of learners' speech that can help them in successful communications with others in English. However, this study considers the phonological patterns of only the standard colloquial Bangla. But there are many dialectal variations of Bangla (with rich literature) based on different districts of Bangladesh (for example, Chittagong and Sylhet), which follow quite different phonological patterns than the standard colloquial Bangla. Investigating what kind of issues the speakers of Chittagonian Bangla or Sylheti Bangla might have in

pronouncing the English phonemes might be an interesting area of research for future studies.

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The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The logo is partially enclosed by a large, light blue circular arc that starts from the bottom left and curves around the right side. A smaller, light red circular arc is positioned above the 'iafor' text, partially overlapping the blue arc.

The Problem of Chinese Language Interference in Written English

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Abstract

Quite a number of studies show that when writing in English a lot of EFL students are influenced by their first language. This review focuses on *the most common written English errors that are typical of those EFL learners whose mother tongue is Chinese*. The selection of the “problem areas” to discuss in this survey is determined by an analysis of more than a hundred 5-paragraph essays written by second year students in a selected university in southern Taiwan. All students are EFL majors. The error analysis revealed two major groups of L1 interference errors: (a) errors caused by the rhetorical differences between Chinese and English in terms of an essay organizational structure, content, and argumentation and (b) grammatical and lexical errors caused by considerable differences in the structures of the two languages. Results confirm many of the findings made in similar studies earlier. However, this study specifies a few L1 interference errors, typical of Taiwanese EFL student-writers, which were not discussed previously. The paper concludes with offering a number of suggestions on how to help native Chinese speakers limit certain errors when they write in English.

Key words: L1 and L2, L1 interference, L1 interference errors

Introduction

Taiwan, alongside with other Asian nations facing the challenges of globalization, puts the development of the EFL proficiency at the front line of its educational policies. English is the main foreign language taught at the elementary, secondary and tertiary level educational institutions around Taiwan. The English language study has become a fashionable trend and also business (Liu 2002). Moreover, the focus of attention has recently shifted from developing reading and listening skills to developing speaking and writing skills. Competence in writing and speaking in English has become one of the crucial requirements in the Taiwanese job market. Good writers and speakers of English have a higher chance of making a successful career especially in companies working at the international stage. So we are witnessing a new situation in the sphere of EFL education in Taiwan that sets new educational tasks, requires new approaches, and causes problems the teaching and learning communities have to deal with.

There are a lot of western instructors teaching English in Taiwan: target culture instructors (native speakers of English) and instructors representing neither the target culture nor the source culture (i.e., they are qualified EFL teachers speaking English as a foreign language). Both categories are referred to as “foreign teachers” in Taiwan. Most of them do not speak Mandarin Chinese, the official language of Taiwan and the first language of their students, or have a very limited knowledge of it. On the whole, they find their teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) experience in Taiwan pleasant and satisfying. The majority of the students are motivated, hardworking, and eager to learn English. There are some frustrations though. One of the common complaints is a great number of errors students make when they speak and especially write in English. Moreover, they tend to make the same mistakes repeatedly. Besides, Taiwanese students very often use the rules and structures of Mandarin Chinese in their communication in English. This automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language is defined as the native language (L1) interference (Dulay et.al 1982). It results in inaccurate or inauthentic English that is often called “ungrammatical English”, “broken English” or, in case with those learners whose native language is Chinese, “Chinglish”. The errors caused by the influence of the first language are named L1 interference or L1 transfer errors. Even though L1 interference is not a new trend in foreign language acquisition studies, it is an important factor to be considered in EFL instruction, particularly in the case when the instructor’s knowledge of the students’ native language is insufficient.

Literature review

A number of studies have proved that adult learners have more difficulties in learning a second language compared to young learners. As a rule, an adult person learns a second language partially utilizing structures and meanings of the first language (Albert & Opler, 1978; Larson-Freeman & Long, 1991). On the whole, a learner demonstrates less fluency in L2, and the expressions and structures used in L2 often suggest those typical of L1 (Beebe 1988). Other researches point out the importance of the relationship between L1 and L2. The more dissimilarity between L2 and L1 structures the more learning difficulties there might appear, as it is challenging for the learner to comprehend a completely new usage. Hence the learner resorts to L1

structures for help (Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1983; Bialystok, 1990; Dordick, 1996). Dechert (1983) has pointed out that the greater the structural differences between the two languages, the greater the number of transfer errors made in L2.

In terms of academic or argumentative writing, the conventional essay structure presented by all English Writing textbooks includes three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction ends with a thesis statement that should be restated in the conclusion, and the body paragraphs begin with topic sentences. To many EFL learners, this structure is dissimilar to the one they are used to when learning writing in L1. As Y. Kachru (2001) has noticed, “unlike the native speakers of English, who expect expository prose to be developed as a sequence of claims and (direct) Aristotelian proofs, non-native users of English employ rhetorical progression of text that are incongruous with the expectations of the Anglo-American reader”. As distinct from the traditional English writing structure, the Chinese writing style tends to have the point of the essay be discretely inferred from the text rather than explicitly stated and continuously reinforced. Besides, the level of originality and creativity of many Chinese learners of English is minimal as they often borrow patterns from textbooks and express few opinions in their compositions (Smerdov, 2011).

There are a few studies devoted to the basic rhetorical differences between English and Chinese that may shed light upon some common L1 transfer errors typical for Chinese students' written compositions. First of all, unlike the three-part English structure, the basic Chinese composition structure has four constituents that are beginning, following, turning, and conclusion. In the third part, the whole essay turns to another direction, i.e. the essay topic is discussed from a different perspective, which aims at surprising the reader. The conclusion expresses a particular point, which is related to the previous paragraph and refers to the theme of the essay. A good conclusion is powerful; it provides the reader with a great insight into the theme as the thesis is often placed in the last paragraph. In case the thesis is placed before the conclusion, the conclusion does not restate the thesis but ends with a statement unrelated to the thesis. (Hinds, 1990; Chen 2006). The Chinese writer organizes ideas inductively, i.e. the author first mentions specific details for the main argument and then introduces the main argument while the English writer first introduces the main argument and then provides supporting details. The tone of Chinese writing is reserved while English writing is straightforward. Chinese writers are not expected to express opinions directly. That's why to English readers Chinese writing may seem too ambiguous (Chen, 2006). In Chinese writing, an author leaves it to readers to interpret the content, understand the deeper meanings and appreciate the artistic beauty. English writing requires the writer to make the ideas clear and specific (Wang, 1994). That is why a thesis statement and topic sentences are required to help the reader clearly understand the writer's main points. Wu and Rubin (2000) have found out that Taiwanese students hardly use personal stories or share personal experiences to support their arguments unlike their American counterparts (Chen 2006). Another rhetorical difference is the use of quotations. Chinese writers tend to use proverbs, maxims, and fixed phrases in their writing often introducing them by the phrase “as the saying goes” while English writers tend to use original diction (Chen 2006).

Statement of the Problem

The Chinese and English languages are worlds apart. When students whose mother

tongue is Chinese have to express their thoughts in English, they tend to ignore the differences between the two languages. This tendency becomes notably obvious in the case with writing in English either for academic or professional purposes. That is why English Writing is traditionally one of the most difficult courses for Chinese EFL students (Smerdov 2011). The assertion is also true about Taiwanese tertiary level students. What is more, this is the skill in which their proficiency level is the lowest. When the students write in English, a lot of their L1 characteristics are revealed due to direct translation from Chinese into English. The result is the so-called Chinglish, an awkward mixture of Chinese and English, which is ungrammatical, and, what is more important, unintelligible, especially for a foreign teacher. Even though the errors are pointed out, most often students are unable to make corrections effectively. Error correction itself becomes a problem caused by students' inability to think in English or their unawareness of the pitfalls caused by the substantial differences between the English and Chinese writing systems. The current study discusses two aspects of the interference of Chinese language elements in students' written English including the rhetorical patterns and grammatical and lexical usage. Helping students to get rid of this negative influence of their mother tongue is a task of paramount importance for teachers of English Writing in Taiwan. The findings of the current study may be useful for EFL teachers by giving a clue to dealing with the Chinese language interference errors more effectively.

Research Objective and Research Question

The objective of the current study is to find out the most typical L1 interference errors made by Taiwanese university students in 5-paragraph argumentative essays. The 104 essays analyzed were written by the second year students in class as the final examination assignment at the end of the first semester. The two research questions the study attempts to answer are the following:

1. What are the most common interference errors caused by the rhetorical differences between L1 and L2 that Taiwanese university students make in 5-paragraph English essays?
2. What L1 interference errors on grammatical structures and lexical usage do Taiwanese students most frequently make in their English compositions?

Both qualitative and quantitative research methodology was used in this study. Besides, the action research methodology was applied as its role is becoming significant in EFL education. It makes it possible for Western EFL teachers "to explore the baggage that they have brought to their overseas teaching experiences." (Simpson, 2008), to better understand learners' needs improve the existing classroom practice. When the data were processed, the major criterion for the quantitative analysis of interference errors on the level of structure and argumentation was the number of writings in which the same kind of error appeared at least once, i.e. how many writers made the same error at least once. As for grammatical and lexical usage interference errors, the quantitative analysis was based on the frequency of the same type of error in all essays. Presumably, those errors that were made by the majority of students repeatedly, i.e. the most frequent errors, might be considered the most common L1 transfer errors. Only those errors that affected the intelligibility of the written content, i.e. made the text hard to comprehend or awkward for a foreign teacher, were in the focus of attention. Those errors that did not affect the

comprehension of a writer's ideas, such as mechanics, use of articles etc., were not taken into consideration.

The Method of Data Collection and the Participants

The sources of data for this case study included 104 writing samples. The samples were 5-paragraph essays written by second year students studying at a private university in southern Taiwan. All writers were EFL majors. The essays were students' final examination task written in class at the end of a semester. The topics were given to them beforehand, and they were allowed to make an outline and use it in class during the writing process. The students were given eighty minutes to complete the essay. The topics of the final exam essays were: *A Comparison of Two Teachers* and *One of the Most Unforgettable Days in My Life*.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of 104 essays revealed the following most common L1 transfer errors caused by the rhetorical differences between L1 and L2:

Table 1.

Essay organization structure	Frequency (from total number of essays)	%
1. The thesis statement is weak, i.e. either the topic or the controlling idea or both of them are not clearly expressed.	68	65.4%
2. The thesis is not restated in the conclusion.	48	46.2%
3. One or more body paragraphs lack topic sentences; a body paragraph begins straight from a supporting detail.	28	26.9%
4. The thesis statement cannot be found in the introduction. Instead, the main point of the essay may be expressed in the conclusion or the body.	17	16.4%
Content and argumentation		
1. The essay does not contain examples, personal stories or opinions supporting the writer's points.	56	53.8%
2. The writer does not use specific transition signals (e.g. for time, sequence, comparison and contrast etc.).	48	46.2%
3. The writer uses too general, vague and ambiguous rather than precise and specific language.	36	34.6%
4. The writer repeats the same idea within one paragraph.	23	22.1%

As it is seen from table 1, quite a number of students made errors referring to the organization of their essay. More than 65% of them failed to express either the topic or the controlling idea or both of them clearly in their thesis statement. Moreover, over 16% of them did not write the thesis statement in the introduction at all. Instead, a sentence expressing the writer's main point was placed in the conclusion or in the

body of the essay. In 46.2% of essays the thesis was not restated in the conclusion. Besides, in 26.9% of essays one or more body paragraphs lacked topic sentences, and the body paragraph started straight from a supporting detail. As for the essay content, more than a half of the writers (53.8%) did not use specific examples or personalized information to support their points. Besides, their ideas and way of expression seemed too vague to a foreign teacher (34.6% of compositions). The language utilized was too general and ambiguous rather than precise and specific: e.g., *this thing*, *this kind of behavior*, *this situation* etc. Over 46% of the students did not use specific transition signals (e.g. for time, sequence, comparison and contrast etc.) limiting the use of transitions to only simple paragraph-opening phrases such as *first*, *second*, and *third* and their varieties. There were many instances of repetition of the same idea within one paragraph (in 22.1% of essays).

The above listed gains support the suggestions made by Chen (Chen, 2006). The L1 rhetoric is very likely to interfere with Taiwanese students' composition in English. The Chinese writing style tends to have the point of the essay discretely inferred from the text rather than explicitly stated and continuously reinforced. The tone of Chinese writing is reserved, and writers are not expected to express opinions directly. That's why to English readers Chinese writing may seem too ambiguous and vague. The results of the case study also prove the idea that Taiwanese students hardly use personal stories or share personal experiences to support their arguments (Chen, 2006). Our gains also support a few findings noted by Smerdov (Smerdov, 2011): some of the influences of the Chinese language on the students' English writing are making numerous repetitions, lack of personalized information and experience-based examples to support their arguments, and a tendency to express the main idea at the end of the composition.

Generally speaking, if Taiwanese students do a writing assignment in class, their writing is more "ungrammatical" compared to that given as a home assignment. In the second case, they have an opportunity to correct errors and rework the structure of their essays by writing a second and third draft. With an in-class essay, they are deprived of this opportunity. Furthermore, the writing time is limited. That is why the errors, both L1 interference errors and L2 developmental errors, are more numerous and very hard to categorize. The material for the present case study includes only those most common L1 transfer errors that make the meaning awkward or semantically unacceptable for a foreign EFL teacher.

Table 2.

Most common grammatical and lexical usage errors	Frequency
1. Verb tense (including overgeneralized use of Present, using <i>will</i> for Present, and tense sequence)	1 821
2. Wrong words	678
3. Incomplete structures or sentences (including omitting verbs and	

omitting significant words)	659
4. Word forms (parts of speech)	398
5. Plural forms of nouns	301

It is seen from table 2 that the most common L1 interference errors made by the Taiwanese students are the wrong use of verb tenses, wrong word choice, incomplete structures, wrong word forms, and noun plurals. They were found in every or almost every essay analysed and were made by essay authors repeatedly, i.e more than once. As Dechert (Dechert,1983) has noted, the further apart L1 and L2 structures are, the higher the numbers of errors caused by the influence of L1 structures. We may suggest that the most common L1 errors presented in Table 2 reflect the most significant structural differences between Chinese and English. The system of English verb tenses seems to be one of the biggest problems for Chinese-speaking students. As distinct from English, there are no verb tenses in Chinese. The concept of the time of an action is expressed by means of adverbials. Taiwanese students tend to overgeneralize the Present Simple tense by using it for expressing the meanings of the past and future time relations. Besides, they often ignore the verb aspect (Perfect and Progressive) and the Passive Voice. Interestingly, there are a lot of instances of the future tense marker *will* used instead of the Present Simple tense. As the students said in their oral interviews, this is a direct influence of Chinese as the meaning of such sentences in Chinese refers to the future. It is also very difficult for Taiwanese students to conceive the concept of the tense sequence in a text. In spite of knowing the rule, they make numerous errors in their compositions.

The next most common L1 interference error is on word choice. Lower level students may not realize that an English word and its correspondent Chinese equivalent don't always share the same semantic register.

The third most common L1 interference error made by Taiwanese students in their essays is incomplete structures. In English, a subject-verb pair must exist for a sentence to be complete whereas the Chinese writing system does not require this; it is not necessary to use a subject and verb in every Chinese sentence. Sentence fragments of two types were found in almost every essay:

- a) an omitted verb (or copula),
- b) significant words omitted.

Besides, students often treat clauses or long introductory phrases as independent sentences and separate them from other sentences with a period.

Another most typical L1 interference error is the misuse of word forms (or parts of speech). Parts of speech are not marked explicitly in Chinese. That is why, sometimes, the same word can be used as different parts of speech in different contexts. Under the influence of Chinese, Taiwanese writers very often make no strict distinction between parts of speech. Hence, there is a lot of confusion between verbs and nouns, nouns and adjectives, adjectives and adverbs and, above all, passive and active participles are confused.

The fifth most common L1 transfer error is on the plural form of nouns. Chinese is not a flexional language. That is why most Chinese EFL speakers omit the ending –s

in the plural forms of nouns and verbs used in the 3rd person singular of the Present Simple tense. The subject-verb and adjective-noun agreement in a sentence is often broken, too. They also tend to use uncountable nouns as countables.

The gains of this study lend support to some of the findings made by Darus (2009) who has analysed common errors made by Chinese students in English essays. According to the researcher, errors on tenses are among the four most common types, while errors on word forms are also not infrequent.

Some other typical interference errors that make the written content awkward from the view point of a foreign teacher are caused by overreliance on direct translation from Chinese. When students were asked to comment on examples of those errors during an oral interview, most of them said something like “This is what we say in Chinese”, “We use this phrase/structure in Chinese” or “It is OK to put it like this in Chinese”. Though these errors are specific, they may be called typical as they were observed in 20% or more of all essays analysed. They are as follows:

- a. Lexical tautology (two or more same-root words in a close context).
- b. Lexical redundancy (faulty use of larger passages for short and precise structures).
- c. Use of the modal *let* instead of *make*.
- d. Use of the direct translation of the Chinese sentence-opening phrase “*In my opinion, I think...*”

Conclusion and Practical Suggestions

The purpose of this study has been the most observable L1 interference effects on Taiwanese students’ writing in English from the viewpoint of a foreign EFL teacher. An important implication of this study is the fact that considerable differences between the structures of L1 and L2 reflect on the learners’ writing in L2.

The study findings show that Taiwanese student writers’ compositions are largely influenced by the features of the Chinese rhetorical style, namely its compositional structure, indirection, repetition, and lack of personal anecdotes or opinions. Transition signals are very often left out as it is the readers’ responsibility to infer the connections between essay parts. This study also shows that the most common L1 interference errors affecting the semantic comprehension of a written text by a foreign reader are misuse of tenses, incomplete structures, and wrong word forms. Meanwhile, other typical instances of L1 influence found in Taiwanese writers’ compositions include the use of uncountable nouns as countables, lexical tautology, lexical redundancy, use of the modal *let* instead of *make*, and a sentence opening phrase “*In my opinion, I think...*”.

Thus, it can be seen that Taiwanese EFL students are influenced by, their L1 rhetorical, grammatical and lexical features when writing in English. Having gaps in the knowledge of L2 structures, they greatly rely on a word-for-word translation from Chinese in the process of composing essays. There is an assumption that a word-for-word translation or “thinking in the mother tongue” is characteristic of learners with a lower proficiency level. The farther they progress to L2 mastery the less they resort to direct translation while moving to an ability “to think” in L2 (Blum-Kulka and Levenston, 1983).

It is of primary importance for an international teacher of English writing to be aware of the difficulties students face with in the process of learning in order to help them to overcome the difficulties and make progress. The researchers' own practice of teaching English composition to Taiwanese students includes several methods:

1. **Noticing.** A teacher should let the students be aware of and then notice their most common errors caused by the differences between L1 and L2. In this respect, a continuous focus of students' attention on the major structural differences between their native language and English is needed. For example, it might be a handout in a form of a list of errors with examples that students keep in their writing portfolio. When students have to write an essay, they may be given a task to focus on one or two specific kinds of errors while editing their first draft, e.g. "check whether you used tenses correctly in every sentence", "check whether each sentence in your paper is complete".
2. **Adjusting the course book content to the needs of your particular classroom.** Most of the textbooks used in English Writing classrooms nowadays are targeted for international student audience and used internationally. Hence, their content sometimes needs to be modified to meet the concrete needs of concrete learners. For example, though the books of the "Great Writing" series popular with EFL teachers in Taiwan include various error correction assignments, not all of them are relevant for university students. Some may be too simple, others focus on the types of errors that Taiwanese students seldom or never make. Besides, many students find the explanations given in the book too long and vague. They prefer a more concise and concrete way of material presentation supported by visual images as well.
3. **Including error correction assignments into classroom practices.** The assignments designed by the teacher may be various: on one type of error or miscellaneous, single sentences or texts, gap-filling assignments of finding and correcting errors, editing your own essay or peer-editing etc. Though there is no clear evidence that EFL students benefit from correction of errors, there is no reason why it could not be made clear to students, especially those who are EFL majors, that they are expected, for instance, to write verbs in the correct tense, and errors in this aspect will influence their grade.

The findings of this study have implications for English Language teaching at universities in Taiwan. Nevertheless, it is recommended that further research be carried out, involving other aspects of L1 interference and additional institutions.

Limitations of the Study

The present study definitely suffers from several limitations. It is limited to only one form of written work, i.e. the 5-paragraph essay, and only two types (a compare-contrast essay and a narrative essay). A more detailed quantitative analysis involving a wider range of error types is needed. Therefore, the study cannot give any conclusive evidence regarding other age groups and proficiency levels of Chinese-speaking students.

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Integrating Presentation Skills Into Business English Classes

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Abstract

With today's enormous pool of information expanding every minute, employers requiring of applicants to possess practical skills, for example, presentation skills and with no change of the number of academic hours for studies in sight, it is absolutely imperative to incorporate the element of practical skills into the core subject, in this case, Business English (BE). Universities abroad practice teaching these two subjects (Business English and presentation skills) separately. Another motivating factor for this integration to occur is the final English exam format for HSE students (HSE – "Higher School of Economics"). They are to present the synopsis of their graduation project in English. Thus, the faculty has found it important to introduce the training of presentation skills into BE classes for second-year students. The paper looks into the reasons for choosing sophomores over senior students and picking BE instead of GE (General English), ESP or Media Classes. It also dwells on the algorithm of incorporating presentation skills into the syllabus. Finally, it describes the preliminary results of this integration (the trial courses started in the autumn of 2012).

Training presentation skills is aimed at “developing the communication skills of would-be speakers as well as enhancing the existing skills of professional speakers” [<http://www.businesstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/public-speaking-training-22-11-07.php>] and these skills are usually trained separately.

“The dominant approach to this kind of training is the situational and practical approach. In this kind of public speaking training, the participants are given different scenarios and themes to speak on. Public speaking training uses both repetitive and varied learning methodologies, both in the cognitive and the psychomotor domains. It has two main objectives, the first of which is to eliminate, or at least minimize, the fear and anxiety of being on stage. The second objective is to equip the participants with guides to verbal and non-verbal mannerisms that will help them break through the perceived difficulty of public speaking” [<http://www.businesstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/public-speaking-training-22-11-07.php>].

With today’s enormous pool of information expanding every minute, employers requiring of applicants to possess practical skills, for example, presentation skills and with no change of the number of academic hours for studies in sight, it is absolutely imperative to incorporate the element of practical skills into the core subject, in this case, Business English (BE). Universities abroad practice teaching these two subjects (Business English and presentation skills) separately. Another motivating factor for this integration to occur in Higher School of Economics is the final English exam format. Students are to present the synopsis of their graduation project in English. Thus, the faculty has found it important to introduce the training of presentation skills into BE classes for second-year students.

The textbooks: the BE classes were conducted using the textbook “English for Business Studies” by Ian Mackenzie (the 2nd edition) once a week. It was agreed to take certain parts of the textbook “English for Presentations” by Maria Grussendorf to teach presentation skills once in two weeks.

It was suggested that presentation skills will be integrated into the BE course for sophomores. The reasons why second-year students were chosen are as follows:

- 1) The curriculum comprises four years. But in the middle of the fourth year of studies students are to present the synopsis of their term paper in English. Thus, by that time they should already have good presentation skills and plenty of time to practice to present their reports in public. Therefore, fourth-year students were excluded from the project.
- 2) First-year students were also excluded as, first, they need time to get used to the studying practices, then, their knowledge of English may vary which creates inequality among students regarding their ability to express their thoughts in English freely, without visible constraints and that poses a triple problem for them: learning new business concepts, learning English in a more profound way and learning to present. It was assumed to be too much workload to handle for freshmen.
- 3) So, the debate concerned whether the faculty should incorporate presentation skills in the second or third year of studies. In both years students have BE classes. The decision was made in favour of sophomores for two reasons: a)

the integration will take approximately half a year and students need plenty of time and topics to practice to present in public. The earlier the incorporation starts, the more opportunities students will have and b) the third year of studies was secured to teach academic writing skills so that students are fully equipped to write and present their final term paper in the fourth year of their studies.

The reasons why BE classes were chosen are the following:

- 1) The curriculum comprises General English (GE) in the first and second years of studies, BE in the first three years of studies, Country Studies (CS) in the second year of studies, Media Discourse in the third year of studies, ESP and BEC classes in the fourth year of studies. As the project was agreed to start with second-year students, the faculty was to decide whether to choose GE, BE or CS classes.

CS classes were discarded as this course is very extensive and intensive that it was difficult to incorporate teaching presentation skills without either shortening the course considerably or shifting part of the material taught for a student's individual studies which will lead to overloading students with extra-curriculum assignments and, consequently, possible worsening of their emotional well-being and / or academic performance.

- 1) After graduating students will be specializing in Economics or International Affairs (the department provides instruction for two specialties). As GE will not be students' field of expertise, it was considered not wise to teach students to present on topics which will hardly ever become the focus of their attention at work.
- 2) Besides, GE classes last only for two years which means that in the third year students would have to switch to a new course to practice their presentation skills. To ensure continuity it was decided to choose BE classes as, first, second-year students are already familiar with the basic business concepts and they will have more topics to present on in the third year of studies as BE classes continue for three years.

After studying a number of textbooks on presentation skills it was concluded that there are nine main points about a presentation to consider:

- 1) preparation
- 2) the speaker's behavior when presenting (posture, hands, etc.)
- 3) the introduction (its structure);
- 4) signposting
- 5) linking words
- 6) summary and conclusion
- 7) visuals
- 8) describing graphs
- 9) handling questions

As a result, eight classes every two weeks cover the first term. So, by its end students were supposed to be familiar with the theory and to have done some practice. The full-time practice was scheduled for the second term.

Now the nine points will be looked at in more detail. The first point is preparation. "People say that overpreparation leads to fear of public speaking. It will have adverse effects on one's presentation skills. Concerning oneself too much with preparation will create stress, which will affect the presenting ability" [<http://www.businesstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/how-to-improve-your->

[presentation-skills-22-08-08.php](http://www.businessstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/change-your-attitude-to-overcome-fear-of-public-speaking-14-07-08.php)]. But this does not mean that no preparation is needed to talk in front of the public. Even great public speakers will prepare their speech and practice before they present it to the audience” [<http://www.businessstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/change-your-attitude-to-overcome-fear-of-public-speaking-14-07-08.php>]. It helps to eliminate a little bit the element of unpredictability, to structure the thoughts and, consequently, to make the speech easier to comprehend and to be within the time frame imposed on by the circumstances. The preparation includes not only writing the speech itself but also getting ready to ‘come on stage’.

As for writing the speech, there are three main points to make. First, the topic a presenter has chosen should be the one he/she feels strongly about. As Brian Tracy, a professional speaker, says in his blog “It is to think through the subjects that have had an extraordinary impact on you, the subjects that you would like to share with others because you intensely feel that others could benefit from your knowledge” [<http://www.briantracy.com/blog/personal-success/effective-communication-public-speaking-and-presentation-skills/>] or . “unless you are convinced about the content yourselves it is difficult to carry the audience with you” [<http://www.businessstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/proper-elements-of-presentation-skills-08-09-08.php>]. Second, before starting to write, the presenter should answer the following questions: “Who is my audience, and what effect do I want my talk to have upon them?”. People believe that it is enough to have an entertaining and interesting presentation to grab the audience’s attention. True it may be, but the talk must also have an objective. Besides, “the required content must be customized to that particular audience for effective results. Wrong targeting [...] will render the presentation useless” [<http://www.businessstrainingdirect.co.uk/references/proper-elements-of-presentation-skills-08-09-08.php>]. And, third, the speaker should do the research. He/she might have enough knowledge on the topic to share but it would be wise to display a variety of opinions expressed by experts in the field.

As for the second part of the preparation stage, it can further be divided into two sections: one has to get ready, first, emotionally and, second, technically. Every second person has a stage fright. According to Brian Tracy, “Fifty-four percent of American adults rank public speaking ahead of fear of death among life’s major fears” [<http://www.briantracy.com/blog/personal-success/effective-communication-public-speaking-and-presentation-skills/>], that is why, first, one has to overcome this fear. Practice makes perfect. Thus, by practicing making presentation in general and by practicing the speech in question one can boost his/her confidence and reduce the amount of stress one might experience when performing. The second thing one has to take into consideration is to familiarize oneself with the surroundings he/she is going to present in, if it is possible: to check the room and equipment, try out the presentation so as to see whether one can carry the voice far, etc.

he way to convey this information to students varies. One can deliver a lecture or ask to do extensive reading before holding a discussion on the topic. The choice depends on the time available and the group.

The second point is the way the speaker behaves when presenting. The presenter’s speech may be brilliant but if he/she is stiff and monotonous or, on the opposite, too lively and high-pitched, it may spoil the positive impression from his/her talk.

Consequently, one should also know how to stand, what to do with his/her hands and how to deliver his/her voice. Unless one is born an excellent public speaker, the right way to deliver the speech comes with practice. Few students perform well the first couple of times that is why ticking points off for poor prosodic and non-verbal performance at the very beginning is counter-productive.

The first two topics – the preparation and the behavior when presenting – are covered at one lesson. No presentation is yet required from students.

The third point is introduction. It is mostly for the benefit of the audience: it presents the speaker and his/her affiliation, the time allotted for the speech and the time to ask questions and, most importantly, the outline of his/her talk that is what to expect.

Students are told a seven-point structure of the introduction, that is followed by a discussion what each point covers (the professor refers them to the textbook by Maria Grussendorf). At home they prepare an introduction for a talk on the topic offered to them by their professor. The topic is based on the issues students tackle when studying the text-book by Ian Mackenzie at that moment (this textbook will serve as a reference point for topics throughout the whole course on presentation skills). This year they happened to be discussing different types of company structure that is why they were asked to prepare a talk about the structure of any company they choose or of the university they are currently studying at.

The fourth and fifth points are signposting and linking words. Presentation skills sometimes are regarded in their narrow sense that is how to act out the speech in front of an audience live. But presenting is not only about performing, it is also about arranging your thoughts and ideas in a certain sequence. Signposting signals the transitions from one part of the talk to another and, thus, keeps the speech clear and lucid. Linking words provide logical links and, thus, show the relations between ideas in the talk. Although they are separate topics and are covered in two classes, only after that students are asked to prepare a talk on one of the topics of their choice from the topics offered. They are required to employ a wide range of linking words and signposting. Already at this stage they receive appraisal (not assessment). The professor can do it the first time to re-enforce the assessment criteria that have been established and discussed previously. The other option is to ask students to evaluate their peer's performance and comment on it. It is essential to enhance the idea that when evaluating they should comment not only on what was wrong but also on what was good in the presentation.

The sixth point is writing the summary and conclusion. Some people do not see the difference between them, thus, rendering it obligatory to teach this difference. The summary is especially necessary if the talk is long. At the beginning the speaker has told the audience what he/she is going to talk about. At the end it is time to recap to remind the audience what he/she has told them. In other words, the summary is re-phrased introduction of the talk that one has presented at the beginning. The conclusion, on the other hand, means outlining inferences and prospects of his/her further research. After studying the difference students prepare a complete talk with the introduction, the main body in which they use linking words and signposting, the summary and conclusion. At this stage besides peer-to-peer appraisal they receive professor's assessment with explanation of the grade.

The seventh and eighth points are designing visuals and describing graphs. Visuals should serve as scaffolding for the speaker but they should not dominate or copy word for word what one is saying. As entertaining as it may sound, trainers / coaches speak of 'death by PowerPoint'. PowerPoint must be used to emphasize ideas rather than as the meat of the speech. Graphs are a part of the speaker's visuals and there are certain rules how to describe them so as to sound logical and comprehensible. This includes not only the algorithm of presenting the message of a graph, a bar or a pie chart but also knowledge and ability to use synonyms so as to vary one's vocabulary and avoid monotonous repetition. These two topics are covered separately and students are offered an opportunity to present after each lesson. Thus, after learning the rules of designing slides students prepare a talk accompanied with a PowerPoint presentation and, after mastering the vocabulary and the structure when describing graphs they make a presentation that involves describing trends or statistics. At this point the professor may try peer-to-peer assessment. It can be done anonymously or not.

Handling questions (the last point) frightens most presenters as it introduces the element of unpredictability into one's presentation and no one wants to make a blunder when answering questions. So, certain tips how to tackle questions are in order. All the rules can be divided into two groups. First, one can prepare for the Q&A session by predicting possible questions or by pre-arranging questions that will be asked by 'people from the audience' but who, in fact, will be the speaker's colleagues or friends. Second, one should bear in mind certain tactics how to respond to different kinds of questions: hostile ones, comments, irrelevant ones, too long ones and so on. A good list of guidelines is given here: [http://www.bdv-skills.co.uk/Question And Answer Sessions.html](http://www.bdv-skills.co.uk/Question%20And%20Answer%20Sessions.html). At this phase to facilitate the Q&A session for students the professor can offer them to formulate their own topic based on the issue they are tackling at present at BE classes. In this case the student will know the angle from which to cover the topic better and he/she will be more enthusiastic about it than before when topics were handed out by the professor.

Two types of presentation were tried: live and recorded (PowerPoint presentation accompanied by an audio).

As it is agreed that one should start with the easiest and one should face fewer challenges at the beginning, it was decided to start with a recorded version (after students had mastered the structure of the introduction by presenting it in class). On the one hand, it lets students take their time when recording their talk, thus, eliminating any imperfections in the speech itself or the performance, they do not experience as much agitation as in front of an audience and it eliminates the only unpredictable element of the presentation that is handling questions as they are not interacting with an audience live. On the other hand, assuming that these young people, being born in a digital era, are digital natives is wrong. "The truth is that they tend to be natives at digital consumption, not digital production" [Lind 2012]. Thus, they encounter a new challenge: to master preparing presentations with sound-recording. After a couple of presentations prepared in this way students were asked to switch to live performances.

At the end of the academic year students were surveyed for their insight into the instruction they had received on presentation skills and the way it was done. The

questions they were asked are the following: 1) Was the information shared by the professor sufficient to learn to make presentations successfully?; 2) Was the way it was delivered the most appropriate and comprehensible?; 3) Did you have enough practice?; 4) Do you approve of introducing recorded presentations into the course or learning it is unnecessary?; 5) What would you like to change in or add to the course?; 6) Do you find learning to present useful for your career prospects?

Answering the first two questions, students agreed that the information provided was enough and the way it was conveyed was appropriate. The attitude to the amount of practice they were exposed to differed. Every student had an opportunity to prepare three presentations in the first term and three more in the second one. Some students found it sufficient while others thought they needed more practice. The reason for this difference is not only whether these presentations were successful or not. Mostly it can be explained by students' personalities: outgoing and open students were eager to make more presentations than they had a chance to while reserved and self-conscious ones were satisfied with this number. As for question 4, almost 90% of the students (88.7%) surveyed did not approve of introducing a recorded presentation, as they saw no apparent use of it in their future careers. Besides many of them faced technical challenge when recording their presentations. To question 5 several tips and observations were received. First, students expressed concern that they started making presentations too early and recommended to allow more time for analysis of already existing presentations of prominent people. Second, in some groups the idea of peer-to-peer appraisal and assessment did not appeal to students as they were afraid of offending their group-mates and thought that giving grades should be exclusively the professor's job. Third, many students (around 76%) wished they could offer the topics for presentations themselves (not handed down by the professor). As for usefulness of these skills for their career all the students agreed with this statement in one way or another: some students believed that they would be directly involved in arranging presentations in their prospective job, others thought that they might have to do it some time in the future.

The results of the pilot project are fairly good: by the end of the second term students have mastered the structure and vocabulary of a presentation very well. The fear of public speaking expressed by many students before lessened due to a fair amount of practice and students believed that if they continue making presentations they might get rid of it for good. Students were satisfied with the course and offered some features that can improve it for future sophomores. Lind's words about his project can be repeated here that "this course is highly valuable to a student's all-round development, in its teaching of critical thinking, meaning making, argument development, persuasion theory, gestural nuance, and so on" [Lind 2012].

This project proves that public speaking is an art that can be acquired, rather than something that one is born with.

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Culturally Marked Information: Challenges and Solutions in Language Teaching.

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Abstract

The paper deals with analysis of the causes of existing challenges and defining ways of solving problems in interpreting culturally marked information while teaching English as a foreign language. In the modern world contemporary information technologies facilitate obtaining information from various sources. Rapid development of social networks allows students to communicate easily with representatives of different cultures thus gaining new knowledge about the world beyond their country and society. On the contrary, such rush of information and time shortage for consuming it often results in lack of students' ability to analyse facts, phenomena of various cultures when they come across them, which in its turn can result in skipping such kind of information or misinterpreting it. Failure to understand and interpret such information while performing analysis of the text, doing translation or communicating can result in poor academic performance.

The author studies the problem, concentrating on defining effective ways of resolving difficulties. In the course of research the following major challenges are defined: language units (metaphors, idioms, slang, specific terms), intertextual elements (literary allusions, quotations etc.), specific factual data characteristic of a certain culture or society (e.g. political system, economy, rules of society life, etiquette etc.), historical references (dates, events, names), music and arts references, non-verbal means of communication including facial expressions and gestures peculiar to certain cultures. Based on her practical work experience the author suggests various types of learning activities aimed at development of students' skills of analysing culturally marked information, e.g. annotated translation, multi-subject projects, integrated lessons.

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The paper deals with analysis of the causes of existing challenges and defining ways of solving problems in interpreting culturally marked information while teaching English as a foreign language.

In the modern world contemporary information technologies facilitate obtaining information from various sources. Rapid development of social networks allows students to communicate easily with representatives of different cultures thus gaining new knowledge about the world beyond their country and society. On the contrary, such rush of information and time shortage for consuming it often results in lack of students' ability to analyze facts, phenomena of various cultures when they come across them, which in its turn can result in skipping such kind of information or misinterpreting it. Sadly, this tendency can be observed not just in everyday communication, but in the classroom. Failure to understand and interpret such information while performing analysis of the text, doing translation or communicating can result in poor academic performance.

According to the curriculum, the main aim of foreign language learning is forming communicative competence. One of its elements is sociocultural competence. It includes knowledge of country studies, culture studies, background knowledge etc. and ability of using this knowledge in the process of communication with representatives of different cultures. Sociocultural competence is that aspect of communicative ability, which involves those specific features of a society and its culture which are manifest in the communicative behaviour of the members of this society. These features may be classified as 'universal experiences', 'social rituals' and 'social conventions' (Ek and Trim, 2000: 95).

Background knowledge makes students members of the speech community, gives them cultural literacy. On the contrary, absence of cultural literacy causes misunderstanding of the implicit information, information hidden between the lines in communication (Bozhok and Vlasenko, 2008: 2).

Sariyeva (2011) defines the main components of sociocultural competence:

- country study competence is the knowledge of the speech community, national character, politics and society, science, education, everyday life, customs and traditions;
- linguocultural competence is the ability to perceive the language in its cultural function, with national and cultural peculiarities. It includes knowledge of language units with national and cultural components in their meaning and ability to use them according to social and communicative situations;
- sociolinguistic competence is the knowledge of peculiarities of national and communication etiquette and non-verbal behaviour and ability of taking them into consideration in real life situations, ability to organize communication according to communicative situation, social norms of behaviour and social status of participants.

Cortazzi (1996) defines also cultural competence in which general cultural norms and beliefs are used to interpret actions and language behaviour and to attribute values and interpretations to interaction.

All components are interrelated and they must be mastered in complex. While cultural context means knowledge of realia common to all speech community, social context is the knowledge of definite social conditions of communication accepted in the country. Thus sociocultural competence is the ability of a person to take the knowledge of these contexts into consideration while communicating in foreign language.

In this case we speak about development of students' interpretative ability to learn that is necessary for the interpretation of authentic documents or interactive situations that includes ability to identify shared historical, religious and socio-economic references, ability to identify the presence of an allusion and its connotative environment, ability to identify internationally shared references (international stars etc) and identify the different connotations attaching to them in one's own culture and the foreign culture (Byram, Zarate and Neuner, 1997: 17).

The main principle of modernizing the content of foreign language teaching is filling the sociocultural component with elements and features of cross-cultural approach, which does not deny but emphasizes national identity of a student.

Introduction of sociocultural component of foreign language learning causes the problem of authenticity of language surrounding. It is solved by means of choice of authentic texts as a unit of communication. The task for students is not only to learn the country study and cultural information but associate it with their native culture, understanding the diversity of world cultures. In other words authentic texts are treated as containing culturally marked information.

Interpreting culturally marked information present challenges in the classroom. Thus, in the course of research several major challenges are defined.

The first challenge is represented by language units with national and cultural components in their meaning. I. Korunets (2003: 167) defines them as national idioms that are formed on the basis of the component parts and images characteristic of a definite national community and its language. Such idioms cannot be understood without understanding their etymology and cultural context.

E.g.: to dine with Duke Humphry (to be left without dinner), cut off with a shilling (disinherited), Gretna Green wedding (runaway wedding), Tom, Dick and Harry (anybody).

Here also belong:

- idiomatic comparisons like *as safe as the Bank of England, as drunk as Lord, as pleased as Punch;*
- metonymy like *Buckingham Palace (the Queen), the White House (the US President), Fort Knox (the US gold), Capitol (the US Congress), Whitehall (UK government);*
- antonomasia (names with symbolic meaning): *Sherlock Holmes (an able detective), Benedict Arnold (a traitor), Paul Revere (a messenger who warns about sth.);*

- paraphrase: *The Emerald Isle (Ireland), The Athens of the North (Edinburgh), the fashion capital (Paris)*;
- Proverbs, sayings reflecting national peculiarities: *My home is my castle, A penny saved is twice earned, National customs are national honours.*

Other challenges include:

- intertextual elements (literary allusions, quotations etc.);
- specific factual data characteristic of a certain culture or society (e.g. political system, economy, rules of society life, etiquette etc.);
- historical references (dates, events, names);
- music and arts references;
- non-verbal means of communication including facial expressions and gestures peculiar to certain cultures.
- This list can be expanded, but these are the main challenges that I have picked based on observation of academic performance of 4th year students who work with the “Upstream Proficiency” book by Virginia Evans and Jenny Dooley (Evans and Dooley 2002).

The book contains texts and exercises rich in culturally marked information, great part of which is often left unnoticed or misinterpreted by students if it is not their task to interpret it.

The first solution how to make students not skip the culturally marked information is giving them additional task to make annotation or annotated translation.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2005: 50) defines annotate as “*to add short notes to a book or piece of writing to explain parts of it*”. Annotating as the task for students will be to define culturally marked information in the text and provide explanation to every unit.

E.g.: Unit 2 Exercise 41 (Evans and Dooley 2002: 39). The exercise is located in the “English in Use” section of the unit, so the instruction of the exercise is: *Fill in the gaps in the passage.*

MEMORIES OF A 1940S CHILDHOOD

In primary school, we were introduced to poetry I) __ a punishment. Failing to deliver a composition on 2) __, I was ordered to memorise **15 lines of Scott. Nineteen forty**, that was.

In second form, we finally connected with an admirable Scottish class master 3) ____ was a passionate poetry lover. A veteran of the **Great War**, Mr. McLetchie told us that 4) __ the nightly bombardments on the **Somme**, he fixed a candle 5) ____ his steel helmet, which enabled him to read poetry.

Unfortunately, we were not yet ready for the pretty stanzas of **Keats**, **Shelley** or **Wordsworth**. I mean, "**A host of golden daffodils**"? Forget it. We dismissed 6) _____ lines as girly stuff, remote 7) _____ the experience of our own city streets. What we needed as an introduction was an anthology that featured poets who addressed 8) _____ directly in our own idiom, like **W.H. Auden** or **E.E. Cummings**. But they 9) _____ to come much later.

The **war in Europe** intruded, inadvertently giving me a taste for what 10) _____ scorned as "classical" music. When I was 12, back in **1943**, wartime radio broadcasts were preceded by four emphatic musical notes. 11) _____ notes replicated the **Morse code's three dots and a dash** for the letter V and were conscripted as a symbol for "**V for Victory**", the slogan we lived with in those troubled 12) _____.

"Who wrote 13) _____? I once asked an aunt.

"**Beethoven**," she said.

14) _____ was my introduction to genius. For those, of course, were the opening notes to **Beethoven's Fifth Symphony**. So at a tender 15) _____ I learned [there was more to music than '**Gertie from Bizerte**' and '**Besame Mucho**', two of **1943's hit parade ditties**.

While analyzing the text of the exercise the following culturally marked information is defined:

1. References to literature: Scott, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, W.H. Auden, E.E. Cummings.
2. Quotation: "A host of golden daffodils" from "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (also commonly known as "Daffodils"), a lyric poem by William Wordsworth.
3. References to historic events: Great War (World War I), Somme (one of the largest and bloodiest battles of the First World War, took place between 1 July and 18 November 1916 on either side of the River Somme in France, more than 1,000,000 men were wounded or killed), war in Europe (World War II), Morse code's three dots and a dash, "V for Victory".
4. References to music: Beethoven, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, 'Gertie from Bizerte', 'Besame Mucho', 1943's hit parade ditties.

Extra task to annotate this text providing detailed explanation to the defined units of culturally marked information prevents students from mere skipping elements they do not know or understand and helps them to extend their background knowledge.

Advanced task is annotated translation. Newmark (1988: 91) explains annotated translation as supplying additional information in translation. Additional information in the translation may take various forms: (1) within the text, (2) notes at bottom of page, (3) notes at end of the chapter and (4) notes at end of book. Williams and Chesterman (2002) characterize annotated translation as a form of introspective and retrospective research where you yourself translate a text and, at the same time write a commentary on your own translation process. This commentary will include some discussion of the translation assignment, an analysis of aspects of the source text, and a reasoned justification of the kinds of solutions you arrived at for particular kinds of translation problems. Annotated translation can be given as a task when the text under consideration is interesting or difficult not only in terms of interpreting culturally

marked information but language material, so students will have to explain their choice of language units in target language.

Annotating can be combined with searching for additional information on the topic discussed, interpreting it and discussing in class.

E.g.: Unit 3 Exercise 37 (Evans and Dooley 2002: 65). The instruction is: *Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits in the spaces.*

THE BIRTH OF SENSATIONALISM

At the time of the 1) ___ **of President John F Kennedy (1)**, television news was still very much in its 2) ___ as far as presenting such 3) ___ live events was concerned. For the first time, the people of an entire nation sat before their screens in horror as details of the attack and subsequent death of their President unfolded before their 4) ___ eyes.

Unfortunately, far from presenting the events and their implications with professional detachment and 5) ___, the various broadcasters involved allowed their 6) ___ to be usurped by inappropriate displays of personal emotion.

With hindsight, such a loss of that all-important detachment can be understood and even forgiven, given the fact that the medium was faced with such an 7) ___ act of calculated violence at a time when the nation as a whole had never experienced such an event within the television age.

For the following 25 years, television news 8) ___ reported on many tragedies. It was not until **the disaster of PanAm Flight 103 over the small Scottish village of Lockerbie in 1988 (2)** that the news media were again galvanised to such an extent. More 9) ___, though, the Lockerbie disaster also highlighted a far more disturbing trend in television news' handling of the 10) ___ aftermath: the unrestrained use of sensationalistic reporting.

1) ASSASSIN 2) INFANT 3) SHOCK 4) BELIEVE 5)
CLEAR
6) OBJECT 7) EXPECT 8) ROUTINE 9) WORRY 10) HORROR

Though the exercise is located in the “English in Use” section of the unit, the text itself contains interesting ideas for discussion. First of all, it contains two references to historic events:

(1) John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, was assassinated on Friday, November 22, 1963, in Dealey Plaza, Dallas, Texas..

(2) A Pan American transatlantic flight from Heathrow Airport in London, England, to John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City, United States, which experienced a bombing on Wednesday, 21 December 1988. A Boeing 747–121 was destroyed by an explosive device killing all 243 passengers and 16 crew members. Large sections of the plane crashed into Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 11 people on the ground.

While the first event is known to students because of the extensive coverage of it in documentary sources and works of art, the second one is less known or completely unknown to them. Here the students may be given an additional task to find information about the events, videos, newspaper article etc., analyze the coverage of

these events in mass media, thinking of some other events in students' native country that galvanized the media and audience because of their coverage and finally make conclusion about sensationalism in mass media and its effect on news presenting and audience reaction to it.

Another solution can be multi-subject projects by which we mean projects covering students' knowledge in several subjects and involving elements of research.

E.g.: Exercise 1 in lead-in section of Unit 3 (Evans and Dooley 2002: 53):



a. Look at the historic front-page reports above. Which of the two, A or B, do you think each of the following words/phrases come from?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. stock market crash.... | 5. 19 October, 1987... |
| 2. collision with iceberg... | 6. economic recession... |
| 3. great loss of life... | 7. 15 April, 1912... |
| 4. 400 miles (640 km) south of | 8. world economy affected.... |

Newfoundland...

b. What do you know about these two events?

Though the exercise is intended by the authors as a basis for warm-up activity, it also can be used as a basis for a multi-subject project. The project tasks will be the following:

1. Summarize the information about the two events.
2. Search for the information about similar events – downfalls of economy and economic crises, natural disasters and catastrophes, famous sea catastrophes and shipwrecks.
3. Discuss the events in class. Ask your fellow students what they know about them.
4. Write your own historic front-page report about the event you choose.
5. Analyze the articles involving peer assessment. Discuss what makes the articles captivating, intriguing, thought-provoking, causing readers to learn more about the event.
6. Discuss what causes people to know much about definite events (e.g. what makes us know a lot about the “Titanic” tragedy and almost nothing about other major catastrophes, why tragic events attracts people’s attention more than economic downfalls which have direct impact on their lives etc.).

In the process of working on the project students incorporated research in history, economy as well as psychology (task 6). The essential part of the project is academic writing (a newspaper article written by a student).

Multi-subject projects are the part of integrated learning where students apply their knowledge and skills to a real-world task, event, learning opportunity, or context, which leads to a specific purpose, product, or outcome.

This can be illustrated by the task given to students while studying the topic of Unit 3 “Travelling” (Evans and Dooley 2002: 73-92) based on the documentary “Top 10 Castles of Great Britain” by “Discovery Channel” where the Top 10 Castles consists of:

1. Windsor Castle
2. Hampton Court Palace
3. Edinburgh Castle
4. St. Michael’s Mount
5. Stirling Castle
6. Caernarfon Castle
7. Leeds Castle
8. Tintagel Castle
9. Warwick Castle
10. Tower of London

The project has 3 stages. Stage I includes working with the documentary where students get the following tasks:

1. Label the pictures representing the castles.
2. Fill in the gaps in the worksheet with correct information.
3. Summarize the information about one of the castles.

Stage II involves students’ research in native history and country studies:

1. Prepare a similar presentation about one of the castles in Ukraine.
2. Compose a worksheet based on your presentation.
3. Present your project in class. Ask your fellow students to do the exercises
4. On the basis of students’ presentations compose top 10 castles of Ukraine.

Stage III is a group work based on working out practical application of the project:
Create a tentative guidebook for tourists on Castles of Ukraine.

The main disadvantage in using all above-mentioned kinds of tasks is time shortage at the lessons. That is why a lot of work goes to individual studying causing the problem of time optimization. Thus, it is important not to overload students with extra assignments and distribute them properly within the Unit. Annotation and annotated translation can be the tasks for initial and middle stages of Unit study while various multi-subject projects are appropriate tasks for the concluding stage of Unit / topic study or pre-examination individual or group projects.

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Bridging the Ideological Divide: Meeting Challenges of Reading

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Abstract

Ideology has been an interesting issue of a scientific research due to its ambiguous character and ubiquity in almost every piece of writing. Modern textbooks for learners of English as a foreign language suggest a variety of topics that might be viewed in terms of ideological conceptions. The researchers have already classified three levels of ideology (Hollindale, 1991); they have defined five modes of representing ideology and strategies associated with its explication (Thompson, 1990); there have been several attempts to do linguistic and literary studies of fiction books with reference to ideological notions (Puurtinen, 1998; Birketveit, 2006; Samson, 2009-2010). However, studies of teaching languages require a number of effective techniques to overcome ideological and cultural discrepancies in the process of reading.

The suggested paper outlines the phenomenon of ideology in modern textbooks for learners of English with an attempt to uncover the topics that cause difficulties in understanding ideologically diverse notions. The research is twofold. First, it scrutinizes textbooks as well as fiction stories for language learners in order to discuss the differences in representing ideological concepts. The second line of research examines possible teaching activities directed for bridging the ideological gap. All these issues are explored in the framework of teaching English as a foreign language specifically designed for classes of developing reading skills. Among the ideologically marked topics are alienation, social exclusion, divorce, alcoholism, violence, sex and gender issues. These topics, more or less openly discussed in modern textbooks and fiction writings, are in focus of the research.

Ideology has been an interesting issue of a scientific research due to its ambiguous character and ubiquity in almost every piece of writing. Modern textbooks for learners of English as a foreign language suggest a variety of topics that might be viewed in terms of ideological conceptions.

The researchers have already classified three levels of ideology (Hollindale, 1991); they have defined five modes of representing ideology and strategies associated with its explication (Thompson, 1990); there have been several attempts to do linguistic and literary studies of books for reading with reference to ideological notions (Puurtinen, 1998; Birketveit, 2006; Samson, 2009-2010) and there have been some papers written on the role of language ideology in language teaching (DordiNejad and Bakhshi, 2010). However, studies of teaching languages require a number of effective techniques to overcome ideological and cultural discrepancies in the process of reading.

My purpose in this essay is to outline the phenomenon of ideology in modern textbooks for learners of English with an attempt to uncover the topics that cause difficulties in understanding ideologically diverse notions. First, the theoretical aspects of the concept including its definition, background, pioneering figures, and related areas are presented. Then, the selected textbook is analyzed for the ideologies inserted in it; content analysis and pictorial analysis are done to discover the ideologies. After that, the roles played by English textbooks in transmitting different ideologies are examined. The final line of research provides the system of exercises intended to teach the students to understand, discern and interpret components of ideologically-driven texts in the process of learning a foreign language.

Ideology: Theoretical Aspects of the Concept

In order to start the discussion of ideology in textbooks it makes sense to present the very notions of ideology and its components viewed in theoretical reflections.

Roland Barthes in *Mythologies* (1991) associates myth with ideology in an attempt to actively promote the values and interests of a certain social class. Ideology is defined as the way in which the dominant classes and powers in a particular society impose their values on the rest of society. His further studies of semiotics have been grounded on the idea that sign and codes are culturally specific and therefore constitute a mechanism for analyzing social changes. His suggestions mirror the ideas of Terry Eagleton who is considered to be a classic researcher of ideology.

'A dominant power may legitimate itself by promoting beliefs and values congenial to it; naturalizing and universalizing such beliefs so as to render them self-evident and apparently inevitable; denigrating ideas which might challenge it; excluding rival forms of thought, perhaps by some unspoken but systematic logic; and obscuring social reality in ways convenient to itself. Such 'mystification', as it is commonly known, frequently takes the form of masking or suppressing social conflicts, from which arises the conception of ideology as an imaginary resolution of real contradictions' (Eagleton 1991: 5-6).

Terry Eagleton elucidates the concept of ideology through a Marxist perspective majoring its three characteristics: value, social conditions and productive forces, which serve to promote the interests of dominant classes.

The term *ideology* was coined by a French philosopher Destutt de Tracy in opposition to a psychological side of humans to refer to belief system and political persuasions. For many years, especially in the period of Soviet power, the term was associated with politics and slanted its meaning in favor of political definitions. Thus, textbooks for learners of language were never discussed in the framework of ideological conceptions. They have been regarded as innocent and deprived of any ideologies and their main function was to teach vocabulary and grammar. However, with extending the term ideology into a broader sense of *ideas, beliefs, or attitudes which are proposed by an individual or group of people with the power to influence others into changing their own beliefs or adopting new beliefs and practices*, the studies of language textbooks started to be traced in terms of ideology.

Textbooks are parts of an educational system enforcing a sense of responsibility, morality, and cultural coherence. Textbooks used in EFL classrooms provide the main source of information on culture and language for those studying a language. Thus, a textbook is an instrument used to teach the language in order to transmit the ideologies and beliefs to speakers of other languages.

In "*A Sociology of Educating*" ideology is defined as '*a broad interlocked set of ideas and beliefs about the world held by a group of people that they demonstrate in both behaviour and conversation to various audiences. These systems of belief are usually seen as 'the way things really are' by the groups holding them, and they become the taken-for-granted ways of making sense of the world*' (Meighan, R. and Harber, C. 2007: 212).

To put it schematically, ideology has the following structure: *people's way of life, values, norms, beliefs, attitudes*. The power of ideology is in its persuasive mode to influence others into changing their views and ideas. In his essay on the diversity of persuasive modes, Robert D. Sutherland defines three ways in which the ideologies are expressed. Thus, *the politics of advocacy* presupposes the overt didacticism, the moral lessons and the authors are conscious of values they are promoting. The advocacy seeks to persuade readers of its ideology; to promote the authors' views and notions of what is ought to be. *The politics of attack* on the contrary is less openly discussed and it is usually generated by authors' sense of amusement, outrage, or contempt when they come across something that runs counter to their concepts of right and wrong, good and evil, justice, fair play, decency, or truth. *The politics of assent* does not advocate in any direct sense, it simply affirms ideologies generally prevalent in the society. Assent as Robert D. Sutherland puts it is '*an author's passive, unquestioning acceptance and internalization of an established ideology, which is then transmitted in the author's writing in an unconscious manner*' (Sutherland, 1985: 143-157).

Similar to the way the aforementioned scientist distinguishes different characteristics of ideologies to be presented in books, I would like to define the approaches used by textbook writers to promote their views. The first one openly states the ideas and assumptions the writer agrees with, thus showing the readers what is to be admired

and respected. The second way is discussing the negative influences and actions, which are to be avoided and neglected as disruptive behaviors. The last aspect is devoid of any evaluation thus open to readers' judgments. By simply presenting the facts and discussing events textbooks are intended to mold the opinions and get the feedback.

Peter Hollindale suggests that ideology operates at three different levels within the text. *Explicit* ideology describes the values and beliefs with which the author consciously fills his/her work. *Implicit* values are conveyed by the author unconsciously, i.e. the unexamined beliefs of the writer that slip into the text unnoticed. At the level of *dominant culture* the reality of ideology hovers over us and herds writers and readers toward the meanings that are consistent with it (Hollindale 1991: 10-17).

I can't but mention here in this short essay the thoughts of John Storey who defined ideology in terms of mass culture, featuring its five main aspects. According to the scientist (Storey 2001: 2-5) ideology is 1) a systematic body of ideas articulated by a particular group of people; 2) it suggests a certain masking, distortion, or concealment. Ideology is used here to indicate how some texts and practices present distorted images of reality. 3) the term "the ideological forms" is intended to draw attention to the way in which texts present a particular image of the world. 4) the next definition is associated with the early work of Roland Barthes, who mentioned that ideology operates mainly at the level of connotations, the secondary, often unconscious meanings that text and practices carry or can be made to carry. 5) the fifth approach traces ideology not simply as a set of ideas, but as a material practice of everyday life.

Ideologies in the Textbook: Content and Picture Analysis

Taking into consideration all the above mentioned views and after studying some other sources of theoretical researches on ideological conceptions I would like now to move on to the practical analysis of the textbook with its reference to ideology.

There are no single requirements for the textbooks on learning English as a foreign language, but I feel these requirements have to be controlled by the purpose of the textbook. The textbook is one of the most powerful sources available for students thus, it has to be interesting, informative, didactic and even therapeutic. Emotivity and cultural diversity are also considered to be an important characteristic of a textbook.

Even the most cursory glance at modern society proves that perception of the reality has recently changed a lot. These days learners of language are exposed to more information and a greater variety of experiences than were students of the past. It is important to highlight many changes in both textbooks and fiction writings intended for learning a language in a world transformed by several decades of rapid social, cultural and technological change. I'm trying to say that through all these revolutions and alterations in modern society, textbooks and fiction materials that are recommended for usage while teaching/learning a language tend to explore other lives and thoughts and situations. Thus, textbooks start to represent things that were not even in youngsters' vocabularies in past generations. Among the major concerns in our present society are the issues of *poverty, racism, unjust violence, gender*

inequality, religious and moral responsibility and others that have become a part of an English language textbook.

These topics more or less openly discussed in passages for reading can be specified in the category of social power, i.e. a property of the relationship between groups, classes, or other social formations, or between persons as social members. It has been already defined (Abdollahzadeh, E. and Baniasad, S. 2010: 1-17) that social power is viewed through *sexism* and *racism*. The first refers to the dominance or superiority of one gender over another, whereas racism refers to the superiority of one nation over the others. In the textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education for learners of English *sexism* is one of the most frequent ideologies. It is traced both in the content and picture analysis: the omission of females, discrimination, the roles specified for sexes. Thus, when reading about famous people students usually get to know more about males, the jobs like manager, surgeon, and business executive are applicable to men, and in most pictures women are depicted as nurses, teachers, models, hairdressers and librarians. *Racism*, if viewed as the dominance of one nation over the others, is explicated as the superiority of English and Englishness. *Hegemony* is manifested through the dominance of the English language and culture and superiority of English-speaking countries. In texts, conversations, reading passages English is promoted as the most popular language for learning, tours to English-speaking countries turn out to be the most desirable, artists and other famous people sharing their life experience all come from England or US. Readers usually learn more about customs and traditions of England than any other nations.

Consumerism as a social and economic order that encourages the purchase of goods and services in greater amounts is also a popular ideology presented mainly in the topics of entertainment, fashion, shopping and technology. The photos of new electronic gadgets, stories about successful brand names, the descriptions of items needed in everyday life usually serve as advertisements for viewers and readers. Editors of textbooks are aware of the fact that reading selections, dialogue topics, and even illustrations and photos can present biases of different sorts. Consumerism in textbooks is tied to the portrayal of the middle class or upper class as the global norm, in addition, it is complicated by the promotion of certain goods or act of buying them. In part of a textbook dedicated to the topic of shopping seeing people with trolleys or people holding huge shopping bags is a common thing. In this connection the “economic shade” of the ideology can be perceived. Textbooks published in England and those prepared in Soviet-time Ukraine differ even in presenting simple grammar sentences that might be viewed as samples of consumerism, social and economic biases.

(English): *I bought a new car last month.*

(Post-Soviet): *Cheese and butter weren't cheap.*

(English): *I will enter the university if I pass this exam successfully.*

(Post-Soviet): *My brother will work at the factory when he finishes school.*

In a more detailed essay on interaction between teaching a language and promoting consumerist texts M.E. Sokolik (2007) provides a wide range of sentences that are seen as ideologically-driven models. Language itself is a powerful means of transferring ideology into everyday life. The cases of using phrases like “*google this word*” instead of a neutral “*surf the net for the word*”, or mentioning words that stand

for brand names, e.g. *Xerox machine*, *Pampers*, *Kleenex* and others usually serve as an example of consumerism.

Reference to the items like bungalows, diamond rings, trips to Hawaii found not in isolated cases, but inserted in almost all selections for reading connected with the topics of entertainment and shopping. Textbooks in no way should be treated as propagandistic. In terms of ideology they are neither instructive, nor preaching. Textbooks as well as fiction writings go beyond the boundaries of just teaching “what is good”. They promote new notions and reveal new topics, though they sometimes clash with the ideas that were perceived as innocent and they do not always adhere to the codes of suitability. However, my point here is: if subjects are handled with balanced views, if writing is of high quality, then the range of challenging situations in textbooks should be wide.

The Role of Textbooks in Ideology Transmission

Literature can be defined as a tool for ideological transmission. The same refers to language. It carries ideology whether we are aware of it or not. Ideology is absorbed as we learn to speak and inscribed in language it shapes our thinking, in part by making some things seem natural, true or right. Ideology has the effect of hiding some aspects of reality, or even distorting its image. Hidden or unknown things cause misunderstanding of certain sociopolitical ideas and cultural attitudes that are reflected in textbooks. Usually neither the teachers nor the learners are aware of, or they disregard, such transfer of ideology in language textbooks. A very simple instance of feeling pressure from pictures and texts is a strong desire to eat a hamburger or fish and chips, though they are not staple food. In this case ideology serves as a powerful tool of persuasion. The role, importance and burden of textbooks in transmission of ideology cannot be exaggerated. Textbooks:

1. Open access to culture and ideology through the language being taught.
2. Present samples of cultural behaviors and ideological patterns.
3. Aim for students to attain the social and economic competence.
4. Direct students for achieving cross-cultural understanding – awareness of their own culture and ideology, as well as those of the target language.
5. Recognize that not all teaching about culture implies behavior change, but merely an awareness and tolerance of the cultural influences affecting one’s own and others’ behavior.
6. Promulgate and convey the ideological freight, sometimes in a way that is annoying.

System of Exercises on Teaching Ideological Aspects

The system of exercises directed for teaching students about values, beliefs, and attitudes of various ideologies has been developed with the idea that in the process of reading students should be able to:

- discern values, beliefs and attitudes in the text
- understand foreign culture values, beliefs and attitudes
- compare national and foreign values, beliefs and attitudes.

Teaching reading provides doing exercises on three stages: pre-reading activities, while-reading activities and post-reading activities.

The system of exercises on teaching culture values in the process of reading fiction is the following: pre-reading activities include exercises on discerning and identifying values, beliefs and ideas; while-reading activities contain exercises on understanding and differentiating values; post-reading activities comprise exercises on interpreting and comparing values.

On *the pre-reading stage* students do exercises on understanding ideas, beliefs and attitudes through discussion, matching pictures, identifying universality of statements, brainstorming and answering preview guide questions. Every pre-reading assignment is traced as approaching schemata activation. Traditional activities like watching films, viewing filmstrips and describing pictures can be used to build background, enrich and elaborate schemata and prepare students for reading a text assignment.

While-reading stage provides exercises on discerning and understanding ideological concepts. It presupposes being involved in reading the text, so students are usually asked to highlight or underline the key phrases that stand for beliefs, values and attitudes in terms of ideology. It can also be suggested to complete the table for guessing and confirmation sections followed by proofs from the text. Text involvement is seen through personal feedback that promotes a dominant force of shaping own ideas while comparing them to foreign ones.

Post-reading activities include exercises on comparing and interpreting values. These can be group discussions, sharing personal ideas, matching sentences from the text to existing standards of own ideology, finding out the examples of values in the text. The post-reading exercises are intended for critical assessment, thus students can be asked to provide the characters' description; role-play the situations discussed in the text and suggest their own interpretations.

To sum it up, I would like to say that bridging the ideological divide is an important part of teaching a foreign language. Reading definitely suggests favorable conditions for that. Ideology gives much for understanding people's behavior and attitude to the reality. It brings meaning to linguistic and extra-linguistic parameters of language. It is very important to teach foreign language students ideas, beliefs and values in order to broaden their ideological orientation, which puts an impact on *what* and *how* they perceive while reading.

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Discourse analysis of the specific press for senior citizens

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Abstract

Dynamic development of mass media as well as globalization of the world information space influences profoundly the spread of new discourse types. These complicated processes demand not only scientific comprehension, but also the development of new paradigms to media discourse research.

The use of discourse analysis in the research of the mass media language is conditioned by the new system approach. Recently problems of language functioning in media discourse have been studied within the scope of different linguistic areas (stylistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics etc.). Discourse analysis for the first time suggests complex integrated approach to mass media research. This approach allows not only identifying the outside peculiarities of media speech, but also discovering inner tools of its functioning, as well as its influence on the audience. Informing people about the world's affairs or occupying their leisure time mass media creates special discursive picture of the world in the network of which strategies and goals of different institutional discourses are implemented.

For the purpose of our research work we analyzed magazines for seniors in English and French such as «AARP the Magazine», «Zoomer» and «Pleine Vie». The choice of the material is due to the fact that in the USA, Canada and most European countries the problem of aging arose long ago and is extremely urgent today. Therefore, it is absolutely natural that up to now a considerable number of issues for the rapidly growing group of seniors are published here.

Dynamic development of mass media as well as globalization of the world information space influences profoundly the spread of new discourse types. These complicated processes demand not only scientific comprehension, but also the development of new paradigms to media discourse research.

The use of discourse analysis in the research of the mass media language is conditioned by the new system approach. Recently problems of language functioning in media discourse have been studied within the scope of different linguistic areas such as stylistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics etc. Discourse analysis for the first time suggests complex integrated approach to mass media research. This approach allows not only to identify the outside peculiarities of media speech, but also to discover inner tools of its functioning, as well as its influence on the audience. Informing people about the world's affairs or occupying their leisure time, mass media creates special discursive picture of the world, in the network of which strategies and goals of different institutional discourses are implemented.

For the purpose of our research work we analyzed magazines for seniors in English, French and Russian such as «AARP the Magazine», «Zoomer», «Pleine Vie» and «60 лет – не возраст». The choice of the material is due to the fact that in the USA, Canada and most European countries the problem of aging arose long ago and is extremely urgent today. Therefore, it is absolutely natural that up to now a considerable number of issues for the rapidly growing group of seniors are published in these countries.

First of all we have to give the definition of discourse of mass media. There are different approaches to this problem, but we understand it as “any type of discourse appearing in the field of mass communication and produced by mass media” (Sicheva,). That means that mass media discourse includes all the communicative situations appearing in its information field. As a mediator between society and authority Mass media propagates specific ideology implanting political, religious and pedagogical ideas in people's minds. T. Van Dake said that mass media does not decide what people have to think; it suggests how they have to do it (Van Dake, 1989). That is one of the peculiarities of the mass media discourse.

Talking about discourse of the specific press for seniors, it is necessary to state that it is formed in the process of a complicated intersection of mass media, advertising, political, medical, scientific and other types of discourses, which act as sub-discourses. Sub-discourse is a type of discourse that lost its functional independence within the scope of a bigger discourse unit. The analysis of the discourse of the specific press for seniors allows to talk about a single media discursive space, in which these sub-discourses are transformed.

The agents of any mass media discourse as a social institution are, first of all, journalists, editors and other people participating in the process of a magazine or a newspaper issuing. At the same time, subjects of the discourse for seniors (characters and heroes of the articles) are representatives of different social institutions such as medicine, cosmetology, psychology and science. Sometimes the subjects are ordinary people in a particular age, whose life stories are very often used as examples of different situations in life, which might be interesting for the target readers of the press for seniors.

Addressees of the discourse for the press for seniors are the readers of the magazines and newspapers targeting this age group. Purchasing the magazine its readers become participants of the magazine discourse or media discourse. One of the main motives forcing people to enter a new discursive space is the fact that they reached a particular age and they have a need to adapt to a new social status of a senior citizen. Purchasing the magazine, the readers from the one hand satisfy their modified cognitive demands. From the other hand they adapt the behavior pattern modeled by the press for seniors. As a rule this pattern serves to the main aim of advertising sub-discourse – to promote special goods and services that help to improve life of elderly people and to keep their health.

One of the peculiar characteristics of the discourse of the press for seniors is the active role of the message addressee. This is due to one of the motives of the readers, which forces them to start buying the specific press for seniors, which is solidarity with the society. That might be explained as a wish to march in step with the times and to keep up with the other members of the society. While suggesting a new discursive space the authors of the newspapers and magazines model their target readers the estimation system, which should be used for the decoding of the information presented in the texts of the mass media discourse under analysis. «So the perception of the information by the reader is colored by attitude towards life modeled in the discourse of the magazine» (Kostiashina, 2010).

It is necessary to understand that a single discourse is not able to define the structure of any social space (Fillips, 2004). In mass media as in any other social sphere there are several discourses in fiction, which can conflict with each other. At the same time, entering the space of interaction of discourses, the readers are positioned as subjects of the communication. For example, in the press for seniors we can frequently meet an appeal to the readers as someone responsible for their own health and wealth: «You are never too old to change your life» (Zoomer, Nov. 2011, 30), «Make sure your investments are in order» (Zoomer, Nov. 2011, 81), «Help protect yourself. If you are concerned about risk of shingles, talk to your doctor...» (Zoomer, Nov. 2011, 124).

The readers of the press for seniors have to act as readers, patients, objects of an advertisement, consumers of some particular goods or as experts, depending on the role, which is assigned by intersecting discourses. Usually the participants of communication do not realize the fact that they perform in several subject positions and do not notice how they change. When found themselves in a new social institution, readers automatically identify themselves with typical for this discursive space images of «who they are» and «who they should consider themselves to be». For example, while reading the description of a new medical treatment readers become subjects of a scientific discourse. However, when they are recommended how to use a particular medicine, the readers enter into the space of an advertising sub-discourse.

In order to attract target readers the authors of the press for seniors discuss the topics, which might be interesting their readers most of all. The most urgent topics for

seniors include health problems, psychological problems of adaptation to new life conditions in the old age, retirement plan, keeping fit and beauty, leisure time, etc.

In modern mass media the author's image is created in accordance with the general ideology of an issue. In the magazines for seniors there are some author's columns, which are, being introduced in each issue, form the author's image. For example, in the magazine *Zoomer* this type of rubrics are called «Peter Bregg's *Zoomer* moment», «Libby Znamer's *Zoomer* report», «Arthur Black's *Zoomer* humor», etc. This type of genre allows to catch the unique style of the author and to see his/her personality. In this case readers take the agent of the magazine as a friend, which creates an illusion of objectivity of the information and absence of the discursive ideology. So a magazine imposes on its readers the discursive world picture created by the author of the message.

The authors of the articles in the discourse of the press for seniors present a specific model of the reality within the scope of which readers are allowed to decode the information. Such model is an essential ideological set of the mass media.

In the press for seniors the authors of the articles suggest their readers various ways to change their lives so that they will be able to unload different problems connected with aging. At the same time the readers are implanted the idea that they are disoriented in this new life space and they will not be able to manage without a piece of specialist advice. Headings of some articles demonstrate this: «Should I stay or should I go?», «Slab city: it's not at all what you think» (*Zoomer*, Nov. 2011, 91).

The authors of the press for seniors build their communicative process in accordance with the addressee factor, using different communicative strategies for that purpose. So, as one of the main characteristics of old age is suspiciousness and skeptical attitude to anything new, the most popular communicative strategy in the press for seniors is an argumentative one. It is implemented with the help of various tactics. One of the most frequent tactics is *reference to the authoritative opinion or an authoritative organization*. In this case a particular person or an organization might be mentioned (A new study by the *Toronto-based Rotman Research Institute* suggests (*Zoomer*, Sept. 2010, 26); According to the *Arthritis Society* (*Zoomer*, Sept. 2010, 34). Often the words denoting some general notion are used (experts, researchers, economists scientists, psychologists, doctors, les chercheurs, les médecins, les scientifiques, l'experts, les psychologues etc.).

The tactic of reference to the source of information has more persuasive potential if quotations of well-known and authoritative people are presented: «Safe-deposit boxes are loss resistant, not loss proof» says *David McGuinn*, president of Safe Deposit Specialists (*AARP the magazine* Nov./Dec. 2009, p.18); «D'une façon générale, les édulcorants sont un moyen pour les diabétiques d'augmenter la convivialité dans leurs quotidien», *estime le Pr Patrick Vexiau*, diabétologue à l'hôpital Saint-Louis (Paris) (*Pleine Vie* № 287, 2010; p.118).

In order to create an easy talk and a direct dialogue with the addressees the authors very often implement a tactic of *intimating* or the direct addressing to the readers. As markers of this tactic the following techniques can be used:

- personal pronouns *you* and *we* or possessive pronouns *your* and *our*: It is important to inform *your* physician and pharmacist of all substances *you* take, including natural substances, and of *your* dietary habits (Zoomer, April 2011, p. 28); *Nos résidence sont conçues spécialement pour que les séniors puissent continuer à apprécier leur vie au quotidien. Nous proposons des services personnalisés et une présence 24h/24 et 7jours/7. Le meilleur moyen de vous en assurer est encore de venir nous rendre visite* (Pleine Vie 287, p. 166);

- Imperative mood: Always *include* a source of protein (Zoomer, April 2011, p. 31); *Associez techniques esthétiques et cosmétique, et l'anti-âge gagne en nature!* (Pleine Vie 287, p. 30);

- questions, which create an illusion of a dialogue and emphasize the atmosphere of trust: *Why leave the home you love? Don't let injury, illness or advancing years keep you downstairs. Sit, Relax and Ride with the Acorn Stairlift* (AARP, Jan. /Feb. 2010, 26); *Une contracture dans le dos? Un torticolis? Des courbatures après une séance de gym? Mettez sur le patch thermo actif. La chaleur n'a pas son pareil pour soulager une douleur persistante...* (Pleine Vie № 287, 119).

In order to create even more trusted atmosphere the addressees of the discourse of the press for seniors are given roles of not only communicative partners but also main heroes of the stories. It should be noted that in the press for seniors such tactic is used very often. A lot of articles are started with life stories of «real» people, which illustrate the main topic of the message. For example, in the article «The Claim Game» (AARP, Nov./Dec. 2009, 28-30) the author is considering the problem of medical insurance in general and the cases of refusal of insurance companies to repay medical treatment or medicines in particular. The article begins with a story of George Craft, who has *Parkinson's disease*. A retired machinist from Dunlop, Tennessee, Craft, 71, thought that purchasing Medicare drug coverage would lower all his prescription costs. So he couldn't understand why the insurer refused to pay for Mirapex, *the only drug that has helped* keep his Parkinson's symptoms in check.

Then the author gives another example of a «real» person Theresa Rattei, 51 years old, who has cancer: For Arizona resident Theresa Rattei, it became *a life-to-death struggle*. Rattei, 51, was diagnosed with a *rare cancer* in 2006 and had chemotherapy twice, *with little success*. In January 2008 her doctor prescribed a radiation treatment, but the insurer managing Rattei's health plan deemed it experimental – and thus not covered.

In both cases the heroes of the stories suffer from serious illnesses (Parkinson's disease and a rare cancer), which in itself is frightening and unpleasant. With the help of such markers as *the only drug that has helped, a life-to-death struggle, with little success* the author of the message enhances inquietude, applying the tactic of intimidation. Mentioning the mature age of the story heroes (Craft, 71; Rattei, 51) as well as their financial difficulties (A retired machinist, Medicare drug coverage would lower all his prescription costs) the author ultimately dramatizes the situation and forces the readers to speculate about the seriousness of the case in which any of them can find themselves.

By telling life stories of ordinary people of the same age as the target readers, the author implicitly demonstrates to the addressees that he is on their side. Thereafter,

the further information presented in the article appears more persuasive. This tactic is called «a friendly circle» in the research papers of many linguists (Issers, 2008).

«The life story of an ordinary person as a tactic of an argumentative strategy is performed not only in analytical articles and social and political journalism. It is actively used by the authors of advertisements. For example, an advertisement of a life alert system aimed to assist senior people in case of emergency is created as an utterance of an ordinary consumer of this service, Florance, with her photograph: Life alert SAVED MY LIFE. With one touch of a button I get help 24/7 even when I cannot reach the phone (AARP, Jan. /Feb. 2010, 61).

Sometimes an advertisement does not give the name of a person and presents only his/her photograph and a direct speech for the utterance: «Depuis que je prends ALL-BRAN, j'ai pu reprendre le yoga. Aujourd'hui, j'ai une vie active. Les céréales All-Bran m'ont aidée à me libérer des petits désagréments intérieurs parce qu'elles sont riches en fibres qui participent au bon fonctionnement du système digestif. ...» (Pleine Vie № 288, 109). In this example cereal is being advertised by a «relatively real» customer who has personally evaluated its superb quality (libère des petits désagréments ... sont riches en fibres... bon fonctionnement du système digestif) and its health-improving effect (j'ai pu reprendre le yoga... j'ai une vie active). As it is known, a customer is not interested in increasing of goods sales as opposed to a producer. Therefore, an advertisement on his behalf obtains the traits of a competent opinion, which significantly intensifies the trust of the readers to the information about this product.

Another communicative tactic, *an icon-person*, which exploits a celebrity image, demonstrates even more persuasive power as it is based not only on the addressees' admiration of celebrities, but also on their desire to imitate this or that prestigious image. Elena Ferrario describes this phenomenon in her article «Politeness discourse in the press for seniors»: «In order to intensify the significance of youthful appearance, which is emphasized by the press with the help of certain keywords, authoritative quotations are not enough. Therefore, on the pages of modern press an icon-person appears, who is usually a widely known film star or a public figure of «the third or the fourth age». They regularly demonstrate their absolutely happy smile and the assertiveness of people with inexhaustible energy» (Ferrario, 2003). For example, a famous American actress Andy McDowell is advertising a hair dye by L'Oréal: «Mon secret de jeunesse, c'est ma couleur!» (Pleine Vie № 283, 25). The other famous actress, Jane Fonda, is performing in a face cream advertisement of the same brand: «C'est l'anti-âge complet pour ma peau!» (Pleine Vie № 286, 2).

The texts that are published in press for seniors can be defined as semiotically complicated, creolized texts as most of the articles are accompanied by illustrations. The illustrations have specific purpose in print media as they add, explain or comment information of a publication. Usually an illustration is connected with the content of the text and is not completely autonomous. It helps to attract attention of a potential recipient and transfer the information more quickly: «... visual part of text can not only illustrate verbal information, but also add figurativeness and expressiveness to the content, and in many cases it can create new additional meanings in combination with a verbal component of a message» (Kara-Murza, 2001). Moreover, while a text

reading demands time and mental effort, a picture is able to immediately transfer the main idea of a text with the help of right images, forms and colours.

On the grounds of our research we can make following conclusions about the peculiarities of the discourse of the press for seniors:

1. Media texts of the press for seniors compose a single communicative field included in the discourse of the mass media as a discursive type.
2. Combining the characteristics of advertisements, social and political journalism and scientific articles media texts of the discourse of the press for seniors are defined as a specific syncretic discursive unit, which is functioning within the limits of mass media discourse.
3. Functioning in the space of media discourse, these texts are not isolated as they enter different interactions such as topical, genre, contextual and stylistic contact with scientific, technical, media and advertising discourses.
4. Such syncretism of the discourse under analysis is a condition for the following linguistic peculiarities: combination of an informative and influential functions, focus on an addressee, contextual and language simplicity, usage of argumentative communicative strategy.

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***Metaphoric Representation of the Ethic Concepts "Faithfulness" and
"Betrayal" in the English Language Consciousness***

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The ethic concepts "faithfulness" and "betrayal" in the English language consciousness are viewed in this paper. The actuality of the undertaken research is determined by the choice of Anthropocentric Linguistics as a scientific paradigm, inclusion of problems under study into the research of the semiosphere of the inner world of the person – one of the most priority-driven trends in modern Russian Linguistics.

The semantics of the inner world of the person represented by abstract and generalized meanings is constituted by a number of universal semantically discrete constants the total combination of which makes up a certain semiosphere. As contrasted to the actual existing world the inner world of the person is an enclosed semiosphere that is beyond direct observation and verification of a cognizer. The inner world of the person is made up by psychic constituents: will expression, character of the person, his / her emotional and mental peculiarities, tastes, predisposition, attitude to other people and him/herself (Pimenova 2004:7). In it a considerable place is occupied by the moral phenomena, such as duty, faith, conscience, honour, shame, etc. Their semantics is determined by social and psychophysiological organization of the person: it is formed in the particular semiotic space in the process of socialization of the individual and it is not inherited aborning. The ethic concepts "faithfulness" and "betrayal" are integral constituents of this semiosphere.

The interest of modern researchers to ethic concepts is based on their ethnolinguistic nature, their content is determined by the norms of the society. They represent idealized world, the idea of "life as it should be" that does not correspond to reality. The urge of collective mind to shorten this distance between real life and "life as it should be" makes ethic concepts always up-to-date.

Following the assumption that the word can serve as a means of access to a concept as a mental unity we turned to the analysis of the lexical units which carry out the verbal realization of the given concepts. Thus we studied abstract names *faithfulness* and *betrayal*, their synonyms *loyalty*, *disloyalty*, *fidelity*, *treachery*, etc. and their derivatives.

The study of the syntactic properties of the verbal representatives of the concepts allowed us to come to the conclusion that their lexical compatibility is mainly determined by their figurative representation. It can be explained by the fact that abstract names nominating the concepts in question represent the phenomena of ideal invisible world that can be comprehended in comparison with the real world. That's why the compatibility of abstract names is open for metaphorization.

The essential features of metaphors in theoretical understanding of some linguists are reflected in the following points:

- metaphor is a powerful means of cognition that represents a method of considering one sphere of reality through the prism of another one – abstract notion is comprehended in comparison with the well-known, familiar sensibilia (Bally 1961: 221; Lakoff 1980);
- in its nature metaphor is anthropometric: measuring different essentialities it compares them with the person, it measures the world with the help of the human scope of knowledge, ideas, the system of cultural values; the ability to think metaphorically is characteristic of *homo sapiens*, understanding of a metaphor is in some way understanding her/himself by a person (Maslova 2004: 91);
- metaphor aims to catch “the soul” of objects, their constant features, which it makes available for sense perception due to its imagery (Arutyunova 1999: 279).

Literal interpretation of verbs and adjectives used with the abstract nouns that nominate the concepts under study allowed to find metaphors that project these phenomena of the inner world of the person on the material world.

Upon our examination we managed to detect the mentioned below metaphoric characteristics of the concepts “faithfulness” and “betrayal”:

- anthropomorphous characteristics;
- artifact characteristics;
- zoomorphous characteristics;
- vegetative characteristics;
- theomorphous characteristics;
- localization characteristics, etc.

Temporal characteristics.

In the whole body of analyzed material there are a lot of utterances in which lexical units that carry out verbal realization of the concept “faithfulness” combine with time markers: *for over thirty years, over the years, for nearly forty years, the long ... years, so long, as long as...* and so on, which says for the fact that faithfulness has a processual character. It lasts for many years, can continue till death and increase day by day.

The characteristic of spatial extension “length” reflects temporal extension of faithfulness:

- (1) “Charles really was very sweet and she was determined to reward him at last for his *long devotion*” (Maugham).

The concept “betrayal” has a temporal characteristic of the time of day – “midnight”:

- (2) May the United Nations ever be vigilant and potent to defeat the swallowing up of any nation, at any time, by any means – by army with banners, by force or by fraud, by tricks or by *midnight treachery* (Lodge).

Localization characteristics.

The concepts of the semiosphere of the inner world of the person have two pragmatically different types of localization: a) localization inside the human body and b) localization of objects of the inner world of the person in ideal (imaginary) space (Pimenova 2004: 296).

In the space of the inner world faithfulness can be situated inside the body which serves as a container for feelings and emotions. Realization of the cognitive model *Body is a container for faithfulness* becomes actual in the following contexts:

(3) Eve refused to leave Alexandra's side. Mrs. Chandler thought she had never seen such *devotion in a sister*. It was truly touching (Sheldon).

Faithfulness as the majority of constants of the inner world of the person concentrates in the heart: *faithful and devoted heart, faithful heart*, which causes frequent combinability of the word *heart* with lexical units that represent the concept "faithfulness":

(4) "...Now and always you have my *faithful and devoted heart*, dear Mathew..." (Christie).

In the space of the inner world blood is not just the red liquid that circulates in the arteries and veins of humans, carrying oxygen to and carbon dioxide from the tissues of the body, but is a locus of soul and feelings:

(5) She was shining black, pure African, *devoted to her last drop of blood* to the O'Harras, Ellen's mainstay, the despair of her three daughters, the terror of the other house servants (Mitchell).

Betrayal as faithfulness can localize inside the human body. It is expressed by the metaphor *Body is a container for betrayal*:

(6) Wise married women don't trouble themselves about *infidelity in their husbands* (Johnson).

The heart as the centre of spiritual life of the person contains not only positive but also negative emotional feelings and properties of the human nature. Localization of betrayal in the heart is expressed by the lexical units *telltale, false* combined with the word *heart*:

(7) ...features Jean Gabin in his robust glory as a master of thief with a *telltale heart* (The New Yorker).

Anthropomorphous characteristics.

Faithfulness is personified: it is flesh and blood, personality with its peculiarities showing in social relationships and interaction. Faithfulness can be personified by definite person who is its embodiment.

Realization of the cognitive model *Faithfulness is a person* is possible with the help of various linguistic means. Personification of faithfulness is specified by the metaphors *Faithfulness is a mother* and *Faithfulness is a sister*:

(8) *Devotion and her daughter* Love Still bid the birthing spirit soar... (Byron);

(9) *Fidelity is the sister* of justice (Horace).

In the cited above examples the concept “faithfulness” has “female” features that says for gender differentiation of the concept.

Faithfulness has “male” features, that is proved by the existence of the metaphor *Faithfulness – fighter*. As a fighter it wins the right to tell the person whole unflattering truth about his /her behaviour:

(10) Doro looked at him – a look Isaac had come to recognize, a look that gave him permission to say what Doro would not hear from others. Over the years, Isaac’s usefulness and *loyalty had won* him the right to say what he felt and be heard – though not necessarily heeded (Butler).

Anthropomorphism of faithfulness is realized in the metaphor *Faithfulness is a dumb person*:

(11) Everyone knew his *dumb devotion* to her (Mitchell).

One of the most widely-spread metaphors is the metaphor *Faithfulness is a blind person*. Faithfulness is ascribed the following characteristics: “blindness”, “inability to see” that sometimes get negative valuation:

(12) Surrendering the self to the person and to the will of another took many other forms. But when one’s headlong capitulation to obsession grew deadly, the consequence of *unseeing devotion* was catastrophe (George).

Blind loyalty with which a loving person is ready to protect the object of his/ her love causes admiration:

(13) Yes, Melanie had been there that day with a sword in her small hand, ready to do battle for her. And now, as Scarlett looked sadly back, she realized that Melanie had always been there beside her with a sword in her hand, unobtrusive at her own shadow, loving her, fighting for her with *blind passionate loyalty*, fighting Yankees, fire, hunger, poverty, public opinion and even her beloved blood kin (Mitchell).

Betrayal like a person has a mouth, hands, face:

(14) These things put arguments into the *mouth of infidelity* (Twain);

(15) ...we should have had no note of warning and might all have perished *by the hand of treachery* (Stevenson).

Pointedly betrayal has not one, but two faces, which indicates insincerity:

(16) ...Melanie knew all the pettiness, the meanness, the *two-faced disloyalty* and the hypocrisy that were in here (Mitchell).

Anthropomorphous characteristics of betrayal are also revealed in vital features of this phenomenon.

Betrayal like a person has life:

(17) It (betrayal) feels bigger than you, and seems to *have a life of its own* (Hedva).

Betrayal is a disease, and to cure it one needs special remedies:

(18) ...his *remedy for such a betrayal* might be to seek vengeance (Mason).

Betrayal shatters the emotional calm of the person, and it is metaphorically expressed by wounding. It can be traced in the metaphor *Betrayal is a wound*:

(19) ...you developed to cope with your earlier *betrayal wounds*... (Hedva).

Theomorphous characteristics.

Faithfulness is sometimes defined with the help of such epithets as «imperishable», «undying», «eternal», typical of some Supreme Being that has heavenly godlike characteristics. In this case it is possible to single out the metaphor *Faithfulness is Divinity*:

(20) It certainly did her good at that moment to be assured that Charles Tamerley, so distinguished, so cultured, so elegant, loved her with an *imperishable devotion* (Maugham).

Immortality or Eternity is a common feature of faithfulness and God.

If faithfulness is associated with God, betrayal is an action spurred on to by Satan, Devil:

(21) ...banishing a rogue *disloyal thought Satan*... (Fielding).

Zoomorphous characteristics.

Understanding of the person in the categories of flora and fauna is characteristic of many languages and cultures, it is based on the idea of unity of the person with wild-life and is expressed in various linguistic forms (Tolstaya 2004: 685).

Zoomorphous characteristics of faithfulness are revealed in the usage of the verbal representatives of the concept with the adjective *doglike*, which is explained by the fact that in different cultures the dog is a symbol of faithfulness and loyalty:

(22) His love for Isabel was a delight to see; he adored her beauty and thought her the most brilliant, fascinating creature in the world; and his *doglike devotion* to Larry was touching (Maugham).

The dog's loyalty has become the fine example of loyalty that should be looked up to by human beings.

Vegetative characteristics.

Vegetative characteristics of faithfulness are found in the metaphor *Faithfulness is a plant*.

Like a plant faithfulness has the capacity to fade or not to fade:

(23) ... this makes me a bigot in the *fadeless fidelity* of man... (Melville).

Artifact characteristics.

Faithfulness can be conceptualized as a *material object* that one can give or present somebody as a very expensive gift:

(24) "But your kinsmen *had given me their loyalty*. That is no small thing" (Butler).

One can find faithfulness as an object, show it, bind it around one's neck, lay it at smb's feet:

(25) Do not let *loyalty and faithfulness* forsake you; *bind them around your neck*, write them on the tablet of your heart (Bible);

(26) I was to be Martha, keeping busy with household chores in the background; she was to be Mary, *laying pure devotion at Alex's feet* (Atwood).

The image of faithfulness as an object is supplemented by the physical characteristic of weight. The metaphor Faithfulness is an expensive item of goods is realized in the following context where one ounce of loyalty is worth a pound of cleverness:

(27) An *ounce of loyalty is worth* a pound of cleverness (Hubbard).

Betrayal as an object is inconspicuous, one has to find it, lay it bare, reveal:

(28) Immediately, we are led to wonder *what betrayal the narrator will reveal* (Mason).

Artifact characteristics of the studied concept are supplemented by the metaphor *Betrayal is a sharp razor* that deeply wounds the person:

(29) "*Betray*" was a strong word, and it sounded as *sharp* as it was: *a blade of a word, slicing Martin deep inside* (Rice).

Conceptualization of betrayal as an object results in the fact that it can have the following object characteristics: «size», «form» that can vary depending on circumstances, «depth», «perceptivity» a) visual, b) gustative – the taste of betrayal is usually bitter, c) acoustic – betrayal has the ability to resonate:

(30) The *bitter sense of betrayal* felt in China about its communist neighbour... (Callick).

Thus, the described above metaphors help us get a more definite idea of the concepts "faithfulness" and "betrayal". The images they convey make the studied concepts more visually compelling and as a result more comprehensible. So, metaphor serves as an important tool with the help of which we understand abstract notions referring to the inner world of the person.

Shifting Paradigms: Language Learning in Kazakhstan

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Abstract

The paper describes the paradigm shift in language learning in the Republic of Kazakhstan from the perspective of the academics that have extensive expertise in teaching English and French at linguistic and technical universities of Soviet Kazakhstan and present-day Kazakhstan. The case-study is based on the comparative analysis done both diachronically (within 30-40 years) and synchronously (English versus other foreign languages, secondary versus higher education, linguistic versus technical universities). The paper analyses political, social, and economic background of shifting paradigm in language learning and its impact on the educational environment in this country. Kazakhstan is the only former Soviet republic that has adopted a state program on trilingualism (the Tri-Unity of Languages project) aimed at learning and mastering at equal level three languages within the community, namely, Kazakh, Russian, and English. Trilingualism is considered to be an objective response to the existing geopolitical situation Kazakhstan is facing today and a key to success for both society and individuals in future. The authors present and discuss positive and negative implications of the paradigm shift in language learning that is taking place within the Kazakhstani education system at large and in two leading Kazakhstani universities in particular.

1 Introduction

After having been part of the Russian Empire for two hundred years and part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) from 1922, Kazakhstan declared its sovereignty on October 25, 1990, and declared full independence on December 16, 1991. These dates became new official holidays (Republic Day and Independence Day, respectively) of the country, while one of the national holidays of the Soviet period, Labor Day (celebrated on the 1st of May) was replaced by the Unity Holiday of the People of Kazakhstan. In view of the multiethnic composition of the Kazakhstani population (131 nationalities), including this holiday in the national calendar and establishing a unique advisory body under the head of the state, The Assembly of People of Kazakhstan are not accidental. Kazakhstan was the only Soviet republic in which the so-called titular nationality (i.e. ethnic group for which a republic was named) constituted less than 50 percent of the population.

Due to the dramatic demographic changes of the 1990s when dozen thousands of the country's Russians, Germans, Poles and representatives of some other nationalities emigrated to their - as it is commonly said here - 'ethnic' homelands, whereas ethnic Kazakhs (called *oralmans* in this country) migrated to Kazakhstan from China, Mongolia, and Russia, indigenous Kazakhs are now in the majority. Ethnically, Kazakhstan of the 21st century is as diverse as it was in the last century, 'with the Kazakhs making up over half the population, the Russians comprising just over a quarter, and smaller minorities of Uzbeks, Koreans, Chechens, and others accounting for the rest' (Country Profile, 2012).

At present Kazakhstan is a bilingual country: the Kazakh language, spoken by 64.4% of the population, has the status of the "state" language, while Russian, which is spoken by almost all Kazakhstanis, is declared the "official" language, and is used routinely in business. English gained its popularity among the youth since the collapse of USSR. (Kazakhstan 2013, Demographics).

Being correct in general the statement presented above makes a mistake common for many foreign reference books and papers: Russian was never declared an official or co-official language in Kazakhstan. According to Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1995),

1. The state language of the Republic of Kazakhstan shall be the Kazak language.
2. In state institutions and local self-administrative bodies the Russian language shall be officially used on equal grounds along with the Kazak language.
3. The state shall promote conditions for the study and development of the languages of the people of Kazakhstan.

At present the spelling of the word denoting the titular nationality and its language in English differs from the one written in the Constitution (*Cf. Kazak*), but the status of the Kazakh language as the state one and the Russian language as the language of interethnic communication remains the same in any official documents.

It is worth mentioning that the figure cited above (64.4%) includes not only Kazakh speakers, but some ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Tartars, Uighurs, Kyrgyzs, Uzbeks, Koreans and even Germans, most of whom were born and/or have been living for a long period in the countryside, where indigenous Kazakhs are in the majority.

Thus, in the present-day Kazakhstan the challenges of learning the state language refer not only to non-Kazakhs, but to Kazakhs either, most of whom are or have been city dwellers. There are many factors that led to such situation in language functioning, but the language policy in the field of education of the Soviet Kazakhstan is one of the most contributing one. In the higher education system of the republic the language of instruction was predominantly Russian. In the then capital of Kazakhstan Alma-Ata (now Almaty) there was only one secondary school where the language of instruction was Kazakh and few 'bilingual' (Russian-Kazakh) schools for the city population of over one million.

2 Shifting Language Situation and Policy in Kazakhstan

As far as in 1997, in his address to Kazakhstani people the RK President N. Nazarbayev stated the way he visualized Kazakhstan of 2030,

Our young state would grow up and reach its manhood and with it our children and grandchildren would also become grown up people. They would be responsible and enthusiastic representatives of their generation, would be in the prime of their life. They would be well-educated and healthy. They would be prepared to work in conditions of modern market economy sticking though to the traditions of their forefathers. They would have an equally good command of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages. (Nazarbayev 1997)

Since then a lot of changes have taken place in many spheres of the national economy and way of life of Kazakhstani citizens, language situation and policy in the country. As for the latter, the changes were so radical that the term "paradigm shift" seems to be quite appropriate for their description. At the same time the process of changes has not ended yet, it is a long-term one and using "shifting" is preferable in this case.

The challenges in achieving the lofty goals of becoming a trilingual community are being met at various levels of the society, including those of central and local government, higher and secondary education, language teachers and learners.

In Strategy 2050 Program the RK President (Nazarbayev, 2012) emphasized, that "Responsible language policy is one of the consolidating factors of Kazakh ethnicity."

Taking into account that the Kazakh language is the country's spiritual pivot, the aim of the state is "to develop the Kazakh language actively using it in all areas" and "to continue implementation of the measures complex to popularize the Kazakh language".

Among the measures aimed at modernizing the Kazakh language is introducing in 2025 using Latin fonts and a Latin alphabet. Nazarbayev (2012) claims,

For the sake of the future of our children we should make this decision and create it as a condition of entry for our wider global integration. This will enable our children to have a better understanding of the English language, the internet and reinforce our desire to modernize the Kazakh language.

Speaking on the language policy, the RK President stresses the unifying function of languages and insists on implementing it a competent and consistent way and avoiding any discrimination of the languages spoken by Kazakhstani citizens:

We should treat Russian language and Cyrillic writing in the same caring way as we do for Kazakh. It is clear to us all, that knowing the Russian language provided a historic advantage to our nation. No one can ignore the fact that through Russian language in centuries the Kazakhstan citizens gain additional knowledge, increase their perspective and communications both domestically and abroad (Nazarbayev 2012).

In the context of the field of study of the authors of this paper, the following statement made in the Strategy 2050 is especially important:

We should work to breakthrough in learning the English language. Having this “lingua franca” of the modern world will reveal new and unlimited opportunities for each citizen of our country (Nazarbayev 2012).

Among the most important official programs that contribute to successful solving language policy issues set in the Strategy 2050 there are *The Tri-Unity of Languages* culture project launched by the then Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2007 (Realizatsiya, 2007) and *the State program for the development and functioning of languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020* adopted by the Decree of the President of Republic of Kazakhstan No.110 dated June 29, 2011 (State Program, 2011).

The first program does not exist as a paper-based document or an electronic version and hence is referred to as “program”, “project”, “idea”, or “concept”/“conception.” The date of its appearance is not clear too. Some researchers claim that the idea on the tri-unity of languages was first voiced at the XII session of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan in October 2006 when the RK President stated that mastering of at least three languages is “important for the future of our children” (Seitov 2013), others argue that the program was adopted by the Decree of the RK President as of 20 November 2007 (Eldesov, 2012), while most academics and journalists consider the 28th of February, 2007 as a kind of “birthday” of the Program, the date of delivering the RK President’s annual state of the nation address named *New Kazakhstan in a New World* (Nazarbayev 2007).

Among 30 major directions of Kazakhstan’s domestic and foreign policy, there is a direction (No. 26) – *Spiritual development of peoples of Kazakhstan. The tri-lingual policy* - in the framework of which the President suggests examining the possibility of establishing a “Fund of Spiritual Development of the Peoples of Kazakhstan” and proposes to begin a step-by-step realization of a cultural project “The Unity of Three Languages” (Nazarbayev 2007).

The RK President emphasizes,

Kazakhstan must be perceived in the world as a highly educated country. Kazakhstan must be perceived in the world as a highly educated country whose population can use three languages. They are: Kazakh as the national language, Russian as the language of interethnic communication, and English as the language of successful integration in the global economy (Nazarbayev 2007, p. 52).

Taking into consideration the statement on the three languages made by the President within Kazakhstan-2030 annual state of the nation address (Nazarbayev 1997) and the fact that the part of the 2007 address which describes the policy directions is named *The “Kazakhstan-2030” Strategy at a New Stage of Development of Kazakhstan*, it seems reasonable to claim that the first address is the one where, by all the rules of heredity, the Tri-Unity of Languages national project was conceived.

The decade that separates these two addresses was not wasted in terms of tri-lingual policy. Within it many Kazakh-medium schools were opened, there were set up specialized grammar schools (linguistic gymnasia), English was introduced into curricular of various universities and colleges as the language of instruction, etc.

As for the 2007 address it is worth mentioning that in the framework of Section III – *State policy directed towards providing international standards of education and professional retraining, corresponding to dynamics and prospects of the development of the labor market* there is a statement within the seventeenth direction (*Improving the systems of elementary and secondary education, and retraining of personnel, and bringing them up to world standards*) that may be regarded as one of concrete measures aimed at implementing the Tri-Unity of Languages program:

Fifth, we should attract foreign teachers of English language to our schools. It is necessary to produce the situation where any average school could provide children the opportunity to learn a foreign language at the highest level (Nazarbayev 2007, p. 43).

Unlike The Tri-Unity of Languages project which is unfortunately not available as an entity, *the State program for the development and functioning of languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020* (State program 2011) is available in any version (paper or electronic ones) and in any of three languages (Kazakh, Russian, and English). Moreover, the wording of the Program is careful and precise, though there are some unnecessary repetitions of the content.

The 2011-2020 Program can be regarded as a logical continuation of the 2001-2010 Program and – to a certain extent – a ‘physical incarnation’ of the intangible Tri-Unity of Languages project. It is aimed at a harmonious language policy that provides full-scale functioning of the state language as the most important factor for strengthening national unity by preserving languages of all ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan.

Key tasks of the program are:

- improvement and standardization of the methodology of teaching the state language;

- development of the infrastructure of teaching the state language;
- stimulation of the process of teaching the state language;
- increase of the prestige of using the state language;
- increase of the demand for the state language;
- improvement and systematization of the Kazakh language's lexical fund;
- enhancement of the language culture;
- functioning of the Russian language in the communicative-language space;
- preservation of language variety in Kazakhstan;
- studying English and other foreign languages.

To make the results of the implementation of the State program described more explicit and reader-friendly the authors of the paper tabulated them (*See Table 1*).

Table 1. Key indicators of implementing the State Program for the Development and Functioning of Languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan (by years)

No.	Key indicators	2014	2017	2020
1	the share of adult population that speaks the state language according to "Kaztest" results	20 %	80 %	95 %
2	the share of school graduates speaking the state language at B1 level	N/A	70 %	100 %
3	the share of the Kazakh language content in state-owned mass media	53 %	60 %	70 %
4	the population's satisfaction with the activities of onomastic commissions regarding observance of principles of transparency & public access to discussion of decision-making process	60 %	75 %	90 %
5	the share of arranged terminological fund of the Kazakh language	20 %	60 %	100 %
6	the share of the country's adult population speaking the Russian language	N/A	N/A	90 %
7	the share of ethnic groups embraced by native languages courses in the national-cultural associations	60 %	80 %	90 %
8	the share of the country's population speaking English	10 %	15 %	20 %
9	the share of population speaking three languages (Kazakh, Russian & English)	10 %	12 %	15 %

As it can be seen from the table, the goals of the Program are quite modest and realistic. WE would strongly recommend to the opponents of the Tri-Unity of Languages project who speak on the threats of learning English to the Kazakh language functioning or on the threats of learning Kazakh to the Russian language functioning in Kazakhstan to read the key indicators through carefully, paying special attention to key indicators No. 8 and No 9. The 2011-2020 Program does not require 100 per cent trilingualism in Kazakhstani community by 2020, only every fifth Kazakhstani is to know English by the end of the program.

3. Challenges in Implementing the Tri-Unity of Languages Program in Kazakhstan

The Tri-Unity of Languages national project is a long-term program, the implementation of which may not involve every citizen of Kazakhstan personally, but it will directly concern all those who are educators, linguists, language teachers and learners. The challenges of implementing the project are considered in the following sections of the paper.

3.1 Challenges at the Level of Educational System of Kazakhstan

According to UNESCO Institute of Statistics (Education 2012, p. 9-10), Kazakhstan belongs to the first (out of five) category of countries where the National Education Index is higher than 0.75 and takes the 35th place in the list of 149 countries (See Table 2)

Table 2. National Education Index – 2011 (abridged)

No.	Country	Value Since 2005	Education Index	No.	Country	Value Since 2005	Education Index
1	New Zealand	▲	1.000	27	France	▲	0.87
2	Norway	▼	0.985	34	Hong Kong, China	▲	0.866
3	Australia	▲	0.981	35	Kazakhstan	▲	0.834
4	Ireland	▲	0.963	36	Romania	▲	0.831
5	United States	▲	0.939	37	Poland	▲	0.822
6	Korea	▲	0.934	39	United Kingdom	▲	0.815
7	Slovenia	▲	0.933	43	Cyprus	▲	0.798
8	Netherlands	▲	0.931	80	Uzbekistan	▼	0.711
9	Germany	▼	0.928	116	China	▲	0.623
10	Canada	▲	0.927	121	Turkey	▲	0.583

The analysis of the entire table shows that while in some countries the value since 2005 remains steady (Montenegro, Nigeria, etc.) or it decreased (Norway, Germany, Uzbekistan, Qatar, etc.), in Kazakhstan the value since 2005 increased like in most countries of the world. This fact can be interpreted as a positive tendency in Kazakhstan's education system development.

Most vivid evidence of the country's education development is data that are presented in *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming inequality: Why governance matters* (UNESCO: EFA 2008).

According to the Education for All agency (UNESCO: EFA 2008),

EFA goals represent more than the sum of their individual parts. While each is individually important, it is also useful to have a means of indicating

achievement of EFA as a whole. The EFA Development Index (EDI), a composite of relevant indicators, provides one way of doing so. Ideally, it should reflect all six EFA goals but, due to data constraints, it currently focuses only on the four most easily quantifiable EFA goals: universal primary education (UPE), adult literacy, the quality of education and gender parity (p. 244).

Using *Table 1: The EFA Development Index (EDI) and its components, 2006* [EFA 2008, p. 248] the authors of the paper made an abridged version of it to present 10 Top countries in the world according to the EFA Development Index (*See Table 3*). Table 3. Top 10 countries according to the level of the EFA Development Index (EDI)

Ranking according to level of EDI	Countries/Territories	EDI	Total primary NER	Adult literacy rate	Gender-specific EFA index (GEI)	Survival rate to grade 5
High EDI						
1	Kazakhstan	0.995	0.990	0.996	0.993	1.000
2	Japan	0.994	0.998	0.992	0.998	0.990
3	Germany	0.994	0.996	1.000	0.992	0.989
4	Norway	0.994	0.981	1.000	0.996	0.999
5	United Kingdom	0.993	0.996	0.998	0.989	0.990
6	Italy	0.992	0.994	0.988	0.991	0.995
7	Denmark	0.992	0.986	1.000	0.991	0.990
8	France	0.991	0.993	0.988	0.995	0.990
9	Luxemburg	0.989	0.987	0.990	0.983	0.996
10	Croatia	0.989	0.989	0.986	0.983	0.997

The analysis of the data on the EFA Development Index as of 2010 presented in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012 (UNESCO: EFA 2012, p. 308-309) shows that Kazakhstan remained in the list of the 10 top countries alongside with Japan, Norway, United Kingdom, and France, while some other countries, namely, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Croatia, and Luxemburg took lower places in the ranking (11th, 17th, 21st, 31st, and 32nd, respectively).

Thus, though Kazakhstan is not one of the countries that enjoy the strongest systems of education in the world, its place in the National Education Index ranking and especially its EFA Development Indices are quite impressive.

However, the same is not true for English Proficiency Index ranking conducted by English First (EF) agency as a cross-national comparison of English language capability research, based on over two million adults completing four different, free online tests (grammar, vocabulary, reading, and listening skills). The study found that Norway had the highest average proficiency of the 44 countries tested, whereas Turkey and Kazakhstan were at the bottom (EF English 2012).

In view of such poor outcomes of learning English in Kazakhstan the reasons for a gradual language priorities shift in the education system of the country are quite obvious.

The opponents of the Tri-Unity of Languages program are right, when they claim,

There is a direct evidence of the language policy according to which training of specialists in English and teaching English at schools have been put at a high level. After the approval of the Tri-Unity of Languages program one can observe a tendency of strengthening and consolidation of the positions of English in Kazakhstan that are supported by the state by increasing the amount of government grants (Eldesov 2012, p.1).

In his article *Pluses and minuses of 'Tri-Unity of Languages'* written in Russian and published in a Kazakh-medium Republican newspaper on November 29, 2012, Eldesov gives some data on government grants for studying languages in higher education institutions (HEIs) of the country that we tabulated for the readers' convenience (See Table 4).

Table 4. Number of Kazakhstani government grants for studying languages at HEIs

Major	Academic year	
	2010-2011	2011-2012
The Kazakh Language and Literature	470	423
The Russian Language and Literature	200	100
The English Language	710	720
Total	1380	1243

Eldesov (2012) claims, "Upon launching the Tri-Unity of Languages project funding of learning and development of languages has increased 20 times as much, but the lion's share of it goes to learning English", but no statistics proving the correctness of the statement is given. As for the data presented in the Table 4, one should keep in mind that one of the weakest links of the Kazakhstani system of foreign language education was (in Soviet Kazakhstan) and is (in modern Kazakhstan) the lack of teachers who can teach English in Kazakh-medium schools.

It is quite possible that priorities in distributing government grant for studying English at Kazakhstani higher education institutions are given to Kazakh-speaking applicants who will be able to study in Kazakh-medium groups (streams) of students and later - after graduating from universities - to teach in Kazakh-medium schools and departments of HEIs.

At least this policy is being pursued by the RK Ministry of Education and Science in selecting candidates for studying abroad in the framework of the Bolashak (Future in Kazakh) and some other programs sponsored by the government. The applicants should meet the requirements by passing exams in Kazakh and English.

3.2 Challenges at the Level of Language Teachers and Learners.

Funding language learning in Kazakhstan is undoubtedly one of essential issues in implementing the Tri-Unity of Languages program in the country, but is not as urgent as the challenge of improving the quality of language teaching and language learning. The quality of language education does not depend greatly on the number of hours allocated for studying languages either.

Thus, in a recently published monograph *Quality of Education in the World and in Kazakhstan*, Kusainov (2013) compares the number of subjects and hours allocated for studying the Language and Literature educational field in Kazakhstani and Japanese elementary and secondary schools. While Kazakhstani schoolchildren study 7 subjects, their peers in Japan study only one subject, namely, the Japanese language. In the first grade Kazakhstani students study the Kazakh language primer, in the second grade they study two subjects (the Kazakh Language and Literature), in the third and fourth grades they study three subjects (the Kazakh Language, Literature, and Russian Language) and in the fifth and sixth grades Kazakhstani students study four subjects, namely, the Kazakh Language, Kazakh Literature, Russian Speech, and a Foreign Language.

Overall, the Language and Literature educational field is being studied in Kazakhstani schools for 2006 hours, whereas in Japan it covers 1377 hours. Thus, Kazakhstani children study language and literature courses 629 hours more than their Japanese peers do, but according to the results of PISA-2009 reading literacy test, Kazakhstan took the 58th - 60th place, while Japan took the 5th-9th place.

Kusainov (2012) concludes, “Despite the fact that our students study in school much longer than the students in Japan, the quality of our children's education is much lower than the one in Japan.” (p. 112)

The situation with language teaching and learning in Kazakhstan is becoming even more challenging now than it has been before. In 2012-2013 academic year in 165 Kazakhstani schools they started the experiment on introducing English classes into the curricula of the 2-nd degree (7-8 year old) students and according to the modified State Compulsory Education Standard (SCES) the first-graders will start learning English in 2013-2014 academic year. Moreover, Moreover, a pilot project on implementing English as the language of instruction within some school subjects will be launched in September 2013.

The authors of the paper share the opinion of those who being involved in language teaching and learning think, *where there is a will, there is a way*. Certainly, there are many ways to meet the challenges of the present-day language situation in Kazakhstan. Altogether there are 130 language centers in in the country where depending on the place of residence any Kazakhstani can learn Kazakh free. (Naimanbaeva et al 2013)

Sh. Kurmanbaiuly, deputy chairperson of the Committee on Languages under the RK Ministry of Culture and Information argues,

Today anyone who wants to learn languages is studying them. There are no obstacles for this. There are many methods available, various manuals and e-manuals have been published. That is to say, for those who desire to learn the state language all opportunities are open. (Naimanbaeva et al 2013)

A lot depends on the personality of the learner, not on his/her age, occupation or availability of free time. In this view the following interview with one of the learners of the Kazakh language is very illustrative:

I am already used to start learning a language to understand the culture when I come to another country. Language is culture medium. There are various books, different teachers here. All of them speak of different methods. Some begin with the history of Kazakhstan and it is very interesting. (Naimanbaeva et al 2013)

The interviewee is Peter House, Managing Director, JSC “FNW Samruk-Kazyna” who attends the Tildaryn Center under People’s Assembly of Kazakhstan whose learners are government employees that acquire basic level in Kazakh just within a month. The teachers of the center make emphasis not on spelling but on communication and use classic folk music and language games in their classes.

The Tri-Unity of Languages program does not interfere in teaching and learning other languages by those who want to.

Thus, in his interview named *Nikhao is a buzzword in Kazakhstan*, Chzhou Li (20, Chinese ambassador to Kazakhstan, states that showing your knowledge of Chinese has become fashionable in this country. More than 8 thousand students from Kazakhstan studying in China. ‘For the country with the population of 17 million it is an honorable figure,’ says the ambassador.

According to Li, teaching Chinese is increasingly becoming popular in Kazakhstan too. Since 2006 till 2012 there were established four Institutes of Confucius in various regions of Kazakhstan and Chinese has been included into curricula of many Kazakhstani universities and schools. Among the causes of “Chinese Language Rush”, the ambassador names impressive economic growth of China, increase of its international status, influence; ancient, magnificent and unique culture; cooperation between Kazakhstan and China. Both Chinese and Kazakhs belong to oriental people and so there is inborn sympathy to Chinese culture & Great Silk Way civilization. And - the last but not the least – there are new opportunities for young people for whom the command of Chinese has become one the important professional skills.

4 Language Learning at Kazakhstani Linguistic and Technical Universities: Case Study

4.1 Language Learning at the Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages (KazUIR&WL).

The Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages named after Ablai Khan

is the successor of the Almaty Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages, which was established over 70 years ago. It is one of the oldest higher education institutions in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The institute was established in accordance with the Soviet government's obligation to provide any graduate from secondary schools with some knowledge of a foreign language. The implementation of this decision was in poor condition. To improve FL teaching the USSR government charged all the union republics with the task to introduce teaching a FL (English, German, and French) at secondary schools, beginning from the 3rd grade. To provide schools and HEIs with the necessary amount of foreign language teachers it was suggested to open one or two foreign language teacher training institutes in each republic. Every graduate from such a HEI was to be able to read special literature and speak informal foreign language. Thereby teaching in foreign language was to be conducted continuously for 4 years two-three hours daily.

The first higher education institution for training foreign language teachers in Kazakhstan was set up in accordance with the USSR's Government Decree No. 1696 dated September 16, 1940 under the name *the Kazakh State Teacher Training Institute of Foreign Languages*. In 1944 it was transformed into the Almaty Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages (APIFL). In the context of the present-day language learning situation in Kazakhstan it is worth mentioning that the same year a new faculty was opened at the Institute – the Faculty of Oriental Languages, but because of the lack of the demand for teachers of the Chinese language it was closed three years later.

Thus, at the beginning of its way the APIFL included 3 language faculties: English, German, and French ones. The main task of the institute was to train FL teachers for secondary schools. The closedness of the country presupposed the closedness of education. After getting independence Kazakhstan's international relations started developing very quickly; the republic entered the world economy market. In accordance with the call of the times the institute expanded its professional training, opened new faculties and in 1993 acquired the status of a university.

Now Ablai Khan University is a multi-profile research and education complex on training specialists in a wide spectrum of international relations and world languages. It conducts training in 17 languages in 39 fields and 49 educational programs and collaborates with 50 universities, with a number of which it has joint programs on two-diploma education. Among the latter there are Dalian University of Foreign Languages, Wuhan University (China), Strasburg University (France).

The university is a member of 12 international organizations among which there are the European Language Council, Consortium of the CIS Humanitarian Universities, Association of Francophone Universities.

The University currently has six faculties: the Pedagogical Faculty of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Translation and Philology, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Faculty of International Relations, Faculty of Management and International Communication, and Faculty of Second Higher and Additional Education. Students of the first three faculties learn the language professionally; they are preparing to become future

teachers, translators, experts in linguistics and literary studies. Students of the Faculty of International Relations and Faculty of Management and International Communication learn many subjects included into their curricula in English. Since the Faculty of Second Higher and Additional Education conducts training in diverse set of specialties (Foreign Language: Two Foreign Languages; Translation Studies; International Relations; International Law; Economics; Government and Local Administration; Journalism; Tourism; Marketing) the role and place of foreign language education depends on the majors of students.

At present the University is operating 13 educational centers for learning various languages and cultures: American, Arabic, Austrian, Chinese, German, Greek, Italian, Korean, Persian, Polish, Spanish, Turkish, and Japanese. Setting up the French language center is under way. All the centers are aimed at assisting teaching and learning foreign languages. They conduct scientific and practical seminars, laboratory workshops, and meetings with foreign linguists, writers, politicians, and statesmen. These centers enhance cross-cultural knowledge of students by organizing a variety of cultural and information activities. Apart from them there are many clubs and organizations where students may improve their command of languages as well such as the University Debate Club in the English language and Black Squire Student Theater in the French language at the Faculty of Translation and Philology.

The University has successfully passed the international accreditation (AQAS) of six educational Bachelor- and Master-degree programs in Foreign Language – Two Foreign Languages, Translation Studies, and Tourism. To improve the quality of training attracting international specialists to teach at the University is widely used. Thus, in 2012-2013 academic year the University employed specialists from 36 countries: Australia, Austria, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Poland, the Netherlands, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the USA, etc.

The Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages seeks to preserve national educational traditions and follow the trends of the world's educational systems (masters' and PhD's programs).

4.2 Language Learning at the Kazakh-British Technical University

Unlike some old Universities (such as the Kazakh National University named after al-Farabi and the Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages named after Ablai-Khan) that launched some bachelors'/masters' programs in English under the influence of the paradigm shift in language learning in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, the Kazakh-British Technical University entered the most significant segment in the Kazakhstan's market of English-medium higher education from the very first days of its establishment.

At present the list of new generation HEIs where English is the only or one of the languages of instruction includes Nazarbayev University (NU) and L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (ENU) in Astana; the Kazakhstani Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Planning (KIMEP), University of International Business (UIB), Kazakh-American University (KAU), International Academy of Business (IAB), Suleiman Demirel University (SDU) in Almaty, to name just a few.

The KBTU was set up under the Memorandum on Mutual Understanding signed by the British Prime-Minister Tony Blair and the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in November 2000 and in accordance with the Kazakhstan's Government Decree dated August 3, 2001.

The University is located in the largest city of this country - Almaty (formerly – Alma-Ata) that up to 1993 was the capital of Kazakhstan. The building that was chosen for the newly-established university is a historical one, being widely known during the Soviet period as the House of Government. The faculty and students of the Kazakh-British Technical University take a legitimate pride in the fact that the independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan was declared by the then Parliament in this very building. The Round Hall of the University where students are attending lectures is a vivid illustration of the changes that have taken and are taking place in Kazakhstan.

Since the first days of its establishment, the faculty of the University that adopted as its motto “a really higher education”, has been striving for achieving the highest standards in teaching a diversity of academic disciplines related to oil and gas engineering, economics and finance, information technologies.

The KBTU is one of the first Kazakhstani Universities that introduced the so-called credit system of education, as well as the faculty staff arrangements into tutors, senior lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, etc. Many of these and other terms were not used earlier and hence when the faculty and the students communicate even in Russian or Kazakh, they use transliterated terms like “advisor”, “syllabus”, “office hour”, “registrar office”, “transcript” and so on.

Every academic year new academic disciplines appear in the curriculum of the University. Thus, for example, in 2006-2007 academic year the Department of Languages launched a new course that was called ‘Research, Reading and Writing Skills’ and coded HUM 315 (from “Humanities”), HUM 316 or HUM 317 depending on the number of credits allocated. This course was a compulsory one for the third-, fourth- and fifth-year students irrespective of their majors: Economics, Finance, Management, Information Technology, Ecology, Oil and Gas Engineering.

In 2007-2008 academic year, a one-credit course (HUM 316) was taught to sophomores and a two-credit course (HUM 317) was compulsory for the freshmen. Unlike similar courses that were taught in Soviet Kazakhstan or are being taught at Russian/Kazakh medium Universities at present-day Kazakhstan, the Research, Reading and Writing Skills aims at developing and integrating skills both in research and in English.

The same academic year the Kazakh-British Technical University administration set a new ambitious goal of 100% participation of the KBTU students in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) preparation program aimed at achieving 6.0 level by the day of the university graduation. To enable the KBTU students to meet the challenge, three teachers of the English Language Department teamed up to explore strategies to incorporate IELTS preparation into the EFL curriculum of the KBTU which at that time included three/six credit compulsory courses of General

English, Business English and English for Professional Purposes (EPP) that strongly correlated with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan's National Standards of Higher Education and the KBTU students' majors. Two strategies of incorporating the IELTS preparation into the EFL curriculum of the University were worked out and implemented that academic year in the KBTU. The procedure and results of the experiment were described elsewhere (Zagidullin 2008) and in this paper only some excerpts are presented:

incorporating the IELTS preparation into the EFL curriculum of the University has revealed some weaknesses in teaching English as a Foreign Language at the Department. The well-known keenness of the EFL teachers on multiple choice questions is fraught with many spelling and other mistakes while answering the IELTS format questions. However, neither teachers, nor students are to blame for this, for the so-called Unified National Test that Kazakhstan's school-leavers have been taking for several years in all disciplines including English is based on the multiple choice system.

Using only or mainly this form of knowledge control may bring up 'a ticking generation' instead of a thinking one. Teachers of any disciplines should widely use diverse methods of teaching and testing their students' level of knowledge and skills.

During the following years the KBTU academics introduced some other compulsory and/or elective English-medium courses such as Academic English, Business Communication, Conversational English, TOEFL, and - the last, but not the least - English for cadets of the Kazakhstani Maritime Academy (KMA) set up within the KBTU last academic year.

In 2011, the English Language Department team won the national research projects competition organized by the Science Committee under the RK Ministry of Education and Science and got the 2012-2014 government grant for conducting research on implementing European standards of foreign language teaching at technical universities of Kazakhstan. In the framework of the project its participants organized and conducted several seminars and workshops for their colleagues in various cities of Kazakhstan (Almaty, Astana, Atyrau, Kyzylorda, Taldykorgan, Pavlodar, and others) and presented their findings in international conferences in Germany, France, Serbia, Spain, Turkey.

5 Conclusion

The paradigm shift in language learning that was set in motion in Kazakhstan after getting independence is so dramatic and rapid that any research on its issues becomes somehow outdated. Thus, for example, the thesis for the degree of Master of Arts *Past, present and future of language policy in Kazakhstan* (Kuzhabekova, 2003), being the most profound research published in English on language policy of Kazakhstan, cannot be adequate resource on present and future of language policy in this country anymore. Almost every day Internet surfing is bringing new pieces of information concerning language learning situation in Kazakhstan.

The same is true about fresher papers dealing with the other issues touched upon in this paper, namely, the changes in the education system of Kazakhstan. The shifting education paradigm makes such reports as *Higher Education in Kazakhstan* (2012) just a valuable resource for further up-to-date research. Data presented in studies on Kazakhstani education system (for example, statistics on the number of universities in Kazakhstan) goes out of date every month.

The present paper is not an exception from the tendency described above. Just on the eve of presenting it at the European Conference on Language Learning in Brighton, UK, Internet disseminated worldwide the information on the birth of the 17-millionth Kazakhstani (17-millionnomu, 2013). The RK Agency of Statistics computed the 17-millionth citizen of the country using vital statistics database on July 11, 2013. It turned out to be Altynbek Eskaraev born on May 17 in the South Kazakhstan. The boy is the fourth child in the family, his father is unemployed and is keeping house at the moment and his mother is an English language teacher. The article mentions an interesting fact that the mother of the 11-millionth Kazakhstani who was registered in the same region some years before was an English language teacher as well.

The local officials who visited the Eskaraevs on July 17 gave a racehorse to the baby and his parents. In addition, the family received as gifts baby carriages and soft toys. No one knows who this 17 millionth Kazakhstani will be when he grows up, but there is something that can be said with confidence: from the moment of birth he is a language learner. Taking into account the current paradigm shift in language learning in Kazakhstan and the profession of his mother, there is no doubt that he will become a trilingual citizen of this country.

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Informed Responses with Clicker Technology in the L2 Grammar Classroom

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Abstract

Nothing makes students of language cringe more than a dry grammar lesson, so an innovative approach is key to reaching them. Clicker technology coupled with an extensive use of peer interaction has proven very successful in my French classes at the Nanyang Technological University, as the combination of these techniques can result in both an entertaining atmosphere and solid pedagogy.

This paper details a fresh approach to the teaching of articles (definite, indefinite and partitive) in a third-level French course in the form of an interactive game show using clickers. The approach is inspired by a framework that Julia Miller uses in her English classes at the University of Adelaide: the articles in a particular text have gone missing and it's up to the class to get the ransom money in order to pay for their safe return. Whereas Miller created a video (in which she stars as the game show candidate) for the students to watch, I adapted the idea for my pedagogical purposes and added the clickers so that I could have one student candidate with full 'audience' participation so that everyone is involved in the game.

I will contextualize the efficacy of this clicker approach by comparing it to another project in which clickers were used not as a summative assessment of the students' understanding, but as a means to present the concept.

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Clickers (or personal response devices) have been around for over ten years in hundreds of large classes in the United States alone (Bojinova 169), but only recently have instructors started using them in smaller classes, thanks to studies such as Sevan and Robinson (2011) and Miller and Felson's (2009), which show their usefulness for small classes when used with appropriate teaching methodologies. Language classes mainly in North America have just started to incorporate clickers (Ellen Johnson at Georgetown, Walcir Cardoso at Concordia, Rifka Cook at Northwestern) due to their availability and the novel approach that they afford. Since the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore provides all students with clickers, it is logical that their use has not been relegated to one domain, but is branching out into the languages as well.

This current paper describes the use of clickers in a third-semester French language class. After having conducted two other trials, one using clickers as a formative aid for grammar learning and the other to spark discussion about French culture, I set out to see whether clickers could make a noteworthy contribution to an existing framework for grammar review. I was seeking informed responses from and for the students.

Trial details

The trial group comprised nineteen students, sixteen of which completed the subsequent questionnaire. The study builds on Dr. Julia's Miller's premise to teach English articles at the University of Adelaide (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/english-for-uni/>). She developed a video in which she plays Ms. Parrot, an Agatha Christie-inspired sleuth that needs to track down missing grammatical articles that are being held for ransom. To this end, she participates in a game show that she calls *Thanks a Million*, which was inspired by the popular television show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*. I wanted a more interactive experience for my students, so I decided to perform the game show live. The students used their comprehension skills to understand the scenario and then they all participated in the game using clicker technology. Although only one student was selected as the contestant, the whole class provided answers on the graphical display that instantly appeared on the screen after the voting period with the credit card-sized clicker devices. The professor cum game-show host encourages the student-contestant to 'poll the audience' at every turn so that he is not really on the 'hot seat' and can participate confidently. I also changed the scenario into French so that the game show was no longer *Thanks a Million*, but *Mille fois merci*. The contestant was attempting to raise a thousand dollars for the ransom (because that is the amount in the French expression) to get the definite, indefinite and partitive articles back to the text we were considering.

The students had a series of nine fill-in-the-article questions with a choice of four answers leading up to the thousand dollar grand finale question. The first four questions were generally the straight-forward type of question that they had seen in previous examples, so they quickly progressed through them. There was the occasional error, so I still reinforced the correct answer with a quick grammatical

summary before going on. Questions five and six presented new cases the students had not seen before in order to test whether the students could apply the basic rules a little further. When errors were made in these cases, it allowed the stronger students to give explanations for their choice and a chance for me, the instructor, to explain why one could say a 'salade au thon' (tuna salad) is correct but a 'salade du thon' would not be. The article would not be used with the preposition 'de' but it is with the preposition 'à'. They had previously seen examples with the preposition 'à' so they should have been able to provide the correct answer from the list. The hesitation came when faced with other unknown options, so it allowed us to discuss those possibilities. This real-time reaction to 'on-the-spot' questions is something that clickers facilitate. Students had no trouble with question seven as they made a link to a previous example as well, but the last two questions involved numerous articles to fill in. These questions tested the ability of the students to get the whole series correct, but also enabled them to see the necessity of symmetry in a list of articles in a recipe, for example. They hadn't noticed thus far that although partitive articles or definite articles were acceptable in a list of ingredients in a recipe, it is better to choose one type or the other to maintain a symmetrical balance in the sentence. This stylistic question was brought out by our discussion after seeing all the responses on the board.

Results

The students were definitely engaged in the game show. This echoes the findings of Fies and Marshall in their review of 25 clicker publications (2006): clickers improve participation and the perception of interactivity in the class. As professors who have tried clickers know, "clickers seize students' attention through the simplicity, novelty factor, and fun element they bring to class. Secondly, they encourage student participation through the anonymity they offer, which is especially important when the language of learning and teaching is not the students' first language" (Gachago 253). Gachago made this statement in relation to the South African students that she teaches in English, but this is just as valid for second-language classes. The anonymity lessens the intimidation factor.

One of the great benefits of clicker use is the immediate feedback offered to both students and instructors. After responding, the student sees where his answer is placed in relation to those of his peers by looking at the graphical display immediately flashed on the screen relating the percentage of people choosing selected answers. This was useful for review, as the student could then see if he were falling behind his peers. The benefit for the instructor is the possibility to address issues in real-time in response to the answers given by every person in the room. Even in a small class of fifteen or twenty students there are always a few students who do not express their thoughts and whose deficiencies might not be addressed without such an aid.

Did this class improve the students' grades? It did not seem to have a significant impact, as the grades resembled previous cohorts' results. How can one

quantitatively assess the impact of one class on life-long learning? For Astin, “the quality and quantity of the student’s involvement will influence the amount of student learning and development” (1984, 297). Being so engaged in the topic may actually influence the lasting effect of the class; the deep-learning and would need further study which surpasses the limits of this trial.

Student and Professor Feedback

This high level of engagement that was obvious to me as the professor did not escape the students, as 88% of them noted that they participated more with clickers when asked in a post-class questionnaire. Not only did they actively participate, but 82% said that using clickers is fun. It is the grammar instructor’s challenge to make anything about articles ‘fun’! 82% of the students said that the game show was improved by the use of clickers and that clickers were easy to use. This is definitely echoed in the literature, since most trials record positive student reaction to clicker use.

In a previous trial using clickers to teach two past tenses in French (McCloskey 2012), 100% of the students recommended clickers for use in small classes, but this was not the case for this current study. I was surprised to see that only 75% of the students recommended them. Perhaps when asked if they are better in smaller or larger classes, the usefulness in larger classes seems more apparent, but I cannot determine the exact reasoning of the students as it was not part of the questionnaire.

Conclusions

This trial was successful, since it improved on a static framework by making a more active learning environment to reinforce the acquisition of a troublesome grammatical point that is a particularly difficult one for our students whose mother tongues do not generally include articles. In addition, the students were very enthusiastic about reviewing the articles that they had learned in this jovial manner. However, there was one element missing. Gachago cites the benefits of clickers as “overall improved attitudes of students –classroom environment benefits, such as improved students’ attendance, attention, participation, engagement-learning benefits, such as improved interaction, discussion and peer learning, contingent teaching, improved learning performance, and quality of learning, and assessment benefits, such as improved feedback, the potential for formative assessment, and the possibility of comparing responses with other students” (255). Although many of these clicker benefits were present in this trial, there was not enough cooperative learning in comparison with previous trials. Walker and Barwell suggest that the benefit obtained from clicker use in smaller classes lies in “collaborative learning rather than in knowledge transfer from teacher to learner” (2009 45). Although the students could take a moment to discuss with their peers before voting, the game show premise does not lend itself as much to the think-pair-share approach that is probably the most effective pedagogical approach coupled with clicker technology. Johnson et al. (1998) in their

consideration of nearly 170 studies of cooperative learning show that it is much more effective than individual or competitive learning. With that in mind, I did not set up the game as a competition and tried to keep the focus on the group. The answers revealed on the screen were individual, though, and the students would probably have benefitted more if they had been grouped with the opportunity for more discussion before responding. Cognitive-developmental theory considers “cooperation as an essential prerequisite for cognitive growth [...Vygotsky, for example, maintains that] working cooperatively with more capable peers and instructors results in cognitive development and intellectual growth” (Johnson 1998, 29).

Having had the experience using clickers in a few different ways, I would suggest that their use with the think-pair-share method is ideal for deep learning no matter what the topic. The goal for educators is to provide students with opportunities to go beyond surface learning or the initial stages of Bloom’s taxonomy, for example, of knowledge and comprehension. Although using clickers for the game show made for an interesting, engaging class which sparked the students’ interest it didn’t take advantage of the full potential of the technology. Having informed responses offered at the click of a button is an advantage, but informing these responses further with more peer interaction should be the goal. More trials will definitely follow.

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Japanese EFL learners' use of interactional resources to delay answers in speaking tests

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Abstract

This study explores the use of interactional resources by Japanese EFL learners when they have difficulties in expressing themselves in speaking tests. Adopting a Conversational Approach, its focus is an analysis of the way they delay answers while tackling comprehension and production difficulties, looking at their use of interactional skills. The data was examined for frequencies of various interactional resources, its functions and intended meaning from a socio-pragmatic perspective. For this purpose, it uses a form of comparative analysis of L2 oral performance in speaking tests of Japanese novice EFL learners and British novice JFL learners to see how learners' native language and its cultural norms attached to their interactional behaviour would affect their performance.

The study found that various interactional resources were used: formulaic expressions, various types of repetition, sound stretches, vowel-marking, and silences. One difference in their communicative behaviour stood out: British novice JFL learners used more varied linguistic resources than Japanese novice EFL learners, whose responses were less verbally-oriented and relied on the interviewer taking an active role in order to elicit their answers. This behaviour can lead to miscommunication among participants and negative assessment of their oral performance.

The study's findings have pedagogical implications, concerning the aspects of pragmatic behaviour that need to be consciously taught at this proficiency level and the ways to facilitate this in L2 classroom. It also offers insights into the significant role of socio-pragmatic interactional resources in L2 learning and their influence on linguistic performance in speaking tests.

Introduction

Over the last decades, the discussions on learner reticence among Asian EFL learners have been gaining more attention for investigating its causes and pedagogical approaches to facilitate more active interaction (Harumi, 2011, Zang and Head, 2010). The possible causes are largely divided into five areas: linguistic problem, cognitive and psychological problem, socio-cultural influence which includes different interactional style in learners' native language and the values they bring in L2 learning including previous different teaching and learning experiences in their local context, situational or contextual difference and finally individual differences (LoCastro, 2004). The findings have suggested that Japanese EFL learners can lack of taking initiatives, be less spontaneous in interaction, and also have difficulty to express their own needs. While each study greatly contributes to raise educators' awareness on this pragmatic aspect of learning and teaching in L2, the most studies focusing on the examination of learner reticence have been conducted in classroom interaction and mainly its analysis on classroom discourse but not many has been done in other learning contexts. Therefore, this study further attempts to examine their use of reticence in a specific task, that is, in the speaking tests. This is because the context of assessment makes learners more aware that they need to optimize their L2 performance at their best especially when it directly is connected to their assessment result. Further, despite of inevitable test anxiety, learners are free from the judgement from the peers unlike in the classroom, where the peer-pressure is listed one of the psychological pressure which underlie the value of groupism in Japanese society. Thus, the present study further attempt to investigate Japanese EFL learners interactional competence, in an under-researched context.

Previous studies on socio-cultural influence on oral proficiency test

As previously referred, there are very few studies which focuses on the socio-cultural influence on oral proficiency test, particularly with Japanese EFL learners. Most studies in this specific area, focusing on examining Japanese EFL learners' oral proficiency performances were conducted in late 1990s'. Norton (1999)s' study examined the fairness of paring format at Cambridge Examination tests and claims that the paring of Japanese EFL learners needs some attention in terms of its gender and age as the societal value on its difference possibly make younger and female candidate somewhat are required to be modest, that is, withdrawn from talking. Further, Ross's (1998) study has claimed that the interviewers in the speaking tests who may have different cultural norms, possibly pose questions requiring certain degree of self-disclosure in culturally inappropriate way. In this case, the Japanese candidates often tend to opt for a minimalist approach in their response or resorting to silence as a form of meta-communication. It therefore warns that there may be types of topic or information possibly make the candidates difficult to answer as Japanese tend not to disclose personal information so easily in public. The result of Ross's study mirrors the result of the Young and Halleck (1998)'s study, which is a comparative study of talkativeness in speaking interview. The study compared the discourse of Mexican and Japanese EFL learners at their intermediate and advanced level. Though it clearly states that there were individual differences and not all the interviewee's language performance cannot be explained from cultural reasons, the study confirms that Spanish-speaking Mexican learners' were more interactive in terms of topic shift, speech rate and number of turns. Thus, both studies report some significant common findings and raise issues on pragmatic aspects of oral proficiency

test. As Celce-Murcia (2000) also claims that differences in norms and knowledge in different culture may create problems especially when the participants use the same linguistic code but have different cognitive, affective and cultural values in interaction. If so, speaking tests, or public proficiency test also inevitably face the issues on how to assess learners' interactional style and the role of interviewer, and also the types of topics dealt with as well as its validity and reliability (Johnson, 2006) and its authenticity (van Lier, 1989) as frequently pointed out. Nevertheless, most studies referred to above mainly devoted to analyse the actual interactional discourse and lacks paying attention to the voices from the actual participants to elicit their implied meaning on the choice of certain interactional skills. Therefore, this study attempts to elicit the participants' voices to find out the underlying cultural values they have as well as the analysis of oral discourse itself.

The study

In order to investigate the use of interactional resources by L2 learners when they delay answers, the following research questions were raised.

Research questions

1. How do Japanese EFL learners and British JFL learners use interactional resources to delay answers in speaking tests?
2. Is there any similarities or differences in the way two groups delay answers and what are the reasons for this?
3. To what extent do Japanese or British cultural norms or beliefs affect the use of particular interactional resources to delay answers?
4. What can the study offer as insights into the significant role of socio-pragmatic interactional resources in conversation management skills in L2 and also its influence on oral assessment as well as classroom practices?

Research method

The present study has two sets of data. The first set of data is the video-recorded speaking tests interviews which were formally assessed as a term-end class test. The data for the EFL class was collected in a Japanese EFL Class at a Japanese University taught by a native English teacher. It consists of 30 sets of dyadic interaction between a teacher and a student. Although they are University students whose linguistic competence is regarded as lower-intermediate in written examination, their oral proficiency skills are considered as novice-mid level according to the placement test conducted at their entry to the University. There were 17 female and 13 male students in their first year who are enrolled on English conversation class. The data was collected at the end of the first term, that is, four months after they commenced their study at University. The data for the JFL class was collected from a Japanese beginner's class at a University in the UK, which offers non-compulsory modern language course, in which students had 4 hours contact hours per week. There were 8 female and 7 male students. Their ethnic backgrounds were slightly varied. They were all British nationals though two Chinese origin learners included the ones, who brought up in the UK since their birth. The data was collected at the end of the term.

Both groups were given same task as follows. And each interview lasted approximately 10-13 minutes and the all the data was transcribed.

Prior to the speaking tests, both groups were given a week to prepare a talk for three minutes on their familiar topic such as my friend, my town, my hobby on their own choice and it was followed by the question and answer stage, led by the teacher. Their oral performance were analysed for its grammatical and lexical accuracy and range, fluency, pronunciation, pragmatic use of language and also repair strategies. This study focuses on the use of repair strategies when they have difficulties to comprehend the question and also answer the questions, therefore when they delay answers.

Adopting the Conversational Analytic approach (CA), the present study examines the various types of interactional resources (both verbal and non-verbal) used by L2 learners to delay answers during comprehension and production process in speaking test. That is, it mainly refers to the compensatory or repair strategies to gain time for thinking, reformulating their thinking for output. That is, it is the strategic competence that speakers employ to handle breakdowns in communication.

The second set of data which intended to elicit the cultural values attached is the interview with the interviewers, the EFL and JFL teachers in semi-structured format, specifically asking for their opinion and interpretation of the interviewees’ repair strategies. The interviewees were also requested to provide a self-feedback survey on their performance, especially on their interactional skills in the test performed.

Thus, based on the data obtained as above, the data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Findings: (1) Quantitative analysis

Before presenting quantitative data, the following classification of the means of communication will be used as a basic framework in this study, looking at the mode of communication in terms of its channel and code and its combination as Saville-Troike (1985:145) claims.

CHANNEL			
C	Vocal		Non-vocal
	O	Verbal	Spoken language
D	Non-Verbal	Paralinguistic, prosodic features (vocalised fillers, sound stretch, laughter)	Silence (non-vocalized pauses) can be accompanied with smile, nod, facial expressions
E			

(Saville-Troike 1985:145)

Figure 1

The classification of the means of communication according to its channel and code presents some interesting dimension of interaction. As this study aims at examining

the oral performance by learners, the focus of the analysis naturally goes to the following three combinations: 1) Vocal and Verbal: Spoken language, 2) Vocal and Non-verbal: Paralinguistic and prosodic features, and 3) Non-vocal and Non-verbal language. As for the first category, the preliminary study suggests that spoken language used as a repair strategy is mainly for repetition in the form of word or lexical level, phrasal level, sentence level and possibly as a summary statement to recall idea. It can be both L1 and L2. In this study, the use of L1 is separately counted as one resource. For the second category, which is the paralinguistic and prosodic features includes vocalised fillers, sound stretch (usually vowel-sound within a word), laughter etc. For the third group is generally the use of silence, completely no-sound produced. It usually is accompanied with some sort of non-verbal behaviour such as facial expression, smile, head-movement including nodding, or eye direction.

Analysis and discussion of qualitative data

Interactional resources:

<u>Verbal cues (%)</u>	<u>EFL</u>	<u>JFL</u>
. L1 use	10.9%	8.8%
. Repetition (L2)	14.5%	20.1%
. Formulaic expression (L2)	0.9%	8.8%
Total (verbal cues)	26.3%	37.7%

Table. 1

As for the use of verbal cues, there were three main interactional resources observed. As learners from both groups, EFL and JFL groups are at their novice level in oral proficiency, the use of L1 is one of the prominent phenomena. From the results, the EFL learners tend to opt for their L1 use more than JFL learners. As for the use of repetition (word, phrasal and sentence levels) in L2, which had various function, such as asking for clarification, reformulating the question being asked, or buying time for thinking was used much more by the JFL learners. The use of particular formulaic expression such as, 'Pardon,' 'Please repeat it again,' was used by very small number of EFL learners but used more by the JFL learners. As the results shows, the use of verbal cues as a repair strategies appear to be used much more frequently by JFL learners. The reason for this will be discussed in the later section.

<u>Non-verbal cues + vocal (%)</u>	<u>EFL</u>	<u>JFL</u>
. Laughter	0.3%	1.5%
. Rising pitch	9.6%	8.8%
. Self-whisper	0.0%	2.0%
. Sound stretch	12.5%	2.5%
. Vocalised fillers	24.5%	31.3%
Total	47.3%	46.1%

Table.2

As for the non-verbal and vocal cues, the use of five interactional resources was observed. In total, the percentage of its use is almost similar in the total numbers, yet

there are some differences with the use of self-whispering, sound stretch and also vocalized fillers. Although the act of self-whispering may not be heard by the interviewer, it seems that JFL learners used it to reformulate their thoughts for output. On the other hand, one of the phonological features, sound stretch was more used by the Japanese EFL learners. This particular interactional resource was also observed by Carroll (2005) in the study of Japanese EFL students use of vowel-stretching while thinking. Although this sound-stretch is observed by any speaker in general as a indication of thinking time, the Japanese learners use this interactional features much more than JFL learners. When it comes to the vocalized fillers, its use was more prominent with JFL. From this result, any kind of vocalization was used by much more by JFL learners.

<u>Non-verbal cues - vocal (%)</u>	<u>EFL</u>	<u>JFL</u>
. Silence up to 5 seconds	15.2%	12.0%
. Silence up to 10 seconds	9.9%	4.3%
. Silence over 10 seconds	1.3%	0.0%
<hr/> Total	26.4%	16.2%

Table.3

Finally, as for the use of non-verbal cues with no vocalization, literally complete absence of sound was much more used by EFL learners. Although the frequencies is similar the silence under five seconds, EFL learners seem to use longer pauses more frequently. Although this study did not include the close examination of possibly accompanied other non-verbal behaviours such as head-movement such as nodding, eye direction, smile and facial expressions, the frequent use of long pauses could be a great threat for the interlocutors in deciding which direction the speaking tests can move and also the evaluation on its use and meaning.

Similarities and differences

To sum up the similarities and differences of the use of interactional resources as a repair strategies, both groups of learners used various interactional resources. As additional information which cannot appear on the statistical results is that individual student had a tendency to use one or two repair strategies repeatedly, in most cases all through the entire question and answer sequences. That is, they seem to recycle the same interactional resources in number of times. There were very few individuals who used more variation on its use. This implies that classroom practices can offer to enhance their knowledge and performance in this area in more explicit way.

As for the differences, as previously discussed, one of the distinctive differences is that British JFL learners used more varied verbal-oriented interactional resources than Japanese EFL learners, whose response were less verbally-oriented. More use of non-verbal and non-vocal oriented use by EFL learners were observed. For instance, British JFL learners used more formulaic expressions and repetition in L2 and vocalised fillers whereas Japanese EFL learners used much more vocally unfilled pause, that is, the sound of silence itself as a code and also as a repair strategy. However, the form of silence in terms of its length is the same, its function and meaning appear to be varied, such as thinking time, comprehending the question,

unable to express difficulties such as clarification of request. Thus, the statistical analysis could depict one aspect of the use of interactional resources as repair strategies, it indicates that the further analysis of its functional use and its meaning needs to be discussed.

Voices from the learners and teachers:

Based on the survey answered by the Japanese EFL learners, they expressed several difficulties in their interaction and also the difficulty to use the repair strategies. First of all, they have mentioned difficulty in listening comprehension. That is, their understanding of the questions seems to be one of the main problems they have to resolve in the interaction. Another aspect of difficulty they have experienced is the fact that they feel that there are occasions they can communicate non-verbally but mostly non-vocally, for instance, when they feel difficult to answer clearly with the option of yes or no. Depending on topic and the context they are talking about, there seems to have been occasion students felt difficulties to provide clear answers. Further, they have mentioned that they have difficulties to maintain eye-contact in talk.

On the other hand, the native English teacher who has interviewed the student regarded students' silent responses as a lack of preparation and difficulty in listening. That is, the teacher strongly believes that their less successful performance can mainly be caused by students' linguistic problems.

As for the British learners, there was not so much variation on the reasons why they try to verbalize their difficulty. The majority agreed that the period of silence creates uneasiness between the parties and needs to be filled. And their Japanese teacher gave a good feedback on their willingness to maintain the communication without long pauses.

Pedagogical implications

The pedagogical implications will be suggested in two different areas. The first is the recommendation for the classroom practices. Based on the results of the quantitative and qualitative data, it is revealed that Japanese EFL learners tend to use non-verbal and non-vocal cues as repair strategies. Although this seems to be reflected their cultural value on the role of non-verbal use of language, they also need to learn strategies for vocalizing their difficulties in L2. In this sense, the use of fillers and the use of formulaic expressions can be introduced in more explicit ways from the early stage of L2 learning at novice level. Along with this, they also need to be given opportunities to know the meaning and function of silence and how the use of pause or silence can be interpreted in L2. The use of different kind of repair strategies also need to be introduced to the JFL learners as their use of strategies were more verbally oriented than the Japanese EFL learners which promote more interaction and to maintain the talk, yet their use of strategies and its applicability was very limited as a novice learners. In case of more advanced students, their linguistic competence can greatly help the overall speaking tasks. However, the novice learners' use of linguistic items is relatively within the small range. Even taking this fact, the use of vocally-oriented repair strategies from the early stage of L2 learning could be more encouraged.

In terms of assessment, teachers or interviewers need to be aware that learners' cultural norms in L1, which may affect their conversational style in L2 need to be understood. This includes the degree of self-disclosure on certain more personal topics. There is certainly a dilemma of what learners should aim for and how much verbalization is more appropriate yet their value on a particular interactional style needs to be respected.

Further studies suggested

Despite some useful findings, the samples are collected from a single teacher's interaction with his students. The teacher's background (especially their understanding on learners' L1 and culture may have some effect on their interactional style and their questioning techniques. Therefore, multiple sources sample collection could have much clearer picture on the use of interactional strategies in speaking test. Also, the effect of teaching useful repair strategies and the development of interactional skills to be encouraged as a longitudinal study to see the claim made here can be useful for learning in the longer term.

Conclusion

Despite some limitations, the study depicted some aspects of L2 learners' use of repair strategies as their interactional skills in speaking test. It was found that Japanese EFL learners have a tendency to opt for non-verbal and non-vocal or phonological use of repair strategies such as unfilled silence, particularly longer silence, and sound stretch (vowel-sound stretch) which are very ambiguous and indirect way of expressing their difficulty and needs. These strategies can cause misunderstandings and could possibly be factors which lead to downgrading of their scores due to their passive style of interaction. It is necessary for us to respect EFL learners' desire to retain a sense of their cultural identity within learning contexts while we search for ways language teachers can help learners acquire interactional competence and assess their skills.

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The logo for the International Association for Language Acquisition Research (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, faint, light blue circular arc that is partially visible at the top and bottom of the page. A red curved line is also visible on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the blue arc.

Teaching literature using the web 2.0: A proposal for higher education

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0200

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Abstract

The educational context is constantly varying, essentially due to the current framework of internationalization and scientific development. In this setting, homogeneous traditional practices are replaced by innovative initiatives that foster constructive learning through eclectic and flexible resources. Nowadays, there is an ongoing debate about the transformation of teachers into guides that provide students with strategies for self and lifelong autonomous learning. Within this profound change, they may adopt new teaching approaches and rely on Information and Communication Technologies, which adapt to present-day students and their needs. In this sense, this motivating project for teacher and students, designed for English Language lessons in higher education, seeks the advantages of the introduction of literature in the classroom, as far as language, cultural enrichment, enthusiasm and personal growth are concerned. It consists of a didactic unit, based on a juvenile literary text, which would be developed on a virtual platform (Moodle). The unit contains a wide range of novel and playful digital activities intended for blended learning. ICT tools are also included to propitiate familiarity, motivation and the opportunity of learning beyond the classroom. The objective is to test whether such method serves the dual function of linguistic education and motivation enhancement. In this way, the students involved would take an active part in their own learning process and value reading as a source of sociocultural knowledge.

1. Introduction.

In recent decades, the educational system has undergone many changes, mainly because of the introduction of new technologies in the classroom, the European framework of reference and the globalization process in general. These circumstances make educational institutions rethink the traditional teaching method and adapt it to the technological and multicultural context in which education is understood as a continuous process that students must undertake independently. This preparation will be essential for students to develop socially and intellectually, adapting themselves to any changes and events that may arise throughout their lives.

This educational change cannot be understood in isolation, since the passage of the student from a passive receiver to an active agent takes place parallel to the evolution of the Web 2.0. With these tools, the user not only observes the contents transmitted by digital media, but also modifies, interacts with and even produces them. In this sense, the teacher's role as an educational guide is particularly necessary in order to provide the students with a wide range of strategies that enable them to discriminate and process information properly.

The serious lack of reading habit among adolescents should also be highlighted. Despite the efforts of the various educational entities, this group is reluctant to this activity, possibly due to a lack of routine and motivation. Perhaps the problem does not lie in the reading itself, but in the context and the means by which it is carried out, which are not adapted to the current reality of young people. Precisely for this reason, this research suggests that inviting students to practice reading in electronic formats may be useful in order to increase their interest and make them value it as a means to gain knowledge and socio-cultural awareness. Note that, traditionally, literature was not usually included in the classroom, despite being closely related to the language, since it combines its linguistic, historical and cultural aspects.

It seems, therefore, interesting to see how, grammatical, artistic, cultural and social goals can be achieved through literature and ICT, at the same time that students are provided with knowledge about influential authors of the target language. Thus, it is possible to get motivational methods based on the innovation and adaptation of the methodology that has been used so far.

2.State of affaires.

This proposal is based on three pillars, namely:

-The literature for and against literary texts in the English classroom and the implementation of ICT in education.

-The existing models that combine both techniques for teaching purposes in the context of language teaching and learning.

-The educational legislation and the recommendations of the European Commission in the context of internationalization in which teaching takes place today.

Since the sixties, a large group of authors argued for and against the use of literature for language learning.

Among the first critics are A. Manley (1987), R. Elliot (1990) or G. Lazar (1994). They defended literature as a means to encourage motivation, active participation, values in education, the acquisition of interpretive skills and the acquisition of language.

However, their arguments did not begin to take hold until the nineties, literature was excluded from language classrooms for over forty years. Prejudices about the language used and the belief in the need for special skills for comprehension have been the biggest obstacles raised by authors such as D. M. Topping (1968), G. N. Leech (1973), H. G. Widdowson (1975) or J. Culler (1975).

Despite the tendency to consider the positive aspects of literature in the classroom, there is not a consensus about the most appropriate texts or how they should be introduced and adapted to the students. Something similar happens with the inclusion of ICT, firstly introduced in the educational field over two decades ago. Despite the numerous possibilities offered, it also presents a few challenges from the perspective of teaching, learning and infrastructure.

After observing the data analyzed, it can be said that both teachers and subject matter experts are in favor of the inclusion of ICT in the classroom. Educational virtues could be summarized in the dynamization of classes, the multiplication of resources and significant autonomous learning (Carter Ramos 2005; MV Fernandez 2006; M. Area 2007). The most common disadvantages are the overwhelming information, sometimes of doubtful quality and origin, the need to invest in electronic equipment, the lack of technological knowledge or technical problems that they can create (Graells Marquis 2000).

However, the so-called "digital literacy" is a reality that must be addressed also in the classroom. Experts such as F. Esteve (2009) point out that technology by itself is not an infallible tool, but needs to be based on a teaching method. The teacher should be present as a guide to help students discern useful and relevant information from which is not, construct their own knowledge and develop a critical view of their surroundings.

With respect to the application of ICT to English language classes, various studies support the benefits of this combination. According to these, electronic devices help create a communicative environment, facilitate vocabulary development through visualization and contextualization and promote reading and creativity, and the ability of students to express their ideas.

Regarding the legislative framework, the educative curriculum sets out the objectives and contents to deepen the knowledge of English, especially those related to the different ways of speaking and writing, giving importance to the use of materials in different media.

In the context of European convergence, languages are crucial to interact in a multinational and multilingual society. The notions of independent and lifelong learning remain in the background of the new educational model. Under these

circumstances, in 2006 the European Parliament and the European Union Council established the basic skills that students should acquire during their stay in the educational system in order to achieve the stated objectives.

3.Objectives and methodology.

3.1. Objectives.

The main objective of this project is to create a model for the integration of literature in the English language classroom through the use of new technologies, taking into account and improving established models. At the same time, it seeks to work the different core competencies and increase student motivation, achieving linguistic and socio-cultural learning outcomes. In addition, special attention is paid to the development of reading and interpretative skills, as well as the active participation of students by expressing their opinions and sharing their experiences.

3.2. Methodology.

Previous studies on literature and ICT in the classroom as well as the current social and legislative framework have been taken into account for the development of this project. The existing models of G. Lazar and T. O'Brien on how to work with literary texts in the language classroom have also been examined. According to these, eclecticism is essential to address possible shortcomings of the models and the difficulties in their implementation.

Finally, this proposal combines methods that have already proved successful with new concepts and software components designed to meet the objectives of the curriculum for Secondary Education and the needs of future citizens of the knowledge society and achieve internationally imposed basic skills.

4.Didactic proposal.

The proposed methodology is the creation of a didactic unit based on the extract of the young adult novel by Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* (2005). Such unit is intended for students in the last year of Secondary Education. In order to study the text in depth, it was decided to use Moodle, a virtual learning platform, which supports classes and provides useful resources outside the classroom.

Moodle virtual educational platform allows to include a wide variety of resources and activities, which can also integrate various technology related procedures. Thus, the teacher creates a space that contains what they want their students to work on. The teacher can manage and control all contents, gathering materials to evaluate students according to appropriate and previously established criteria.

This interactive training system that offers great flexibility, conforms to the objectives of this project for several reasons:

- Enables the treatment of any subject or content using new technologies and increasing innovation and motivation of students.
- The content and tasks promote both language skills and cultural awareness.

-This procedure is effective to incorporate blended learning mode.

-The Moodle platform serves as an instrument of integration of the different elements that make multimodal discourse, which combines traditional aspects of reading and writing with a wide range of audio-visual media.

These features make the technique multimodality motivating, updated and essential for digital-native students, for whom new technologies are as inescapable as the development of new digital literacy.

4.1. Selection of the text

The first step was to choose a literary text. The following aspects were considered for this purpose: the type of course the teaching proposal focuses on, students to whom it is addressed and the text itself.

Regarding the first aspect, the context in which this project is to be developed is an English classroom in the last year of Secondary Education, in which students learn general English for academic purposes. The use of literary texts in this class is justified in the official curriculum and programming of the course, as both reiterate the need to promote reading and increase reading skills of different types of texts in various formats, including literature and digital media.

With regard to students, most had an A2 level of English and shared a common cultural background. Their ages are between sixteen and nineteen and they are not familiar with literature, at least in the classroom. To ensure that the text used is related to their interests, their age and student status have both been taken into account. In addition, the text has been intended to entail moderate challenge and to be a source of motivation and personal enrichment.

Although presented in its original version, it could be said that the fragment does not contain complicated language, since it does not belong to any specific field. There is also a wide range of additional materials available, which are related to the novel, such as web pages, videos, podcasts and film adaptations.

However, the text presents some aspects that may be less familiar to the students, especially a rich vocabulary and cultural references. The fact that it is a fragment could also hinder understanding, as some students may feel the need to know more details of the story. In this case, they would be encouraged to continue reading outside the classroom (extensive reading), offering them some help with any problems they may encounter. However, the potential disadvantages were considered when planning the sessions, so a number of resources have been included in order to cover such needs and provide an overview of the text at hand.

4.2. Activities

The activities, which combine traditional and technological methods, are divided into three different sections.

Pre-reading activities help the students establish a first contact with the text. They are motivated and engaged by introducing the contents in an attractive way through videos, images and prediction exercises.

While-reading activities provide a deeper insight into the topic. Glossaries, flashcards and interactive exercises make this section.

4.3. Additional materials and reinforcement activities.

The teacher would use the virtual platform to different contents that encourage active participation and success in understanding the text. These materials would also serve as a link with later units and to reinforce any aspects that students may not have acquired properly.

It includes a general forum in which students can express their concerns and suggestions about the reading. In addition, a chat has been set up in which the teacher will propose topics for discussion and reflection. In this way, students can share their views on these issues and link them to their own experiences. Moreover, the teacher can assess the degree of understanding of the text and provide additional information in order to improve it.

In general, different external resources would become visible for the students while they proceed with the reading. This section includes contents such as:

- Information about the author.
- Links to relevant websites.
- Videos with scenes from the film inspired by the novel.

The aim of including these materials is to help students understand the text by providing them mainly with visual and interactive aid. In addition, they would be able to access the platform at any time, with no time or space limits, as well as to contact with peers and the teacher on a regular basis.

4.3. Objectives and contents.

This educational program is intended to achieve goals through specific contents.

The main objectives are:

- To use ICT to create individual or group projects and get students to express their own ideas.
- To collect and select information critically.
- To increase the reading habit and familiarity with literature.
- To promote constructivist learning through relevant tasks based on real life.

- To innovate and introduce multimodal discourse as a means for motivation and active participation of students.

- To attain basic skills: linguistic communication, mathematics, knowledge and interaction with the physical world, information processing and digital competence, social and civic, cultural and artistic, to learn how to learn and autonomy and personal initiative.

The contents include linguistic (vocabulary, grammar, phonetics ...) and cultural aspects in order to improve reading, speaking and listening skills.

4.4. Assessment

The evaluation process is an important part of any training program. As far as the teachers are concerned, it lets them know the level of the students and enables them to assess their progress and their own teaching methods. As for the students, they can be aware of their own learning progress. Assessment should be continuous, formative and objective so as to allow the students to improve and learn from their mistakes. It promotes the idea of error assimilation and assessment as part of the learning process. To achieve this, this procedure should not be understood in isolation, but in line with the objectives, contents and methodology applied in the teaching practice.

4.5. Implementation, results and conclusions.

To test the effectiveness of this methodology, the unit has been implemented in three Secondary Schools. These centres are located in rural and urban areas and have a heterogeneous group of students.

In order to obtain data to analyze the situation and the success or failure of the unit, two separate questionnaires were given to students and teachers. These contain general questions about their daily routine in the classroom and more specific ones about the development of the new unit.

After the trial period, the results shed light not only on the suitability of the project but on the educative reality and the need to take it into account when researching on the implementation of certain methodologies in the classroom. In general, it can be concluded that the developed method meets the objectives. In view of the results, it is motivating for both teachers and students, content integrates linguistic, literary, cultural and socio-digital issues and helps to promote reading among students who are unfamiliar with this activity. On the other hand, despite being based on the legislation that establishes the minimum content for secondary school groups, activities have been too complex, because the students had a low language level, even below the one established by the academic curriculum. The results are poor especially in the area of grammar while visual techniques appear to benefit in the case of vocabulary exercises. In terms of infrastructure, the absence or poor condition of the equipment made it difficult to implement the unit in the classroom. Finally, there seems no great differences between rural and urban centres.

From these available data, the following conclusions might be drawn:

- Despite the novelty and potential benefits of the method, it is important to adapt it to the level of the students, teacher training and school resources.
- Interdisciplinary working groups that have the collaboration of researchers and teaching staff, are ideal when it comes to study how to adapt new methodologies to different learning contexts. This project is just one example of how much work can be done in this field.
- This same idea can be extended and modified in various ways. As new technologies are constantly evolving, different devices can be introduced in the language classroom. There is also the possibility to change both the activities and methodology according to the results.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning the support of the idea of the teacher as an educational guide and forerunner of innovative proposals. The teacher not only imparts knowledge but teaches how to learn, as the technologies are ineffective unless they are backed by someone who provides educational values and notions. The selection of materials and technology based on the level, cognitive development and the interests of the students is of great importance and can compensate for any disadvantage that could be attributed to this type of methodology.

Finally, what seems clear is that there is a need to invest time and effort in research oriented language teaching as the poor results leave much to be desired in most Spanish classrooms. This field is emerging as a source of research opportunities designed to fulfill a social function. Education in general and language learning in particular are essential to thrive in today's world, which attaches great importance to information and communication worldwide.

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Handling multilingualism in secondary education: A teachers' perspective

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Abstract

‘Literacy’ in terms of reading and understanding texts is essential for success at school. The increasing linguistic diversity in Dutch schools confronts teachers with many challenges. How do they perceive, manage, and evaluate this situation with respect to the teaching of literacy?

In order to answer that question, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with 230 secondary school teachers in North Brabant, a province in the South of the Netherlands. The participants were differentiated equally by three criteria: (1) type of education (vocational or preparatory scientific education), (2) school subject (Dutch, modern languages or other text-based subjects) and (3) teaching experience (<12.5 or >12.5 years). Questions concerned the perception of multilingualism in class, the background of students and practical issues for the lesson.

Results are organized along three topics. In each section, special attention is given to the moderating role of the three criteria mentioned above. The first topic is a descriptive one, the latter two are didactical. (1) How many children do actually have a multilingual background, and which home languages are represented within the classroom? (2) Which challenges do arise from multilingualism in class, and is there a connection between problems with literacy and the multilingual context? (3) Do teachers feel well prepared through (preliminary) schooling and institutional support? Which types of additional support do they consider as necessary?

In the conclusion, consequences are discussed for the development of teachers’ education, training and external support.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Multilingualism in the classroom confronts teachers with many challenges. A recurrent observation is that teachers of multilingual classes have more problems than teachers of mainly monolingual classes. In order to respond adequately to the challenges encountered in teaching multilingual classrooms, teachers should be prepared for these challenges in teacher training (or receive remedial training on the subject if they are already teaching), and be given adequate supporting facilities. Therefore, knowledge on the origins of the perceived problems is needed. What is the nature of the challenges and problems teachers are confronted with?

The present study investigates the teachers' perception and evaluation of multilingual classrooms at secondary schools. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 230 secondary school teachers from two different school types in North Brabant, a province in the South of the Netherlands. They were asked about their students' linguistic backgrounds, about their perception of challenges and problems encountered in teaching multilingual classrooms, about the preparation and support and other facilities that would be needed to handle these challenges.

1.2 Secondary schooling in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, children enter one of three types of secondary education at the age of 12: pre-vocational education (VMBO), senior general secondary education (HAVO) or pre-university education (VWO). These types differ with respect to the content and complexity of their curricula and offer different possibilities for further education: these are senior secondary vocational education (MBO) for VMBO, higher professional education (HBO) for HAVO, and university (WO) for VWO. (For terminology, see Broekhof, 1995; Ministry of Education, 2007). The majority of children attend pre-vocational schools (about 54%); the others more or less evenly enter senior general secondary education (about 25%) or pre-university schools (about 22%). The present study focuses on the school types at both ends of the spectrum (VMBO and VWO).

1.3 Research Questions

Three research questions were formulated with respect to the teaching of multilingual classrooms.

Question 1: How many children in your classes do actually have a multilingual background, and which home languages are represented within the classroom?

Question 2: What are the challenges arising from multilingualism in the classroom?

Question 3: Have teachers been properly prepared for these challenges during their studies? Which types of additional support do they consider necessary?

2 Methods

2.1 Questionnaire

Interviews were conducted on the basis of a semi-structured questionnaire. Four topics were addressed.

Background information. Informants were asked about their age, gender, work experience, and affiliation (school type and school subject taught).

Multilingualism in class. Informants reported on their experiences teaching multilingual classes. Teachers were asked to estimate the degree of multilingualism in their classes in two ways: first, to give an estimation of the percentage of students that speak languages other than Dutch at home; second, to name up to three languages their multilingual students speak at home. Besides this, the teachers were asked to report on the general home situation of their students. They were free in their interpretation of the home situation.

Challenges and problems. Informants were asked about the biggest challenges and problems they experience when teaching in a multilingual setting.

Preparation and support. Informants indicated any preliminary preparation they might have had for teaching in multilingual classes. Besides this, they reflected on different types of support that they would consider necessary and helpful.

2.2 Informants

In all, 230 teachers participated; 122 men and 108 women. One half worked at schools for pre-vocational education (VMBO), the other half at schools for pre-university education (VWO). Half of them taught Dutch (49%), 20 percent taught a modern language (such as English, French or German) or a classical language (Latin or Greek) and 32 percent taught non-language subjects (such as history, mathematics or sports). Their ages ranged from 19 to 64 with an average of 44.1 ($SD=12.46$) and did not differ for gender, school type, or the school subject the teachers taught (all F 's < 1.63, $p > .20$).

The work experience of the teachers ranged from six months to 42 years with an average of 16.6 years ($SD=11.91$). Teachers were split into two groups: those whose experience was 12.5 years or less ($n=112$), and those whose experience was 13 years or more ($n=118$). Work experience differed by gender ($F(1,218)=12.91$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2=.056$) and school subject ($F(2,218)=6.41$, $p < .005$, $\eta^2=.056$). The women had over six years less experience than the men (14.1 versus 20.1). Teachers of a non-language subject had about six years less experience than their language colleagues (12.9 versus 18.5). The school type did not show any differences ($F(1,218)=.61$, $p = .44$).

2.3 Procedure

The teachers were interviewed by university students. Each student acting as interviewer recruited two teachers: one from a pre-vocational school (VMBO) and one from a pre-university school (VWO). The interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed literally. Subsequently, the transcripts of the interviews were coded for further analysis. During the analysis, special attention was given to the moderating

role of the school type. Besides this, the teacher's school subject, their work experience and gender were taken into consideration.

3 Results

3.1 Multilingualism in class

Experience with teaching multilingual classes was reported by 69 percent of the teachers. There was no association with school type ($\chi^2(1)=0.89$, $p=.35$). On average, teachers estimated that one in six students has a multilingual background (16.8%; $SD=22.12$). Their estimates ranged from 0 to 100 percent. Estimates differed between school types ($F(1,155)=11.58$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.070$). Pre-vocational school teachers reported a much higher estimate of multilingualism than pre-university education teachers (22.5% versus 9.3%).

Home language background

The teachers were also asked to name up to three languages their students speak at home in addition to Dutch. In all, 45 different languages were reported. Table 1 gives an overview of the 10 most frequently mentioned languages.

Table 1. Top ten of the languages mentioned by teachers

Languages	Absolute number
Moroccan-Arabic/Berber	184
Turkish	146
English	37
Chinese	32
Afghan	25
French	15
German	15
Polish	14
Kurdish	13
Papiamento	12

The languages most used at home in addition to Dutch were (Moroccan)-Arabic or Berber (together making up 27%) and Turkish (21%). Of the other 52 percent, the most reported home languages were English (5%), Chinese (5%), and Afghan (4%). Only six percent of the teachers reported that among their students no other languages were spoken at home instead of or in addition to Dutch. Five percent named one foreign language, 22 percent named two, and 67 percent three languages. An association with school type was found ($\chi^2(3)=8.65$, $p<.05$). At pre-university schools, more teachers named three languages than at pre-vocational schools (70% versus 65%), whereas at pre-vocational schools more teachers named two languages than at pre-university schools (28% versus 15%).

The languages reported by the teachers were classified as either Western (Germanic, Romance and Slavic languages) or non-western (Creole, Afro-Asiatic, Sino-Tibetan, Iranian languages, and other language families). Based on this classification, the sample was divided into four groups of teachers: Teachers that reported having only Dutch-speaking students in their classes, Dutch speaking students and students

speaking other western languages, Dutch speaking students and students speaking non-western languages, and students speaking Dutch plus students speaking both western and non-western languages. Table 2 presents the distribution over these four teachers' groups. There was some difference between school types ($\chi^2(3)=6.90$, $p=.08$). However, in both cases the vast majority (>85%) reported having students speaking non-western languages at home.

Table 2. Teachers reporting on four degrees of multilingualism in relation with school type (in percentages)

	Pre-vocational (n=116)	Pre-university (n=114)	Over all (n=230)
Only Dutch	3.4	8.8	6.1
Dutch + western	2.6	4.4	3.5
Dutch + non-western	62.9	47.4	55.2
Dutch + western and non-western	31.0	39.5	35.2

A first idea about the home situation of students was given by 181 teachers. They interpreted the home situation in three different ways: in terms of ethnic background, socio-economic background and of family background. No difference was found for school type ($\chi^2(1)=3.60$, $p=.17$). Table 3 presents the distribution over these aspects in relation to school type.

Table 3. Home situation in relation to school type (in percentages)

	Pre-vocational (n=92)	Pre-university (n=89)	Over all (n=181)
Ethnic background	62.0	55.1	58.6
Socio-economic background	23.9	36.0	29.8
Family background	14.1	9.0	11.6

Ethnic background

More than half of the informants (59%) associated home situation with the ethnic background of students. Answers that referred to ethnic background included all references to language, birth place, cultural diversity or nationality, immigrant status and the distinction "black/white" or "autochthonous/allochthonous" students. In all cases, these subcategories were used in order to make a distinction into two groups.

Most of the teachers made a distinction on the basis of autochthonous/ allochthonous students. About half of this group reported that most of their students are of autochthonous Dutch origin. The other half reported mixed classes (autochthonous and allochthonous students). In some cases, the estimates included an either negative or positive evaluation of the students.

Teacher van Veen, for example, (male Dutch teacher, pre-university school, and 56 years old) related the allochthonous background of the students to a lower social class.

Approximately 60 percent have an allochthonous background and are increasingly from lower social classes.

Ongeveer 60 percent [zijn] van allochtone afkomst, in toenemende mate uit lage sociale klassen.

Teacher Jong (male Dutch teacher, pre-vocational school, and 58 years old) pointed to language problems of non-western students:

Many students have a non-western background and consequently have language difficulties.

[We hebben] veel leerlingen met een niet-westerse achtergrond die daardoor moeite hebben met de taal.

With regard to the positive evaluations, teachers emphasized the high level of education, the higher social class and the stability of many immigrant families. Teacher Dijk (female Dutch teacher, pre-university school, and 56 years old) reported on the high motivation of certain groups of students.

Students with an Afghan background are strongly motivated by their parents and score high grades. The Turkish children are always highly motivated too and do their best to get good grades.

De kinderen van Afghaanse afkomst worden erg gestimuleerd van thuis uit en halen graag een hoog diploma. De Turkse kinderen zijn ook altijd erg gemotiveerd en doen hun best om een goede opleiding te halen.

Socio-economic background

About 30 percent of the teachers referred to the socio-economic background of the students' families. Socio-economic background was frequently mentioned in connection with profession, income, social background, or educational status of the family. Teachers mentioned students' backgrounds in terms of lower, middle or higher socio-economic status. With regard to the profession of the parents, teachers named a variety of parents' professions being represented in class, ranging from farming families all the way up to managing directors. When teachers referred to the income of the parents, their estimates were quite high. The estimates with regard to the social background were more diverse. Most of the teachers that referred to the social milieu referred to a mix of higher and lower social milieus in class. The answers that included information on the educational status of the students' parents ranged from classes with mainly lower or mainly higher educational backgrounds to classes with a mix of educational backgrounds.

Family background

Twelve percent of the informants associated students' home situation with family background. It was addressed in terms of the parent's marital status and the number of sisters and brothers. Most of the teachers emphasized that many of their students' parents are separated without specifying the backgrounds of these students. By contrast, teachers often emphasized the stability of the home situation and the high number of sisters and brothers in the case of multilingual students.

3.2 Challenges and problems

Four out of five teachers reported challenges encountered in teaching multilingual classes. These challenges were classified as challenges for students, challenges for teachers and challenges for both. There was a difference between the two school types ($\chi^2(2)=7.93$, $p<.05$). Table 4 shows the distribution of the challenges in relation to school type.

Table 4. Distribution of challenges in relation to school type (in percentages)

	Pre-vocational (n=100)	Pre-university (n=92)	
Challenges for students:			62.0
mastering functional language skills	25.0	39.1	
understanding texts	2.0	7.6	
passing final exam	6.0	6.5	
mastering adequate vocabulary	9.0	8.7	
Challenges for teachers:			33.7
being comprehensible to student	18.0	12.0	
motivating students	17.0	13.0	
being aware of differences	14.0	8.7	
Challenges for both students + teachers:			4.3
mutual understanding	9.0	4.3	

Challenges for students

In pre-university education, more challenges for students were perceived (62 versus 42%). Students' challenges concerned functional linguistic skills, the mastery of adequate vocabulary, the understanding of texts, and passing the final exam. Most teachers mentioned challenges encountered by students in mastering functional linguistic skills. These skills comprise the language skills that are needed to be able to handle everyday situations. Thus, teachers mentioned difficulties students had filling out housing subsidy forms or understanding the package inserts that come with medicines. This category also included problems with Dutch grammar. One pre-university teacher (male Dutch teacher, 31 years old) illustrated this with the opaque gender distinction in the (fe)male article 'de' (*the*), the neuter article 'het' (*the*) and, the demonstrative 'die' (*that*). The frequent error 'die meisje' (*that girl*) which should be 'het meisje' in Dutch.

How to teach the difference between 'de' and 'het'? There are no specific rules governing the use so you need a feel for the language in order to learn that properly and not say things like "Die meisje".

Het verschil aanleren tussen 'de' en 'het'. Er zijn geen duidelijke regels aan verbonden dus je moet een taalgevoel hebben om dat goed te kunnen leren: Die meisje.

With regard to the mastery of adequate vocabulary, many teachers emphasized problems multilingual students had understanding words. Van der Aeck (female history teacher, pre-university school, and 45 years old) reported that these children need more attention:

I help multilingual children a lot, help them understand words and sentences, because they can't do that on their own.

Meertalige kinderen help ik veel met het leren begrijpen van woorden en zinnen, omdat hun dat zelf niet lukt.

Van Loo (male Biology teacher, pre-vocational school, and 20 years old) reported problems students had following her course:

The problem is that students have to focus on more than one language, and that they do not understand words that we consider normal. If in biology you're talking about an oak for instance, they have no idea what that is.

Dat leerlingen zich op meer talen moeten focussen, dat woorden die we in het Nederlands als normaal beschouwen niet worden begrepen. Bijvoorbeeld als je het bij biologie over een eik hebt dat ze niet weten wat dat is.

Next to the understanding of words and the mastery of functional language skills, the understanding and interpretation of texts poses serious challenges for multilingual students. Teacher van de Borg (female Dutch teacher, pre-vocational school, and 24 years old) described the problems as follows:

Children of allochthonous origin tend to read past things, miss things when they are reading or interpret things in a different way.

Kinderen van allochtone afkomst lezen vaak over dingen heen of interpreteren dingen anders.

Teacher Kerkhoff (male Dutch teacher, pre-university school, and 56 years old) explained the origin of these problems:

[The challenge is] to get them, non-native speakers in particular, to let go of their fear of texts, to learn to handle the machine that a text actually is.

Tekstangst wegwerken, om te leren gaan met de machine die een tekst is, vooral bij niet moedertaalsprekers.

Finally, passing the final exam also poses challenges for students. Teachers reported problems students have with specific types of questions or tasks formulated in exams.

Challenges for teachers

In pre-vocational education, more challenges for teachers were perceived (49% versus 34%). These included being comprehensible to students, motivating students or being aware of differences. Some teachers mentioned that they use visual or other non-verbal aids in order to make themselves understood. Another teacher emphasized that he repeats things that are important to make sure that everybody understands them. With regard to their own use of language, teachers are uncertain about whether they succeed in expressing themselves at an appropriate level, as teacher Snitjer (male Math teacher, pre-university school, and 49 years old) specified:

[The biggest challenge is] to use language in a way that does not impoverish it, but that is quite clear nevertheless.

Taal zo te gebruiken, dat het niet verarmt maar toch heel duidelijk is.

Some informants reported difficulties keeping the students interested, motivated and concentrated. Some teachers report that many students are not interested in reading classical literature such as poems or that they are not motivated to do the tasks the teacher sets them. The last of the teachers' challenges, being aware of differences, mainly concerned cultural differences, differences between students' performance and social differences.

Challenges for students and teachers

Some teachers (9% pre-vocational and 4% pre-university) reported on challenges for both, for students and teachers alike. Such challenges mainly concerned mutual understanding and awareness of cultural differences. Several teachers reported problems with the power relationship between themselves as teachers and certain students. Thus, one female teacher explained that some students are not used to female authority and do not accept her as a teacher. Besides this, teachers perceived challenges with regard to the creation of a sense of group identity in class. The use of Dutch in class in order to include the whole class in a conversation was part of this category.

To sum it up, the challenges for students mainly concern language skills, whereas the challenges for teachers also comprise aspects of attitude and intercultural differences. The third category of mutual understanding comprises aspects of group dynamics and communication that are essential for the learning process in class.

3.3 Preparation and support

Only one third of the teachers reported having received some form of preparation during their studies regarding challenges involved in multilingualism in class. For Dutch teachers, the percentage was higher than for their colleagues (43 versus 13%; $\chi^2(2)=24.56$, $p<.001$). Teachers with more extensive work experience reported less preparation (14 versus 42.9%; $\chi^2(1)=24.56$, $p<.001$). Women reported more preparation than men (39 versus 18%; $\chi^2(1)=12.41$, $p<.001$). School type did not show a significant difference ($\chi^2(1)=1.93$, $p=.17$). Among the informants that reported having had some form of preparation for teaching multilingual classes during their studies at University, most of them named preparatory courses for teaching Dutch as a second language. These teachers had been informed about second language acquisition and the difficulties involved in that, and on how to explain new words to second language learners. Besides this, informants mentioned traineeships in multilingual classes being required during their studies and a handbook for teaching multilingual classes being part of their required reading (Van de Laarschot, 1997). However, most of the teachers could not remember having received any preparation or reported not having had any preparation during their studies.

Support

Almost half of the teachers (49%) reported a need for support in order to handle the challenges involved in teaching multilingual classes. No differences were found with regard to gender, school type, subject, and experience (all $\chi^2<1.36$, $p>.24$). The support needed by the teachers covered the following three areas: working conditions, assistance, and materials. School type, school subject and work experience did not show any differences here (all $\chi^2<0.59$, $p>.74$), but an association with gender was found ($\chi^2(2)=6.29$, $p<.05$). Table 5 presents the distribution over the three areas of support in relation to gender.

Table 5. Support areas in relation to gender (in percentages)

	Men (n=54)	Women (n=58)	Over all (n=112)
Assistance	37.0	56.9	47.3
Working conditions	31.5	13.8	22.3
Materials	31.5	29.3	30.4

Women more often indicated that they valued assistance (57% versus 37%), whereas men attached more importance to working conditions (32% versus 14%). Materials were valued equally by male and female teachers.

Assistance

On average, almost half (47%) of the teachers considered assistance necessary. Assistance was either related to the whole school setting, to the classroom or to the individual student. With regard to the school setting, what was considered important was having a contact person at school for advice on problems related to multicultural

and multilingual classes. The availability of interpreters and social support was also valued highly (such as the availability of a so-called “remedial teacher”). With regard to the classroom, teachers reported a need for the presence of an assistant or a second teacher. Another type of assistance that was also reported as desirable concerned teaching-methodological support. With regard to individual students, the importance of after-school extra Dutch languages lessons for second language learners was emphasized. Some also pleaded for offering students help with their home work. One teacher pointed out that the procedure for getting individual assistance is quite complicated and should be made easier.

Working conditions

In the area of working conditions, 22 percent of the informants would like to have more support. They expressed a need for more meetings, better communication with the parents and getting their support for the use of the Dutch language at home. Teacher Peters (male Dutch teacher, pre-vocational school, and 64 years old) puts the responsibility for support entirely in the hands of the parents:

Support should be offered at home rather than at school. At home, children often speak another language than Dutch. If parents would use more Dutch at home, they would notice that this benefits their children.

De ondersteuning moet niet op school, maar thuis zitten. Kinderen spreken thuis vaak een andere taal dan Nederlands. Als de ouders thuis wat meer Nederlands met hun kinderen gebruiken, zullen ze merken dat hun kinderen daar voordeel bij hebben.

Other claims with regard to working conditions concerned more time and smaller classes. Besides this, teachers would like to have more opportunities for professional exchange, especially between Dutch language teachers and teachers of other subjects.

Materials

One third of the teachers considered appropriate materials helpful and necessary. In general, the feeling was that more financial support is needed. Teachers emphasized a need for technical facilities (such as access to computers and the Internet, smart boards and beamers, more visual material, extra online practice, an online media center, audiovisual media such as films). Besides, teachers would like to have more background information on the pupils’ home situation, their cultural habits, and length of stay in the Netherlands. Finally, basic language skills in the students’ languages were considered helpful, even if this amounts to no more than just a few words. One teacher reported that it can be helpful to address students in their mother tongue to attract their attention.

4 Conclusions and discussion

Multilingualism

The first aim of this paper was to get an idea of the actual degree of multilingualism in Dutch secondary schools. A first observation concerned differences between the two school types: Pre-vocational school teachers’ estimation of the degree of multilingualism in their classrooms was higher than that of pre-university teachers. Besides this, pre-vocational teachers mentioned more non-western languages as being the home language of their students than their pre-university colleagues. Regardless of the differences between the two school types, 69 percent of the teachers reported having experience teaching multilingual classes. In all, 45 different languages were

reported. According to the teacher's estimations, one in six students in their classes had a multilingual background. However, the surprising fact that 94 percent of the teachers named at least one and most of them three foreign languages spoken by their students at home shows that teachers are aware of differences between their students, although these may be difficult to label. The estimations regarding the students' home situation also showed that teachers are aware of differences between students: a large part of the teachers referred to the cultural, ethnic, or national background of their students, and a lesser number to the language backgrounds of their students. While multilingualism is a factor in Dutch schools, we can conclude that other factors such as cultural differences may play a bigger role in the perception of teachers.

Challenges and problems

The examination of the challenges and problems involved in multilingualism in the classroom was the second purpose of the study. It is remarkable that 80 percent of the teachers perceived problems and challenges in both school types. However, the types of challenges perceived differed: At pre-university schools, teachers tended to point to their students as being responsible for the challenges encountered, whereas pre-vocational teachers predominantly sought to improve their own behavior towards multilingual students. However, the biggest challenge that was perceived by both groups, pre-vocational and pre-university teachers alike, lies in multilingual students having problems with basic and functional language skills. Even if -in the first instance- teachers would focus on cultural differences, the challenges they perceive are primarily language-related.

Preparation and support

The third purpose of the study concerned the need for preparation in the course of teacher training and the need for more support. Considering the variety of challenges the teachers perceived in teaching multilingual classrooms, the small number of teachers that remember having had any preparation with regard to teaching such classes is striking. The only type of preparation that was mentioned was reported by teachers of Dutch and concerned things they had learned about teaching Dutch as a foreign language. The teachers felt a great need for adequate preparation, just as they did for more support, notably in the form of practical assistance in teaching multilingual classes, for better working conditions and more material aid.

5 Implications for research and policies

Both in research and in policies, an increasing call can be heard for the development of appropriate preparation in teacher training with regard to teaching multilingual and multicultural classes (McPake, et al., 2007, p.41). The fact that none of the 230 teachers in the study reported having had specific training aimed at preparing them for teaching multilingual classes is telling. The teachers themselves mentioned many aspects that could and should be paid attention to in teacher training. They pointed out that they wanted to know more about the cultural backgrounds of their students and about their languages, and that they need the right tools to be able to teach their classes appropriately. The support they felt was most badly needed was assistance, notably in the form of a contact person that teachers can consult on matters related to teaching multilingual and multicultural classes. Summarizing, we can conclude that there is a strong need for appropriate training courses and teaching materials, and also for more facilities, notably the presence of a contact person for consultation. Besides

this, teachers should be able to work more with audiovisual media and the size of the groups taught should be reduced. The outcome of the study shows that the problems encountered in teaching multilingual classes are considerable. Recent studies that investigated teachers' perception of challenges and problems were focused on primary education. The PIRLS study conducted in 2011 reported that primary school teachers are generally quite satisfied with their working environment (Meelissen, et al., 2012, p.135). However, when it comes to teaching literacy, Broeder and Stokmans (2012) showed that teachers perceive serious problems, especially in multilingual classes. The diverging outcomes and the lack of studies on secondary education call for further research on the origins of problems and challenges in order to prepare and support teachers appropriately.

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Punctuation of Scientific Prose as a Cross-Cultural Phenomenon

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Abstract

This paper presents the study of current tendencies of the punctuation usage in modern Russian and English (mostly American) scientific prose which suffers the influence of fast development of Information Technologies, language contact, and general instability of modern punctuation practice. The combination of common punctuation marks, consistent with other typographic devices provides a specific complex multi-level structure of a modern computer edited scientific text. The use of all punctuation devices is reduced to separating, emphasizing and linking functions and is governed by the set of rules and standards specific for different languages. The obligatory compliance of punctuation rules in Russian is contrasted to the recommending nature of English punctuation; the main objective of the latter is to reveal the communicative intention of a speaker and to make the text interpretation easier for a recipient. Contrasting the punctuation of Russian and English scientific constructions allows to reveal a number of similarities such as the same set and similar functions of punctuation devices and lack of stable uniformity at different publishing houses. The punctuation differences in Russian and English texts are reduced to its real functioning. The use of punctuation in Russian pre-printed texts is not strictly limited by the established Russian rules and shows more correspondence with English punctuation functioning. Such correspondence suggests that punctuation conventions are not completely governed by a certain language but are rather intercultural. This thesis contributes to the scientific study of modern punctuation status as an international phenomenon that exists independently for inter-language general usage.

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Punctuation of Scientific Prose as a Cross-Cultural Phenomenon

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Introduction

This scientific research focuses on current tendencies of punctuation usage in modern Russian and English scientific prose (mostly American and International). The punctuation rules for both languages are widely presented nowadays in punctuation guides and manuals (Valguina 2004, Rubens 2001, Kirkman 2006, etc.). The theoretical issues of modern punctuation practice and the compliance of these rules are also considered in well-known manuscripts (see, for example, Shubina 2006; Truss 2004, etc.), where the researchers describe the state of the art and analyze the nature of changes in modern punctuation systems using descriptive and comparative methods (Orehova 2000). However, using the conventional contrastive approach allows to describe only the main differences and similarities of the punctuation of Russian and English languages and to study the main punctuation principles, rules and conventions. Our approach of studying the standard printed language and the tendencies in pre-printed texts at the same time helps determine the features and also the perspectives of the punctuation of scientific prose in future.

According to published results, not enough attention has been paid to the relationship between punctuating and the researcher's mind who writes a scientific paper. Since these two are closely related, additional psycholinguistic investigations in this area are necessary. Studying the naïve punctuation of 'natural writing' (Lebedeva 2002), which is not edited by publishers, helps us reveal the nature and the attitude to this phenomenon in different languages and see how people with different mentalities use punctuation devices. Since nowadays English became an international language in many scientific areas and correspondingly it demonstrates the mixing of ideas and mentalities it is of interest to find out in what way the international English may affect people's thinking.

In this paper, Russian and English printed and pre-printed scientific papers in the areas of electronics and computer science were considered. The scientific prose was analyzed using the descriptive and contrastive methods which enabled us to enlighten basic principles, similarities and differences of Russian and English punctuation. The main findings of this work concern the analysis of the naïve punctuation of pre-printed texts where Russian punctuation rules are not strictly complied and some cases of the deviance correspond to English standards.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. In the motivation section, the background and scientific aspects of this investigation are discussed. In the main body of the paper, the punctuation principles, common and specific features of punctuating Russian and English scientific prose are considered. The punctuation deviance in Russian pre-printed texts and its correspondence to English standards is described. In

the conclusion the implications of the research with venues for future work are suggested.

Motivation

The set of punctuation devices and the range of their functions, i.e. both quality and quantity of punctuation marks, are constantly changing due to the development of new digital forms of communication (internet, mobile phones, etc.). Thus, many people, no matter well-educated or not, become 'writers' nowadays (Truss 2004), which has a certain affect on functioning of punctuation in different areas, in particular Russian and English scientific writing. Russian young scientists not having time to study punctuation rules in the EFL classroom acquire them based on their own experience, i.e. from reading scientific papers in English language produced by researchers of different nationalities which are not necessarily edited by high quality publishing houses.

Thus, the punctuation of Russian and English electronic and printed texts, in particular scientific texts, reveals general inconsistency of modern punctuation practice which is governed by the following factors: 1) more freedom in Russian mentality that affects different aspects of writing, 2) fast development of Information Technologies, and 3) language contact, since ordinary young people start communicating in English, and this language in some cases is very far from the classical British language. Last 20 years most scientific journals in the area of computer science and electronics are not translated anymore into native languages, and young researchers do not have other choice than to read them in English. It can thereby be one of the reasons of punctuation changes in Russian scientific prose.

English language is considered in this paper as a language of 1) the Internet in some areas of research (electronics and computer science), 2) the universal English symbols and typographic signals on the computer key-board, and 3) the official language of scientific conferences and publications in many international journals. Therefore, since English has a major effect on different aspects of Russian scientific language, the objective of this study is to analyze how international English interferes with Russian concept of punctuating scientific prose.

Methods and corpora

The corpora used for the analysis are printed and pre-printed Russian and English scientific papers. The printed texts from known publishing houses are treated as standard, whereas the pre-printed texts produced by Russian young scientists are not corrected by editors. Studying these texts allows to find the cases of deviance from Russian punctuation rules. These texts illustrate the naive idea of punctuating scientific prose in the minds of Russian researchers.

The data were collected using a descriptive method with the elements of contrastive analysis; they are used to find the correspondence between theory and practice in the punctuation of scientific writing. In our research it is important not to treat this deviance just as non-accuracy. These cases are considered from the anthropological point of view to reveal a natural and common way of expressing a scientific idea in different languages, in particular, the convenience and logics of using them by a young Russian researcher. Combining all the mentioned techniques enable us to study

English itself and how it influences other languages not only in the aspects of the past and the present, but also the future.

We studied printed scientific papers from well-known publishers such as Elsevier, IEEE, Springer, etc. Russian scientific papers were analyzed from good blind reviewed journals edited by correctors: *Izvestiya* of Russian Academy of Sciences, *Vestnik* of Tomsk State University, *Izvestiya* of Tomsk Polytechnic University, etc. Russian pre-printed scientific papers were written by young Russian researchers who have to read and write in English language.

The common and specific features of punctuating Russian and English scientific prose

As far as an electronic or printed scientific text (Russian or English) is concerned, the combination of conventional punctuation marks, consistent with other typographic signals and effects provides its complex multi-level structure. Variation of these devices contributes to the efficiency of the scientific text interpretation.

The use of micro-level punctuation, i.e. conventional punctuation marks such as a comma, full stop, colon and others, is governed by the set of rules and standards specific for different languages. The nature of conventional stops in scientific writing is not only grammatical or semantic as is described in various guides; apart from that their specific formal functions are specified in templates.

The use of macro-level punctuation, i.e. the typographic devices such as capitalization, spacing, variation of font, size-type, etc., emphasizing the hierarchy of the text elements (headings, abstracts, terms), is specified by a great variety of standards offered by different publishing houses and is not formally codified in Russian and English languages. However, the requirements given in the templates must be strictly followed comparing to rather optional usage of conventional punctuation marks in the international scientific prose.

There are more similarities in modern punctuation of Russian and English scientific prose that are not evident from the first sight: 1) almost the same set and similar functions of punctuation devices, 2) the inconsistency of the elective use of symbols and characters (e.g. British and American quotes; em- and en-dashes, etc.) and the typographic organization within one language but different publishing houses.

Despite of the fact that the graphic structure of a scientific text in European languages is mostly common, there are differences in the main punctuation principles, in particular, in Russian and English punctuation systems. In this paper, the prescriptive approach of punctuating Russian prose is contrasted to the anthropological approach of English punctuation. The compliance of the rules in Russian is obligatory, whereas the nature of English punctuation is recommending and its main objective is to reveal the communicative intention of the author and to make the text interpretation easier for the recipient. To be more precise, in most cases, similar syntactic constructions in English scientific prose can be punctuated in different ways depending on the length and meaning of the sentence. Because of this, English punctuation standards are presented in the guides not only as strict rules, but mostly as conventions. However, the theory and practice of Russian punctuation, which was known to be very strict some decades

ago, is suffering slow changes nowadays, and the amends are introduced for some rules in accordance with the meaning of the sentence and the author's intention.

Because of the recommending nature of English punctuation usage, three types of equivalence of punctuating syntactic constructions in Russian and English can be specified. The equivalence types together with some examples are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of equivalence of punctuating syntactic constructions in Russian and English

	English style	Russian style
Full equivalence	... , which + /non-restrictive clause/ , ... The power loss can be reduced by switching the transmitter direct to the X aerial, which is mounted on the roof, , which + /non-restrictive clause/ , ... The power loss can be reduced by switching the transmitter direct to the X aerial, which is mounted on the roof, ...
Partial equivalence	/Introductory phrase/ , /simple or complex sentence/ In this paper we consider the following examples. In this paper, we consider the following examples.	/Introductory phrase/ /simple or complex sentence/ In this paper we consider the following examples.
Full non-equivalence	/Principal clause/ that /subordinate clause/ It follows that...	/Principal clause/ , that /subordinate clause/ It follows, that...

The deviance from Russian rules in pre-printed scientific texts: drifting to English standards

The punctuation of pre-printed scientific texts shows how texts are punctuated from the point of view of young Russian researchers. It appears that this punctuation is not limited by the standards presented in the rules and typographic guides. There are two types of the deviance: 1) not all the symbols used in the pre-printed texts exist in Russian standard punctuation practice, 2) the punctuation devices are used in the functions not prescribed by the rules.

1) The punctuation of pre-printed texts produced by Russian researchers is characterized by a wider set of punctuation devices, since the additional symbols that are alien for Russian punctuation standards such as a long dash (—) or English quotes (‘) and etc. are frequently used in pre-printed electronic variant. The example below illustrates the use of a long dash instead of the Russian en-dash:

e.g. ... this can be done by omitting the additive — though this should be done only as a last resort.

2) Pre-printed texts also demonstrate a wider range of functions for micro- and macro-level punctuation. Conventional punctuation marks that separate units (period, comma, dash, etc.) and the typographic devices such as capitalization, italics and underlining possess a wider functional potential in pre-printed texts. Some are used for giving additional emphasis to the words and phrases that seem to be important to the author but not essential enough to the syntactic structure. The example below shows omitting of a comma between the clauses of a compound sentence:

e.g. The samples have arrived_ and testing will begin shortly.

According to the collected data, the deviance from Russian standards appears to correspond to a number of English scientific style punctuation rules. The symbols that are used in pre-printed texts do not exist in Russian scientific prose but they are taken from the universal international system of writing. We found many cases when the punctuation devices in Russian pre-printed texts are used in functions that are not specified by Russian punctuation rules and correspond to English punctuation rules. These are the cases of usage of a full stop, comma, dash and capitalization in delineation and serialization functions. The examples of this 'drifting' tendency are shown below.

The following example represents the use of the English quotes instead of Russian («»):

e.g. ... the plasma tube temperature increases “automatically” ...

A comma used after an introductory phrase or initial group is a common case. In Russian language this case is not specified by the rules and is considered as an error in the corrected printed version:

e.g. In Section I, the basic expression to be used in the theoretical development is obtained.

The comparative analysis allowed to assume that Russian punctuation seems to be slowly drifting to English standards. However, it still needs further research whether we deal here with the interference or a cross-cultural phenomenon of punctuation in scientific writing.

Conclusions and discussion

The obtained results show that the range of punctuation devices and their functions of pre-printed texts is wider than in the printed texts and modern punctuation practice of Russian scientific prose corresponds to English standards in some cases. The inconsistency of Russian punctuation practice, contact of languages in science, and the anthropological approach, which is slowly being accepted in Russian punctuation practice, create favorable conditions for modifying Russian mentality and the concept of punctuating Russian and English scientific prose, and thereby this research contributes to the scientific study of modern punctuation status as a cross-cultural phenomenon.

This research has a number of applications. The results can be used as tips for teaching punctuation in the EFL classroom: teaching Russian punctuation at school, or teaching English punctuation to young researchers, as well as these results can be useful in machine translation. This study also contributes to solving some important linguistic problems when determining the status of modern punctuation and contributing to normalizing processes. It is theoretically important to continue the research of current punctuation tendencies in different areas of scientific style using the collected data in order to study the relationship between micro- and macro-text level punctuation in the minds of researchers of different mentality, to investigate how punctuation of European and Eastern languages affects the punctuation of international English, to develop new experimental methods for studying the interference phenomena in punctuating scientific writing.

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Peer-to-peer interaction in Professional English MOOCs: A proposal for effective feedback

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Abstract

This paper analyses peer-to-peer interaction in the first MOOC (Massive Online Open Course) in Spain on Professional English, which was launched in parallel in different online platforms, UNED Abierta and Miríada X, to enhance open practices in Higher Education. For the purposes of this paper we will concentrate on the latter, Miríada X, in which a crucial part consisted of a series of intercultural activities for peer-to-peer interaction and feedback to foster online communication in the target language, reduce the unbalance in the students (30,000) – teachers (7) ratio, and diminish the considerable dropout rate inherent to this type of courses. The data corresponding to the interaction undertaken and feedback provided by the students were recorded and analysed in the light of how the course was observed to be undertaken by the students and their own views collected in the final questionnaire.

KEYWORDS

Massive Online Open Course, second language learning, social interaction, social feedback.

INTRODUCTION

Outside of formal learning, people are learning everywhere (at home, on their way to work, at the gym), any time and from other people they may not even know (through social media, open courses). Learning has become “social” and MOOCs provide a social learning approach other traditional online courses did not. This might be a perfect context for language learning but, is language learning the best candidate for a MOOC? Few have decided to find out the answer up to now. Surprisingly, language MOOCs are not in the course list offered by any of the pioneer platforms in this new model of pedagogy: Coursera, Udacity and EdX. Personal initiatives, such as Instreamia, created by brothers and Spanish teachers Ryan and Scott Rapp, and non-English speaking platforms (UNED Abierta, Miríada X), have unlocked the path to open and massive language learning.

Feedback, understood as “any information which provides a report on the result of behavior” (Richards & Smith 2010), and essential part in language teaching and learning, has become one of the most controversial issues and potential challenges in MOOCs. How to give feedback as instructors to thousands of students? Peer to peer assessment seems to be the system most platforms rely on. Students are given an assessment rubric or certain criteria, which must be followed to evaluate the work produced by their fellow students, in the understanding that both processes, evaluating their peers’ work and receiving evaluations and comments from other students, can provide them with a valuable learning experience.

Language MOOCs, such as the one which the focus of this paper, have a distinctive feature compared to other MOOCs: communication is not only the means but also the final goal of the course and in the case of an LSP (Language for Specific Purposes) one such as this, oral communication skills should be fostered among students in order to help them transfer a message clearly and professionally. In “Professional English” MOOC, students were given the chance to express their opinions orally on social and working life subjects, such as eating out with the colleagues and job interviews, all of them related to particular activities in each module. Their answers had to be recorded on video and sent to three other students who would evaluate their oral communication skills. This kind of peer feedback, accordingly guided by instructors through four different criteria, is oriented to enhance participation and help create community networks among students, as well as a feeling of belonging to a MOOC community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

From 2008, when David Cormier introduced the term “MOOC” in a conversation with educators George Siemens and Stephen Downes, to this day, these courses have been classified in several different categories based on their goals. On this paper we are following Lane’s classification (2012) of MOOCs in three different categories: (1) network-based or connectivist MOOCs; (2) content-based MOOCs and (3) task-based MOOCs.

Network-based MOOCs or Connectivist MOOCs (cMOOCs) are based on connectivism, a learning theory that, in Stephen Downes’ words on his “Connectivism and Connective Knowledge” course (2011), “is the thesis that knowledge is distributed across a network of connections, and therefore that learning consists of the

ability to construct and traverse those networks. [...] Knowledge is, on this theory, literally the set of connections formed by actions and experience.” (Connectivism and Connective Learning 2011). Content-based MOOCs tend to use instructivist pedagogy. Enrollments in this kind of courses are massive, and content acquisition takes priority over the sense of community. In task-based MOOCs, the last category in Lane’s classification, community is important but not a primary goal. Pedagogy in this kind of MOOC is a mix of instructivism and constructivism.

A thorough search on the most popular online platforms offering MOOCs (Coursera, Udacity, EdX, OpenupEd.edu, Canvas, etc.) reveals that language courses are almost insignificant in numbers compared to other disciplines, such as Computer Science, Health and E-learning. There are some courses on particular language skills, like writing (“First-Year Composition 2.0”, George Institute of Technology; “English Composition I: Achieving Expertise”, Duke University), or reading (“Developmental Reading”, World Education University), but most of them require participants’ basic or intermediate proficiency in the language of the course. Hence, they are not language learning MOOCs.

English language-teaching experts and educators have already shown their interest in MOOC pedagogy as a potential field of research for language teaching and learning (Hibbs & Stevens 2012), but for the moment few seem to have taken up the challenge of creating second language (SL) learning MOOCs. One of them is the “SpanishMOOC”, a massive open online course for learning Spanish, run by Ryan and Scott Rapp, already mentioned in this paper. These language teachers are founders of Instreamia (<http://www.instreamia.com/>), a new online platform for teaching and learning through video. Recently, language instructor Todd Bryant, from Dickinson College (Pennsylvania), has launched two SL learning MOOCs, “English MOOC: Open Course for Spanish Speakers Learning English” and “MOOC de Español: Curso abierto para hablantes de inglés que deseen mejorar su español” in The Mixxer (<http://www.language-exchanges.com/>), an online platform created by himself and hosted by Dickinson College.

Traditionally, online language courses have normally focused on formal aspects and on written skills, dealing mainly with vocabulary acquisition and grammatical practice, and limiting the activities included to reading comprehension and closed written production, with a minority of them offering closed listening comprehension activities (Martín-Monje, Bárcena & Read 2013). Open production and interaction, both in their written and oral form, have remained the least practiced and explored SL competences in CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), due to their natural complexity (Hughes, 2006).

Web 2.0 tools and the social networking revolution we have been immersed during the last couple of years might be the reason why language learning MOOCs are paying attention to the practice and development of students’ open oral and written production. Discussion boards are an important part in MOOCs where open written production may be developed. In “Professional English” MOOC, discussion topics were opened every week, to provide students with the chance to share their views on interesting topics related to the course subject and, at the same time, develop their written production in English.

Synchronous oral interaction in language learning MOOCs has been tackled in different ways. The use of free social media tools, such as Google Hangout or Skype, is common in both examples of language learning MOOCs. The “SpanishMOOC” course used Google Hangout for conversation practice. Students had to choose a group to join according to their own time zones. This Google Hangout pairing system is going to be developed for the second edition of the course, since instructors assure that “the time zones and group request process was entirely too confusing, and students need an automated way of getting connected” (Rapp 2013).

Similarly, Bryant’s language MOOCs on English and Spanish, based on open educational resources (OERs) from British Council and Voice of America’s Learning English among others, rely on language exchanges via Skype, another free tool that allows users to communicate with peers by voice and video. The Spanish course for English speakers has taken place at the same time that the English course for Spanish speakers, and both have similar activities but on different topics, so that students from both MOOCs will always find a peer to talk to about the topics on their respective courses.

Asynchronous oral interaction, as is the case in the “Professional English” MOOC, favors peer to peer feedback, giving students the opportunity to listen and watch their peers videos in great detail, and as many times as needed. Feedback can be therefore provided after a period of reflection and with instructor-designed criteria.

Peer to peer feedback is one the most controversial issues in MOOC pedagogy and it is found to be one of the reasons students drop out (Colman 2013). Whether it is the poor quality of the feedback or the rude and little constructive comments received from peers, students decide to either quit or avoid activities with peer-to-peer feedback. Although there is evidence of the benefits of giving students the opportunity to provide and get feedback from their fellow-students (Falchikov 2006; Liu & Carless 2006), MOOCs pedagogy and its implications (number of enrollments, minimum role and participation of professors) seem to pose a challenge to both instructors and students.

As a partial solution to this issue, instructors may provide peer reviewers with evaluation rubrics, assessment criteria and guidelines at the beginning of the course, as it has been attempted in the MOOC “Professional English”. Future research on this field should also be directed to improve automatic peer assignment, selecting students according to age, proficiency level and course participation.

METHODOLOGY

The study undertaken falls under the category of action research (Lewin 1946), since it combines theoretical conceptualizations with the knowledge of a specific educational context (Altricher et al 1993; Cohen et al. 2011; Robson 2002), creating a process of progressive problem solving and reflecting on the teaching practice. The rationale behind the introduction of peer-to-peer (P2P) activities in the Professional English MOOC was to decrease the dropout rate intrinsic to this type of courses and devise an innovative, comprehensive methodology for online language learning, and particularly for the development of interaction skills, that could be applied to very large numbers of students. In the following sections we will look at the participants, instruments and procedures that constituted the research scenario.

Participants

The Professional English MOOC was one of the 58 courses offered by the MiriadaX platform (<https://www.Miriadax.net/>) in its first edition. This course proved to be the third most popular course, with 23,424 students registered, 19,076 who actually started it and 1,120 who completed the whole course (5,87%). More than half of the students were from Spain, or at least accessed the course from this country, and the other significant home countries corresponded to Latin America: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela (see table 1 below). Consequently, the native language of the vast majority of participants was Spanish.

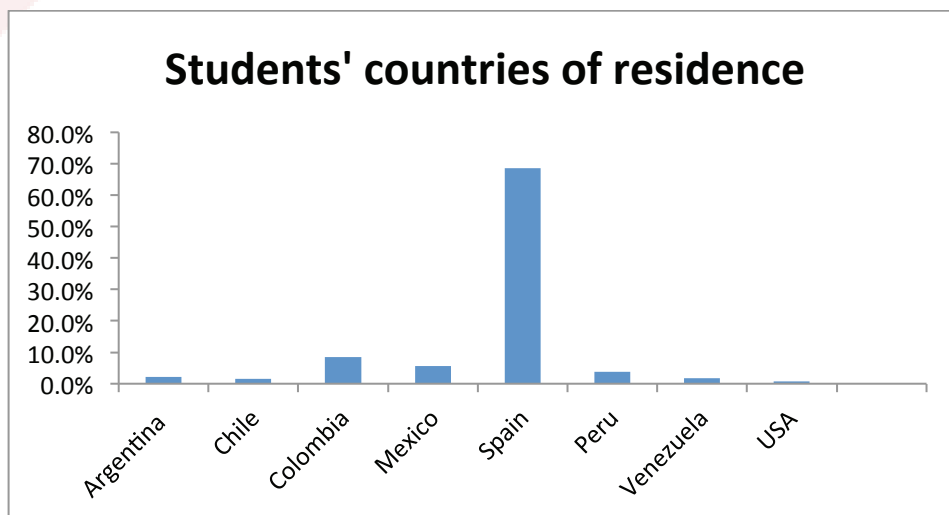


Figure 1 Participants' countries of residence

The majority of the participants were young adults (13,52% were under 25 years old and 46,11% were between 36 and 45 years old; see figure 2 below) and mainly female (61,28% women, contrasting with 38,72% men).

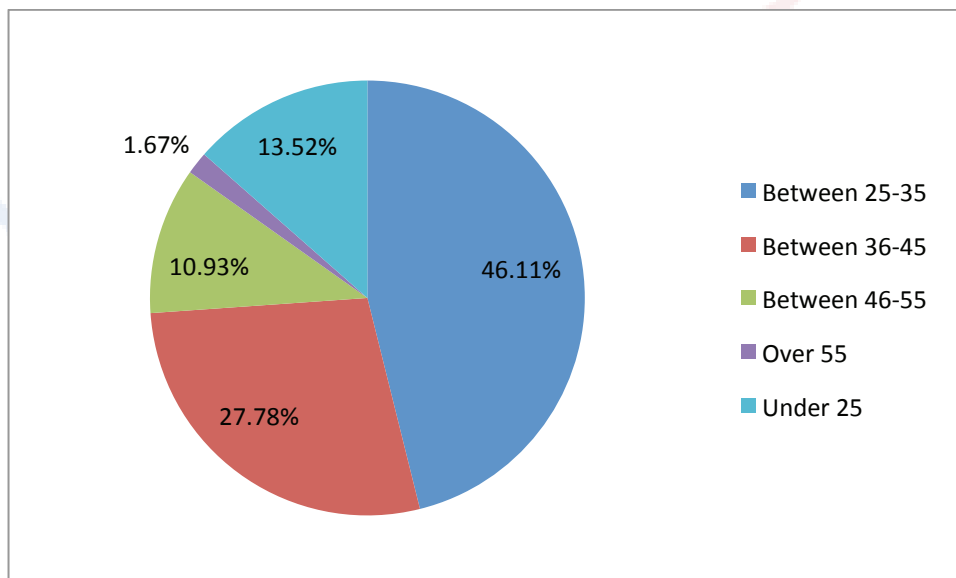


Figure 2 Participants' age

Although MOOCs are claimed to be a powerful educational tool to attract potential students who are not part of the formal education system, the course attracted people in the process of obtaining them. As figure 3 shows, half of the participants (55,33%) were university graduates, near a quarter of them were undergraduates (23,18%) and almost 10% were pursuing postgraduate courses.

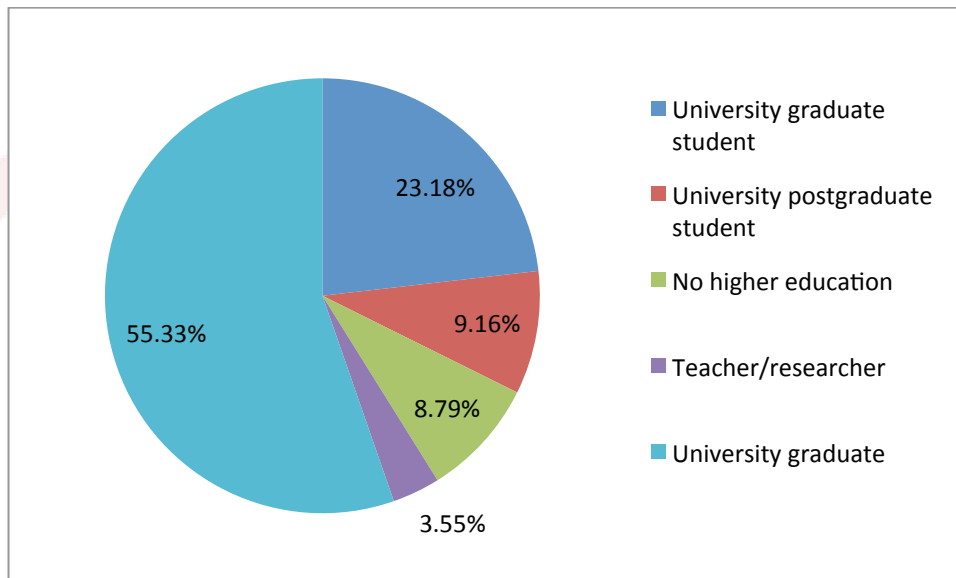


Figure 3 Participants' qualifications

Enrolling in a high number of courses could lead any student to eventual dropout. That is why this aspect was considered, which revealed that the majority of students enrolled in more than one MOOC at the same time. Figure 4 shows the number of courses that participants in the Professional English MOOC were doing at the same time. It can be seen that more than half of our students (57,14%) were enrolled in two to five other courses and a further 12,74% were doing up to 10. Only one quarter of the students (25,77%) focused on Professional English exclusively.

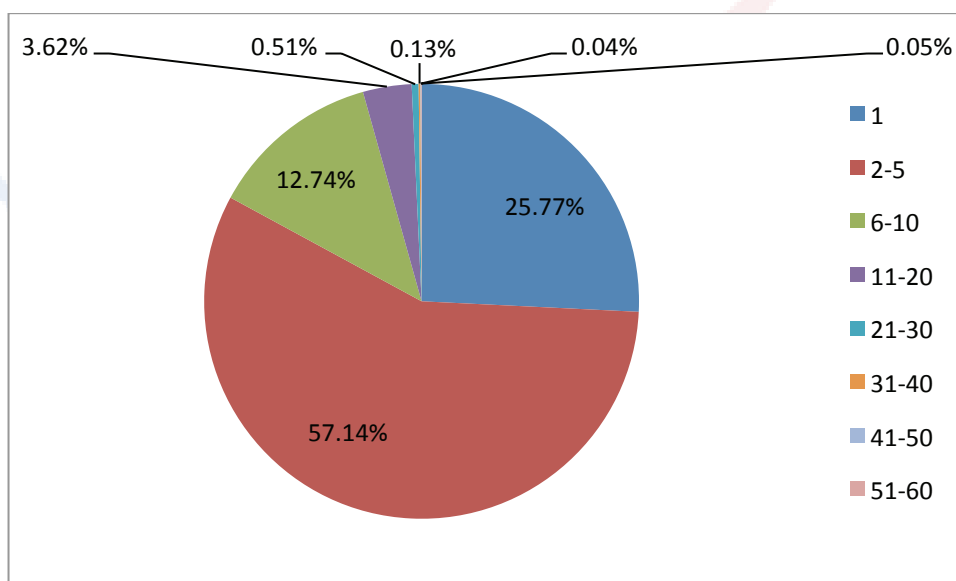


Figure 4 Number of MOOCs in which the participants were enrolled in

As for their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) level, they all had to take a diagnostic test at the beginning of the course and they were in the bracket of A2+-B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe 2001).

Instruments and procedure

It is early days for empirical research on MOOCs, but publications so far show a preference for a mixed-method approach (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007; Robson 2002), combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, in order to capture the diverse activities carried out by course participants (individual activities, P2P, group discussions in forums, etc.). The platform allowed tracking of students' progress, logging all attempted and successfully completed activities. Also, a post-course questionnaire helped to obtain a more complete picture of the participants' learning experience.

The course was structured in six different modules (see table 1) and ran for 12 weeks (31 January-25 April 2012). It was designed for students to complete each module in a fortnight, although all the contents were accessible from the beginning, in order to provide participants with a flexible methodology, in which they could choose to work and progress at their own pace. The overall organization of the course followed previous ESP courses developed by the authors (Stevens & Bárcena, 2002; Bárcena & Varela, 2012), and included a scaffolding mechanism that guided the student through the learning processes related to written work. For example, students with difficulties could resort to extra (simpler) activities for reinforcement, and in the tests, explicit feedback was provided with a link from each question to the specific point in the course where the topic was explained, so the student who answered it incorrectly or did not feel confident about his answer, could go back and revise the topic.

Table 1 Structure of the Professional English MOOC

Module	Title
1	Looking for a job is a full time job!
2	The first day at IBS
3	A new milestone in Peter's life
4	Settling in at work
5	Daily activities
6	Going online

Interaction, both written and oral, was key to the course design. Consequently, the authors developed a series of activities to foster collaborative learning in the MOOC forum and P2P activities. The former consisted of a proposal posted in the course

forum, which motivated students to practise open writing. The latter was an oral task, which paid attention to intercultural aspects related to the corresponding topic of the module. Students had to record their oral production in video format and upload it to the MOOC platform. Table 2 shows an example from Module 1: “Looking for a job is a full-time job”:

Table 2 Example of a P2P activity

In the job adverts in some countries it is common to find references to what could be considered “personal” traits and require candidates to be a specific sex, age range, physical characteristics, religion, etc. **What do you think of this? Do you consider that this procedure is discriminatory or not? Can you identify any circumstances (types of jobs, etc.) where these personal requirements could make sense and be appropriate?**

Each P2P activity was sent to three other students who acted as evaluators or raters and had to provide feedback following the guidelines provided in the MOOC. Only students who had uploaded their video recording were sent videos to evaluate their peers. This was an automated system provided by the platform MiriadaX. Participants were provided with evaluation criteria which they were encouraged to use, in order to make their peer review more meaningful to their course mates. The criteria were four: 1) appropriateness of vocabulary, terminology and register; 2) grammatical correctness; 3) fluency, pronunciation, and intonation; and 4) intelligibility and coherence.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 3 shows the number of students who completed the P2P activity, compared to the number of students who completed each module:

Table 3 Number of students who completed each module and P2P activities

Module	No. students who completed the module	No. students who completed the P2P activity
1	7922	2842
2	4869	2006
3	3641	1714
4	3016	1564
5	2662	1494
6	2477	1391

The disparity between figures in the second and third column shows that P2P activities were not the most popular of the module activities. Students had to complete 80% of them in order to pass it and these data suggest that, whenever possible, P2P activities were left out.

When looking at written interaction in the MOOC forum, the number of threads and posts is quite staggering (table 4):

Table 4 Interaction in student forum

Category	No. threads	No. posts
General discussion	206	1032
Presentation	36	273
Module 1	113	505
Module 2	75	334
Module 3	38	166
Module 4	30	151
Module 5	29	86
Module 6	19	55
TOTAL	546	2602

However, the number of students who wrote posts in the course forum was quite low. Only 925 wrote posts in the twelve weeks of the course which, compared to the 19,076 participants who started the course, represents less than 5% of them.

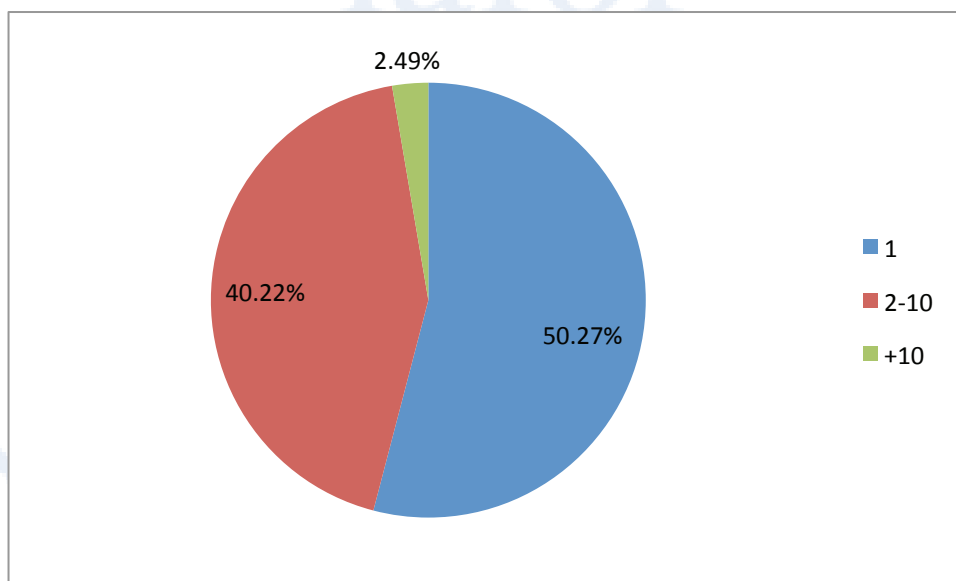


Figure 5 Percentage of students and number of posts

Furthermore, as figure 5 shows, out of those 925 active forum users, half of them only posted one message, and around 3% posted more than ten. It must also be mentioned that there was a very prolific forum user who posted a total of 96 messages in the course forum. This datum should be taken into account, since it affects the calculated average.



Foro de discusión

Buscar

P2P

«Volver

Mostrando el intervalo 1 - 20 de 22 resultados.

«Primero ◀ Anterior siguiente ▶ Último»

#	Mensaje	Mensajes del hilo de discusión	Visualizaciones del hilo de discusión	Relevancia
1.	Technical Problem with the P2P	4	22	★★★★★
2.	¿es obligatorio hacer todas las p2p?	4	115	★★★★★
3.	Delay P2P	1	13	★★★★★
4.	Pedir prórroga del curso por culpa de tarea P2P	2	48	★★★★★
5.	actividad peer2peer modulo 6	6	75	★★★★★
6.	RE: Module finished 93%	12	96	★★★★★
7.	RE: Module 0: Incomplete (Teaching Team)	61	524	★★★★★
8.	RE: Modulo 2, Peer to Peer Feedback: A professional diary	5	67	★★★★★
9.	RE: I don't have the 100%	18	256	★★★★★
10.	RE: Peer to peer	10	128	★★★★★
11.	Technical issues in THE WHOLE COURSE (missing videos)	1	26	★★★★★

Figure 6 Threads in the MOOC forum related to P2P

As can be seen in figure 6 above, 11 threads out of the total of 546 in the course forum were related to P2P activities and they mainly focused on technical issues: problems to upload the videos, students who were not send P2P activities to assess, completed activities that appear as incomplete in the student log, etc. Figure 7 shows a snapshot of such posts:

Technical Problem with the P2P
 technical problems
 25/03/13 19:51

Responder Responder citando Contestación rápida

In the P2P exercise of this module three, I have sent my exercise and received the proper valuation from my course mates but there should be a problem because when I try to rate one of my course mates exercise (it happens only with one person in concrete) it is like the result doesn't get saved in the system so it always show my process at 94% unless a completed process.

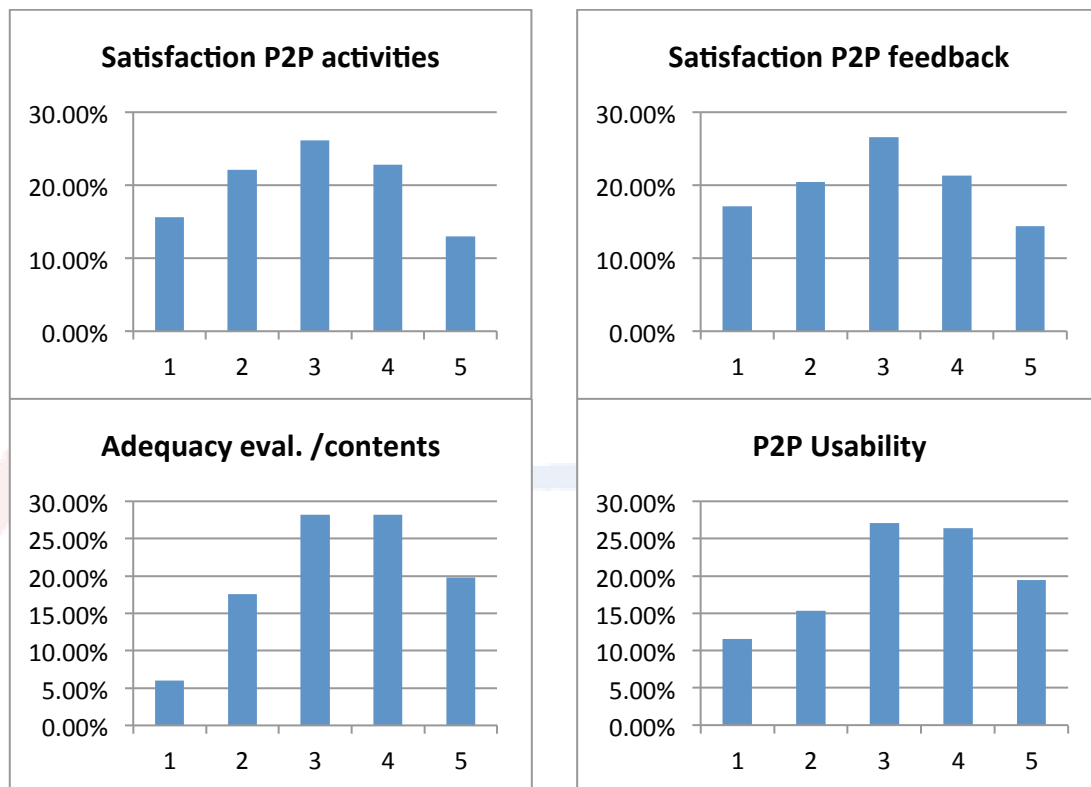
Hope you help me to solve this soon.

Thank you very much in advance 😊

Figure 7 Sample of a post in the forum related to P2P technical problems

The post-course questionnaire for students contained over 40 items but for the purpose of this paper, which aimed at analyzing the P2P module and its role in course abandonment, we will concentrate solely on those related to P2P activities and feedback, namely: satisfaction with P2P activities, satisfaction with P2P feedback (provided by course mates), adequacy of the evaluation with the course contents, and P2P usability. Table 5 below shows these four categories together, so that they can be compared and contrasted. A 5-point Likert scale was used, 1 being very little and 5 very much, as can be seen in table 5.

Table 5 Data related to P2P



DISCUSSION

In the previous sections the authors have provided data related to the first language MOOC in Spain, whose first edition was run during the first three months of 2013. Despite the precedents in other countries, where the background and profile of MOOC students is completely heterogeneous (Worlock & Ricci 2013), the group of students here was mostly composed of Spanish natives, which was highly suitable to the approach followed in this course in the sense that it emphasized divergences between both languages and addressed English language topics of special difficulty for students with Spanish as their mother tongue (false friends, interferences, lack of structural parallelisms, etc.). The analysis of the students’ educational background revealed that the majority were university students. This was rather unexpected because MOOCs are largely aimed at the population outside formal education, particularly those in tertiary education. However, the fact that the majority of the students in the MOOC were in formal education is due to the fact that this was one of the first courses in the Miriada X platform, and hence one of the first in the country. The Miriada X program was launched by two of the main companies in Spain: Universia (a network of collaborating universities coordinated by the Santander bank) and the learning services of the telecommunications company Telefónica, in collaboration with Spanish universities. Therefore, the publicity of the courses was undertaken on the respective web pages, leaflets, etc., which are mostly visited by their own students. It is expected that, with time, this learning modality will spread to a more general audience.

Most of the students were adults between 25 and 55 years of age, which does not coincide with the digital native age group, and as expected, most of the problems that were raised in the MOOC forums were related to technical difficulties. This fact was not expected, since the Miriada X platform is very intuitive and user-friendly. However, the reality was that students were often confused about the platform tools,

particularly in the P2P module, and there were a high number of incidences raised online. During the first weeks, a high number of courses were launched and thousands of students invaded the server, which caused the server to crash and connection with the platform to be lost.

The reception of the MOOC initiative in Spain was welcome with great enthusiasm, as can be demonstrated by the large number of registered students, not only in language courses (the most numerous) but also in other disciplines. It should be noted as well that MOOCs typically have between 3 and 10 European credits (the Professional English MOOC had 5). However, in contrast with UNED's online courses, whose students are very cautious when registering for small number of credits per academic year given the costs of the registration they have to pay, both the attractive thematic offer of the MOOCs (mostly related to social and work demands) and the fact that they are free of charge by definition led them to register in several courses at the same time.

The information about the development of the course was obtained through the teaching team's observation of how students did their activities and interacted in the forums, and also a final questionnaire. The students valued the course positively, and in particular three aspects: its flexible structure and the scaffolding and feedback mechanisms. Unlike other courses whose teaching teams decided to make materials available to students gradually to ensure that they worked with them in an organized way, all the materials in the Professional English MOOC were available to students from the beginning of the course in order to fulfill the condition of openness in this type of modality. The teaching team decided to rely on the students' responsibility to take their study seriously and not rush through the materials inappropriately. This feature provided flexibility to the course and allowed the course to be undertaken at different times and rhythms. As for the scaffolding mechanism that led students to simpler explanations and activities on a given topic when difficulties were encountered, it was used by less advanced students and valued as one of the key aspects of the course. This feature allowed for the diversification of the usefulness of the course, particularly since there was no entrance or diagnosis test.

Learning and using a language involves a number of written and oral skills and competences, including linguistic (formal), pragmatic (contextual) and sociolinguistic (cultural and intercultural) (following the terminology of *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* [Council of Europe, 2001]), all of which have a comparable importance in successful communication, particularly in professional environments. However, many computer-based language courses emphasize the development of reading/writing skills and on formal rather than functional linguistic aspects, because of their computational intractability (Chowdhury 2003). For this course it was decided to include the most computationally problematic areas of language teaching, namely oral and written interaction and sociolinguistic competence by making the most of the P2P tool available in the Miriada X platform.

Students were asked to upload a video recording with an oral presentation on a given sociolinguistic topic and the online platform automatically sent the uploaded file to three other students, who had to provide feedback to their course mates using the following criteria: 1) appropriateness of vocabulary, terminology and register; 2) grammatical correctness; 3) fluency, pronunciation, and intonation; and 4) intelligibility and coherence. Guidelines on how to provide useful and respectful

feedback were provided in the course guide (consisting of an explanatory video recorded by the teaching team and a document), which was available for consultation throughout the course. Special emphasis was given to avoid erroneous feedback by asking students to stick to areas that they felt confident about and by asking for help if in doubt. In any case, the seven teachers tried to supervise most of the P2P activity and observed that the majority of students were prudent and responsible when they felt unsure about the correctness or appropriateness of a given element in the video. In fact, as the literature of P2P reveals, there is a tendency to be more cautious in correcting others' production than in one's own production. Furthermore, the students acknowledged (and there was evidence of this being true) having searched on the web and consulted several resources on the preparation of their feedback. On a negative note, it must be said that students focused their attention and criticism on criteria 1) and 2), rather than 3) and 4) (see above). Since they were university students (and highly likely to have undertaken a number of formal/conventional English courses in their academic lives), this preference is probably a reflection of the prioritization that they have experienced as students by their teachers. However, the skills which correspond to criteria 3) and 4) are of utmost importance in the professional world (Belcher, 2006), so further guidelines in this sense are likely to be incorporated into the feedback section of the course guide for future editions of the course.

CONCLUSION

This paper has provided an account of the first edition of the first language MOOC in Spain, which has recently taken place in the Miriada X platform. Although the overall feeling of the experience is rather positive both for students and for the teaching team, there were very significantly divergent results, reflected both in the statistical records of the students log and the final student questionnaires. The analysis of the data made it obvious that language MOOCs capture the interest of the population, but publicity is clearly not focused in the direction of those people who could benefit the most by free and open courses: the socially unprivileged and those out of formal education. A thorough revision of this area is required in the future.

There is a huge variety of MOOC models being used at the moment and results on the methodology of the Professional English MOOC demonstrate that most of its features are worth preserving for future editions of the course. However, there was considerable dropout, which reflects the misconception that the general population has on MOOCs, despite the fact that each course had an associated a number of European credits, and that could give them a rough idea of the volume of work involved. However, the fact that they are free makes people register with no commitment to continue, and randomly poking around in the course, due to curiosity although subsequently dropping out. This is likely to carry on to some extent in the future and questions the validity of course abandonment as a quality variable for MOOCs (Read et al., 2013).

Finally, the P2P activity was developed by the platform developers as a key tool that would enhance interaction and was welcome by the language teaching team because of the opportunity to put into practice what is a key skill in language use. However, a large number of students, who acknowledged the importance of interaction, etc., in the questionnaires, failed to make the most of this opportunity, probably because of the extra work, time, and effort that it entailed, a common social phenomenon that has been widely acknowledged by language teachers in this country. The teaching team

has realized the need to change this attitude of language learners and intend to emphasize the importance of collaborative learning in the next edition of the MOOC from the beginning so that students realize the incoherence underlying their attitude and their loss by failing to undertake this type of P2P activities. An entire subsection is intended to be included with the highly positive testimony of the minority of students who undertook the P2P with an attitude of effort and commitment.

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The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The logo is partially overlaid by a large, faint, light blue circular graphic that spans across the middle of the page. There are also some faint, curved lines in shades of red and blue in the background.

CROSS THAT BRIDGE WHEN YOU COME TO ENGLISH: CLIL AS A NEW CHALLENGE IN ITALY

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0225

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Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the role of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) as one of the most experimental and challenging teaching and learning methods from primary through to adult and higher education. As demonstrated by the Council Conclusions on Language Competences to Enhance Mobility (Council of the European Union, 2011), CLIL is still on the agenda of the European Union. Crucially, its success will be determined by assessing a case study that involves the Italian education policy. The Italian Ministry of Education has mandated CLIL as an approach to be adopted for teaching non-lingua subjects in the last year of Italian secondary school and Italian technical high school by 2013. This policy moves Italian educators under the limelight of the international education arena where one of the main challenges is to move beyond traditional teacher-centered lecturing towards learner-centered ways of learning. Italian teachers should realize that educators across the world will be watching them apply “the CLIL-Potential” and outcomes from Italian CLIL classrooms will help define CLIL best practice. In the light of these premises, the research attempt here is

- a) to investigate Italian primary teachers’ feelings, attitudes and expectations toward the great potentiality of the CLIL approach thanks to a questionnaire to be administered to a selected schools located in Southern Italy;
- b) to discuss how selected authentic CLIL materials can be used and implemented in a primary and secondary education settings.

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Introduction

CLIL is an umbrella term adopted by the European Network of Administrators, Researchers and Practitioners in the mid 1990s. It encompasses any activity in which a foreign language is used as a tool in the learning of a non-language subject in which both language and subject have a joint role. CLIL operates along a continuum of the foreign language and the non-language content without specifying the importance of one over another. It was thus exclusive in explaining how a variety of methods could be used to give language and non-language subject matter a joint curricular role in the domain of mainstream education, pre-schooling and adult lifelong education. It may involve project work, examination courses, drama, puppets, chemistry practicals and mathematical investigations. In short, CLIL is flexible and dynamic, where topics and subjects – foreign languages and non-language subjects - are integrated in some kind of mutually beneficial way so as to provide value-added educational outcomes for the widest possible range of learners. CLIL is usually done through putting aside some time in the school week for learning subjects or special modules through another language. In CLIL the learning of language and another subjects is mixed in one way to another. This means that in the class there are two main aims, one related to the subject, topic, or theme, and one linked to the language. This is why CLIL is sometimes called dual-focused education. It can be done in many ways. For example it might involve 8 years old children having 30 minutes of languages showers per week, in which they sing songs or play games in the other language. Imagine learning to play a musical instrument such as a piano without being able to touch the keyboard. To learn how to master a musical instrument requires that we gain both knowledge and skill simultaneously. In other words, we learn effectively by experiencing both learning about instrument, and having hands-on practice at using the instrument, at the same time. CLIL doesn't only promote linguistic competence. Because of the different "thinking horizons" which result from working in another language CLIL can also have an impact on conceptualization, literally how we think. Being able to think about something in different languages can enrich our understanding of concepts, and help broaden our conceptual mapping resources. This allow association of different concepts and helps the learner go towards a more sophisticated level of learning in general. In CLIL, the development of the first language carries the utmost importance. Children will initially mix sounds and words when they are operating with more than one language. As the child learns to master two different languages there will be some degree of interference, which is what happens when elements of one language come into the use of another. Interference is part of the normal process of language learning and is not a sign of a problem unless it becomes unacceptably recurrent. This presentation aims to emphasize that participating in a CLIL lesson does

not require a student to already have a background in the additional language, like having lived abroad or used it with family members or friends. Each CLIL class should start at a level which is suitable for the students involved. Many classes start with the assumption that the students do not have any prior knowledge of the language. To make cognitively demanding lessons understandable for everybody calls for expertise and careful planning. Preparing a lesson in a foreign language does not mean additional work because I think that teachers through working together, content and language can share their individual knowledge and make it joint knowledge. Teachers because of CLIL implementation are likely to have increased opportunity for their professional development according to the idea that education is a “lifelong learning”. I would like to underline that thanks to the CLIL project it is possible to arouse pupils ‘curiosity and during the explanation of the lesson in the foreign language children are usual to set a lot of questions like: how do the pupils of the other countries study? How much do they study? How is their school? How are their teachers? Then they begin to ask to translate the name of the objects of the classroom in the language foreign object of the CLIL, that’s why this is an experience that should became a challenge for both pupils and teachers and all together can discover new opportunities that school can give for example learn to understand the words for what they are and not for their English equivalents. Although at the beginning of the language-learning process, one must translate concepts, words, and phrases into his own language, once you get a good handle on the new language, it is best to begin learning words for what they *are*, based on their context, rather than their equivalent in your own language. Learning content (inherent in naturalistic language learning) represents a meaningful, contextualized activity which increases interest and encourages students. On the other hand, being able to speak and reason about academic content in a language different from their own, gives students the chance to expand their cognitive skills and use more sophisticated language. Each time students read a discipline-based text, they learn something new about the English language and the academic discipline. The most important point is that all teachers are teachers of language and content. At this point, it must also be stated that the integration of language and content in the classroom is not without its shortcomings. In classes where content and language are integrated, the excessive emphasis on material simplification acts to the detriment of the development of the necessary skills for students to become independent learners. In contexts where an L2 is learnt through content, students are not offered enough chances to speak or initiate a conversation, hindering their speaking and writing outcomes. Simple arithmetic tells us that with 25 students in a class, if each has a say in a 50 minute lesson, their speaking time must be less than two minutes since the leader of the discussion also has to speak. Where students use English are very limited and that their creative use of English is also scarce or even non-

existent.

With its focus on structured group work, cooperative learning may help enhance CLIL contexts, cooperative learning, for its part, has been defined as “a body of literature and research that has examined the effects of cooperation in education. It offers ways to organize group work to enhance learning and increase academic achievement. Cooperative learning, used systematically in primary and secondary levels, has shown to improve students self-esteem, their understanding of tasks and of others as well as their teaching skills. Cooperative learning has also proved favorable to social cohesion and collaboration within the group, allowing students to overcome fear in front of other students or teachers. In the area of L2 teaching and learning, different studies and works feature cooperative learning activities and methods that have been successfully implemented in the classroom. The underlying assumption is that communication among students working in groups rises as they have a need to exchange information. The result is higher participation, lower level of inhibition and more possibilities for oral practice. Likewise, by engaging in face-to-face interaction with their peers, students use the L2 in a more creative way than when they have to speak in front of the whole class. Groups cater for the integration of reading, listening, writing and speaking by means of interaction and communication. Finally, cooperative learning promotes among students the ability and the inclination to work together beyond the classroom by making cooperation not just part of the how of learning but also part of the content.

The benefits of cooperative Learning in CLIL Contexts in small structured groups in the L2 classroom have been praised in the L2 literature, group work increases opportunities for practicing the target language, it improves the quality of conversations among students, since face-to-face communication in a small group is a natural communicative situation, it is the first step towards individualization in education, promotes a positive affective atmosphere and it is a source for student motivation. Quoting Vygotsky sociocultural theory, which states that learning is facilitated if observed as a social process, is implemented in cooperative learning lessons thanks to the frequent opportunities students have in their groups to speak and listen to the L2, limiting this way teachers talking time and focusing on content and fluency rather than on correction. Mistakes are natural when learners are focused on making themselves understood. Students are compelled, this way, to use language in real communication contexts, boosting the variety of speech acts normally used in class. By increasing the time students are using the language, their listening and speaking skills are also enhanced. With the help of language and supporting the Vygotskian language-thought connection, students develop higher level cognitive strategies so they are asked to plan activities, organize and defend ideas, find information, take decisions or solve problems. Pupils become more

independent in relation to their own learning since Cooperative Learning in CLIL Contexts they perform tasks originally fulfilled by the teacher (planning tasks, finding sources, explaining difficult points, summarizing a text or providing feedback to a classmate). Finally, group dynamics make cooperative L2 classes focus on the student and their interaction with peers. Through different cooperative learning techniques, students learn to develop social skills (active listening, turn taking, praising, giving opinions, encouraging others and the learning to think in a foreign language) which have interesting effects on students attention and on the teacher student relationship. Through the implementation of cooperative learning in CLIL contexts we are promoting not only better L2 and content learning and teaching but also the development of the individual as a whole.

The benefits of Content and language integrated approaches

Regardless of the degree to which the main objective of CLIL programmes is language, content teaching does not lose out. CLIL requires a slower pace, which often results in a need to work through syllabae at a different speed. Pedagogically, it also seems clear that CLIL has positive effects on teaching and learning. Teachers' efforts to be 'clearer' than usual, and students' efforts to follow lessons taught through the TL have a positive impact in the following directions:

- ◆ A cross-sectional approach to language learning comes into effect as language teachers are not the only ones responsible for languages
- ◆ Using language to communicate content is perceived as more motivating than using language to reflect on content
- ◆ Using a foreign language to deal with the learning processes characteristics of content subjects becomes important
- ◆ Using a foreign language to teach content subjects requires study skills to overcome difficulties
- ◆ Using the foreign language stems from intrinsic motivation to communicate, hence unconscious or implicit learning may take place

The challenges of bilingual education

The most obvious advantage of bringing the beginning of bilingual education forward is that students are younger, and therefore perhaps more receptive to foreign languages, most researchers agree that "the younger=the better in the long run". This may be explained by the rather obvious advantage that students who study in a bilingual mode from primary education onwards will be exposed to the foreign language for a much

greater amount of time than students whose bilingual education is limited to the last four or five years of their schooling. This, however, will only hold true in those cases where students are offered a follow-up programme in secondary education. If the bilingual programme finishes in the last years of primary education, then the greater exposure is not guaranteed, and the whole educational innovation may be purposeless. This is especially serious if students, on completion of the programme, are placed with others who have not previously profited from bilingual education, and therefore have to be taught the foreign language at a lower level than students who have completed bilingual programme. Young students who view the language as an end in itself, and only after several years of learning it (as yet another school subject) are given the chance of using it for a real purpose, may develop an attitude towards the foreign language which is already more learning-oriented than communication-oriented. Therefore, creating a real need to use the language from the very beginning will very probably exert a beneficial influence on students' attitude towards it. Bilingual education implies teaching the language as a vehicle for communication, rather than as an end in itself (Wildhage and Otten 2003). This approach thus sets the scene for more successful language learning that is meaning-oriented, communicative, and perceived as something relevant by the students. Since language in bilingual education is used as a vehicle for the communication of new ideas and concepts, students process is at a higher level. This is true for bilingual education at any level, it is extremely pertinent to bilingual education at primary level, because there is no preparation in terms of language learning prior to starting the bilingual programme, as is the case when bilingual education starts at secondary level.

The double challenge of bilingual education

In the bilingual education teaching-learning mode, students and teachers are faced with double challenge. The first challenge is related to the fact that new concepts are presented through a foreign language, thus doubling the cognitive effort students must make to deal with this twofold challenge. While this is true for all students involved in learning through a foreign language, it may be especially difficult for students who are still developing their cognitive abilities. Conversely, the cognitive development the learner makes through one language transfers to the other, so that when the student has learned how to organize or interpret information in his or her native language, he or she can transfer this knowledge to the second language. As a result, learning is valid for subjects taught in either language. The second kind of help teachers can provide to meet the double challenge of bilingual education is to work on learning strategies. Students need to make their learning more effective, and one way of doing so is by using the appropriate strategies. Work on strategies need to be complicated, and can start with topics such as how to memorise words, and move on to more complex

strategies such as how to activate selective attention in order to focus only on the relevant information and avoid getting distracted by unknown words. An added advantage of explicitly working on learning strategies is that students' learning will be transferred to other areas of their schooling, thus probably improving their general achievement. A difficulty related to learning through a foreign language concerns assessment, since it may well be that students understand the contents of the subject being taught, but are not able to express this knowledge appropriately because they lack the necessary language. It is therefore vital to find ways of assessing students' performance that do not rely exclusively on language. One way of doing this is to develop assessment tools that do not require students to produce a lot of language, such as multiple choice questions or exercises that entail short or no written answer. Furthermore, it is necessary to re-think the importance of accuracy when assessing students' progress in the content subjects.

The effect on the development of the students' L1

Since students are exposed to L1 for less time, and they are not learning all the content subjects in their mother tongue language any more, the worry is that they may not learn the language needed to talk about these issues in L1. On the one hand, most of the concepts dealt with in the first years of primary education relate to students' experiences, and therefore will probably be talked about outside school. However, the more complex the topics dealt with school, the less likely it is that specific vocabulary will be made available to students in their daily life. It is in this situation where teaching has to guarantee that students are exposed to the necessary language in both codes, the L1 and the L2. The main means for exposure is curricular integration: in other words, dealing with the same topic in different subjects adopting different perspectives and using a different language. Coordination between different teachers is especially suited to the primary curriculum, and to the students' perception of the world because both are, in principle, holistic. For younger students, it is especially important to be able to relate the things learnt in one subject to those learnt in another and to real life as fragmentary ideas are less memorable for them. Therefore, curriculum developers worldwide ask for the primary curriculum to be holistic rather than divided into separate, unrelated subject. This globalized curriculum should not, however, be repetitive: that is, the same topics taught in the same way, but through the two languages.

CLIL in Italy

Italy is one of the first country to enter the CLIL in sorting through the Gelmini reform (2008) of the second cycle of Education. Starting from the scholastic year 2012/2013 in all language schools will be taught lessons in CLIL, initially at the module level, beginning classes in third. The teaching will be developed in language schools, in a second foreign language and in a second discipline, from the fourth classes, for the school year 2013/2014. In all other high schools, the year of the CLIL is the 2014/2015 (fifth year classes), but there is nothing to prevent anticipate the development as is already happening in the paths of ESABAC¹ (issuing a double title: Italian and French) and in the paths of the schools "European" and "international" (for example, teaching of history in German, of sciences in English, of geography in China at the Convitto Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele II of Rome), but also at some technical institutes (for example the ITC Tosi Busto Arsizio) and professional (for example the IIS Frisi of Milan). The schools in which there is the possibility to offer teaching a subject in a foreign language (hereinafter indicated LS) or regional or minority such as e.g. in the Val D'Aosta, use for a long time methodologies CLIL, but now their spread arises from a pragmatic response to the European requirement to promote mobility and the integration of its citizens, breaking down the language barriers, educate young people to be able to move and act in a multilingual environment that poses new socio-economic challenges. The linguistic needs and training very diversified of the majority of European citizens, the promotion of bilingual skills if not trilingual the emphasis of the early teaching of a second language and the encouragement of teaching subjects non-linguistic by means of a second language or are the motor elements. The European reality comprises countries that support the learning of a language indigenous minority who are in border areas which include immigrants, children, or monolingual groups who simply want to expand their language skills. Multilingualism is one of the key goals for Europe. The European Commission's White Paper "Teaching and Learning: toward a learning society" (1995), places, between the five priority objectives for the education and training systems in member countries, the promotion of knowledge of at least two Community languages in addition to the mother tongue. The recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of December 18th 2006 concerning the key competences for lifelong learning inserts the communication in foreign languages among the eight key skills. The European Parliament resolution of the 24th March 2009, entitled "The multilingualism: a resource for Europe and a common commitment" recommends, among other things, "the Member States to include in their curricula optional study of a third foreign language, starting at secondary school level". The CLIL is considered as a possible solution to meet the

¹ ESABAC : binational italian –french graduation

demand for acquisition of community languages and cultural competencies to encourage integration and the European mobility, a methodology needed for a linguistic integrated education.

Conclusion

Although the challenges presented by bilingual programmes at primary level are considerable, many difficulties need to be analysed. Teachers need time to re-think their teaching from the perspective of the special characteristics of teaching in a bilingual programme. Teachers also need the tools and knowledge to understand what bilingualism in general, and bilingual education in particular, entails. The success of bilingual education depends on the daily work carried out by teachers in the classroom. Thus, if politicians want a programme to succeed, they will have to look carefully at ways in which teachers can be supported in their goal of bringing to life this pedagogic innovation. Teachers need time for reflection and training; they need to be provided with materials and other types of resources that make their teaching task easier.

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Innovative language teaching: teachers' beliefs and practices

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Abstract

In the context of language education and language teaching, the issue of grammar is particularly problematic: grammar instruction is still connected to prescriptive approaches, which are outdated, disconnected from linguistic theory, and ineffective at improving students' communicative skills. Nevertheless, the recent *Portuguese Language curriculum* (Reis *et al.* 2009) embodies a new paradigm towards grammar teaching, assuming, from a constructivist standpoint, that the promotion of *explicit language awareness* (ELA) sustains the development of students' speaking and writing skills.

Research has revealed that to endorse real changes in teaching practices it is important to act upon all the dimensions of teachers' professional knowledge, including tacit phenomena, like beliefs, by means of professional training and development. Therefore, it is relevant to know how teachers handle this new paradigm and how what they think about teaching grammar affects their practices.

Throughout the brief description of a multi-case study focused on 10-12 years-old L1 teachers' beliefs and practices regarding grammar teaching¹, significant inconsistencies arise in the comparison between teachers' speech and teachers' practices and, more importantly, between the curriculum guidelines and classroom activities, leading to the conclusion that teachers have difficulties facing the required adjustment to the emerging paradigm.

Although the nature of the study does not provide enough data to support teachers' profiles, it points out a possible path to conceive an effective teacher-training program in the context of life long learning.

Key words: Grammar teaching, Teachers' Beliefs, Teachers' Practices, Explicit Language Awareness

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¹ The study presented in this paper: Ferreira, P. (2012). *Concepções e práticas dos professores de Língua Portuguesa em relação ao ensino e à aprendizagem da gramática: um estudo exploratório no 2.º Ciclo do Ensino Básico* (Master's thesis). Lisbon: Escola Superior de Educação, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa.

Introduction

The subject of teaching and learning grammar has been widely debated, and is still a prolific issue. Although research has shown the lack of effectiveness in the traditional way of teaching grammar, most teachers still use strategies coherent with a deductive or expositive approach to grammar, delegating to students the role of simple receivers of rules, structures and examples to be incorporated by training (Mohamed 2006).

The epistemological shift towards grammar teaching, that is taking place all over the western world – e.g., teaching grammar in context (Weaver 2008); grammar didactic sequences (Camps & Zayas 2006; Pereira 2010); new grammar (Nadeau & Fisher 2006); grammar discovery activities (Hudson 1992; Tisset 2008; Cardoso 2008; Costa *et al.* 2011), implies an inductive approach to grammar, recognising that students play a decisive role in their learning process through reflexion and discovery.

In the *Portuguese Language curriculum* (Reis *et al.* 2009), the competency that integrates the development of grammar knowledge is *Explicit Language Awareness* (ELA), differently from the designation used in the 1991 curriculum, Language Functioning, (cf. DGEBS 1991). This change is a reflection of deeper changes that go far beyond the choice of words. Following Costa *et al.* (2011), figure 1 presents the main differences between both perspectives:

1991 Language curriculum	2009 Language curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •no relation between the implicit knowledge of students and teaching and learning grammar; •focus on the correction of errors during communication activities; •contents organised as a result of the context of communicative use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •implicit knowledge considered as the root of and the starting point for most activities for teaching and learning grammar; •focus on the detection of regularities of the language with mobilization to several contexts of use after systematization; •contents organised accordingly to the mobilization and to the stages of the development of linguistic knowledge.

Figure 1 – Two curricula: two perspectives

The new Portuguese curriculum has emphasised a close link between explicit knowledge of language and reading / writing skills, stating that “mobilisation of the categories of explicit knowledge (elements, classes, relations, operations, linguistic and textual structures) to solve practical problems improve performance and make patterns and criteria of language explicit.” (Reis *et al.*, 2009:151 our translation).

This is precisely one of the central problems of language didactics both at the theoretical and practical levels. First of all, articulation between these two dimensions is limited to occasional examples. Teachers do not have a coherent model of the basic grammatical points to be presented which would allow them to mobilise the students’ grammatical knowledge in the reflection about written and oral texts. Secondly, the

definitions and procedures of prescriptive or traditional grammar still predominate in educational resources (grammar and text books) as well as in the classroom (Pinto 2002; Ribas 2010). Thirdly, investments in knowledge transfer are a low priority (Tardif & Pesseau 1998).

In order to change this situation it is imperative that the shifting paradigm has real effects on classroom practices and teachers have to embrace it and spread it if they want that to happen. Otherwise, the changes will take place only on paper.

Considering the need to implement the new curriculum, it was certainly relevant to ascertain if teachers' practices and beliefs regarding teaching and learning grammar are coherent with the guidelines of the document. To put these guidelines into practice teachers must implement teaching and learning paths distant from traditional and expositive practices and create a structural framework of mobilization of grammar knowledge into other competencies.

Overview of the research and its purpose

This research was motivated mainly by a combination of three factors:

- a) Students' results in standardized tests - serious difficulties in exercises involving grammar knowledge or its explicit description, and its permanence through basic education, are evidenced by several studies (Delgado Martins *et al.* 1987; Ucha coord. 2007; Duarte coord. 2008b; Costa 2008).
- b) Teachers' positioning towards grammar teaching and learning - the results of the only previous study on teachers' positioning towards Portuguese Language teaching (Duarte coord. 2008a) have revealed that most teachers declared to favour strategies of a deductive nature.
- c) The new (and innovative) curricular and terminological guidelines - in the school year that preceded data collection, a new Portuguese Language curriculum entered into force.

Despite the complexity of learning and of the different influences involved in the process, the transformation of teachers' practices is definitely a relevant issue to these problems. Research has revealed the influence of deeper and tacit phenomena on teacher's behaviour, enhancing the need to discern these implicit aspects in order to make them explicit and to act upon them by means of professional training and development. These psychological and social phenomena, such as beliefs, correspond to the "unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe and think." (Borg 2003, p. 81).

The study here presented was conducted taking into account the double dimension of teachers' actions (Zabalza 1994), in which thinking and behaviour are involved. Data were collected through class observation and interviews, attempting to discern some of the Portuguese Language teachers' beliefs and practices towards teaching and

learning grammar through the analysis of their actions and their speech.

The design of a multicase research study, that focused on six Portuguese, native language, teachers and on six 5th or 6th grades classes (10 to 12 year-old students), from three schools in the district of Lisbon, in the academic year 2011 – 2012, is sketched in Figure 2:

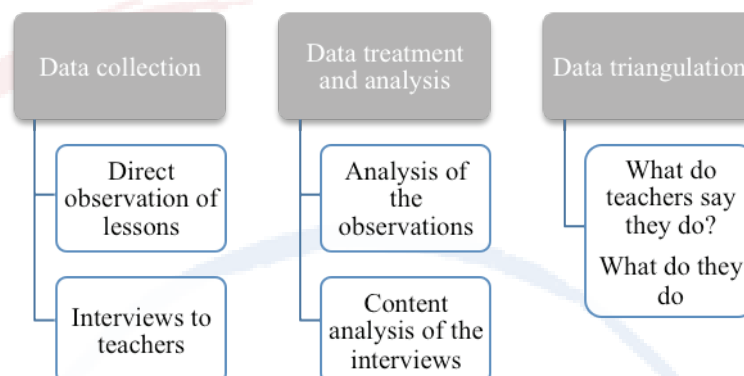


Figure 2 – Data collection, treatment, analysis and triangulation

The four research questions that guided the collection, the treatment, the analysis and the triangulation of data were:²

- What beliefs towards the process of teaching and learning grammar do 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers hold?
- What are 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers' views regarding the new curricular and terminological guidelines?
- What are 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers' practices regarding teaching and learning grammar?
- What are 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers' needs for training as far as Explicit Language Awareness is concerned?

In the following section the results and the conclusions formulated through the crossing of the data obtained from both techniques, the supporting theory and the investigation goals initially defined will be presented.

Teachers' beliefs towards grammar teaching

Considering the first question defined, *what beliefs towards the process of teaching and learning grammar do 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers hold*, we conclude that all the participant teachers recognise relevance to grammar knowledge, an importance which has been traditionally recognised. Similarly, all the teachers have indicated the influence of this knowledge on the success on other written and oral competencies. However, none of the teachers indicated the concept of mobilization to other contexts of use, which is one of the guide stones that support the new *Portuguese Language curriculum*.

² The questions were reordered to favour the presentation of the results and the conclusions of the study.

According to the analysis of the interviews the teachers' considerations don't seem to be informed opinions, based on the results of recent research, which evince the interdependence between metalinguistic development and other competencies (Gombert 1990; Sim-Sim 1997, 1998; Duarte 2008).

In fact, the interviewed teachers' considerations seem to represent the continuity of one of the dimensions of the traditional conception of grammar, the grammar of the written language, of prescriptive nature.

All teachers declared their motivation to teach grammar and only one of them said that her students aren't motivated to learn grammar. This affirmation of the motivation of teachers and students towards grammar is clearly contrary to the common notion most disseminated: the uneasiness felt by teachers and students towards this subject (Pereira 2010).

Taking the complexity of grammar teaching into account, two teachers indicated the high level of difficulty of this dimension of the language to teachers and both of them emphasized the need to properly prepare the practices in this domain.

Apart from one of the teachers, who remember diversified strategies and resources during the course of learning grammar when she was a student, the participants declared to have been taught grammar through the presentation and the repetition of contents and the repetition of exercises. They also recalled the focus on a memory-based learning and declared that the teaching method followed by their teachers were quite similar. Apart from one of the participants, teachers recognised the influence of the way they have learnt grammar on the way they currently teach it.

Focusing on the data which resulted from the content analysis of the interviews, teachers pointed out the existence of modifications on their scientific approach to grammar during their professional activity, mainly due to the observation of students' responses, to a long-term teacher professional development programme (National Program for Teaching Portuguese Language) and to professional experience.

Two teachers positioned themselves towards the role of memorisation in the learning process, valued by one of them, while the other affirmed that that skill plays a minor role on learning grammar. Memorisation is, surely, necessary for the apprehension of certain rules and paradigms and plays an important role on any learning process. Nevertheless, as Duarte (2000:56, our translation) affirms, "(...) reflecting on the linguistic structure and functioning isn't a simple task of presenting labels and rules one expects students to memorise. On the contrary, it's an organised and progressive work of observation and systematisation of the great paradigms and regularities of the language."

It is possible to conclude that, for the interviewees, how they were taught grammar as students is influential on how they teach it as teachers. This realisation can be considered as an alert to teacher training, as it evinces the need to deconstruct one's learning processes before any approach to the grammar didactics.

Teachers' views regarding the new curricular and terminological guidelines

As far as the second question of the research is concerned, *what are 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers' views regarding the new curricular and terminological guidelines*, the participants indicated the importance of using metalinguistic terms, having all of them declared to use the new grammar terminology. However, it was only possible to confirm the use of the metalanguage accordingly to the *Terminological Dictionary* in four of the observed lessons and there was terminological and scientific accuracy in just one of them. These considerations enhance the existence of difficulties in the use of the new terminological guidelines, as well as some failures in their scientific background, particularly regarding the morphological, the syntactic, and the word class levels. In fact, three teachers declared their insecurity in using the new terminology.

Regarding the use of *Terminological Dictionary*, three teachers declared to use it to clear some questions, one said she uses it indirectly when she reads the new curriculum, other considers unnecessary to use it and other declared not to use it and explicitly affirmed her resistance to the new terminology.

As far as the sections of the *Terminological Dictionary* are concerned, three teachers declared that most of them is easily understood. The areas qualified by the participants, as the least difficult are morphology, in general, the phrase and the word classes.

On the other hand, the syntactic functions are the areas of difficulty most indicated by teachers, followed by syntax, in general, coordinate/ subordinate clauses and connective adverbs.

Other conclusion is the coexistence of two grammar terminologies in the same level of teaching in the school year 2011 – 2012. Teachers working at the three participant schools declared to have been instructed to use the previous terminology and curriculum when working with 6th grade students and the terminology and the curriculum in force when working with 5th grades. In fact, it was possible to confirm the use of previous curricular and terminological guidelines with a teacher working with a 6th grade class. This situation can be confusing, as four teachers in fact, indicated it.

Considering the teachers' views regarding *Explicit Language Awareness*, the opinions of the participants are divided. On the one hand, three teachers consider it appropriate. On the other hand, a teacher indicated that there has only been a switch in labels, other finds it inappropriate and another declared she doesn't understand why that designation was chosen.

As far as the relevance of *Explicit Language Awareness* is concerned, four teachers attribute the same importance to the five Portuguese Language nuclear competencies (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking and Grammar). On the contrary, two teachers declare that some competencies are more important than others, highlighting Reading and Writing.

It's relevant to point out that one of them declares that *Explicit Language Awareness* is the least important linguistic competency. This information, although coherent with the results of the questionnaire applied to teachers in one of the preliminary studies which based the construction of the new curriculum, are, to some extent, surprising, because early in 2001, the *National Curriculum for Basic Education – Essential Competencies* (DEB, 2001) recognised the status of

nuclear competency to *Explicit Language Awareness*, on equal terms with the others, status reinforced by the current curriculum. One could expect that those who promote their teaching and learning had already incorporated the levelling of the five nuclear competencies.

Taking the articulation of the competencies into account, four teachers declared that they usually teach grammar in articulation with the other nuclear competencies, while two indicated that they prefer to teach it independently. Actually, these statements reinforced the data obtained from direct observation, despite the fact that in the four accounted cases there were different tones of attempts of integration. There was no situation of real articulation procedures in any case, as one can notice in the following chart

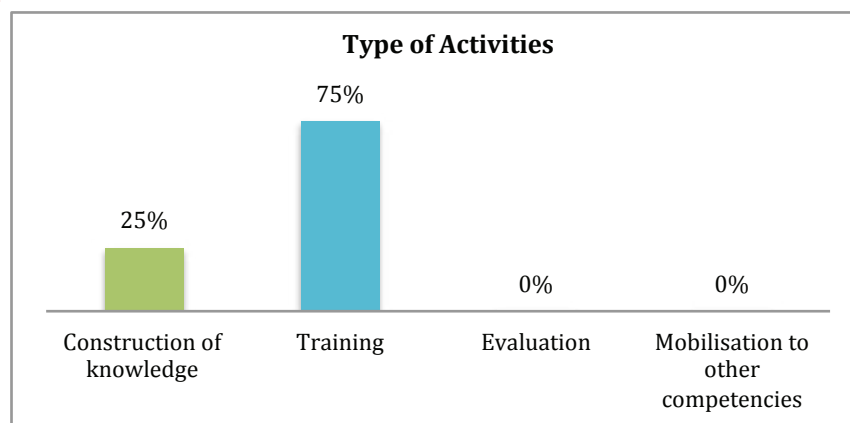


Figure 3 – Type of activities observed (percentages)

The mobilisation of grammar knowledge into other competencies, one of the major keys of the new curriculum wasn't indicated or observed in any context. Apparently, there is a widespread belief in the importance of grammar to improve speaking and writing, but it doesn't seem to reflect an informed opinion supported on the knowledge of why and how that influence takes place.

Teachers' practices

Considering the third research question, *what are 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers' practices regarding teaching and learning grammar*, the most evident conclusion is that, despite the different individual beliefs and practices in this field, all the participants teach grammar. This is coherent with one of the conclusions presented by Neves (2005) in a study conducted in Brazilian schools. The author declares that teachers "maintain systematic grammar lessons as a ritual, indispensable to legitimate their role" (p. 48, our translation) although they feel "it isn't serving any purpose" (p. 47). Similarly, Sousa (2010 *cit in* Pereira 2010) and Castro (2001, *ibidem*) declare that teachers assume grammar as a characterising feature of Portuguese Language teaching, as a curricular subject, and that any content can be taught provided it is recognised and legitimised as grammar.

In fact, one of the participants, teacher P3, considered Grammar the least important of the five nuclear competencies, but she declared it is the competency to which she reserves most of the time, alleging "moral" reasons to justify this apparent incongruity, because of the presupposed emphasis on grammar on the examinations students take.

Four teachers assumed the use of methodologies consistent with a deductive or expositive approach to grammar. This was coherent with the data obtained from observation. One of the participants declared to favour strategies consistent with an inductive or reflexive approach, particularly the operationalization of grammar workshops. Again, this was, in fact, observed. Despite another teacher had declared to follow an inductive approach to grammar, it wasn't possible to confirm the use of strategies of that nature in a structured way in the observed lesson.

One of the teachers declared to rely little on the students' ability to learn through reflection and discovery. On the other hand, five participants mentioned they stimulate the discovery of grammar rules and structures by students by themselves. Three of them presented the work around grammar as a space of discussion and reflection on language by students. However, the only context where a minimally structured work of reflection on language was observed was in case 2 (teacher T2 and Class C2).

It was only possible to confirm the involvement of students in the process of decision making in case 2. Actually, the role of students in their own learning was little valued by the participants, except in this case.

Considering the classroom dynamics, the large group was the most favoured modality in the observed lessons. In five of the cases, there were also moments of individualised work. The promotion of pair or group work wasn't observed in any case. Teacher T5 while interviewed made the only reference to cooperative work.

Syntactic analysis and identification of the classes of words were the most frequent instructions, a realisation coherent with the data collected through observation, which evinced an importance attached to the syntactic and word class levels. It is also important to state that the majority of the exercises involved classification, corresponding to more than 51% of the total of the tasks. It is interesting to verify that one of the conclusions that emerged in the study conducted by Neves (2005), previously quoted, was precisely the focus on the identification and classification of word classes and syntactic functions.

The charts presented next allow the systematisation of the results related to the type of exercises proposed by teachers:

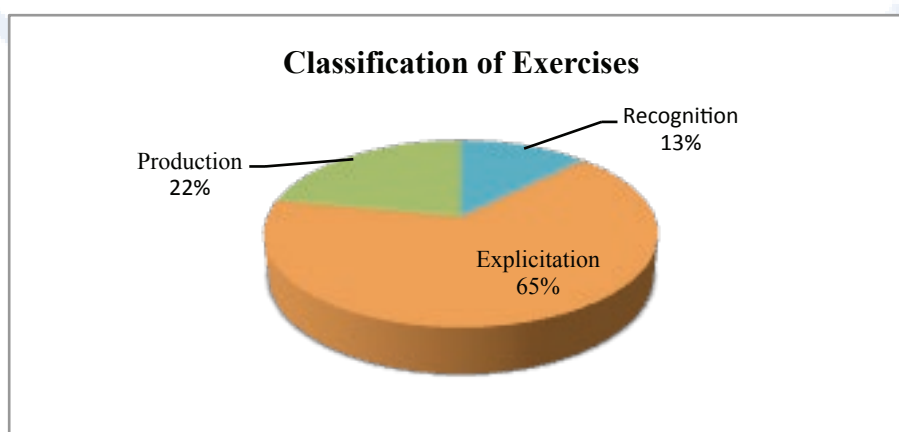


Figure 4 – Classification of the exercises proposed by teachers (global percentages)

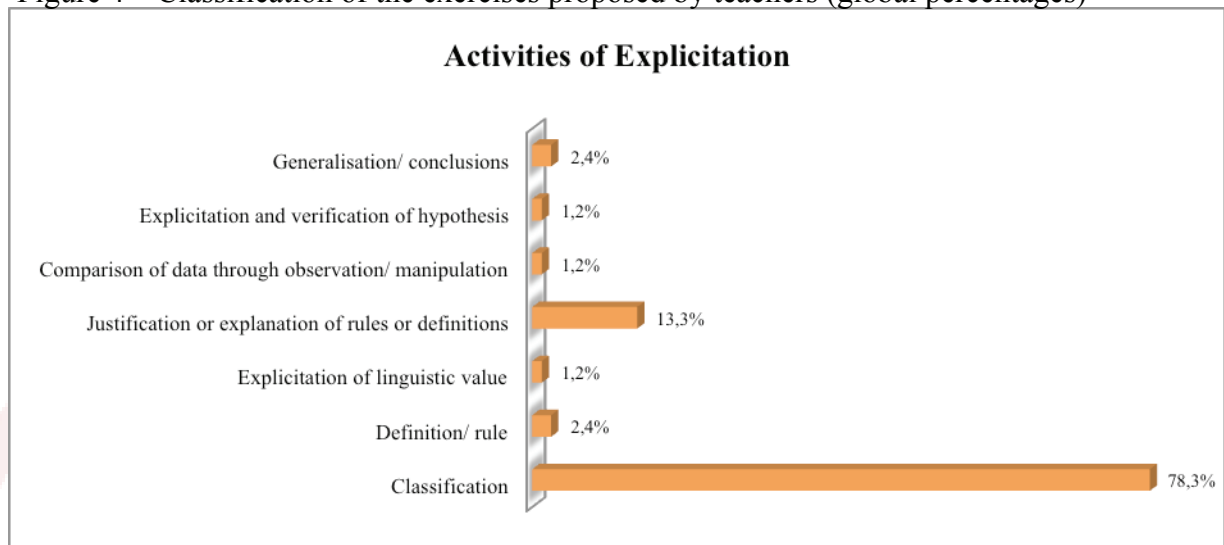


Figure 5 – Classification of the exercises of explication (percentages)

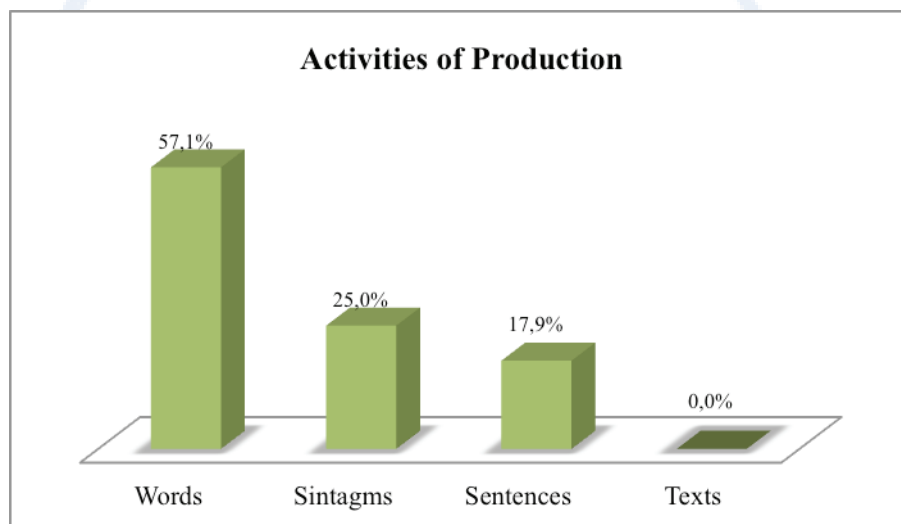


Figure 6 – Classification of the exercises of production (percentages)

The most frequent unit of contextualisation in the teachers’ speech and action was the sentence. In the four cases in which the work was contextualised from text, no real integration of grammar knowledge in the exploitation of the text occurred, perhaps with the exception of case 1, in which Reading Comprehension and Grammar were developed simultaneously, although there was no explication of the literary and textual value of the grammar contents implied. In case 2, the text was merely the motivating element and the starting point for the sequence. In cases 4 and 5, the text was the source of the linguistic data to analyse, constituting a pretext to do grammar exercises. The text as an initial context meant nothing but the source to collect units (sentences or words) from to analyse and catalogue. In four of the sessions, there were also moments of contextualisation from the unit *word*, isolated from any linguistic context.

All the participants recognised the importance of training and conducted activities of this type. Except from teachers T2 and T5, the participants propose the realisation of exercises of training and application after the presentation of rules or structures by the teacher.

The most used resources in the lessons observed were the board (whiteboard or blackboard) and the students' notebooks, used in the six cases, the textbook, worksheets and literary texts, used in two cases each, and *powerpoint* presentations and music, used by a teacher each. Data analysis also indicates the use of other materials, especially grammar books.

Summarily, the results are consistent with the *grammar tyranny* affirmed by authors like Pinto (2002; 2004), Figueiredo (2004) or Neves (2001), as all the participants teach grammar and, globally, reserve a high percentage of time to this competency. Contrarily to what might be supposed, the problem doesn't lie on the little amount of time dedicated to grammar nor in the refusal to work this curricular area, but on the conceptualisation of grammar and of how the process of teaching and learning in this field should take place.

In spite of some individual differences, a prevalence of traditional and expositive methodologies, coherent with a deductive approach to grammar, were evidenced. The most favoured model of instruction was clearly one of transmission. This seems to point to some shortcomings in teacher's training and development. In fact, teachers seem not to have deviated from the more traditional grammar oriented approaches.

Teachers' needs for training

Regarding the fourth question of research, *what are 5th and 6th grades' Portuguese L1 teachers' needs for training as far as Explicit Language Awareness is concerned*, it's important to stress the insecurity affirmed by four of the participant teachers towards their scientific preparation. Three of those teachers present constant training as a demand of the profession, what may consist on a solution to the indicated lack of confidence.

The teachers declared to feel the need for training, two of them in order to update, four to deepen their knowledge on the contents they teach and two to strengthen their knowledge on specific didactics.

The most frequently referred fields in need for updating were the latest spelling agreement and *Terminological Dictionary*. Two teachers declared to feel the need to deepen their scientific knowledge, two affirmed that their professional development would benefit from a wide training action which would include both scientific and didactic knowledge, a teacher expressed her will to strengthen her scientific knowledge on syntax and another stated her need for training focused on didactic knowledge. One of the participants in the study emphasised the importance of spreading studies on teaching and learning grammar in order to support teachers' work.

Direct observation revealed the need for training regarding scientific knowledge, particularly in the types of sentences, direct object, indirect object, oblique object, nominal group, contraction of prepositions with determiners and the degrees of adjectives.

As far as the specific didactics is concerned, teachers evinced difficulties regarding the new curriculum, particularly the operationalization of strategies and methodologies coherent with a learner-centred perspective. The principles that underlie the inductive approach were, actually, rarely enacted in the classroom.

Despite the existence of guiding documents to implement the new curriculum, aimed at supporting teachers in the work of each competency accordingly to the new curricular and terminological propositions, none of the participants declared to use the document reserved to grammar in their practice, what can be noticed in the following chart:

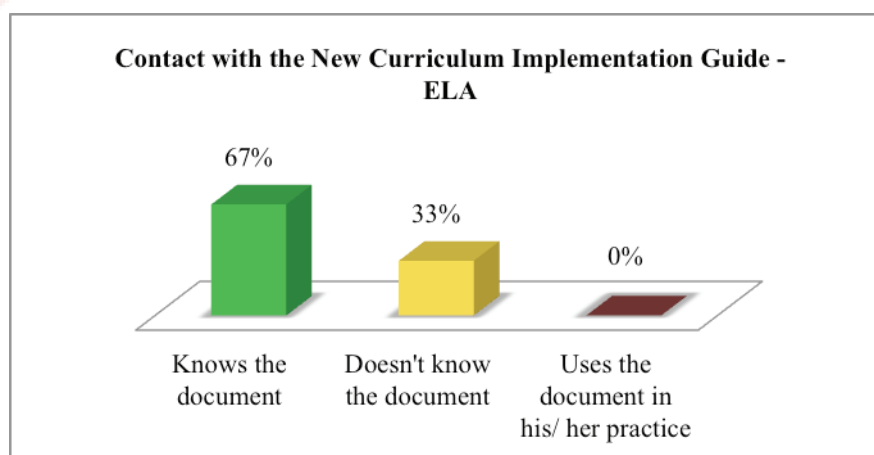


Figure 7 – Contact with the *New Curriculum Implementation Guide - ELA*

Considering the needs for training in specific didactics, besides the previously stated difficulties in the operationalization of activities stimulating reflection and discovery and the mobilisation of that knowledge into other competencies in a structured way, one of the participants revealed she didn't understand the differences between the processes of acquisition and learning of first language and learning foreign languages. This could explain the use of strategies to teach language as if it was something strange and external to students.

Although teachers recognise the need for constant training, they do not seek it, nor do they know the guiding and supportive documents recently published.

Taking the previous considerations, specifically formulated regarding each of the investigating questions defined *a priori*, and despite the fact that the considerations we present can't be generalised, there are some transversal conclusions regarding the participants in the study one can indicate.

Final remarks

Although the study conducted had the merit and the originality of contributing to the investigation of some items related to teachers' practices and beliefs regarding grammar teaching, a subject very little investigated in Portugal, it's important to be aware of its insufficiency to the strong understanding of the equation, both due to the impossibility of generalisation of the conclusions of the study, a frequent limitation of using a convenience sample composed of few participants, and to the need of complete the results with data resulting from other studies on influential items in this scenery. This study is exploratory, in nature, meaning that it could constitute a starting point to

other longitudinal and transversal studies, in which some of the aspects we focused or other collateral could be investigated.

Teachers are performing their tasks in a transitional time, what requires constant adjustment and updating skills. In fact, the new curriculum consists of a structured and organised manner of fulfilling real changes in teachers’ practices, rooted on some principles and pre-conditions that, though they can’t be called innovative, since they were enounced long ago, they haven’t been systematically put into practice in most of the classrooms.

Focusing on grammar, the curriculum reinforces the status of nuclear competency recognised, in 2001. In spite of the innovative guidelines, classroom teaching seems to be unaffected by theoretical and research progress. The following figure presents a comparison between the curricular guidelines and the observed practices, which are unequivocally distant from each other.

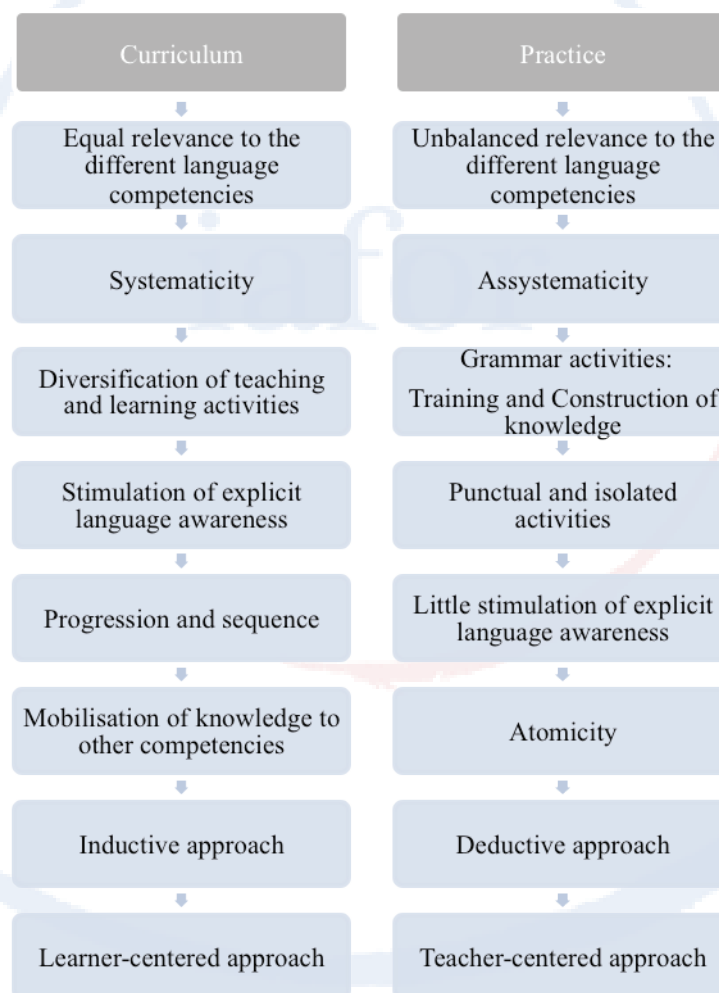


Figure 8 – Curricular guidelines and observed practices

Secondly, professional training and development are still a long distance apart from the individual needs and contexts, not only in terms of adjustment, previously stated, but also due to some fragilities concerning scientific or didactic background indicated by the participants or evidenced through observation. Therefore, some questions emerge, namely on the role of initial training in

this situation. It would be relevant to investigate the teachers’ practices and beliefs, namely focusing on teachers who teach subjects in the areas of linguistics and specific didactics to pre service teachers. Likewise, it would be interesting to study the courses of advanced training and in force training actions and programmes in this domain. Admitting the thesis defended by Lima (2007), that although beliefs are relatively stable structures, they can be altered, and in spite of the considerations stated by Borg (*cit in Birello, 2012*) about the impossibility to program teachers to behave in a certain way, it would be important to study how training, initial, in force and advanced influences the transformation of teachers’ beliefs and practices in this field.

It’s interesting to state that teacher T2, participant in this study, declared having changed from an expositive perspective into a constructivist and inductive approach after her involvement in a long term in force training program (National Program for Teaching Portuguese Language), thus indicating a transformation in terms of thought and behaviour. It’s important to state that this program was little focused on grammar, but it implied a reconceptualization of the roles played by teachers, students and students’ previous knowledge and experience on the teaching and learning process, reflecting on every competency. The chart that follows illustrates some of the differentiating aspects of this teacher comparatively to the others.

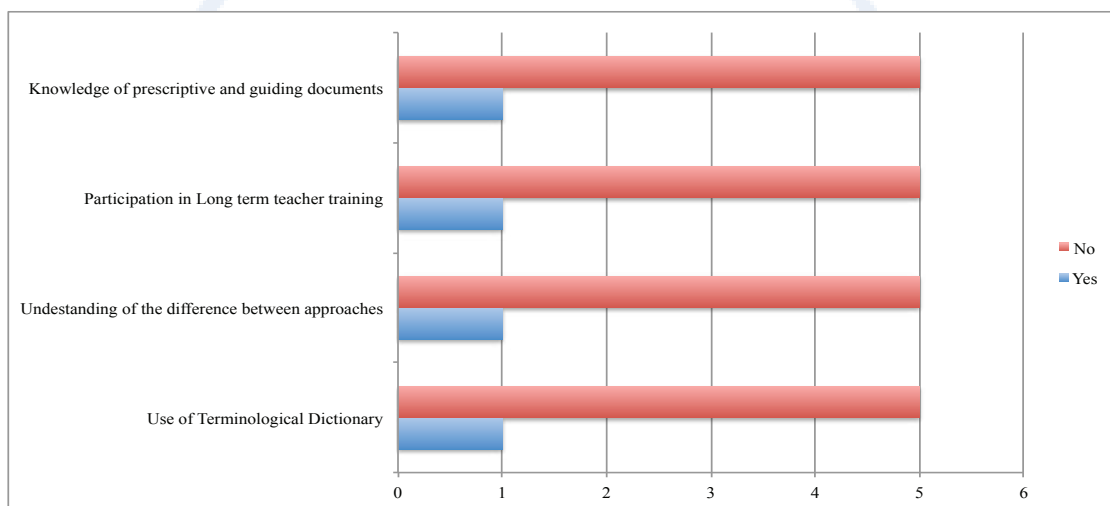


Figure 9– Some differentiating points

The data analysis evinced an incoherency between the new paradigm of grammar teaching, the curricular (and terminological) guidelines and the teachers’ practices. The lack of preparation revealed by most teachers and the transformation of beliefs and practices observed with the teacher involved in a long term in force training program may highlight a solution to change the scenery, as it points out a possible path to conceive an effective teacher-training program in the context of life long learning.

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***Recurrent Centers as Constituent Elements of
Scholarly Article Argumentation Line***

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Abstract

Academic texts are expected to conform to particular regulations invariable for the given genre and to properly reflect the structure of cognitive process based on putting forward and testing certain hypotheses, explaining the results of the research and providing adequate, consistent reasoning. Given the peculiarities of journal article structure and the nature of argumentation, scholarly article is treated as an argumentative discourse and argumentation as a communicative process related to the analysis and selection of appropriate arguments, evaluation of possible alternatives and estimation of their logical consequences. The present research addresses the peculiarities of recurrent centers within the framework of scholarly articles and aims at the analysis of their role in structuring an argumentative line of journal texts. Recurrent centers are encountered as bi-functional cyclical text units of two levels: the deep level where they get encoded at the author's perspective and decoded by the reader within the argumentative stream and the surficial level where recurrent centers act as formative text elements contributing to creating logical, plausible argumentation. It is proved that recurrent centers are employed to make a special emphasis on the key notions of the research report delivered in articles and the most crucial points of the argumentative speculation.

Keywords: recurrent centre, argumentative text, argumentative line, semantic hub, invariable

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Recurrent Centers as Constituent Elements of Scholarly Article Argumentation Line

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Introduction

Text issues especially those related to text structural and semantic components both at the surficial and deep levels have always been debated in the academic circles. Being a depository and transmitter of social, cultural, and scientific knowledge a text seeks to adequately reflect the structure of a thought process and to achieve a full congruence of the mental image to its speech equivalent when the language patterns are being transformed to the speech patterns. Being a means of communication a text aims to prove that this very piece of literature is worth reading and a scholarly text aims to convince the competent audience of the research relevance and validity and to win them over to the author's side in perceiving the ideas presented in the text.

Given its composite multifaceted nature, the academic text tends to be addressed from different perspectives being treated as a complex architectonic unit in text grammar, a semantic composition in text semantics (Wallace, 2007; 2009), a communication phenomenon in linguistic pragmatics and psycholinguistics, a set of typological elements in functional linguistics (Bondarenko, 2001), a semiotic unity in linguistic culturology (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). Taking into account the functional and stylistic approach a text can be described as a composite system determined by extra linguistic factors of scientific and cognitive activity. Within this approach both levels of the text need to be analyzed: its conceptual and semantic coherence at the deep level and its structural and speech organization at the surficial level. It is asserted that semantic and speech coherence of an academic text is determined by cognitive and communication activity of the writer, the structure of the scientific knowledge presented in the text, and the peculiarity of scientific thinking. (Kozhina, 2008)

Thus it turns out to be important to understand what contributes to text structural and semantic cohesion and coherence especially when it concerns academic writing as part of academic discourse where logical consistent delivery of information contributes to the adequate data interpretation crucial in the academic discourse. Based on the theory elaborated by Prof. Koshevaya the present research addresses the peculiarities of recurrent center or iterative patterns and ideas within the framework of scholarly article and investigates their role in structuring an argumentative line of journal texts. The research required the analysis of text and argumentation processes correlation, the definition of recurrent center status within the text structure, the observation of recurrent centre performance within the academic discourse. Based on the research a structural and semantic classification of recurrent centers has been suggested.

Theoretical Background

Text dynamics

A text is argued to be the result of a thought process described in psychology as an intellectual exertion aimed at finding an answer to a question or the solution of a practical problem. In other words, an activity characterized by a motive, an objective, a system of actions, result and control or reflection on the results of the actions. Due to Prof. Koshevaya (Koshevaya, 2012) any text has a framework structure: in writing the boundaries of the text are the title as the start and epilogue, in fiction, or conclusion in a text of any genre. The text internal schema proves to be dynamic clearly revealing a movement of thought when ideas get introduced, developed and modified, when they live their life from the starting point (introduction) through intermediate focal points to the final point (conclusion). The analysis of various narratives demonstrates that the inner content of such framework structure equals a request for information expressed in different forms either explicitly or implicitly.

e.g. *How can multinational enterprises (MNEs) identify the best local firms as international joint venture (IJV) partners in emerging economies? Nevertheless, two important but relatively underexplored questions merit further investigation. First, what is the role of a local firm's network position when foreign entrants select IJV partners? Second, how does the host country's institutional environment interact with the role of a local firm's network position as a selection criterion?*

In this example taken from an article published in the *Journal of Management Studies* the request is absolutely explicit since there is a straightforward question or rather questions to be answered within the article. Taking into consideration the genre of the text which aims at the maximum clear delivery of information it is even possible to predict the further train of thought with a relative accuracy. The prediction depends on the reader's expertise but at least the reader can get prepared for analytical reading as a certain plan is offered at the outset.

Although in the next example there is no direct grammatical question, a request for information can be easily elicited as soon as the sentences are paraphrased.

e.g. *. Building and sustaining competitive advantage requires that firms make strategic investments..... Identifying ways that firms can overcome investment liquidity constraints, therefore, identifies ways in which firms increase their strategic options and ultimately their performance.*

The phrase '*Identifying ways that firms can overcome investment liquidity constraints*' could have been expressed in one of the following questions: '*How can firms overcome investment liquidity constraints?*' or '*How can firms identify the ways to overcome investment liquidity constraints?*'. The phrase '*identifies ways in which firms increase their strategic options and ultimately their performance*' equals the question '*How can firms increase their strategic options and ultimately their performance*'.

Dealing with the request the thought goes through different intermediate stages accumulating information that is to be sufficient to provide an adequate answer to the question. The analysis of the concluding parts proves the premise.

e.g. *But whether the child's adjustment to its new independent status is hampered or helped by continued linkages to the parent remains an open question.*

The request made in the introductory part is satisfied with the answers in the concluding part. As for the intermediary part is concerned it comprises a certain system of reasoning based on argumentation process where the problems set at the outset are addressed and analysed.

e.g. *Our purpose was to examine the effects of continued ties to the parent firm on post spin-off market performance. Using agency theory and transaction cost arguments, we proposed and found that ownership and governance ties to the parent firm have important implications for the market performance of the newly independent child firm... It is also noteworthy that continued ownership by the parent firm had a negative effect on child firm performance, supporting the control rationale over the investment rationale... It appears that continued substantial ownership by the parent firm acts to constrain the child, preventing it from adapting and establishing itself as an independent entity.*

The sequential stepwise movement leads to establishing a multistage model of the text. The phenomenon underlying this movement from stage to stage is admitted to be functional-semantic correlation that is interpreted as the author's encoded intent actualized in all structural and semantic units of the text. (Koshevaya, 2012). Accepting the text's framework organization based on an internal dynamic movement from the request for information through focal points of speculation to the answer and text's ability to reflect and display the structure of a thought process there is a need to consider the phenomenon of argumentation in respect to the scholarly discourse.

Text argumentative nature

Argumentation is admitted to be a social, intellectual, verbal activity aimed at justifying or refuting a premise. It is represented by a system of assertions to be understood and shared by a certain audience. (Alekseev, 1991 pp. 30-35) Argumentation is concerned with the analysis and selection of appropriate arguments. Argument is trinomial in structure as it is based on a premise, logical consequences. Argument = proposition + reasoning + judgment

The structure of argumentation is more complicated as it includes communication components: a set of particular terminology that is especially important for scholarly texts created within the framework of concepts specific to a particular study or theory.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & \text{Argumentation} = & \\ & \text{argument} \quad + \quad & \text{communication components} \\ (\text{proposition} + \text{reasoning} + \text{judgment}) & + & (\text{terminology} + \text{sender} + \\ \text{receiver}) & & \end{array}$$

Text as a knowledge transmitter reflects the structure of a thought process aimed to find an answer to a question or the solution to a practical problem with the help of a certain system of actions. In the present research a text particularly a scholarly one is maintained to have an argumentative nature. Thus, the qualities typical of argumentation are assumed true for an argumentative text.

Being guided by the proposition that argumentation has a dual nature: logical in structure and rhetorical in content (Ivin, 2000 p.25), an argumentative text is asserted to be the integrity of two processes: internal related to the selection of the most adequate linguistic forms and external related to the social interaction with the reader aimed at inspiring thinking and convincing. Moreover, being based on predication, argumentation is considered to be a cognitive process as it generates information perception, processing and representation; a mental process involving speculation, explanation, confirmation, correction, or objection (Gadamer, 1988 p.37); a communicative process aimed at transmitting a message and eliminating cognitive and axiological dissonance interpreted as the deviation between two types or levels of background knowledge. (Festinger, 1985 p.41) So, the author's key goals while reporting on the research results is to appeal to the readers' thinking, to convince them of the data relevance. Consequently, considering all the features of argumentation an argumentative text can be described as the result of a social, cognitive, verbal activity aimed at justifying or refuting a proposition basing on a system of evidence substantiated in the process of reasoning with the purpose to convince a target audience through an adequately structured argumentative line. That is why the problem of structuring argumentation line within a text deserves a specific analysis.

Text Structure vs. Text Semantics

The present research rests upon the theory elaborated by Prof. Koshevaya (2012) and developed by her followers, in particular Prof Sviridova (2011). According to this approach a text is considered at the deep level where an idea, i.e. the author's intent, gets encoded by the author's perspective and at the surficial level of decoding it by the plot perspective with the help of functional-semantic correlation that is incorporated in all text units. Functional-semantic correlation is a selective approach

to the functional and structural patterns employed in the text since their choice is limited by the author's intent and perspective. (Koshevaya, 2012) A text at the same time is asserted to be the nexus of two aspects: conceptual and pragmatic that makes a text a multi-dimensional speech unit. At the conceptual level the following dimensions can be distinguished:

- Context where a text is analyzed in terms of the author's intent expressed in the plot with the help of functional-semantic correlation.
- Semantics where a text splits up into several semantic units. The most complicated semantic unit of a text is a semantic hub containing the text encoded idea and a periphery. A semantic hub includes central data links serving to disclose the text main idea. The sum of all central data links forms the text content. Central data links, in their turn include invariables, cores and recurrent centers)

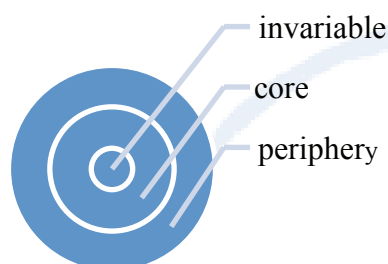


Fig.1. The structure of a central data link

- Composition where a text is treated in terms of the plot perspective including the author's perspective, logical pivot, semantic axis merging invariables and maintaining text coherence.

Being considered at the pragmatic level a text includes the following dimensions:

- Structure where a text is presented as a unity of phrases, decomposable, depending on the genre, into: title, volumes, parts, chapters, conclusions. A journal article typically includes title, abstract, introduction, problem statement, methodology, theoretical background, findings, discussion, implications and conclusions, possibly recommendations.
- Semiotics that addresses a text as a speech system built by text segments, super-phrase units, speech complexes
- Composition that proves to be at the nexus of conceptual and pragmatic levels acting as a connecting link between them and ensuring the perception of the text as a completed narrative.

Acknowledging the argumentative structure of scholarly texts we admit that the process of building argumentation conforms to the general text rules. Thus, conceptually an argumentative text possesses the author's intent expressed in a proposition with the help of reasoning (or functional-semantic correlation); is perceived as a semantic hub including several central data links (as the process of reasoning may require multifaceted analysis); and linked with the help of argumentative line (based on the author's perspective, logical pivot, semantic axis). It turns out that the semantic organization of the text is built around the semantic hub which is set by functional-semantic correlation and encoded by the title. In the scholarly article the semantic hub containing several central data links defines the text linear character that definitely contributes to achieving clarity and logics in reasoning. Reasoning deepens and extends with the help of recurrence aimed at focusing on the points and aspects most crucial for expressing the author's intent.

Recurrent Centers

Recurrence plays a specific role in scholarly literature where an academic text is due to report on the research results in the most objective way employing a system of concepts typical of a particular science, providing unquestionable arguments and critical approach. Critical approach presupposes speculation, poly-theoretical description, and interpretation variety, some ideas known as iterative ideas or recurrent centers being repeated throughout the text. Iteration tends to develop a previously stated idea employing cyclical inquiry and enabling multiple opportunities for people to revisit ideas and critically reflect on their implication. The results of one iteration act are used as the starting point for the next iteration.

In linguistics recurrent center is claimed to be a text unit that acts as the iteration of thoughts interrupting the linear delivery of ideas and facts. The purpose of recurrent center is to actualize certain points mentioned before (often casually), to focus on the issues that are crucial for disclosing the author's intent. As a result distant parts of the text having a common semantic base get linked.

Structural organization of the text is built around plot perspective (in our research based on scholarly articles - argumentative line), that is a continuation of the author's perspective. The argumentative line goes through the whole text. It connects central data links within the text which at most express functional-semantic correlation. On the other hand argumentative line has a zigzag course since it covers both linear and deep aspects of the text expressed with the help of recurrent centers.

We suggest considering recurrent centers as bi-functional cyclical text units of two levels: the deep level where they get encoded at the author's perspective and decoded by the reader within the argumentative streamline and the surficial level where recurrent centers act as formative text elements contributing to creating logical, plausible argumentation. Thus, recurrent centers carry out both structural and semantic functions operating distantly within the argumentative line as a mark impulse in accordance with the author's intentions.

Argumentative line as the basis of the text structure internally discloses functional-semantic correlation through the semantic hub allocating central data links; and externally building the whole text. Central data links consist of cores and recurrent centers which are able to move from the periphery of one central data link to the core of another one. We observed the functions recurrent centers perform during their movement. Based on the analysis of recurrent centers' functioning a classification of recurrent centers has been made.

Recurrent Centre Classification

Text writing and reading process is like a spiral evolving movement, (Taranets, 2008 pp.340-341) where every new reiteration on the one hand structures the author's premises and reasoning simplifying the reading process at the architectonic level and on the other hand brings new connotations to repeated words, broadens newly expressed ideas, and contributes to argumentation cogency at the semantic level.

Given their bi-functional nature recurrent centers can be classified at two levels: structural and semantic

So in respect to the text formal structure we can speak about *sectional recurrent centers*:

- basic current centers – putting forward a proposition
- intermediary current centers – providing multifaceted reasoning
- concluding current centers – providing a conclusion or a judgment

Every logical and consequently argumentative narrative complies with the rule of thumb: say what you are saying (outline the main points of your account), say it (deliver the information) and say what you have said (summarize the main points to make sure all the details have been included). At the outset the author introduces the key issues for discussion:

e.g. In the following section, we describe the role of board independence, board size, and CEO power for firms in financial distress in a highly turbulent environment, and we develop hypotheses linking board and CEO characteristics to the survival prospects of firms in our sample. We next describe the Internet firms we study, our data sources, and our analytical methods. We then present our empirical results and conclude with a discussion of the significance of our findings for the study of corporate governance.

Then, at the stage of reasoning the issues are refined and specified and every idea follows the previous one ensuring logical delivery of information. The concluding part again touches upon the same issues providing answers to the questions asked in the introductory part.

e.g. We find that high board independence is only associated with firm survival when financial distress is high. When the degree of financial distress is low, firms with boards with relatively low independence actually have lower failure rates... This could indicate that very small boards are unable to handle the day-to-day operations of a healthy firm.

Given the dynamic nature of argumentative texts, two opposite vectors of text argumentation can be distinguish: forward and backward ones. So, according **to the argumentation direction** there can be distinguished:

- prospective recurrent centers
- retrospective recurrent centers

These two classifications correlate since in the introductory part of any, particularly academic texts recurrent centers prospectively identify the number of main body recurrent centers. Moreover, the more recurrent centers there are in the introductory part the more of them there are in the main body and the more complicated the argumentative line is. Thus, recurrent centers of an article introduction point out the invariables for building the article argumentative line. In the main body the recurrent centers emerging in the introduction often turn into semantic cores.

Prospective exposition is perceived a means of text building aimed at providing the opportunity to predict further narration, to comprehend the links between the article parts and issues. Every new section of an article tends to start with a brief outline of or

introduction to the information provided further making the readers tuned to reading and interpreting the author's intent.

e.g. We review the most important lines of thinking in this section.

These or similar words start article theoretical section, often known as *Literature Review*, and make clear that certain theoretical streams will be discussed, the issues will be repeatedly addressed to as they are expected to be either paralleled or opposed. An article section can also include an introduction of the following part preparing the reader and arranging the thoughts:

e.g. The next section describes the research design advantages of focusing on exporting as diversification and the following section details the arguments that underlie my investigation. The subsequent sections describe the research design and data, discuss the tests and results, and present implications...

Retrospective exposition as a means of text building seeks to:

- restore previously stated points or introduce new ideas related to the previously stated points and necessary for further comprehension of the research report
- enable reconsidering previously discussed issues in a new context
- actualize some parts of the text which indirectly relate to the intentional information.

Every part of an article finishes by summarizing the key points discussed. Consequently, retrospective recurrence inevitably leads to the reconsideration and reassessment of some issues and standpoints presented in the text making some irrelevant at first sight, points meaningful and significant.

e.g. "In this paper, we have studied the extent to which changes in environmental challenges are associated with the changes in strategy making from an organizational life cycle perspective."

Scholarly premises are expected to be consistent and belong to a certain scientific stream or school, new assumptions are deduced from existing standpoints. Since every author values previous or current studies, they appeal to theoretical and empirical knowledge to support their own research. As a result of ***the author's reference to the existing information*** recurrence exists at two levels:

- intratextual , i.e. within a single text where recurrence seeks to perform the function of segmentation that results in establishing a clear model of presenting the text sections. (Strizhenko & Kruchinina, 1985, p.70)

*e.g. "However, as stated above, negative emotions can also interfere with learning."
"Hence, in each local authority questionnaires were sent to two echelons – three corporate officers and seven officers in each of the seven service areas mentioned above."*

- intertextual, being or involving the reference of one text by another; here we can speak about citation.

-

e.g. *“Smith et al. suggested that companies in the same developmental stage of their organizational life cycle have similar characteristics... In another study, Miller and Friesen conducted an empirical analysis and classified firms...”*

Besides organizing the author’s ideas in accordance with the conventions accepted in the academy, at this structural surficial level recurrent centers mark the most meaningful points and issues facilitating the process of decoding the author’s intent encoded in the argumentative line. In this process recurrent centers tend to describe, explain, hypothesize, compare. This enables to distinguish the following recurrent centers in respect to their **semantic functions**:

- Descriptive – seeking to provide details, essential features of certain points;

e.g. *The complexity and dynamic nature of knowledge flows present great challenges for crossborder exchange partners to coordinate and translate that learning into firm-specific advantage.*

- Explanatory – aimed at clarifying, specifying certain issues;

e.g. *“In this expression, N is the number of car models of automaker a, t-1 and t-3 denote the first and third year of ownership of model k cars of automaker a, respectively.....”*

- Comparative – aimed at paralleling, opposing and contrasting ideas;

e.g. *Therefore, the main difference between an exporter versus a non-exporter is the geographic diversity of its sales. In contrast, international production diversification (i.e., foreign direct investment) involves the control of production facilities in foreign business environments.*

- Speculative – giving reasons, theorizing and providing conclusions;

e.g. *“... as MO and marketing capabilities are complimentary to one another in ways that generate economic rents, and each may be viewed as an individual source of competitive advantage, the interaction between MO and marketing capabilities possesses the characteristic of ‘asset interconnectedness’”*

- Exemplifying – giving examples, listing constituents and components.

e.g. *“Several ways of reducing uncertainty have been suggested. These include: participative and consultative decision making; vertical integration or forward contracts”*

It is worth noting that the list of recurrent center semantic groups can be expanded.

Conclusions

The aim of the article was to consider the role of recurrent centers in academic articles and analyze their contribution to building the author’s argumentative line.

First of all, the research has revealed that due to the similarity between the argumentation process and the functional and semantic organization of a scholarly article the latter can be treated as an argumentative text. An argumentative text is admitted to be at the nexus of conceptual and pragmatic aspects. Text structural organization is built around plot perspective (or argumentative line), that is a continuation of the author's perspective. The argumentative line goes through the whole text. It connects central data links with the help of recurrent centers which act as formative text elements contributing to creating logical, plausible argumentation. It is proved that recurrent centers are employed to make a special emphasis on the key notions of the research report delivered in articles and the most crucial points of the argumentative speculation. Recurrent centers help readers follow the author's train of thought in terms of building the most logical argumentative line through an adequate reasoning in terms of description, speculation, comparison, explanation, exemplification, etc.

The knowledge of recurrent centers is important for text analysis, understanding the principles of organizing ideas and thoughts in writing. Taking into account the functions of recurrent centers, in particular their ability to act as mark impulse it is possible to improve reading skills and enhance comprehension skills. However, the article has not included the issues related to the analysis of recurrent centers' collaborate with each other within the academic text and the correlation between recurrent centers and the title within the academic text.

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The logo for the International Association for Business Economics (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially visible at the top and bottom of the page. A faint, larger-scale circular graphic in shades of red and blue is also visible in the background.

First, second and foreign language learning: how distinctive are they from one another?

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Abstract

Language learning is a complex domain of study which tends to vary considerably according to numerous criteria; among these, the *status* of the language learnt vis-à-vis the student. A student does not, obviously, learn his mother tongue, his second language and a foreign language in the same manner. In each case, his profile and environment, and accordingly, his objectives, difficulties, strategies and attitude towards language learning may also change; as a consequence, the outcome of his learning process too will vary. While the distinction between first and second language learning has been highlighted by many a researcher, the differences between first or second language learning and foreign language learning have received little or no attention from linguists. This has resulted in perceiving foreign language learning as a mere extension of the model of second language learning, thus preventing foreign language learners from being correctly identified and catered to for who they really are. Through this paper, I would strive to discuss and clearly establish the numerous distinctions between first, second and foreign language learning. In my capacity as a former language learner and a present language teacher, I would be able to support each point of distinction I present with examples I gathered from my personal experience and class observations.

Introduction

The field of language learning is indeed a complex domain of study: it can vary according to different criteria related to the field's four main pillars: the learner, the teacher, the learning context, and the target language.

Researchers in the field of language education have apparently long since realized this fact: the best proof for this is the fact that they no longer consider *second language* education to be the same as *first language* education so much so that, today, *second language* teaching/learning receives as much attention as *first language* teaching/learning does from language educationists.

However, when researchers in the field of language education deal with *foreign language* education, they tend to ignore the equally important distinctions existing between *first* and *second language* acquisition on the one hand, and *foreign language* acquisition on the other.

Objective

Thus, my objective in writing this conceptual paper is to bring into light the fundamental features of *foreign language* learning as against those of *first* and *second language* learning. My primary intention thereby is to draw the attention of language researchers to this neglected field of study and to encourage them to identify and cater to *foreign language* learners for who they really are; failing to do this hitherto has been, in my opinion, one of the major reasons for which most language learners have failed in reaching their goal of mastering foreign languages.

Method

As already mentioned, this being a theoretical paper, the ideas I present here are derived not from one particular research, but from a series of observations that have been done over a period of almost two decades of *first*, *second* and, especially, *foreign language* teaching and learning.

Discussion

I. Language status

Prior to discussing the features of their learning, it is important to identify what is meant by *first*, *second* and *foreign languages*. However, it is also important to remember that the status of a given language would not always be the same to its learner, its teacher and their learning context: For example, if we consider the case of a Moroccan learning English from an Englishman in Sri Lanka, the status of English vis-à-vis each of these stakeholders will be different: while for the teacher, it would be his¹ *first language*, in the learning context of Sri Lanka, English would be a *second language*. On the other hand, for the Moroccan student, who has probably had Arabic and French as his *first* and *second languages*, English would only be a *foreign language*.

¹ Throughout this paper, the pronoun 'he' will be used to refer to teachers or learners of both sexes.

Although the status of a target language could thus vary vis-à-vis the person or the context in question, in this paper on language learning, our focus would essentially be on the status of a language with regard to its learner.

1.1 *First language*

A *first language* of a learner could often be the same as what is generally termed as his 'mother tongue'. In such a situation, the learner would indeed have as his *first language* the *first language* of his mother. However, in the present globalised world, the concept of *first language* has evolved beyond the concept of the mother tongue: in a world where global migration and, as a direct consequence, mixed marriages are on the increase, more and more children are compelled to learn more than one language at home. If their parents speak two different languages, children may select either their mother's or their father's native language as their *first language*, or else, they will consider both languages as their *first languages*.

Beyond a child's home setting, his social setting could also play a considerable role in determining his *first language*: in the case of immigration, young children often adopt the language of their host country as their *first language* to the detriment of their parents' native tongues. In certain other cases where the child's parents underestimate their native language vis-à-vis another more widespread language, they may encourage their children to abandon the native tongue and adopt the more prestigious language as their *first language* (Ex. Children of native Sinhalese adopting English as their *first language*).

In any case, it seems appropriate to me to call the *first language*, the very first language(s) that a child would master and that he would continue to use (to different degrees) for the rest of his life. Many learners in the world learn their *first languages* both at home and school and use it for day-to-day communication in the society in which they live.

1.2 *Second language*

In many countries of the world, children learn their *second language* at school. This is generally either another local language (French for English-speaking Canadians) or an international language (French for Moroccans) that is considered to be important in the country where the learner resides. The designation of a non-native language as a *second language* in a given country depends on the close historical, geographical, socio-economical ties that that country shares with the country of origin of the non-native language. When the *second language* of a learner is determined by the country which he resides in, he would often have the possibility to use that language in his own country.

Nevertheless, in certain other cases, a learner's *second language* is not determined by the country in which he lives but by his immediate family and social entourage. In such a situation, his *second language* could be different to that of the country in which he resides: If the learner is issued from a bi- or multilingual home or minority community in his native country (Ex. Tamils in Sri Lanka), or if the learner has immigrated to another country as a youngster speaking his own *first language* (Ex.

Tamils in France), etc. he would learn as his *second language* the *first language* of the country's majority or, in the case of a vast country, that of his region. However, even in such cases, the learner would have a rather close relationship with his *second language* and would be in a position to use it in his day-to-day life.

One may ask whether any language that a learner learns after his *first language* could be considered to be his *second language*. In my opinion, one could not. A *second language* is a language that a learner masters the second best, after his *first language*. It might or might not be, chronologically, the second language that he learnt after his *first language*, but, it should be the language that he is most familiar with after his *first language*. Moreover, a *second language* usually has a functional value in the learner's family and/or his social circle. A '2nd language' in its name sake only, might not always meet all these requirements; for example, if a learner in a monolingual country where students are not obliged to learn a *second language* decides, in an arbitrary manner, to learn any given language as his second language, that language, though is surely the 2nd language for him to learn, will not necessarily be his *second language*; this shows how, unlike a *first language* or even a *foreign language*, a *second language* of a learner has a socially marked existence than a personal one.

1.3 Foreign language

What is termed a 'foreign language' is a language which has generally no direct link with the person's immediate social or personal environment. The selection of a target foreign language is thus largely a personal choice of the learner, except in cases where children and adults are compelled to learn *foreign languages* for academic or professional reasons.

Like *first and second language* education, *foreign language* education too is a heterogeneous notion composed of different forms of learning. The underlying criteria for such diversity are linked, once again, with specific features of the learner and teacher profiles, and the given learning context: For example, *foreign language* learners can belong to different age groups and can have different learner objectives and capacities; they may have as teachers, native or non-native speakers of their target language; they may learn in learning environments that are favorable or unfavorable to language acquisition, etc.

Despite their intrinsically heterogeneous forms of existences, we might say that *first, second and foreign language* learning each has its typical representative group of learners: *First language* learners in their vast majority are toddlers and small children while the most representative groups of learners for *second languages* are young children and adolescents. *Foreign language* learners on the other hand are generally adults. Although one could argue that children continue to learn their *first and second languages* even after growing up, the society does not consider adult learners of *first languages* to be formal language 'learners'. Although *second language* learners do at times continue to follow lessons of their target language even as adults, such cases are comparatively limited in number. Thus, interestingly, while *first and second language* learners are hardly represented by outsiders to their typically representative age groups, *foreign language* learners, despite being represented primarily by adult learners, also include a considerably large number of young children and adolescents.

In this sense, *foreign language* learners are the group of language learners which includes the most varied range of learner age groups.

Foreign language learners could further be distinguished from each other according to the type of learning context they are in: while some *foreign language* learners study their target language in places where it is used for day-to-day communication (*endolingual learning contexts*), others learn it in places where the use of the target language is more or less restricted to the language classroom (*exolingual learning contexts*); Although this difference in learning contexts is also applicable to *first* and *second language* learning contexts, it is in the case of *foreign language* learning that its significance becomes more apparent: while almost all *first* and *second language* learners learn their target languages in either fully or *semi-endolingual* contexts, *foreign language* learners are to be seen pursuing their goal in both types of contexts.

Learning context	Description	Examples
Endolingual	target language is available to learners outside their language classroom	UK for learners of English Sri Lanka for learners of Sinhala
Semi-endolingual	target language is partially available to learners outside their language classroom	UK for learners of French Sri Lanka for learners of English
Exolingual	target language is unavailable to learners outside their language classroom	UK for learners of Sinhala Sri Lanka for learners of French

Table 1- Learning contexts

Nevertheless, taking into account the number of adults and children learning *foreign languages* in their own countries, one may safely say that the number of *foreign language* learners studying in *exolingual* contexts of learning could arguably be higher than those studying in *endolingual* contexts: except probably in the case of immigrants learning the *first language* (which could eventually become their *first* or *second language* depending on their age) of their host country, learners of *foreign languages* hardly move to the country of their target language, except perhaps for short stays, for the sole reason of learning that language.

	<i>Endolingual</i>	<i>Semi-endolingual</i>	<i>Exolingual</i>
Typical First language learners	<i>Children</i>	Adolescents	Adults
Typical Second language learners	Children	<i>Adolescents</i>	Adults
Typical Foreign language learners	Children	Adolescents	<i>Adults</i>

Table 2 – Typical learner groups

II. Target group

Given that *first*, *second* and *foreign language* learning are multi-faceted notions, only the most representative of each category would be examined here; however, as mentioned earlier, the focus of this paper being specifically on *foreign language* learning, the main target group of study here would be the most representative group of learners among *foreign language* learners: that is to say, adult learners of *foreign languages* studying in *exolingual* contexts of learning.

It is these two very criteria, namely, the *adult learner profile* on the one hand, and the *exolingual learner environment* on the other, that distinguish *foreign language* learning greatly from *first* and *second* language learning.

II.1. Age related issues; the child learner versus the adult learner

The advanced age of language learners have greater implications on their learning process than one might generally imagine. Although it is a commonly accepted idea that children learn languages faster than adults, it is important to find out why this is so, if it is indeed so.

During this study, I manage to identify seven distinctive factors related to the adult profile of the foreign language learner that could directly and rather negatively influence his learning process: they are as follows:

- 1) Adult learner's physiological condition
- 2) Adult learner's psychological condition
- 3) Social impact on adult learner's learning process
- 4) Adult learner's non-native learner status
- 5) Adult foreign language learner's multilingual learner status
- 6) Adult learner's learner objectives
- 7) Time allocated by adult learner to his learning process

Each of these issues related to the adult learner profile are discussed below:

II.1a) Adult learner's physiological condition

What is referred to under the above heading is the general functioning of a learner's physical person, namely, his brain and body. What is pertaining to his mental (non-physical) status will be discussed under the heading *Adult learner's psychological condition*.

When we compare the physiological functioning of an adult learner with that of a child or an adolescent learner, we could see that there are, at least, five different ways in which the former could oppose the latter; unfortunately, each time, the child's condition seems to favor his learning process while the adult's seems to be an obstacle to his learning.

i) Lack of alertness

It is no secret that an adult's mental and physical alertness, along with his physical fitness, start to slacken as he advances in years. Obviously, this phenomenon does not affect all adult learners in the same way: some are affected by it sooner than others, but it is usually the older people who suffer more from physical and mental fatigue than younger adults. However, the fact remains that children and adolescents are generally in better physiological shape than their adult counterparts, and that it cannot but favor their language learning process.

ii) Lack of memory power

The memory power of an adult too diminishes as he gets older. Compared to a child or an adolescent learner, an older learner might be slow to build his *foreign language* vocabulary: while children often prove to be eager learners of new concepts and words, adults, probably due to their slackening memory power, tend to show a lethargic attitude towards rote learning.

iii) Unreceptive auditory system

Unlike child learners, adults learning languages are rather disadvantaged when they have to identify and reproduce sounds of a new language. Their auditory systems being already completely developed, many adults fail to recognize new sounds that they are not familiar with in a *foreign tongue*. Adolescents too may encounter this problem, though to a lesser degree. However, certain adults do manage to overcome this obstacle through perseverance.

iv) Limited mental capacity

If the adult learner is rather old, it is possible that his mental capacities have weakened far too much for certain tasks he is given as a learner. On the contrary, a child's actively developing brain gives him a great capacity to meet the demands of his learner environment much easily.

v) Lack of proper academic training

Lastly, some adult language learners fail to learn their target language because they lack academic training necessary to follow formal language education; this is often the case with academically non-qualified immigrant workers who are compelled to learn the language of their host country in a formal learning environment. As grown-ups, they find it difficult to adjust themselves to the demands of their new learning environment and often end up abandoning their course. Child language learners too resemble such adult learners in that they too are not trained to acquire languages formally. However, unlike the former, the latter acquire their target languages through informal learning supported by their familiar home environment. As for adolescents learning *second languages* at school, over the course of their school education, they get trained gradually to learn languages formally.

II.1b) Adult learner's psychological condition

Just as much as they are physiologically different to children and adolescents, adults are also different to them in their psychological status.

i) Self-consciousness

Contrary to what they may say, most adults are more self-conscious than child and adolescent learners are. Unlike children, adults often have a status to maintain and are over protective of their public image; their undue worry about making mistakes in public and being laughed at often prevent them from participating actively in class

activities during the learning process. Children on the contrary are usually devoid of such self-inflicted hypocrisy and this helps them progress faster than adults.

ii) Inferiority complexes

In group classes of *foreign language* learning, some adults experience various types of inferiority complexes vis-à-vis their target language and their fellow learners. For example, they could be intimidated by the superior social or educational levels of their fellow classmates, the closer connections these may have with their teacher, the better understanding they have of the target language and culture, etc. In such situations, some adult learners may feel a certain inferiority complex about their own persons, which might in turn make them reticent to take part actively in group activities, hindering thus their learning process: Young children are generally much less intimidated by their fellow learners and that is often conducive to their learning.

iii) Own negative preconceptions about learning as an adult

Some adults feel that learning is for youngsters and that it is unbecoming of adults to keep studying at an older age. When they have to study a language for personal or professional reasons, they would tend to do it grudgingly, without taking pleasure in what they do.

Other adults who might not feel so hostile to language learning might nevertheless feel uneasy and out of place in a class consisting of younger learners. Such negative attitudes vis-à-vis their learning process will certainly not help a learner acquire a language easily.

iv) Psychological disturbances

An adult's mind is usually busy with many more issues than that of a child's. Unlike children, adults are constantly burdened with family, personal and professional issues which may make it difficult for them to concentrate on their class work.

v) Guilty conscience

This point may look akin to what was discussed under point iii). However, unlike in the earlier case, what is referred to here is not the negative opinion an adult learner might have about his role as a *learner*; but rather, the guilty conscience he might be burdened with about sitting in a class, when, as a responsible adult, his presence, as a mother, a father, a worker is needed elsewhere.

II.1c) Social impact on adult learner's learning process

Adult-to-adult world is generally non-supportive of the learning process of adults; that is to say, unlike children and adolescents, adults generally do not get much support or encouragement from other adults to carry out their projects of study; while children are expected to dedicate themselves to studying and are fully-supported and encouraged in that endeavor by adults, adults are hardly encouraged by the society to do the same. For the society, an adult attending classes might either be someone who has all the time and the means of the world and nothing else to do, or else, somebody

who neglects his responsibilities, wasting time and money on less important things in life. Fortunately, with the ever-increasing number of adult students in the modern world, such social misconceptions seem to disappear gradually.

II.1d) Adult learner's non-native learner status

Vis-à-vis *first language* learners, *second* and *foreign language* learners are disadvantaged in that they learn a language which is not their own; thus, their enthusiasm for the language learning process depends largely on how close they feel about their target language. If a given *foreign language* learner's connection with the target language is minimal, (that is if he has no connection with the target language country, culture, people, literature, etc.), he will obviously take a much less interest in the language learning process than a *first language* learner will do.

II.1e) Adult foreign language learner's multilingual learner status

i) Target language; an accessory

While for *first language* learners, and to a lesser degree, for *endolingual second* and *foreign language* learners, their target language is indispensable for survival, for *exolingual foreign language* learners, their target language is only an accessory. The fact that an adult *foreign language* learner is already a well-developed communicator in at least one, if not more languages by the time he starts learning his *foreign language*, he will be less inclined to use the latter language to communicate wherever he could use his first languages. In the case of *first* and *endolingual language* learners, this would be impossible; hence probably, their faster language acquisition. However, in the case of adult *exolingual foreign language* learners, this state of things greatly slows down their language acquisition.

ii) Interferences of first languages

Given the fact that the adult *foreign language* learner has already acquired grammar, vocabulary and other linguistic features of one or more languages prior to his debut with the *foreign language*, it is quite probable that he is constantly influenced by these during his *foreign language* learning process. However, unlike what we have been discussing so far, the interferences of the features of his first languages are not always negative on the *foreign language* learner. Although it is true that negative interferences of his first languages could lead him to misinterpret the correct functioning of his new target language, positive interferences could at the same time facilitate and accelerate his learning process (for example, when learning the target language alphabet, its sounds, vocabulary, etc.) Thus, a learner's prior knowledge about other languages acts often as a linguistic guide to *foreign language* learners, be they *endo-* or *exolingual* learners. This is apparently the only advantage adult learners of *foreign languages* seem to have over child *first language* learners.

II.1f) Adult learner's learner objectives

Another reason why adult *foreign language* learners seem to fare poorly in communicating in *foreign languages* could be attributed to the unrealistically high learner target the society sets for them; while children learning their *first languages*,

or even *foreign languages*, are expected to learn and say very simple things for years, adult *foreign language* learners are expected to discuss more complex issues that adults deal with, almost right from the start of their learning process; in fact, unlike children and adolescents who learn their target language mainly for their day-to-day communication, most adults of *second* or *foreign languages* learn those languages for specific purposes (For example, for tourism, business, diplomacy, etc.); Thus, their objectives in learning languages are different to those of *first* and *second language* learners, and while children may work incessantly on the accurate use of their *first language*, adult learners would concentrate rather on communicating in their *foreign language*; hence perhaps their noted inaccuracy in written and oral forms of expressions.

II.1g) Time allocated by adult learner to his learning process

This disparity in performance between child *first language* learners and adult *foreign language* learners is easier to understand if we also consider the gross disparity in time duration allocated for their language acquisition. While a child learner would spend years and years on end, and 24 hours per day and 365 days per year to learn his mother tongue, slowly and almost to perfection, an adult *foreign language* learner who will end up as a so-called ‘advanced learner’ of his target language will have only about 4 hours weekly (that too in an irregular manner) for 5 years to become what he is supposed to be. This alone would suffice to understand how unfair it is to expect an adult *foreign language* learner, after 5 years of learning, to acquire the same fluency of the target language as a child *first language* learner.

II.II Context related issues; the *endolingual* context versus *exolingual* context

Having identified the learner age group related issues which would distinguish many *foreign language* learners from their *first* and *second language* counterparts, we will now proceed to examine **the context related issues** that make *exolingual foreign language* learners stand apart as a special group of learners when compared with representative groups of all other learner categories; including the *foreign language* learners studying in *endolingual* learning contexts.

II.II.a) Contact with target language

i) Exolingual contexts of learning

Learners in *exolingual* contexts have very little or no contact at all with native speakers or media in their target language. The higher the degree of *exolingualism* in a given learning context is, the more will its learners be deprived of any real contact with their target language outside their classroom. With the rapid development of global travel and communication, it is becoming more and more difficult today to find totally *exolingual* learner contexts of *foreign languages* for international languages like English, French, particularly in developed countries. Nevertheless, in countries less exposed to outsiders, study of non-internationalized languages may take place in fully-*exolingual* contexts. For example, learning an African language or a European regional language in Tibet or learning an eastern European language in Ethiopia. In such cases, the *foreign language* learner’s learning process will be strictly limited to his classroom. He will not have any contact with the target language outside the

language classroom because his *foreign language* has no place or use in the country where the learner lives. Let alone native speakers, the learner will simply have nobody to talk with in his target language and will have no access to media or books in that language; as a consequence, his learning process will be strictly limited to what he reads, writes, hears and speaks in the class.

ii) Semi-endolingual contexts of learning

In other learning contexts where the *exolingualism* is felt less acutely, learners might have certain links with the target language; either because the two countries concerned are situated close to each other geographically; or because they have close ties with each other; or because learners have access to internet, etc. However, it should be noted that the greater majority of the people in the world today, including many *exolingual foreign language* learners, do not have access to the internet.

iii) Exolingual contexts of learning

This is clearly not the case for *endolingual* language learners. While almost all *endolingual first, second and foreign language* learners are immersed more or less completely in their target language culture and society, even *semi-endolingual second language* learners too get a certain exposure to their target language in their countries. As it was mentioned on page 3, if a country names a certain language as its *second language*, it is because that country has close ties with the target language country. Thus, *second language* learners generally have access to books and media in their target language in their own country. If they do not always meet native speakers of that language, they will at least have local people speaking that language to talk with. (For example, learning English in Sri Lanka or learning French in Morocco).

II.II.b) Contact with target language culture

One other disadvantage in studying a language in *exolingual* contexts is that students are thus alienated not only from their target language, but also from the socio-culture setting that their target language is linked with. *First and second and even foreign language* learners in *endolingual* learning contexts are quicker to learn their target language because they live in the related socio-cultural setting and know the issues discussed in their language class. Their learning process is largely facilitated by their intimate knowledge of the culture associated with their target language. On the other hand, language learners in *exolingual* situations often ignore most of the issues dealt with in their target language course books. Their learner task is thus made doubly difficult in that they are to learn about something unknown, through a language that is itself hardly learnt!

II.II.c) Contact with native teachers of the target language

A third and final disadvantage linked with learning a *foreign language* in an *exolingual* context is that such learners often fail to get teachers knowledgeable in the target language and the culture associated with it. Most *exolingual* contexts of learning have difficulty in recruiting teachers who are native speakers of the target *foreign language*, and even when they do, their number is often limited. In some *exolingual* contexts of learning, they recruit passer-by native speakers of the target

language who have hardly any experience in language teaching. Local teachers who usually make up the most of the teaching staff in *exolingual* contexts are generally well-trained, but they often lack themselves the necessary exposure to the target language in its daily use. Having never been to the target language country, most of them are ignorant of socio-cultural issues pertaining to the language they teach. Thus, when questioned by learners, they either fail to provide them with correct and adequate information or else, they would give them erroneous explanations.

Obviously, this state of things has a considerably negative influence on the outcome of *exolingual* language learners' learning process. With regard to target language teachers, the only advantage *exolingual foreign language* learners might have over their *endolingual* counterparts is that, unlike the latter, the former have at their disposal teachers, who may be less knowledgeable about the subject they teach, but very knowledgeable about *exolingual* learners and their learner difficulties.

IV. Solutions and Conclusion

This theoretical analysis of language learning helps us understand how difficult the task of an adult *foreign language* learner could prove to be, particularly when he learns a *foreign language* in an *exolingual* learning context. The objective of this paper is nevertheless not to present *foreign language* learning in *exolingual* contexts as a total failure. Many *foreign language* speakers of the world today have learnt those languages indeed in such trying contexts and, in some cases, as adults. It is thanks to what they have learnt in those settings that they are today able to communicate in those languages.

The point which needs to be made here is that, the conditions under which adult *exolingual* language learners study make their task very difficult and that, as a consequence, yield rather poor results. Language researchers have thus the obligation to change this situation for the better by studying such learner profiles and contexts more closely and developing learner manuals, teacher training, exam planning, target setting, etc. to suit specifically to such special contexts of language learning.

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Using Literary Theories for Teaching Literary Genres in University Courses

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Abstract

Teachers need abundant proficiency on literary theories in addition to the reading techniques when they give lecture about multicultural literature in English language classes. Though they follow classical, new criticism, mythological and archetypal, the formalist, feminist or reader-response methods of literary analysis in their multicultural literature reading, they should have knowledge, for example, on postcolonial criticism when they deal with Eurocentric inclination. Teaching English has become a major necessity for developing areas in Asian countries due to globalization. The general purpose of this paper is to discuss the problems related with the novel tendency of teaching English for Asian educational system. This paper discusses the requirements of educational system in Asia for teaching English as well as on the mode of training English applicable skills. It also discusses the qualification and improvement of teachers' ability to teach literature which helps them change the educational system ensuring that studies are more enjoyable. The current study presents various trends in English literature that could be employed by both the teachers and the students.

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Introduction:

English as a global language was not completely perceived in the early 1950s to the 1970s, but the prominence of English language as a global one came to be known only in the 1980s. There was a growing perception of the language becoming a universal language, which resulted in famous authors making daring proclamations like “English is the global language”(Crystal, 1997, p. 1). A questionnaire was presented to various people from all over the world by the British Council in the year 1995 (Paul Iles, 1995). Of the 1,398 respondents who undertook the survey almost 96.3% of them suggested that they either strongly consented or moderately consent that English was and will stay put in the upcoming years as the most prevailing language of the world communication systems.

Apart from this 79.2% responded that they neither consented nor strongly consented for the idea of having another language contesting the role of English as the major language of the world. Fishman (1996, p. 628) suggested that the present world is governed by massive trade, technology and banking systems apart from human sciences and other qualifications, and all these applications predominantly use English for communication so as to ensure participation from the whole world. This is despite how well founded and guarded by the local traditions, languages and cultural identities may be. Crystal, (1997) and Graddol, (1997, 2006) noted that this change has resulted in English becoming the global language. After the proclamation given by Fishman, it has been noted more obviously how the belief has been made more evident all across the globe.

The observed significance of English and also the need to be able to communicate in English language has unfortunately not been reflected on the educational system in the countries of Asia. When students were asked about the teaching and learning methodology of English in classrooms, members of the group disclosed many intricate patterns of the issue. Even though English skills are regarded as extremely beneficial, many people in Asian countries view education only based on examinations point of view. The 400 L. Pan, D. Block / System 39 (2011) 391e402 suggested that the highly ingrained nature of the Asian culture to be examination centric making it hard to make use of the CLT method of educational system which was meant to be followed by the teachers. Hence the general issue was that the Asian educational system viewed their education as examinations instead of seeing it as learning approaches. In these situations, English has been quoted as a unique and integrated system that contained two ideologies, which served two different, but interconnected operations in the modern Asian countries.

On one side Block, (2010) noted it as a product, as quoted by examination results that helped provide employment in the job market. From this view, it is not an issue if the examination results included competence in communicative skills and all that the result shows is a certificate of having passed the examination. On the other side it is noted that for those Asian nationals who are in touch with other non Asian nationals,

their English skills are more pronounced, compared to the Asian nationals who have no means of communication with non Asian nationals. Hence it is very crucial to note that English becomes a key language for Asians if they wish to play their life in a global scale, especially since the whole world is moving at a global level.

At the upper intermediate and higher levels, students are expected to have a good grip over the language. Similar to the situations in other parts of the world, English literature is taught in Asian countries for many reasons. The most common ones are that literature provides easy access to motivating content material and cultural background, encourages language acquisition, expands students' language awareness, develops students' interpretative abilities and educates the whole person (Widdowson, 1975; Mullane, 1984; Brumfit, 1985; Spack, 1985; Akyel & Yalcin, 1990; Carter & Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993). Collie and Slater (1987) say that literature can provide valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement. According to Osburne's (1987) survey of master's level English language teacher trainees in a Chinese university, the trainees have more interest in literature than linguistics and methodology. Du (1990) also reported that, in his survey of Chinese students' attitudes towards the courses offered by a university, 42 out of 58 students (84%) indicated a "strong liking" for and a "great interest" in literature. He claimed that in general there is a great potential in all the Asian countries for the use of English, and thus for literature in English.

Rationale:

Employment of Asian students has been defined by the growth of the economy through various ways like technology, guidance, testing and standard. It has been suggested that in order to preserve the standard of human resource in professional courses like technological education there is a need for a lot of concentration. This would in turn result in education system for technological studies reaching newer heights.

In the developing world, English has emerged as an essential language to learn and been a common tool to communicate in the world. English is a prime language for expression one's own feelings and technological usage. The use of literature in this regard may help build up the overall command over the language which may be reflected in technical use.

Teaching of English is a growing field in the training education of Asian students. The vitality of English teaching for Asian students with regards to achievement of goals set by organizational as well as licensed credentials has been discussed and is often linked to the learning outcome of the students. In developing countries like China and India, national level recognized organizations struggle to implement common, open and accurate accreditation models, which has been a problem of

English teaching for bright students. Finding the chances of bilateral acceptance and migration of students would assist for international recognition. So, English teachers and researchers should meet with new orientations and teach English differently. Technology students trained well with professional usage of English in schools can be a specialist in technology.

Teaching Multicultural Literature in English Language:

Teachers need abundant proficiency on literary theories in addition to the reading techniques when they give lecture about multicultural literature in English language classes. Though they follow classical, new criticism, mythological and archetypal, the formalist, feminist or reader-response methods of literary analysis in their multicultural literature reading, they should have knowledge, for example, on postcolonial criticism when they deal with Eurocentric inclinations. Inadequate knowledge on theoretical contexts between English teachers' leads their students to study the ambiguous depictions of cultural groups carelessly while they read. So, deciphering multicultural literature with postcolonial literary theory will support the students to consider the problems in Eurocentric illustrations of development. According to Mingshui Cai (2002), we have to take multicultural literature to make the experts in that topic instead of merely conveying information. He indicates that "when using multicultural literature in the curriculum, it is imperative to move from informing to empowering students. To empower students is to help them develop the ability to identify, critically analyze, and even take action to solve problems related to cultural differences." (p. xviii)

Students could actively react to the problems of multicultural literature due to transformation from informing to qualifying the students. Students can understand the concepts by appropriate explanations. For example, postcolonial literary theory can be taught by explaining the association between postcolonial and multicultural literatures, which are closely related though they are the same completely. Multicultural literature includes world literatures (translated to or originally in English) like immigrant literature, ethnic (or minority) literature, and Native literature, whereas postcolonial literature is defined precisely as "writing by those peoples formerly colonized by Britain, though much of what it deals with is of interest and relevance to countries colonized by other European powers, such as France, Portugal, and Spain" (Ashcroft et al., 1989. p.1).

Teaching Mechanisms:

In 1990s, research started to delineate literature teaching in foreign language classrooms. But those studies were position-based instead of data-based studies, which determine the result of literature teaching on learning a foreign language.

Advanced learners of English appreciate good literature even if they are not able to perceive the entire contents (Erturul, 1995). She also pointed out that the students have to improve their literary proficiency, which would help them understand symbolic meanings in the literature. On the other hand, poetry brings the learning of rhythm and sound system among students (Çubukçu, 2001a; Himanolu, 2005) and encourages them to be learners (Erturul, 1995). Though some studies in 1990s encouraged literature usage in EFL classrooms, new curricula reduced the weekly literature courses, which was reinforced by Turker (1998) as to be followed in all levels of instruction. Akyel (1995) commented that the teachers may not like to teach poetry in classrooms due to their lack of knowledge in poetry although poetry provides precious language for EFL students. EFL teachers should be able to differentiate each genre as each genre has its own practical usage. Erturul (1995) reports that while the short stories are short and time saving with less words and imaginations, poetry on the contrary, have in-depth of imaginations, accent and rhythm. She also describes that drama contains dialogues, which would be very useful as they are a part of regular communication. She claims that novels are not applicable in classroom teaching as they are lengthy but they are recommended for reading outside the classroom and called as “breath reading” or “extensive reading” for the overall improvement of skills of the student

A study conducted with fourth year prospective teachers of English language revealed that most of the prospective teachers believe that literature courses are important for their English language education curriculum (Arikan, 2005). Novel methods of teaching and learning by using literature are valuable resources of improving language learning in Asia. As an example, literature theory can replace language-based methods for teaching literature (Çubukçu 2001b; Ünlü, 2002; Arikan, 2008). Additionally, computer technology like internet has to be included with traditional classroom-based activities for teaching literature (Kartal and Arikan, 2010; Arikan, 2008). Students have interests to work with tools given in the virtual world for learning American and British literature (Arikan, 2008).

Different models of teaching literature in class:

There are various models proposed for teaching literature to students in Asian Countries (Carter & Long, Lazar). The teacher can take literature content according to the type of model they select.

Cultural model takes literary content as a product, i.e., input information of the culture focused. It is the classical method, usually applied in university courses about literature. The cultural model looks for the social, political and historical background of a content, literary movements and genres. But content specific language work has not been done so far. This method would be completely teacher-centric.

The language model was meant to be highly learner-centric. While going through the content, learners tend to give importance to the pattern of language usage and the meaning through which they understand English. This model lets the teacher focus on general grammar and vocabulary (for example as given in the course books) or go for stylistic analysis in which the students would be able to elucidate the content with the knowledge on linguistic characteristics of the content. This improves the reading and studying ability of the learners.

The personal growth model is a process-based method and tends to be learner-centric. In this model, learners can portray their own views, thoughts and experiences. It tries to provide the content and the reader interactions to build the language thereby making it unforgettable. Learners are promoted to “make the text their own”. This model identifies the strength of literature, which can make the learners implement their learning in the classroom.

Requirements of Asian students’ education for English teaching:

Global Technology Excellence states three major points as follows. First, students play a significant role to resolve international issues like constant growth and safety, etc. Second, students have to collaborate in the various sectors in the world because of globalization of technology. Third, Government, industry, academy and other technology based associations need to work as a team to provide training to global students. Training given by the industry would be more useful to the students. Global study has to be conducted on existing technology education system, which would insist the importance of English in education and future careers of the students and increase the needs of English teaching in Asia. It is also understood that any further improvement in technical education in English is dependent on the student command over the English language. Such a command over the language is possible only when there is command over English literature.

Improvement of English applicable skills:

In the current scenario, English teaching should develop the ability of the students in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating. Asian students’ education offers different new opportunities and styles to teachers and students. Developing skills, which need English proficiency, would be beneficial for students particularly in multi-national companies. These skills can be promoted while encouraging teaching of literature with a practical output in mind. Learning and applying informational technology and new applications through English applicable skills brings better convenient openings for advancement in the world. Work place demands English speaking programs and skills. So, we have to enhance the reading skills of students

through encouraging them to read more English classical and modern literature, which would improve their vocabulary and spoken English skills. Words and phrases used in daily life can be improved by communicating with English speakers in native language. English drama and poetry reading would help improving listening skills. Writing short paragraphs on their own and then lengthy articles with the use of reading materials aid for writing skills. Translation of vernacular literature into English can also be practiced to improve command over the English language

Combination of professional knowledge:

Apart from providing basic training, students have to be trained to use foreign language to implement in professional skills, teaching and other applications. This could be achieved by teaching students in the real time environment like asking them to take part in poetry reading competitions, organize plays in order to practice their language skills. By this, students would gain technical knowledge on English language. Following this hands-on training for their job and understanding professional knowledge as well can be made possible if technology students are asked to go work in their industry. In addition, they would be aware of the working environment, problem solving methods, interactions with elder and senior students and team work. Professional knowledge with English teaching gets more importance in Asian students' education and is appreciated by industries.

Training ability of self-learning:

Learning is a continuous process in life to update our knowledge to understand the advanced technologies and meet the age related demands. We would be able to train students to be imaginative and for continuous growth. Self-learning and long-life learning skills are important for both teachers and students. People who do not updated their skills and knowledge would be out of date and lose their jobs. So, we have to learn new skills and knowledge to keep us updated. Learning should continue after leaving classroom also. We have various resources to read such as professional magazines, journals, papers, internet, and in-service training programs. Joining to the organizations and participating in the conferences would get to know recent developments. Internet, distance education, e-learning and air-class would provide broad and different learning. Self learning increases our knowledge and skills anywhere anytime and is a productive life-long learning method.

Conclusion:

Literature is very important for English programs conducted in most of the non-English speaking countries. But teachers over those countries face problem in literature based teaching of English. A very few well prepared curricula with supporting materials is the first problem with teachers in language classroom. Inadequate preparation for literature teaching in TESL / TEFL programs is the second problem. The third issue is that the role of literature ESL / EFL is not defined with precise objectives. Many instructors implement literature in the classroom with no knowledge or training in that area. The teacher plays a crucial role in literature based teaching of English. When choosing literary contents for classroom teaching, many factors such as language skill of the students, interests, age, sex, etc have to be considered to supply with right materials to avoid students getting bored.

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The Normalizing Role of English in an Era of Standards-based Reform

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Abstract

As a tool for learning, language enables and limits what we learn and how we learn. As a result, language could have normalizing effects on language learners. In the U.S. the school curriculum is delivered through culturally specific languages in English and, as such, English can help or restrict academic success for language minorities. The enabling and limiting potential of language is acutely evidenced in the uneven impacts that the Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSSI) - the most recent national effort in the U.S. to help students to be career and college ready in the 21st century – have had on English Language Learners. In standard based classrooms, English Language Learners face the challenge of mastering content area subjects while learning basic English at the same time. The role of English in regulating access to standards content, however, is not sufficiently acknowledged in the Common Core Standard Initiative.

This paper outlines both the repressive and liberating potential of language by drawing upon my own experiences as a formerly ELL on the higher education level and then as an inner city social studies teacher who taught in a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom. While remaining hopeful that education is the ultimate tool to achieve equitable outcomes with all students, I caution the risk of upholding standards without duly addressing issues specifically challenging language minority students. Recommendations about how to help ELLs meet the language and academic demands of the students will be discussed.

To compete in today's global economy, a series of federal and state efforts have been launched since the 1980s in the United States to provide broad guidelines and set high standards for public education (Massell, 2008; Shepard, Hannaway and Baker, 2009). The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative (2009) represents the most recent state-sponsored, federally endorsed effort in the U.S. standards based reform to overhaul the nation's educational system in keeping abreast with the international standards. This paper examines the role of English in the Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSSI) and theorizes the impacts it might have on English Language Learners (henceforth, ELLs), drawing upon the existing studies with respect to ELLs. Changes in school language policies and classroom practices to address the special needs of ELLs in the implementation of the CCSS will be recommended.

A brief overview of the standard-based reforms in the United States

The most recent educational reforms in the United States are driven by the United States' desire to maintain its economic predominance in a globalized economy (Massell, 2008; Shepard, Hannaway and Baker, 2009). As the quality of the work force is critical to a nation's economic sustainability in an era of increasing competitiveness, setting high academic standards for what students should know and be able to do is essential to the United States' struggle to sustain its economic competitiveness in the 21st century (Massell, 2008; Shepard, Hannaway and Baker, 2009).

Standards-based reform is based on the premise that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve the quality of learning and teaching (Massell, 2008; Polikoff, Porter and Smithson, 2009). The onset of modern day standards-based reforms in the U.S. is marked by the publication of *The Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). A report that was commissioned by the Reagan Administration in the wake of the academic 'underachievement' of the United States' students on international scales. *The Nation at Risk* (1983) called for the creation of a standards-based curriculum framework which outlines specific skills and knowledge which students will need to acquire in order to be competitive in the job market. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the standards-based movement continued to gain momentum, fueled by the ever-heightened concern that the United States' educational system was failing to meet the national need for a competitive workforce. By 2001, Standards-based school reform has become a predominant issue facing public schools (Massell, 2008; Polikoff, Porter and Smithson, 2009; Shepard, Hannaway and Baker, 2009).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (2001) signaled a turning point in the U.S. standards movement. It set in motion an accountability system that required states to give state-wide standardized, measurable assessments to all students annually in order to receive federal school funding. Under NCLB, each state was also required to set high, challenging standards for its students. Each state decided for itself what counts as a "high, challenging standard," but the curriculum standards must be applied to all students, regardless of their cultural and ethnic backgrounds. NCLB expanded the federal role in public education through annual testing, annual progress reports, teacher qualifications, and the incentive of federal funding (Massell, 2008; Polikoff, Porter and Smithson, 2009; Shepard, Hannaway and Baker, 2009).

NCLB never asserted a national curriculum, but left to each state to adopt its own curriculum framework, as long as the curriculum framework outlined a common core of knowledge and skills that all students were required to have in order to be successful. Seeking to bring diverse state curricula into alignment with each other by following the principles of standards-based education reform, the Common Core Standards Initiative defines a new chapter in the standards-based reform movement. By articulating specific, concrete, measurable standards of what students need to know, understand, and be able to do in an integrated curriculum framework, the CCSSI has become the latest push to standardize what should be taught in public schools. Sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the initiative is part of the overarching standards-based reform that seeks to provide "internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the work place"¹.

Though not a federal policy per se – as the U.S. constitution prohibits the federal government from playing a direct role in educational affairs – The Common Core Standards Initiative, however, amounts to a federal mandate when it is enforced with a system of incentives and rewards authorized by the Race to the Top (2009) - a federal program which awards states if they adopt the Common Core Standards to guide their reforms in a satisfactory manner. The CCSS Initiative in conjunction with the Race to the Top (2009) strengthens an accountability system and lends its support to the standardization movement by asserting the federal control over the reforms in state and local district K-12 education in the U.S (Achieve, 2011; Fletcher, 2010; Toppo, 2012).²

Below is the brief timeline of the standard based reforms (Achieve, 2011; Shepard, Hannaway and Baker, 2009; Toppo, 2012):

- 1983- *A Nation at Risk* was published.
- 1989- The *National Council of Teachers of Mathematics* published the Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics, a standards-based document.
- 1994- The Clinton Administration reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to ensure that all states had rigorous standards for all subject areas and grade levels.
- 2001- The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law by President George W. Bush.
- 2009- The National Governors Association announced the Common Core Standards Initiative. The stated goal of the Initiative is to "provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them."
- 2009- President Obama announced the Race to the Top competitive grants as a motivator for education reform.
- 2010- The common Core Standards for mathematics and English

¹ http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-US-Secretary-of-Education-Duncan-announce-National-Competition-to-advance-school-reform

² States were awarded points for satisfying certain educational policies, such as performance-based standards for teachers and principals, complying with *Common Core* standards, lifting caps on *charter schools*, turning around the lowest-performing schools, and building data systems.

Language Arts were released, with a majority of states adopting the Standards in the subsequent months.³

The key features of the Common Core Standards (CCSS)

The Common Core Standards define the knowledge and skills that students should develop as they progress from kindergarten through Grade 12 to make sure that by the time students exit high school, they will be college and career ready (Achieve, 2011; Fletcher, 2010; Toppo, 2012).

The Common Core Standards can be highlighted as follows:

- The CCSS articulate the knowledge and skills students should develop to be globally competitive in an instructional framework of curriculum and assessments.
- The CCSS aim at the development of higher level thinking skills in students through the increased rigor in classrooms.
- The CCSS expect students to be able to integrate their knowledge across the subjects. Instead of compartmentalizing their knowledge, students will synthesize what they learn from different topics and forge a new knowledge of their own.
- The CCSS focus on analyzing text and the development of evidenced based reasoning. Teachers are expected to provide students with linguistic structures so that students can use evidence critically to evaluate sources and synthesize information from grade level complex texts.
- The CCSS stress students' ability to transfer what they learn in classrooms to life situations. Students are encouraged to work in a collaboration to apply their skills towards the solutions of life-like problems.
- The goal of learning as envisioned by the CCSS is to foster in students the sense of confidence and problem solving attitude and become an independent learner.

The CCSS hold the same expectations for all students including English language learners and students with special needs, though recognizing some students will need additional support. By holding students to the same expectations, the CCSS Initiative signals a shift to the national set of standards.

While the proponents of the Common Core Standards Initiative adamantly assert that these standards will allow teachers to closely monitor students' progress and, when rigorously implemented, will lead to "college and career readiness," the CCSSI has its staunch detractors (Achieve, 2011; Fletcher, 2010; Toppo, 2012). One of the criticisms leveled against the Common Core Standards Initiative is: the Initiative fails

³ Like previous reform efforts, the Common Core Standards Initiative is driven by the ever-growing sense that the U.S. has consistently trailed behind other nations on international assessments. According to two recent reports released in 2009, the *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* and the *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study*, students in many nations in Europe and Asia have outperformed the United States in 4th grade and 8th mathematics and science. The same report also revealed that out of 34 countries, the U.S. ranked 14th in reading, 17th in science and 25th in math. Since math, science and reading are literacy skills that decide whether students will likely thrive in a global economy, the results have caused grave concerns in the United States (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/11/education/us-students-still-lag-globally-in-math-and-science-tests-show.html?_r=0).

to take into consideration the cultural and linguistic diversities within the student population in American public schools (Boykin and Noguera, 2011). In particular, it fails to address the special needs of English Language Learners except providing some general information and suggestions for ELLs (Boykin and Noguera, 2011; Reed, 2010).

English Language Learners and the Common Core Standards Initiative

The United States has always been a nation of immigrants, but even more so in the past decades. Not surprisingly, ELLs are the fastest growing population in U.S. public schools. In the decade between the 1997–1998 and 2008–2009 school years, the number of ELLs in public schools increased by 51%, while the general population of students grew by just 7% (see Center for American Progress, 2012). As in 2012, 1 in 10 students is an ELL. It is projected that by 2025 ELLs will make up 25% of the student population in the U.S. public education system (National Education Association). The increasing number of ELLs in the U.S. public schools today presents critical challenges to every school as it implements the CCSS (Boykin and Noguera, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; Walqui, 2010).

Whether an ELL will be academically successful depends on the student's cultural background, socioeconomic status, first language literacy, quality of prior schooling, and levels of English language proficiency. While some ELL students did thrive in schools, many struggled, repeatedly failed classes or the standardized tests and risked of dropping out (Noguera, 2004; Suarez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). Statistically speaking, ELL students graduated at significantly lower than their English proficient peers. For example, in New York City public schools, the ELL four-year graduation rate for the 2006 cohort (graduating 2010) was 40.3%, compared to 75.3% of non-ELL students. The graduation rate for ELLs is about 30% lower than their non-ELL peers. Generally, it took ELLs 5-7 years (as opposed to 4 years) to graduate from high schools (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov>). Numbers such as above exposed the persistent achievement gap between ELLs and their English proficient peers. As the achievement gaps within the U.S. public schools continue to perpetuate and halt the nation's academic and economic progress, a focus on closing the gaps must be prioritized by the CCSSI and any other standards-based reforms (Boykin and Noguera, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; (Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr, 2010; Walqui, 2010). In particular, addressing the special needs of ELLs in standards-based classrooms must be at the forefront of the CCSSI if it can be considered as a genuine reform.

While acknowledging that, to help ELLs succeed in terms of the CCSS requires collaboration at all levels, including students, teachers, school and district leaders, state leaders, pre- and in-service providers, test makers, and funders, the purpose of this paper is to raise the awareness of the critical role that language plays in the CCSS and explore how it may have impacted on ELLs in a classroom that complies with the CCSS.

Challenges facing ELLs in standards-based classrooms

In June 2010, the CCSSI unveiled the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Both Standards articulate rigorous grade-level expectations in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing for all students, including English Language Learners. The ability to speak, listen, read, and write in English is fundamental for students to meet the Common Core Standards (Achieve, 2011; Bailey and Huang, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; Hakuta, 2011;Toppo, 2012).

Though English is never constitutionally proclaimed as the official language of the land, as part of what has been called the English-only movement, 28 of 50 states have adopted legislation granting official status to English as of today (Crawford, 2004; Nieto, 2009; Ovando, 2003). In most of the classrooms in the U.S. it is simply accepted as given that English will be used as the language of classroom instructions and assessments. English, therefore, plays a normalizing role in meeting the expectations outlined in the Common Core Standards. Being able to communicate in English and achieve the mastery in the English Language Arts is expected of all the students, including ELLs.

Given its dominance in the school system, English plays a role in controlling access to learning and the school curriculum (Ahmad, 2006; Cummins, 2000a; Garcia, Kleifgen & Falchi, 2008; Roseberry McKibbin, Brice & O'Hanlon, 2005). When ELL students were placed in English-only standards based classrooms, with no special help in learning the language and no access to the curriculum, it was not surprising that they fell behind English-speaking peers. While some caught up, many failed and eventually dropped out (Ahmad, 2006; Cummins, 2000; Roseberry McKibbin, Brice & O'Hanlon, 2005). Indeed, the role English plays in standards-based classrooms can be so dominating that it tends to create an environment in classrooms that may not be conducive to learning for ELLs, who are required to master the content area subjects while learning basic English.

As of 2013, 45 states and the District of Columbia have set CCSS in motion, and the *Common Core Standards* will be fully implemented beginning in 2014-2015. Two assessment consortiums, English Language Arts and mathematics, will start administering new assessments to gauge whether teachers and students are meeting the new standards as laid out in the CCSS. With the advent of its full implementation, we can be certain that the impact of the CCSS will loom large. However, few studies existed in terms of the CCSS' impact on ELLs. Since the CCSS Initiative is the continuation of the ongoing standardization reform, past research on the role of standards-based reform in the education of ELL can shed light on our understanding regarding how the CCSSI will affect ELLs (Ahmad, 2006; Garcia, Kleifgen & Falchi, 2008; Roseberry McKibbin, Brice & O'Hanlon, 2005). Drawing upon existing research, the role of English in standards-based classroom in terms of its impact on ELL students can be summarized as follows:

English controlling the access to the school curriculum

In standards-based classrooms, learning in content area studies is closely bound to literacy skills in English. As in most U.S. schools, English is used as the language of instructions and assessments, the skills required to understand classroom instructions are the same skills necessary to comprehend and construct knowledge in content area studies (Abedi, 2004; Ahmad, 2006; Garcia, Kleifgen & Falchi, 2008; Roseberry

McKibbin, Brice & O'Hanlon, 2005). ELL students are presented special challenges in content area classrooms, since ELL students are expected to master content-area subjects, which are fraught with academic, content specific language while learning basic English simultaneously.

Cummins (2008) usefully illuminated the distinction between the two differing kinds of language proficiency that are important to the understanding of special challenges facing ELLs in content-area, standards-based classrooms. BICS are Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills, which students need to develop through interacting with native speakers. CALP is Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, which is the basis for students' ability to cope with the academic demands placed upon them in content area classrooms. Academic language proficiency, in particular, poses a unique challenge to ELL students. According to Cummins, academic language is essentially cognitively demanding and context-reduced, and generally takes ELL students five to seven years to develop to a level commensurate with that of native speakers (Cummins, 2008; Thomas and Collier, 2002). Mastering academic language is especially challenging for ELL students since there are no other sources of help than the language itself when ELL students are engaged in context-reduced tasks such as listening to lectures, reading dense text, or participating in class discussions.

The Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and mathematics demand both BICS and CALP. The CCSS require students' mastery of specialized academic language and concepts that frames a context in which learning and knowledge are constructed. For ELL students who had no or little exposure to English in their previous education, it can put them at a great disadvantage (Bailey and Huang, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; Hakuta, 2011). To master the content-driven curricula in a new language in standards-based classrooms can cause ELL students tremendous emotional stress and anxiety and can profoundly influence their interest in learning (Abedi, 2004; Ahmad, 2006; Pappamihel, 2002).

English as the hidden curriculum

In addition to meeting the academic language demands of the school curriculum, ELL students experience the 'hidden curriculum' as the unstated 'social norms and moral beliefs tacitly transmitted through the socialization process that structures classroom social relationships' (Giroux, 1983. P.48). Nieto (2009) contended that the attitudes and practices of schools, communities and society control the opportunities for success among historically marginalized population, including ELL students. If a society or community does not embrace or respect the idea of linguistic and cultural diversity, it is likely that the same attitude or belief will infiltrate into many classrooms. This, in turn, will detrimentally impact the quality of education ELL students receive (Nieto, 2009; Walker, Shafer & Liams, 2004.).

The hegemony of English to the exclusion of heritage languages

In the new standardization climate under the CCSSI, 'literacy' has come to refer only to reading and writing in the English language (Bailey and Huang, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; Hakuta, 2011). Literacy abilities in languages other than English and in modalities other than speaking, listening, reading and writing in

English are generally ignored. These normalized assumptions find expression in the absence of reference to students' heritage languages and their corresponding cultural practices and values in most curriculum documents, instructional manuals, and assessment protocols, even in contexts where a very significant proportion of students in the school system come from non-English-speaking home backgrounds (Cummins, 2008; Walker, Shafer & Liams, 2004.).

Research supports that the use of the native language aids in the meaning-making process by allowing learners to read words they know and sentences they understand, to use context effectively, and to self-correct efficiently (Cummins, 2008; Walker, Shafer & Liams, 2004). Though research has highlighted the importance of continued first-language use in developing second-language literacy, many teachers continue to question the value of ELL students' use of their first language in classrooms and schools (Cummins, 2008; Schwarzer, Haywood, & Lorenzen, 2003).

The normalizing role of English suppresses ELL students' voice, subjectivity and identity

As the dominant language used in U.S. schools and beyond, English is able to insert itself into the consciousness of ELL students through its symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1994). Studies indicate that ELL students develop attachment or identification with the English language and in so doing form their self-perception, to some extent, in relation to its image (Ajayi, 2005; Canagarajah, 2004; Pappamihel, 2002). They tend to see themselves in the eyes of the school curriculum standard that they try to live up to, and perpetually feel inadequate to it. For example, some ELL students, instead of seeing themselves as emerging or accomplished bilinguals, come to see themselves as someone who cannot 'speak good English' (Canagarajah, 2000; Canagarajah, 2004; Pappamihel, 2002). Cummins (2009) suggested that the success or failure of ELL students might well be partially determined by how adept teachers are at integrating home languages for facilitating academic success.

The normalizing role of English and global education

The normalizing role of English in standards-based classrooms is echoed in the concept of literacy proficiency assumed by the developers of the Common Core Standards Initiative (Bailey and Huang, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; Coleman and Goldenberg, 2012; Hakuta, 2011). While well-intentioned to focus on literacy and critical thinking skill development, the CCSS developers have narrowly equated literacy proficiency with monolingualism, that is, with the proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English (Bailey and Huang, 2011; Coleman and Goldenberg, 2012; Hakuta, 2011). The CCSS Initiative construes literacy as a skill set bounded by the national borders and as such, is ill fitted for an era that technologies have made border crossing and global interaction become ever more prevalent. As cultural interaction has become a norm in the globalized world, there is a need for a concomitant shift in the sort of literacy skills and abilities that students will need to develop for effective participation in modern work, academic, and societal environments (Bailey and Huang, 2011; Bunch, Kibler and Pimentel, 2012; Coleman and Goldenberg, 2012; Hakuta, 2011). In order to negotiate the complexity of contemporary life, students need to be versed in a broader range of

literacy skills and competencies. The literacies must be multiple, multimodal, dynamic and flexible.

To help students develop literacies and skills to succeed in the 21st global economy transformed by the evolution of technology and the increased global interaction, teachers need to “extend the idea and scope of literacy pedagogy to account for the context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalized societies” and to “account for the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies” (New London Group, 1996). In particular, students will need to develop abilities and skills to critically appraise complex information from multifold sources in order to make important decisions in their lives. To be able to engage in contemporary communicative and meaning making practices in globally network contexts, it is imperative that students develop literacy, language and social skills across national borders.

Toward a multilingual and multiliterate classroom

To develop a viable pedagogical and literacy approach in the implementation of the Common Core Standards that not only takes into account the particular issues facing ELL students in standards-based classrooms, but also addresses the intensity and complexity of the contemporary literate environments, I suggest to build on cultural and linguistic diversities within the school community that will address the special needs of ELL students within standards-based classrooms and the world beyond. The recognition of the normalizing role of English in the U.S. education is merely the first step we need to take in our collective effort to help ELLs succeed in standards based classrooms. As Bourdieu (1994) and many others have maintained, a viable pedagogical approach must be not only critical of the constraining force of school structure, but also look for the productive force within the school community that addresses and empowers ELL students (Bourdieu, 1994; Yosso, 2005). A viable pedagogical approach to address ELL students, hence, must actively approach linguistic and cultural diversity not as deficit, but as a vital source for learning, and actively seek its incorporation within the curriculum and school community.

The notion of multiliteracies – used to represent a multi-modal literacy approach to linguistic and cultural diversity in globalized societies – can well serve as our point of departure in search of a viable literacy approach to address the needs of ELLs in the context of standards-based reforms (Albright, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Holloway, 2004; Masney & Cole, 2009; Ryan, 2005). Originally developed by the New London Group (1996), the concept of multiliteracies has gained recognition in the U.S. through authors such as Cummins (2007), Street (2005) and Schwarzer, Haywood, & Lorenzen (2003). As a literacy approach that seeks to build on the diversified structure within the school community and beyond, multiliteracies can be used to capture the increasingly complex range of multimodal literacy approaches in response to the multilingual and culturally diverse society that the United States has become (Albright, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Holloway, 2004; Masney & Cole, 2009; Ryan, 2005).

Due to the reality of global interaction and cultural diffusion, the linguistic reality today is extremely complex. Though English remains to be the dominant, global language, the promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity is crucial to any serious

attempt to realize a truly global education, which would help students develop a means of intercultural communication that fosters flexibility, resilience, creativity and critical thinking simultaneously (Cummins, 2006; Holloway, 2004; New London Group, 1996; Schwarzer, Haywood, & Lorenzen, 2003). By challenging the notion of literacy that sees literacy as simply speaking, listening, reading and writing in a monolingual setting (English in our example), multiliteracies seek to incorporate the rich forms of students' cultural and linguistic background into the curriculum and school communities, rather than focusing on a narrow range of monolingual, text-based literacies (Cummins, 2006; Holloway, 2004; New London Group, 1996; Schwarzer, Haywood, & Lorenzen, 2003).

While in many schools, minority students' diverse cultural and linguistic heritages might have been incorporated into extra-curricular and occasional curricular activities, such inclusion often amounts to no more than token representations of minority cultures (Ryan, 2005; Taylor & Robinson, 2009). In the content area standards based classroom, minority cultures/languages remain extraneous to content and skills development within the curriculum. To authentically address cultural and linguistic diversity within the school community and ensure students will be globally competitive, not only classroom environments need to validate cultural diversity (at least in terms of teacher attitudes and school climates), their home languages and literacies must be seen as vital funds of knowledge and forms of literacy and incorporated into the formal/academic learning. In an article that calls for a pedagogy to foreground multiple voices and narratives, C. Jewitt (2008) described multiliteracies as:

multiliteracies sets out to stretch literacy beyond the constraints of official standard forms of written and spoken language to connect with the culturally and linguistically diverse landscapes and the multimodal texts that are mobilized and circulate across these landscapes. Therefore, multiliteracies can be seen as a response to the remaking of the boundaries of literacy through current conditions of globalization and as a political and social theory for the redesign of the curriculum agenda (Jewitt, 2008; p. 245).

Multiliteracies, as a response to the globalized, linguistically and cultural diverse reality we inhabit, can be used to approach classroom instructions through students' linguistically and culturally situated practices within an inclusive classroom learning community in which linguistic and cultural diversities are respected (Albright, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Holloway, 2004; Jewitt, 2008; Masney & Cole, 2009; Schwarzer, 2001; Ryan, 2005; Schwarzer, Haywood, & Lorenzen, 2003).

Recommendations for changes in school policies and classroom practices

Based on the above discussion, certain recommendations for changes in language policy in school districts and in classroom practices should be considered to address the needs of ELLs in the implementation of the CCSS.

Adopt a language policy that promotes diversity

If the expanded concept of literacy approach that take into account the linguistic and diverse reality within the school community can be associated with the required skills

and knowledge to succeed in today's globalized economy, school districts might wish to consider certain changes in their curriculum policies. In particular, they might want to consider including exposure to second languages in the school curriculum, through some degree of immersion to builds on the connection between foreign language instruction for native-born Americans and English-language instruction for ELL populations (Cummins, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Such a practice provides a positive view of linguistic and cultural diversity that will significantly enrich the culture and intellectual life of the school community.

Create a linguistically and culturally diverse classroom

Classroom environments have a significant effect on ELL students' literacy experience. Teacher beliefs and attitudes toward ELLs and other cultures can profoundly shape students' learning experience and affect their achievements (Cummins, 2000; Walker, Shafer & Liams, 2004). It is important to create climate of cultural acceptance/respect that supports a linguistic and culturally diverse classroom. An important dimension of creating such an environment is to integrate, whenever possible, students' first languages, cultural beliefs and values into all aspects of classroom life so that students feel positive about themselves as an integral part of the class (Cummins, 2000; Walker, Shafer & Liams, 2004). For example, a discussion about the global nationalist movement in the wake of the collapse of European imperialism in the 20th century can take advantage of students' linguistic and cultural knowledge of the nationalist struggles in their home countries.

Use cooperative learning strategies

As part of a national push for students who can think, solve problems, work with others, and learn on the job, informally grouping and regrouping students in a variety of ways throughout the school day can provide opportunities for ELL students to interact orally with their peers in a small, non-threatening, non-judgmental forum. Students and students in small group talk can create a comfortable environment (Peregoy and Boyle, 2005; Stevens & Slavin, 1995). They are able to ask questions they might be hesitant to pose in front of the whole class. Use bilingual students as peer can help emerging English language learners to understand key concepts of a topic in their first languages. Research studies show that the use of carefully structured learning groups has many positive outcomes in terms of academic achievement, communication skills, race relations, the development of socially responsible and cooperative behavior and attitudes (Peregoy and Boyle, 2005; Stevens & Slavin, 1995).

Promote multiliteracies

As previously discussed, literacy involves not just learning how to speak, listen, read and write in English – as envisioned by the CCSS - but a way of critically and creatively interacting with language in texts (Coffey, 2010; Freire, 1993; Freire& Macedo, 1987; Shor, 1999). There is not just one literacy, but many. Teachers need to use varied forms of presentation and encourage students to represent their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways in order to respond effectively to linguistic and cultural diversity within the student population.

Multiliteracies recommend using a wide range of classroom practices that allows the process of meaning making to be supported by contexts (Albright, 2009; Holloway, 2004; Jewitt, 2008; Masney & Cole, 2009; Ryan, 2005). Students and particularly ELL students rely on contextual prop such as the use of visual support of all kinds. It allows the meaning of the text to be distributed in various ways and become more accessible to ELL students. Using accessible, interesting alternative texts, teachers can encourage more students (and this would include ELL students) to participate in conversations about social issues that have been stifled by sterile reading material contained in textbooks (Coffey, 2010).

Effectively incorporate the use of technology in classrooms

Digital and media technologies, when effectively utilized, can be used to create a multilingual classroom and promote multiliteracies. The ability of technology to synthesize a wide range of modalities of learning can easily lend itself to be incorporated into the classroom learning and teaching (August, 2011; Stage, Asturias, Cheuk, Daro & Hampton, 2013; Warschauer). Technologies, through innovative inventions, can change, extend and enrich students' literacy experience in many ways:

Multiple media and hybrid texts provide students scaffolding structure to tackle complex texts and challenging topics.

The effective use of search engine helps location and dissemination of information. Internet technologies and social media such as e-mail, texts, and chats makes learning become interactive and generates potential interests.

The availability of word processing program can be used as a tool of self-assessment or peer review.

The fact that technology has made translation across languages possible allows teachers to transform the classroom into a multilingual and multiliteracies environment.

The evolution of technologies makes it become a reality that more and more digital technologies can be accessible to each student. Internet access has become common in schools. Most of the classrooms in the US are equipped with digital and media technologies such as smart boards and cart of laptops. In many school districts, students are provided with laptop or tablet to use in classrooms (August, 2011; Cummins, 2000; Stage, Asturias, Cheuk, Daro & Hampton, 2013; Warschauer, Grant, Real, Rousseau, 2004). It is expected that the availability to internet technology will transform the classroom and student learning.

Concluding remark

As was discussed earlier, the Common Core Standards Initiative assumes a narrow notion of literacy approach that prioritizes print-based literacy and equates literacy with listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. As a literacy approach, the CCSSI not only fails to address the special needs of ELLs in standards-based classrooms, but ill-prepares U.S. students in general to the ever diversifying global reality. There is a need to expose students to a broad range of literacy practices in order to prepare them to be ready for the complexity of the contemporary world. To this end, teachers in standards based classrooms must begin to explore ways to link cultural and linguistic capital of minority students with the school curriculum and to

incorporate multiliteracies into the implementation of the Common Core Standards. In this sense, the rich funds of ELL students' cultural and linguistic capitals may participate in the development of multiliteracies in the school community, which will benefit all students in their adaptation to an ever diversified society (Albright, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Cumming-Potvin, 2007; Masney & Cole, 2009).

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The Role of Lexical Gaps and Neologisms in Language Learning: A Consciousness-raising Perspective

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Abstract

Linguistic gaps (possible but non-existing forms) and neologisms (newly invented words/phrases) were investigated for their possible role in language learning. More specifically, a group of around 50 EFL majors, of Majmaah University, College of Education, KSA, have been subjected to instruction on "lexical gaps and neologisms" as part of a regular course of their syllabus on morphology/syntax. Instruction took place during five academic terms and for a set of five subgroups/batches of EFL majors. Instruction strategies were varied to cater for multiple intelligences and different learning styles. Afterwards, students were asked to write their own gaps and neologisms (in both L1 and L2). A further method of getting students to provide new meanings/senses of their own for already existing words was used. Then, a set of qualitative (phenomenological/introspective/retrospective) methods were employed to check the possible effect that the knowledge and discussion of these gaps and neologisms have on raising the students' consciousness about the depth/complexity of both the language system and language learning. Additionally, retrospective methods were also employed to probe the impact of gaps and neologisms on students' creative and critical thinking. Results strongly suggest that students' knowledge and intensified awareness of the linguistic gaps and neologisms have enriched and deepened their both language and language learning experience. This is especially the case among those who were able to provide gaps/neologisms of their own, whether by writing lexical/sentence gaps or by giving existing words of their choice new senses of their own (more than 90% of the subjects successfully did)

Keywords: Lexical gaps, Neologism, Consciousness-raising (CR), Creative/Critical Thinking, Language Learning

1. Overview

The human language system is hugely complex and greatly multi-sided. At the heart of this complexity, lies the property of an inherent 'creativity' that would allow not only for the production and perception of unlimited linguistic data, out of a limited set of rules, but also, equivalently, for the production and understanding of a set of boundless would-be\possible data (Chomsky, 1965,1972,1981,1986). This probable/hypothetical data may be words or phrases that are inherently permitted by the language system, but are still currently not existent. Put differently, these are "lacunae" or "gaps" that possess a great potential for both language and language learning.

One such potential, is the role of these gaps and neologisms (for the purpose of this study the two terms will largely be used interchangeably, and the slight technical differences will be discarded) in raising the EFL learners' consciousness about the complexity of the language system (the in-built creativity that dwells at the heart of it), the complexity of the language learning process, along with an opportunity of a reflection on their own learning styles that could be utilized in easing language learning .

Consciousness-raising (CR) is a strategy/approach in language education, in general, and EFL, in particular, which seeks to maximize students' awareness of language structure or function, with a view to helping achieve or enhance learning (cf. section 2.4). This study explores the impact of linguistic/lexical gaps and neologisms on intensifying the students' consciousness about the complexity of the language system, language inherent creativity and the potential this carries for language learning. It further, examines the possibility that knowledge of these gaps may foster learner autonomy and creative/critical thinking (all of which central to CR). Another key merit of (CR) that is of paramount significance, is the fact that both intentional and incidental learning are merged together. In lexical learning research, there has been a long-standing controversy over whether it is the intentional or incidental strategy that plays the greater role in acquiring new vocabulary (Schmidt, 1994; Schmitt, 2002;Hadi & Iman, 2013). The long-standing debate has, in fact, been sparked by Krashen's 1980s famous distinction between acquisition (subconscious/inadvertent) and learning (conscious/advertent) (Krashen, 1982,1988). With its capacity of combining the two aspects of intentional and incidental learning, (CR) coupled with other recent trends/approaches in language education have contributed enormously to critically reviewing Krashen's classical neat acquisition-learning distinction. As a result, the much more recent tendency is to view language learning as much more complex than this simple distinction might suggest; with both acquisition and learning as containing explicit/intentional and implicit non-intentional facets.

Theoretically, the study draws on the vast achievement of generative\cognitive linguistics pioneered by Chomsky and his followers since the late fifties and early sixties of the twentieth century, socio-cognitive approach to both theoretical and applied linguistics and the strategy of "consciousness-raising" in language teaching and learning.

Employing a range of qualitative data collection techniques, particularly the phenomenological method of "retrospection", a group of EFL English majors, were probed (at both individual and group levels) on the influence of the knowledge of the lexical gaps and neologisms on their consciousness of language creativity, and hence on their language learning quality and styles.

The following sections outline and report the study of the use of gaps and neologisms as a conscious-raising tool/task on a group of EFL majors, at Majmaah University, KSA.

2. 0 Theoretical Framework and a Review of the Literature

2.1 The Language System: A Socio-cognitive Perspective

Language can best be described as a socio-cognitive entity (van Dijk, 1982, 1998, 2003, Halliday 1993). This is because all attempts to view it as exclusively cognitive or exclusively social have probably failed to capture the overall picture, or have been proven to be deficient in quite a number of ways. Correspondingly, the most promising research linguistic paradigm, nowadays, is the one that combines the social and the cognitive aspects of language, be it in theoretical linguistics, applied linguistics or language education.

2.2 What is a Linguistic\Lexical Gap?

A lexical gap is a linguistically possible, but non-existing word in a language. Possible, because it does not violate the specific rules (esp. phonological and morphological norms) of the language in which the word is considered a lexical gap (also known as accidental gap, approximate), and non-existing because the word has never been in common use of that language. The gap can also be a sentence (and when we maximize the potential, probably, a whole text, too). A classical example of the latter, is Chomsky's famous sentence gap " colourless green ideas sleep furiously".

The existence of gaps could provide strong evidence to Chomsky's key concepts of "language creativity" (its inherent property of allowing speakers to produce and understand countless\infinite number of words\sentences that have never been heard or used before). The property of "discreteness" (the fact that inbuilt language system allows speakers to infinitely expand data "words\phrases\sentences") is also of relevance, herein.

Gaps constitute creative 'silences\slots' of huge potential and paramount importance. These "silences" are capable of being creatively packed with words\sentences Fromkin, et al,(2007:88-89) sums the whole thing up as " well-formed but not existing words. The actual words in a language constitute only a subset of the possible words...no dictionary can list all possible words...there are always gaps in the lexicon- words not present but could be added". Citing possible but non-existing words such as: (blick, disobvious and linguisticism) and impossible and non-existing words such as (*bnick, *unsystem and *needlessness), the writers (ibid.:89), go on to

claim that the fact that speakers' are inherently able to differentiate between the two sets, is further evidence that our minds possess "mental dictionaries", that do not contain lists of possible and impossible words, but "rules" specifying which words are possible and which ones are impossible and to infinitely add new words to our vocabulary.

2.3 What is Neologism?

Neologisms are a kind of newly-invented words\meanings. The World English Dictionary defines neologism as a "newly-coined word that has not yet been accepted into mainstream language... often attributed to specific persons, publication, period or event". This is, in many ways, consistent with the definition of the Online Free English Dictionary "the creation or use of new words or senses". Neologisms may be entirely new words, new meanings assigned to already existing words (cf. The Washington Post competition in section 3.24) or new lexemes (inflections) added to existing words. Examples of present-day technological/digital neologisms include: to "google" (search for something) and ego-surfer (someone obsessed with searching the net to find information about one's self). Other examples include: "staycation" (said for someone who spends the vacation at home or in the immediate local area), the shiftless (people who prefer to write in the lowercase), "agressocracy" (a society in which the most aggressive dominate, or which is ruled by most of its aggressive and ruthless members) (see Mc Fedries' website of neologisms and the 54 Great Examples of Neologisms, vappingo.com). Neologisms (and gaps as well) are in some ways, similar to 'Pullet Surprises', which are wrong, but very intelligent/creative guesses. The term was first coined by Greene (1969) who collected her students' creative errors and published them in a small book entitled 'Pullet Surprises' (itself a mistake of "Pulitzer Prize"). Greene's examples include students' wrong definitions for words: monetary (a place where monks live), paradox (a lovely place to go when you die), longevity (being very tall) and homogenous (devoted to home life) (cf. Fromkin, et.al., 2007).

Notably, there are two senses of the term "neologism"; in psychiatry the term is used to describe the special way in which psychotics such as "schizophrenics" speak. This involves the use of words and phrases with meanings specific to their users (schizophrenics/autistic children). The other sense of the term, is common in theology and philosophy of thought. In this sense, neologism is used to describe the invention of new ideas or new interpretation of religious books. These two senses, though not directly related to our study, are nonetheless implicative, in a number of important ways. Key among these, are the notions of "innovation", "creativity", "anomaly" and "particularity" (all of which relevant to the purposes of this investigation).

The existence of neologisms and linguistic gaps may also be read in terms of Halliday's (1993) theory of a language-based theory of learning; itself a development of his earlier three-category formulation of "learning language", "learning through language" and "learning about language", in which he proposes that learning a language should not be looked at as just a form of learning, but as "learning the foundation of learning itself" (p. 93). In Halliday's term, learning is fundamentally "a semiotic process", and "the prototypical form of human semiotic is language" (ibid.:93).

If learners could create their own gaps and neologisms, then this might as well indicate a creative form of "interlanguage" (the intermediate linguistic system that language learners constitute while in the process of language learning) (cf, Selinker, 1972, 1992). Much more recently, research on "interlanguage", has unveiled amazing facts about its "systematicity", "pluralism", "specificity", "idiosyncratic", and "socio-cognitive" nature, at the same time (all of which would seem to be central to human cognition and intelligence).

Of further particular interest, is the fact that some recent studies have unearthed that linguistic gaps and neologisms exist even in sign languages; a fact that would provide further evidence for the cognitive/mental claims of language prevalent in various forms of Chomskyan and non-Chomskyan generativism.

2.4 Gaps and Neologisms as a Consciousness-raising Task (CR)

Consciousness-raising has been a new trend in EFL, particularly over the last three decades (Ellis, 1991; Willis and Willis, 1996; Mohamed, 2004, etc.). Before being introduced into language education by Ellis, the term had been around in a variety of fields since the early 1960s, such as feminism, politics and psychology (group therapy). (CR) purports fundamentally at making students aware of the target language structure/function whilst performing a communicative task. Consciousness-raising is central to the larger framework of Language-Focus, Form-Focus Instruction (FFI) or more commonly Focus-on-Form (Fon F) approach. Promoting consciousness as an integral aspect of language learning, has been introduced as a strategy of rethinking and reevaluating what has become a sort of 'modern orthodoxy' in EFL and language pedagogy " the communicative approach/communicative language teaching CLT (CLT has been understood or misunderstood, for that matter, to have advocated or encouraged ignoring/marginalizing the role of grammatical awareness in L2 language learning).

CR tasks are described by Nunan (2011:98) as " designed to draw the learners' attention to a particular linguistic feature through a range of inductive and deductive procedures (...) The assumption here, is not that the feature will be immediately incorporated into the learner's interlanguage, but that it is a first step in that direction".

Among the many characteristics provided for CR tasks and that are of particular relevance here: (see Ellis , 1991; Willis & Willis 1996; Bankier,(n.d.), etc.

- CR promotes both explicit and tacit knowledge of language.
CR encourages cooperative learning.
- CR caters for learner differences and multiple intelligences
- CR stimulates a conducive learning environment that capitalises on fun, learner self-satisfaction and minimizing anxiety by keeping the affective filter at its lowest position.
- CR evokes critical and creative thinking in the language learners.
- CR helps building learner autonomy, creativity and learner-centredness (Tudor, 1996; Ellis, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2011; Nunan, 2011).
- CR would allow for an effective use of L1 in the L2 classroom.

The use of gaps and neologisms, can presumably help achieve these goals, and as such serve as a genuinely useful CR task. Furthermore, using gaps and neologisms is more likely to incite, not only language awareness (studies of CR tasks have thus far concentrated almost exclusively on grammatical awareness), but also awareness about language learning itself. Learners can contemplate the depth and complexity of the language learning process. In this connection, students may reflect on the degree to which their 'culturally-based expectations' (Tudor 1996) may affect the quality of their learning.

3.0 Method

3.1 Subjects

The subjects for this study are all Saudi male EFL majors, studying at the English department, College of Education of Majmaah University (formerly a branch of King Saud University). Their proficiency vary from pre-intermediate to advanced levels, and they are studying a syllabus that includes, among other components, English linguistics, language skills, language acquisition and education, literature and syntax\morphology, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis.

The study of lexical gaps and neologisms is among the major components of Syntax and Morphology (Eng 423). Throughout a span of five successive terms the effect of the study of the phenomenon of lexical gaps and neologisms on heightening the students' consciousness of language and deepening their language learning experience has been carefully observed and further scrutinized using relevant qualitative methods (e.g. retrospection) of data-collection and qualitative data analysis.

3.2 Data-collection

The data for this study has been accumulated over a long period of time. For a span of five successive terms relevant data has been gathered. English majors studying at the college of education, Majmaah University, received regular classes on "lexical gaps and neologisms" as part of a course in morphology and syntax (Eng 423). The gathering of data took place via the following forms:

3.2.1 Lecturing Students about the cognitive-linguistic Phenomenon of Gaps and Neologisms:

Students received three-four hour classes on the linguistic phenomenon of "lexical gaps and neologisms". Definitions and several examples from both English and Arabic were provided. Teaching strategies were varied to suit different learning habits and styles (taking into account the recent trend\theory of "multiple intelligences"). Very often, students were asked to present materials in class using modern data projector and to write response papers after that.

3.2.2 Getting Students to Discuss the Phenomenon of Gaps and Neologisms

Students were then asked to discuss the phenomenon\behaviour of gaps and neologisms following classes. Focus discussions took various forms, formal and informal and included discussing internet materials, as well. This intensified the

students' interest in the subject and prolonged the duration of their attention and thinking about language, in general, and about the implications of this particular phenomenon for human mind\cognition, in more specific terms. Relevant linguistic theory such as the "cognitive approach" and Universal Grammar\LAD were presented and discussed to theoretically ground the phenomenon.

3.2.3 Getting Students to Write Three Lexical Gaps/Neologisms and Three Sentence-gaps

After receiving enough information about "lexical gaps and neologisms", subjects were asked to write six gaps\neologisms (three English gaps and three Arabic gaps). In addition, they were asked to write an English sentence gap (modeling Chomsky's famous sentence along with an Arabic sentence gap). More than 90% of the subjects were successfully able to write gaps/neologisms.

3.2.4 Giving New Senses to Existing Words

The "Washington Post" has an annual competition of getting its readers to provide new meanings of their own for existing words. Very interesting examples usually come up (one reader gave the word coffee the meaning "the person upon whom one coughs", another reader provided the meaning " appalled over how much weight you have gained for the word "flabbergasted"). Of course the newspaper may not have thought of the linguistic and pedagogical implications of this game and has organized the competition for the sake of sheer fun. Inspired by this competition, a few students were asked to think about selecting known words and give them new meanings. Like the Washington Post readers, some students, finding the game extremely funny and interesting, were able to provide interesting meanings.

3.2.5 Post-test Discussion of Lexical Gaps/Neologisms

After the classes and the pre-quiz discussion, students were once again involved in post-quiz discussion of the phenomenon under investigation. The deep discussion was prompted by theoretical questions such as: Why does the language contain such silences, in the first place? What does that imply for the nature of language knowledge, in general and morphological and syntactic knowledge, in particular?, How is it that speakers of a language could give existing words totally new meanings?, etc.

4. 0 Results, Analysis and Discussion

Results can be seen to disclose that the unique knowledge of and use of the linguistic gaps (lexical or sentence gaps) and neologisms raised language awareness in the students, triggered their creative\critical thinking; causing them to view language a new and to rethink language learning and linguistic phenomenon, in general. Data collected via the phenomenological/retrospective methods have uncovered that most of the subjects having undergone the intensive consciousness experience of linguistic gaps and neologisms reported a change in the way they now look to

language/language learning. Most of them (more than 90% of the subjects) reported an increasingly new and intensified awareness of the language property of "creativity" as well as having experienced a heightened sense of learner autonomy. This is particularly the case among those who were successfully able to write linguistic gaps/neologisms of their own or provide new meanings for existing words.

All things considered, the phenomenon of these innovative "silences" (linguistic gaps and neologisms) appear to possess a host of theoretical and pedagogical implications in a variety of contexts:

4.1 Implications for Language Theory, Language Learning and Learning Theory

The very existence of the gaps/neologisms demonstrates that human learning, in general, and language learning, to be more specific, is much more complex than previously thought. Despite the obvious advances, we are still along way away from fully capturing the inner workings of the learning process (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This may provide further evidence to Chomsky's keynote theory of linguistic knowledge, (Chomsky 1965, 1972, 1981, 1986; Meisel, 2011) (supporting the existence of Universal Grammar (UG)), but would likewise unbutton a crying need for further interdisciplinary research in the learning theory that incorporates linguistics, language education and "cognitive science" (the latter is still largely unknown in Middle-eastern and African contexts). This would be one of the tendencies that this study suggests.

Meisel (2011) has argued that the key factors for the differences between L1 and L2 "are due to the fact that the (LAD) does not operate in quite the same way in the two types of acquisition... although the working of the (LAD) cannot be held accountable for all observed L1-L2 differences, there are good reasons to believe that it is the single most important cause for both similarities and differences" (p. 202). The study of gaps and neologisms and their use by both L1 and L2 learners is, moreover, likely to contribute to Meisel's theory of the crucial role of the (LAD) in this respect.

Pedagogically speaking, the existence of these 'slots' might be exploited in quite a number of ways. Halliday's three categories of "learning language", "learning through language" and "learning about language", along with his related theory that language learning is much more than just learning a language; it is learning about learning itself, would need to be called forth again (see sections 2.3 & 2.4).

Modern communicative language teaching, which has been "a prevailing orthodoxy", since the early 1970s, to borrow Long's (1991, 2007) phrase, has so far apparently overlooked the incorporation of "language awareness" (learning about language), despite the new approaches such as "Whole Language", "Task-based teaching" and "Post-method") that generally call for a review of many classical and modern pedagogical orthodoxies. Long's "Focus-on-Form" (drawing students' attention to the "form", whilst operating in a communicative task/context) approach, could validly be seen as an attempt to rethink the "communicative" orthodoxy (or the many ways in which it has been misrepresented/misunderstood). Indeed the pedagogical use of "linguistic gaps and neologisms" can serve as an active form of "Consciousness-

raising task (CR)" as discussed in the introduction and detailed in section (2.4). More importantly, the study unveils that (CR) can also be extended to include consciousness of some aspects of the process of language learning per se.

4.2 Implications for Future Research

Future research on the role of linguistic gaps and neologisms in language learning may benefit tremendously from mixing both qualitative and quantitative methods of data-collection and analysis (this study has drawn almost exclusively on qualitative/phenomenological methods, as gaps and neologisms are deemed lending themselves more easily for qualitative research than quantitative, and because there is a growing tendency in modern linguistic/social research to either draw on the qualitative methods or mix them with quantitative ones). Finally, there are also many indications that the study of gaps and neologisms would reveal interesting facts about the role they may play in both the structure and function of a wide range of texts/discourses. More specifically, literary/narrative discourse (classical examples utilizing gaps/neologisms include Carroll's and Twain's works), together with post-modern fiction, doubtlessly, provide rich data for analysis of gaps/neologisms. Besides, it is highly recommendable that further explorations of linguistic gaps and neologisms take into account the role these might play in "intertextuality" (the interrelationships between texts/discourses).

5. Summary and Conclusion

The study of "linguistic\lexical gaps" and "neologisms", in addition to being supremely interesting and a greatly virgin field, in its own right, has got a huge potential for the theory of learning, language learning, cognitive science, cognitive linguistics and language pedagogy\education. A group of 50 college EFL majors were subjected to a heightened awareness experience of linguistic gaps and neologisms, and then later checked for how they view this experience using several qualitative (phenomenological) data-collection methods and analysis.

Findings can be shown to reveal that gaps and neologisms help raise linguistic awareness in the EFL students and urge them to think innovatively and creatively about language learning, through language learning and beyond language learning, as well. Relevantly and more precisely, gaps/neologisms could be used as an effective "consciousness-raising task", for developing and enhancing particular skills/features, together with developing learner sense of autonomy, learner creativity and learner-centredness.

Besides, experiencing gaps/neologisms can further buttress the cognitive linguistic claims of Chomsky and other generativists (especially the claims for existence of UG\LAD). This is particularly so, because the phenomenon of linguistic gaps and neologisms appears to be universal, applying to all languages and all learners (it looks reasonable to assume that all normal humans, whether studying L1 or L2 are capable of producing and recognizing lexical gaps and neologisms in the language(s) they are learning/ have already learnt). Resultantly, the phenomenon is applicable to both L1

and L2 learners. The latter fact is important in two respects: contributing to theorization on the relationship between the acquisition of L1 and L2, on the one hand, and helping the ongoing quest for the LAD (Meisel, 2011), on the other. Simultaneously, these gaps and neologisms, would probably help enrich the debate about the validity of the "Complexity Approach" (viewing both language and learning as extremely complex, dynamic and multi-faceted systems), ventured by Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008). Hazndar's (2003) finding that the surface absence of verbal inflections in some L2 learners does not mean that their interlanguage system is, in itself, impaired, appears consistent with this complexity approach, implying in effect that the learners' ability to produce and recognize lexical gaps and neologisms, provides further evidence to the complexity approach of language and language learning.

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The logo for the International Association for Applied Linguistics (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially visible at the top and bottom. A red, curved brushstroke-like element is also visible, arching over the top left of the circle.

Illocutionary verbs as a tool for conveying reporters' perspective in English media discourse.

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Abstract

Since the issue of intertextuality was introduced, it has been hotly debated and employed by professionals in various disciplines time and again. In media discourse reporters widely use this powerful tool for suiting their own purposes. At writers' disposal, reported speech as one of the most common forms of intertextuality allows gaining readers' confidence, interpreting information subjectively or even detaching from what is said. It is claimed that the writers' pursued effect is achieved not only through the content of the reported speech itself but also through a correctly chosen reporting verb. The present research targets at the comparative analysis of reporting verbs introducing direct and indirect speech and focuses on the peculiarities of the latter ones, subjecting to conscious scrutiny their illocutionary forces. In order to account for the impact of these verbs the semantic analysis is carried out, which results in the identification of their lexical presupposition and their classification. The findings suggest that in media discourse the choice of reporting verbs discloses the narrator's perspective, elucidating the point of view of the person quoting instead of the quoted one. The research outcomes reveal semantic peculiarities of verbs used to refer to the ideas of other writers and researchers and therefore assist people in academic reading and writing.

Keywords: intertextuality, reported speech, quotation, reporting verbs, media discourse

1. Introduction

Quotation as an integral component of media discourse has widely been used by a great number of authors for making information more precise, vivid, objective or subjective, for creating a dramatic effect and even for detaching from what is said. Therefore the analysis of this issue can be found not only in works of leading theorists such as Prof. Bahtin, Prof. Galperin but also in numerous publications of modern writers, who have carried out a great amount of research into structural, semantic and pragmatic aspects of quotation. However focusing on the following characteristics of quotes, some authors frequently overlook paying sufficient attention to the analysis of reporting verbs that in their turn contribute to the understanding of the narrator's attitude to the quoted utterance. A point of reference for the analysis of speech acts as a phenomenon was brought about by Prof. Austin (1962), who introduced the notion of illocutionary act and the theory of 3 types of acts; after his death many authors continued studying this topic among them was John Searle (1975), who tried to systemize John Austin's theory and suggested another classification of illocutionary acts. Among modern writers Caldas-Coulthard's works deserve particular attention, according to her typology reporting verbs are classified in relation to the reported clause. (Caldas-Coulthard, 1994 p. 305). However, despite the sufficient number of works on reporting verbs in general, the classification of speech and thought reporting verbs, their role and influence on a reader in English media discourse is still needed.

1.1 Intertextuality in media discourse

Linguist Kristeva coined the term intertextuality in 1967 in her account of Bakhtin's works, which are considered to have initiated the theory of intertextuality. Since then this term has been widely used and interpreted differently in various disciplines. Broadly speaking, intertextuality is understood as interrelationship between a text and other texts, the ways they refer to one another. Since intertextuality is really popular with many authors, it is quite reasonable that there are a great number of approaches to studying this notion. Generally authors, dealing with intertextuality, may be classified into two basic groups: those, who analyze texts in relation to the social structures in which they were produced (Fairclough, Kress), and others, who analyze intertextuality as an element of textuality, focusing only on a text itself (De Beaugrande, Dressler).

In media discourse authors usually resort to reported speech, as a form of intertextuality, for incorporating others' words into one's text. Prof. Fairclough in his book *Analysing discourse. Textual analysis for social research* states that "The most common and pervasive form of intertextuality is reported speech (including reported writing and thought), though there are others (including irony). Reported speech may or may not be attributed to specific voices, and speech (writing, thought) can be reported in various forms, including direct (reproduction of actual words used) and indirect report (summary)." (Fairclough, 2003 p.39) Thus reporters widely use this powerful tool for suiting particular purposes. At their disposal, reported speech as one of the most common forms of intertextuality allows gaining readers' confidence, interpreting information subjectively or even detaching from what is said.

1.2 Reported speech in news reports

In newspaper articles quotations may appear in two main ways in direct and indirect styles, the former one is a juxtaposition of the quote frame and the quote itself, which may be detached from the frame by quotation marks, intonation or pauses, while in the latter one just a reporting verb, which is usually followed by a conjunction “that”, introduces the quote. Generally in quotes of both styles reporting verbs may be employed. The following examples from two newspaper articles are given to point out main characteristics of each type of reported speech:

e.g.:

I Direct style:

1. "It is certainly going to be a long weekend," Holloway *said*. (NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, 26 October 2012)
2. "We're at a point of time where people need to take precautions now," Hauer *urged*. (NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, 26 October 2012)

II Indirect style:

1. Holloway *said* the city would use the coastal storm plan implemented during Irene. (NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, 26 October 2012)
2. AccuWeather *warned* that the storm would be “catastrophic” for the Middle Atlantic and Northeast. (NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, 26 October 2012)

At first sight it can be seen that in direct style the words of Holloway are explicitly demarcated while in indirect style the words are not immediately spotted because they are merged in, i.e. the reporter has incorporated Holloway’s words as if they were his/hers. In direct reported speech it is assumed that the words are the exact ones the speaker used. On the contrary, when the text producer resorts to indirect speech to retell what someone else has said quotation marks disappear, tense and deictics change to suit the writer’s style and readers can never be sure whether the words belong to the original speaker or not.

According to Prof. Suñer (Suñer, 2000) direct quotes mostly tend to represent the position of the quoted person, while indirect ones express that one of the quoting author. Apparently, words said by experts and important people give the writing a sense of factuality and veracity because their content comes from sources that can hardly be challenged. Besides, quotations convey liveliness and turn the news more readily credible. Some journalists are likely to employ less direct quotes so that not to create a sensationalist article oversaturated with people’s comments. On the contrary, it is not surprising that in some socially oriented newspapers a great number of people are given a voice in their account of the facts.

However, the findings of the present study suggest that being able to reproduce the exact content, all types of quotes seldom transmit faithfully the original text, as the context they are produced in is unrepeatable.

Basing on the quantitative analysis of articles devoted to international and national affairs and placed in such newspapers and journals as The Financial Times, The NY Times, The Economist, The Spectator, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Daily News, it is found out that indirect quotes, used to present factual data, are more frequent in news reports.

In this research indirect quotes are chosen as a database for the semantic analysis, which aims at identifying the peculiarities of reporting verbs, touching upon their lexical presupposition and resulting in their classification.

2. Theoretical framework

The classification of reporting verbs provided in this study takes as its starting point previous research of Prof. Austin, Prof. Searle, Prof. Caldas-Coulthard.

According to John Austin "to say something may be to do something", he suggested that a person can simultaneously perform three acts in producing an utterance: the locutionary act is the act of saying something; the illocutionary act is the act performed in saying something, and the perlocutionary act is the act performed by, or as a consequence of, saying something. (Austin, 1962 p.101)

Thus, by asking "Is there any milk in the fridge? ", a person performs 3 acts: locutionary act of asking about the presence of milk, illocutionary act of requesting milk, and finally perlocutionary act of making somebody check and bring some milk.

The final classification that was elaborated by Prof. Austin includes five main categories of illocutionary acts: verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, expositives. (Austin, 1962) Since then, many authors amended his classification, attempted to define the term illocutionary act variously and worked out different systematizations of acts.

It is difficult to exaggerate John Searle's contribution to the study of illocutionary acts since in his works he sheds a new light on the issue of speech acts introducing the notion of illocutionary force indicating devices and makes the theory more systematic. In his classification he marks out 5 classes of illocutionary speech acts: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations. (Searle, 1975) In his research on indirect speech acts John Searle tries to explain how by saying something people may mean not only what they say but also convey additional information.

e.g.:

For instance, by saying "Yulia, can you call me tomorrow?" one asks if Yulia will be able to call but also requests that she calls. Therefore being expressed indirectly this direct question may be regarded as an indirect speech act.

According to Caldas-Coulthard's (1994) typology, which is based on the function reporting verbs have towards the reported clause, verbs can be classified into: neutral reporting verbs, metapositional reporting verbs, which in their turn are subdivided into assertives, directives, commissives and one more category transcript verbs that indicate parts of a document or a series of speech events. (Caldas-Coulthard, 1994 p.305)

The terms *illocutionary act*, *illocutionary force*, *illocutionary verb*, *illocutionary point* can be found in numerous research on this topic and have fairly specific meanings.

Thus *illocutionary act* is a complete speech act that consists of the delivery of the propositional content of the utterance and particular illocutionary force (promising,

advising, warning, etc.) (SIL International 2004)

e.g.:

-Thus, if a speaker asks “*Have you already read this newspaper?*” as a way of inquiring about news, his intent may be in fact to read this paper. Thus the illocutionary force of the utterance is not an inquiry about the news, but a request to take the paper.

Illocutionary force of an utterance is the speaker's intention in producing that utterance. (SIL International 2004)

e.g.:

- “*It is stuffy*” may be both a comment about conditions in the room and a request to wind it.

Therefore the illocutionary force accounts for the effect the speaker wants his/her utterance to have on the listener.

Illocutionary verb is a verb that, as part of its meaning, expresses at least one illocutionary force. (SIL International 2004)

The term illocutionary point, which is a component of illocutionary force, means the basic purpose of a speaker in making an utterance. According to certain research, five types of illocutionary points exist: to assert something, to commit to doing something, To attempt to get someone to do something, To bring about a state of affairs by the utterance and To express an attitude or emotion. (SIL International 2004)

Another term deserving attention is performative verb, it is a verb carried out simply by means of uttering it aloud, such verbs can both describe a speech act and express it. Whether the verb is performative or not may be checked by adding “*hereby*” thus by uttering “*I hereby apologize*” one does not only perform an expressive act but simultaneously names it.

These works make up a theoretical basis of this research, which is aimed at studying reporting verbs and their characteristics in English media discourse.

3. Research results

According to the findings of this study, which are constituent with what is known about illocutionary acts described by Prof. Austin, Prof. Searle, Prof. Vanderveken and Prof. Caldas-Coulthard, two classifications of verbs are elaborated.

The first one is based on the reporter’s attitude to the quoted utterance, which is somehow shown through a choice of a reporting verb.

And the second one classifies verbs into 7 main categories, grounding on the speaker's perspective in the production of the utterance, which is still interpreted by the reporter.

In media discourse reporting verbs no matter whether they appear in direct or indirect speech, are less varied than in other kinds of discourse, probably it can be explained by the fact that most journalists tend to be neutral while reporting news. (Zelizer, 1989)

The verbs in this research are also subdivided into *speech* and *thought reporting verbs*. The latter ones, reflecting thought processes, are only a few in media discourse, such as *to think / to believe*, as in general the author does not know, and probably does not care, what is going through the speaker's mind.

e.g.:

While Mr. Whittingham *hopes* that it will not be the case, he *anticipates* that proponents of the Keystone XL pipeline will use the rail accident to push their case with the Obama administration. (The NY Times, Hints of Personal Intrigue In Czech Graft Scandal, 7 July 2013)

Mr. Morsi's supporters *believe* the former president is being held inside the club, and have held rallies at its gates, demanding his release. (The NY Times, At Least 40 Die as Soldiers Said to Open Fire on Morsi Backers, 7 July 2013)

3.1 Classification one

It is assumed that in media discourse there are certain markers that act as a guide to the reporter's attitude towards the speaker, reporting verbs are among them. According to the results of this study, all verbs may be classified into 3 categories: neutral verbs, verbs with positive connotation (positive verbs) and verbs with negative connotation (negative verbs). It is worth mentioning that the connotation a verb has is mostly conditioned by a context.

Neutral verbs (to say, to state, to tell, to think, to report, to state) are believed to be completely neutral and acquire connotation only in case they are accompanied by other lexical units, for example such as adverbs. Neutral verbs are the most frequently used in media discourse. (Bell , 1991 p. 206)

Basing on the carried out analysis, from neutral verbs journalist most often resort to the verb *to say*.

e.g.:

He *said* the city would use its buses to move people out of hospitals and nursing homes in the low-lying areas of all five boroughs as it did during Hurricane Irene last year. (NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, State of emergency declared in NY as Hurricane Sandy barrels toward northeast, 26 October 2012)

This example illustrates that the verb *to say* has no evaluative or interpretative properties.

Being relatively rare compared to other neutral verbs, the verb *to state* presupposes that the reporter refers to a powerful actor in a formal setting or tries to conceal the lack of information coming from specified/authoritative sources, this verb is never attributed to an anonymous eye-witness.

e.g.:

On Saturday, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, *stated* that he was not opposed to talks over certain issues, but warned Mr. Rouhani that some of Iran's enemies "do not speak our language of wisdom." (The NY Times, Iran's New President Calls for Nuclear Talks Without Rejecting Direct U.S. Role, 6 August 2013)

The usage of *positive verbs* (confirm, disclose, emphasize, explain, point out, reveal, outline, underline) by reporters implies that they agree, support, find the information quoted truthful or refer to a respectable information source.

In the following example the usage of the verb *to emphasize* shows that the author finds the quoted information valid, taking for granted that it is true.

e.g.:

Ms. Hersman *emphasized* that investigators could not yet draw any conclusions about the cause of the crash. (The NY Times, Terror on Jet: Seeing Water, Not Runway, 7 July 2013).

The verb *to confirm* is quite popular with reporters, who resort to it to show that the quoted utterance is a direct representation, a kind of summary of what was actually said and to indicate the reliability of the given information.

e.g.:

U.S. *confirms* That It Gathers Online Data Overseas (The NY Times, U.S. Confirms That It Gathers Online Data Overseas, 6 June 2013).

Negative verbs. (allege, claim, gamble) For producing objective news, reporters have to quote all information sources, even if they treat them unfavorably.

The reporting verb *to allege* represents a kind of doubt, whether the utterance stated is correct, it can also be used by journalists to show their negative attitude towards the information.

e.g.:

We disclose user data to government in accordance with the law and we review all such requests carefully. From time to time, people *allege* that we have created a government 'backdoor' into our systems, but Google does not have a 'backdoor' for the government to access private user data. (The NY Times, U.S. Confirms That It Gathers Online Data Overseas, 6 June 2013)

Another good example of an unfavorable reporting verb is the verb *to claim*, which usually indicates that the reporter views the action negatively or doubts: the choice of this verb may also presuppose some ignorance and inferiority of an information source.

e.g.:

Early in 2012, Mr. Necas sought to justify hefty bonuses for Ms. Nagyova, *claiming* that “she works like a horse.” However, some began to question the prime minister’s judgment. (The NY Times, Hints of Personal Intrigue In Czech Graft Scandal, 4 July 2013)

3.2 Classification two

In classification two verbs are grouped into 7 main categories, grounding on the speaker's initial perspective in the production of the utterance, however, it is necessary to mention that this perspective is still interpreted by the reporter's choice of verb.

Verbs of introduction (to announce, to believe, to declare, to introduce, to hope, to note, to outline, to point out, to pronounce, to report, to say, to state, to tell) are used to simply introduce the quotation as information, to make it known to the public. They introduce opinions, decisions, some factual information produced by respectable sources. Mostly assertive speech acts are represented by verbs of this category, which means that the focus is placed on the content of the utterance.

The verb *to tell* perfectly illustrates the distinctive features of this group. It has both an assertive use, when a person informs others, and a directive one, when somebody tells somebody else to do something. To tell has an assertive sense when it is used in a direct and confident way and presupposes information perception without any criticism.

e.g.:

Ms. Nagyova’s lawyer *told* the Czech news media that she had ordered the surveillance to protect Mr. Necas’s wife... (The NY Times, Hints of Personal Intrigue In Czech Graft Scandal, 4 July 2013)

The verb *to declare* is mostly used to present opinions, decisions, and its authoritative nature makes the content indisputable. Being the primitive declarative, this verb also has an assertive use when people affirm something relating to them, making it known to the public. When used in the first person, this verb shows that a speaker renders information he/she has direct and privileged access.

e.g.:

On June 22nd he declared that the Lib Dems now face a big decision. (The NY Times, The little party behind the throne, 29 June 2013)

Verbs of agreement/disagreement (to accept, advise, to agree, to criticize, to decline, deny, disagree, to reply, to warn)

Verbs of agreement indicate that the author agrees with another source or position.

The verb *to agree* can be used differently, for example, one can be in the mental state of agreeing with someone without uttering any words as well as one can also agree verbally with someone by making the speech act of agreeing. In this case it has an assertive illocutionary force.

e.g.:

The Chinese, he noted, are not urging all sides to resume talks until the North Koreans agree that the objective is removing all nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula. (The NY Times, U.S. and China Agree to Hold Regular Talks on Hacking, 1 June 2013)

Verbs of disagreement show a critical response to another source or position the author is advancing.

To deny can be both assertive and declarative. Used in the assertive sense, this verb means to negate the offer that has been made before, by asserting a contrary one.

e.g.:

... several of the companies — including Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Apple — denied that the government could do so. Instead, the companies have negotiated with the government technical means to provide specific data in response to court orders, according to people briefed on the arrangements. (The NY Times, U.S. Confirms That It Gathers Online Data Overseas, 6 June 2013)

Verbs of support (to argue, to decide, to emphasize, to encourage, to insist, to indicate, to maintain, to pledge, to promise, to propose, to order, to support, to urge) These verbs provide support with evidence or reasons for the position of the author.

The verb to maintain expresses a publicly stated opinion. Even though the reporter may know that the content of the supported claim is disputable, by using the verb to maintain, she/he wants to present the source's views in a stable and well intentioned manner.

e.g.:

...officials... maintained that it minimizes the collection and retention of information "incidentally acquired" about Americans and permanent residents. Several of the Internet companies said they did not allow the government open-ended access to their servers but complied with specific lawful requests for information. (The NY Times, U.S. Confirms That It Gathers Online Data Overseas, 6 June 2013)

Verbs of tentative presentation (to anticipate, to estimate, to imply, to predict, to promote, to propose, to suggest) These verbs are used to present information tentatively or indirectly .

For example, the verb to suggest is a performative verb that is used to represent strong proposals of usually legal content. It can have a directive and an assertive use. In the assertive use, to suggest something is to make the hearer perceive information without affirming it unambiguously and without insisting that it is true. In the directive sense, to suggest is just to make a weak attempt to get someone to do something.

e.g.:

Television images suggested that the surviving tank cars on the Lac-Mégantic train

were of the older design.(The NY Times, Deadly Derailment in Quebec Underlines Oil Debate, 7 June 2013)

Verbs of continuation (to add, to continue, to go on to say, to state further) Authors employ these verbs to continue reference to a quote, usually verbs of this category describe an internal addition, it means that the statement after them is thematically bound to a formerly mentioned one, which is considered as more important. Illocutionary force of an utterance with the verb of continuation is often constituent with the force of a previous sentence.

e.g.:

Security officials *said* the death toll stood at 43 civilians and one security officer. They *added* that more than 300 people had been wounded. (The NY Times, At Least 40 Die as Soldiers Said to Open Fire on Morsi Backers, July 7 2013)

Verbs of conclusion (to conclude, to decide, to determine, to find out) Authors resort to the verbs of this category to draw a conclusion from a previous discussion.

Using the verb *to conclude*, authors demonstrate that they arrive at a logical judgment or opinion by reasoning. Reporters employ this verb with an inanimate subject represented by such nouns as analysis, review, when they do not want to name a particular person, who is responsible for the introduced information, which may be quite significant, or even contradictory.

e.g.:

An analysis of the pipeline plan for the State Department *concluded* that if the pipeline was rejected, oil sands producers would instead turn to railways for shipments to the United States. (The NY Times Deadly Derailment in Quebec Underlines Oil Debate, July 7 2013)

Verbs of erroneous statement (to allege, to claim, to gamble) are used to present information that is considered questionable or incorrect, these verbs most clearly express the reporter's doubts and skepticism about it.

As stated above, the usage of the verb *to claim* entails a certain negative attitude of the reporter towards the news source or questions the truth of the information provided. In news reports the verb *to claim* often names the illocutionary force of assertion but it can also have a directive force, in that case it introduces requests, where to claim something is to demand it as a right or as a due.

e.g.

And Representative Mike Rogers, Republican of Michigan and the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, *claimed* in a news conference that the program helped stop a significant domestic terrorist attack in the United States in the last few years. He gave no details. (The NY Times, U.S. Confirms That It Gathers Online Data Overseas, 6 June 2013)

4. Conclusions

It is revealed that the choice of the reporting verb is a deliberate way to show the attitude attributed by the reporter to the news source and the information presented. According to the findings, the usage of a particular reporting verb does not only disclose authors' personal preferences but also prejudices readers' opinions in favor of or against the information given. The research results suggest that using a reporting verb journalists integrate the outside information with their own interpretation. The choice of a particular verb is determined by several points: the primary perspective of a quoted utterance and its author, the reason for the quoted material's inclusion: whether it is used to reflect an opinion, to clarify, to support, to argue the information. By introducing the quotation carefully, the reporter can let readers know not only the source of quotation but also give readers a sense of how original authors feel about their own material. Therefore when giving voices to other people, reporters may both portray the original author's view as well as hint at their own reaction to that view.

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The logo for the International Association for Language Acquisition (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially obscured by a larger, semi-transparent red arc that also surrounds the text.

Making the Extrinsic Intrinsic: the Case for Motivation in the Language Acquisition Process.

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Abstract

Anybody involved in second language acquisition will attest to the fact that motivation is the single most important factor in determining the success or failure of the process. When adults are taken into consideration, the reasons for learning a second language are many and varied. There would appear to be, however, a proportional relationship between the age of the learner and the variety of motivation. The younger the learner, the more likely one is to hear that a child is in the classroom because they have been told to attend, or that they would not be in the classroom if the lesson were not a compulsory part of the curriculum. It is the profound conviction of the author that a desire to be successful in the acquisition of a second language can be intrinsic, with the use of a set of basic tools which provide extrinsic motivation to learn, but rely on a child's intrinsic competitive nature. On the basis of two case studies, one conducted in a classroom of learners with a disparate L1 and the second conducted in a classroom where the learners shared a common first language, the article will demonstrate the fact that children can be provided with an external reason to learn which, over time, becomes inextricably linked with the task of learning the given language.

Key words – Second Language Acquisition, intrinsic, extrinsic, motivation, case study.

Introduction

When considering Second Language Acquisition, probably the single most important factor in the success or failure of the acquisition process is the motivation of the learner. Therefore every teacher of second language should be fully aware of just why the learner is seeking to learn a second language. Of course, each individual student has their own motivation and this will be reflected by their personality, aims, dreams, or maybe none of these factors. However, given the crucial role played by motivation in SLA, this field of interest has been at the forefront of research in recent times. Firstly, it is necessary to provide a definition of the types of motivation, which can be bracketed as intrinsic and extrinsic, then proceed to analyse the main theories of motivation, before finally providing an overview of how motivation can be applied in SLA in order to make the extrinsic tools used by the teacher transform into intrinsic motivation in the learner.

When seeking a definition of motivation, one need look no further than the work of socio-psychologist Gardner (1985, p. 50) who states that “motivation involves four aspects, a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitudes toward the activity in question.” This can best be understood as some type of inner state of being which causes various behaviour patterns to develop, and gives these patterns direction, especially the area of target-orientated behaviour. In the case of language learners, this is – somewhat naturally – connected with the desire to take an active part in the learning process. This is not to say that motivation is simply an internal process, because the field of motivation theories are equally concerned with the reasons a learner chooses to participate in the learning process and the targets which the learning process is intended to meet. Therefore we might immediately draw the tentative conclusion that, while students may be equally motivated, the causes of their motivation may differ significantly.

As a result of this conclusion, we might begin to draw a distinction between two types of motivation; that is intrinsic and extrinsic. So, we can assert that learners are intrinsically motivated when they have a personal interest in participating in the learning process, and take an active role in defining the aims of this process. This is almost an altruistic approach to learning, whereby learning for its own sake is often more rewarding than any benefits that learning might bring. According to Lepper & Iyengar (1999, p. 349) a student with intrinsic motivation participates in the learning process for “its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes.” One feels justified in concluding here that intrinsic motivation is therefore determined by the dual feelings of competence and self-determination; so it is of paramount importance that the intrinsically motivated learner feels that they are participating in the learning process of their own volition, and has a feeling of autonomy, rather than the impression that they are being forced into acquisition at a pace not of their own choosing.

In complete contrast, the extrinsically motivated learner is driven by the tangible notion of reward. This might range from a word of praise from the teacher or parent, through financial reward and career advancement, to the fear of being punished for failure. So, we can posit here that the activity itself takes second place to some external factor which the teacher must be aware of in order to utilise this to its fullest effect. It is also necessary to be aware of the fact that learners with extrinsic motivation might actually be pressured into the process of SLA, rather than being a

genuinely willing participant. There is, however, a negative aspect to extrinsic motivation, and that occurs when the rewards are no longer necessary, or the motivation to receive the rewards is withdrawn. At this point, the learner is left with no tangible reason to continue acquisition. However, this should in no way overshadow the fact that extrinsic motivation plays an important role in assisting those with no intrinsic motivation, especially when this takes the form of positive feedback (Littlewood, 1984).

It is possible, when comparing these two forms of motivation, to conclude that intrinsic motivation has a more profound effect on the learner, because such learners tend to put more effort into the learning process and are often prepared to take greater risks. It is also a general rule that intrinsic motivation tends to be more durable in nature, thus providing a longer lasting effect.

Selected Theories of Motivation

Having provided an outline of the two basic types of motivation, it is now possible to proceed with an investigation into the theoretical frameworks that have been constructed by various researchers, and analyse the approaches various schools of thought have taken when considering motivation. The basic theories can be placed into three overall categories: behaviouristic, cognitive, constructivist (Brown, 2007).

Firstly, and in no order of priority, we can analyse the behaviourist school, which developed during the early to mid twentieth century. In short, this theory involves a three stage approach to learning, which can be defined as stimulus, response, and reinforcement. The first stage of this theory implies there is a stimulus for action, followed by the action itself, with the final stage being an external response, usually seen to be a reward (although in some cases this might actually be negative feedback or punishment). The most eminent proponent of this theory is Skinner (1976) who explains motivation in terms of reinforcement theory. According to him, behaviour is both generated and sustained by the results of the learner's actions. Therefore, with positive reinforcement, the behaviour of the learner can be encouraged and maintained, while through negative reinforcement, behaviour can be discouraged, or indeed eliminated. Skinner's theory is reliant on the fact that learning is nothing more than a change in behaviour, and that changes in behaviour can be engendered by controlling the stimulus, and creating a natural reaction that will eventually be, through reinforcement, reproduced by the learner without the need for external stimulus at all. We can see that behaviourist models rely very heavily on extrinsic motivation, and seem to be anathema to the notion of intrinsic motivation and learner autonomy (Williams & Burden, 1997).

The earliest behaviourist theories propounded were based on the idea of Classical Conditioning, which became eponymous with the theory which is best presented by Ivan Pavlov (2003). In his research, Pavlov used a dog to demonstrate exactly how this theory works in practice. If we imagine the response of a dog to the sight of a bowl of food, we can correctly predict that the dog will salivate. Therefore the food produces salivation. Then, if we were to ring a bell at the same time as we were to produce the dog food, we would have a chain of events such as food, bell, and salivation. After a period of time, if we were to ring the bell, but not produce the food, we would get the reaction of bell produces salivation. What we have achieved is the substitution of one stimulus for another, while maintaining a similar reaction. To put

this in slightly more technical terms, the learner actually learns no new behaviour; rather the learner is conditioned to react in the same way to a variety of stimuli.

The behaviourist model was slowly superseded by the cognitivist school of thought, which made a clear link between behaviour and choice. In stark contrast to the behaviourists, who indicated that external influences were sufficient to condition human behaviour, the cognitivists stressed the fact we as individuals have complete control over our destiny as we are ultimately responsible for setting our own targets and also how we set about achieving those targets. Consequently, cognitivist research tends to focus on why people make decisions, and the factors involved in reaching those decisions (Williams and Burden, 1997).

There is one cornerstone theory of cognitive motivation, which was propounded first by Bernard Weiner and is termed Attribution Theory (Dörnyei, 1998). In the simplest of terms, this theory seeks to explain how people perceive the cause of events. There is, according to Weiner, a three stage process involved in attributing a cause to an event: firstly, the event or action must be observed; secondly, it is necessary to determine that the action is intentional; and finally one must establish whether the action was forced or not (the so-called internal and external causes). Having established a basic method for the establishment of the cause of an action, Weiner then turned his attention to defining achievement in a specific task. And it is here he discussed the notion of attribution, and the most important factors affecting attribution, which are luck, ability, task difficulty and effort. Further, these attributions can be classified into three causal groups: controllability (whether the causes are within our control, or rather they lay beyond an individual's mastery), stability (does the cause change, or does it remain constant), and the locus of control (the causes are polarised on an internal/external basis). The lessons here can be applied in understanding the basic human tendencies to attribute success to one's own abilities, while failure is often explained in terms of external factors such as bad luck or external interference.

Despite the diverse nature of cognitivist writings, it is possible to identify a clear unifying thesis, and that is the focus on the individual rather than taking a broader perspective. Many theorists have chosen to focus on internal drives and desires. One such example is discussed in Brown (2007), when he puts forward the exemplary work of Ausubel and the six internal needs that each individual has which provide the drive for our decisions. The main problem that has been singled out in this approach is the fact that cognitivist theory fails to take into account the external forces that inevitably influence the thought process, and hence the decision making process, of the individual. This is where a more comprehensive approach has developed in recent times, which takes into account a whole spectrum of factors that influence an individual's level of motivation to acquire a second language.

The third generally defined approach to motivation is often termed as the constructivist view, which moves away from the individual choice towards a broad social context. Each individual is, of course, motivated individually, which is neatly summed up by Williams & Burden (1997) when they say that "what motivates one person to learn a foreign language and keeps that person going until he or she has achieved a level of proficiency with which he or she is satisfied will differ from individual to individual" (Williams & Burden 1997, p. 120). The authors do go on to

explain that while individual choices are paramount, they are subject to a broad range of qualifying influences including such factors as social and cultural constraints, and the individual's interaction with other members of their social group.

The constructivists tend towards highlighting the innate capacity of human beings for self-improvement, while simultaneously recognising the social forces that work externally to shape our psychology. One such humanist to seek to explain motivation in these terms was Abraham Maslow who, in his Hierarchy of Needs, propounded a pyramidal structure, with fundamental needs at the bottom, and the more abstract needs at the very top (Dörnyei, 1998). It follows that these needs must be fulfilled from the bottom upwards; so on the bottom layer we find physiological needs such as oxygen, food, water (those things fundamental for human survival). Following this layer in ascending order, there are safety needs, belonging needs, esteem needs, and at the very pinnacle the needs of self-actualisation. It goes without saying that an understanding of these needs is crucial in ensuring the motivation of learners.

David McClelland (1987) proposed the theory of Achievement Motivation, in which he indicated there are three elements that significantly contribute to levels of motivation, the need for achievement, the need for power, and the need for affiliation. And it is the first of these needs which is of most interest to theorists of SLA, because McClelland discovered that many learners like to be challenged by moderately, or even fiendishly difficult tasks. In doing such tasks, learners are testing themselves and satisfying the need for achievement, as well as testing themselves and gaining feedback to reinforce the sense of success. Of course not all learners are gifted with the same levels of this motivation, and McClelland observed a marked variation in learners need to achieve. However, he also sought a way to train learners to raise their expectations, thus increasing their levels of motivation. So having examined a sample of the theories presented to explain motivation, it is now possible to examine the role of these theories in SLA.

Improving motivation

As mentioned earlier, motivation probably plays the single biggest role in determining the success or failure of the acquisition process. And we can further conclude that intrinsic motivation is the most powerful and durable form of motivation. In the main, learners are motivated to their task by a need to belong, the need for approval, or the desire to show competence (either to their self or others). While these intrinsic forms of motivation are very important in themselves, they play only a small part when taken into the wider contexts of cognition and society. A few things that may be concluded here are that: rewards should be used sparingly, less they lose their value; the students are often more than capable of generating their own motivation; the levels of the tasks set for completion should neither be too easy, nor too difficult; goals should be set to specific tasks to enable the learners to see where they are going, and to allow the learners themselves to measure the success or failure of the task. Despite the infant nature of the study of motivation in SLA, it is quite clear that the lessons that can be learned are of great value in assisting the learner to achieve the greatest possible level of achievement.

Attention can now be turned to the practical implementation of this knowledge in the classroom environment, which will be done on the basis of an analysis a case study conducted at a Summer Language Camp in the United Kingdom in the summer of

2012. The intention of the case study was to observe how motivation of an extrinsic nature could be employed as invisibly as possible in order to facilitate the acquisition process, and especially to see how the correct form of motivation might be employed to overcome other barriers to the task of language learning.

Making the extrinsic intrinsic.

The first method employed was to try to improve the motivation of the students. Here the problem was not so much a question of enthusiasm, as all of the learners under observation were keen members of the class. The crux of the issue with motivation was twofold, firstly, the learners treated the whole experience as a 'Summer Holiday', and as a result, any attempt to work in the traditional classroom sense was met with reluctance, because work and holiday do not mix. Secondly, the lessons took place during the morning, and so the learners often gave the impression of being tired and too lethargic to achieve anything constructive. Therefore the method employed needed to be of an extrinsic nature in order to be effective.

Simply using words of praise as a form of carrot in this respect would be of relatively limited value. Equally, the use of negative feedback and punishment would only serve to create a negative working environment that would be counterproductive. Thus a system of motivation was needed that might take the form of extrinsic motivation, and would rely on an element of peer motivation to reduce the role of the teacher to a moderator, rather than raise this role to that of the central figure in the motivational dynamic. Also, the method needed to include an element of feedback, so that it would be possible for the students to assess their achievements (either positive or negative).

The method that was chosen is based on the English school 'House Points' system. In this, the students are divided into groups, and points are awarded on the basis of positive achievement, or deducted as a form of punishment. This method also served a secondary role of encouraging integration between the learners, all of whom were strangers on the first day of the course, and also assisted in separating those of a common mother tongue. Another essential advantage of this system of motivation is that it encourages a sense of belonging, which is a key element in personal happiness, and also the desire to do things not for one's own sake, but for the benefit of the 'team'. It also, interestingly, makes the teacher a somewhat redundant source of discipline as it is the learners who employ a form of peer correction when something goes wrong.

This points system was introduced on the second day of the course. The students were divided into three groups of four, with care being taken to ensure that those learners with a common L1 were in different groups. The sorting process immediately piqued the interest of the learners, as it was a novelty to them, and their enthusiasm for the idea of a competition was clear from the outset. However, an additional element was introduced at the beginning in order to give the competition real meaning, and that was the concept of a winners' prize. The effectiveness of this method was immediately apparent as it was deemed necessary to deduct points for those who had turned up late for the lesson. The result was that the students who were late were berated by their peers for costing the team points, and the behaviour was not repeated on a single occasion over the remaining three weeks. The tentative conclusion that can be drawn here is that the attitude of those who were late was altered in order to avoid

becoming alienated from their team members, and thus, inadvertently, their motivation to be present and active during the classes was also improved.

In order to try to increase the intrinsic nature of this method, the students were given as much control over the rules governing the awarding and deduction of points as possible, and were also responsible for the creation of team names to try to increase their sense of empathy with the group. Again, this was done to take advantage of the inherent competitive nature of young people, and to try to reduce the role of the teacher (as stated previously, it was intended from the very beginning that the students not be aware of the extrinsic nature of this motivation). Equally, it was deemed that ownership of the classroom was essential for the learners, as if they could say that they were responsible for the rules, they were more likely to actually obey those rules and also force compliance in their peers.

The relative motivational merits of this method were immediately apparent when the first task of the first lesson was presented, which was diary writing (an integral part of the Pilgrims course, as it allows for repetition and reviews of material, and also caters for learners of a visual nature as this exercise is not communicative). On the first day of the course, there was a general antipathy demonstrated towards the written tests, which was anticipated, and this antipathy was again expected when it came to writing the diaries. So it was decided that points would be awarded on the basis of achievement on a scale of one to ten (so that even the lowest achievers would gain some form of tangible reward). When the groups were assigned for the diary writing activity, it was immediately noticeable that both Luca (Italian male) and Eugeny (Russian male) were reluctant to participate, either because they were audio learners and the task was not best suited to their learning style, or because they simply did not want to write. Interestingly, it was observed that in both cases, other members of their groups assisted them in recalling their activities from the previous day, and their overall impressions of what had so far come to pass. Equally, Mohamed (Saudi Arabian male), who was reluctant to participate in the activity, on the grounds of his difficulties in writing using the Latin script, received assistance in producing work of a passable merit. The overall result exceeded expectations in a number of ways. Firstly, the exercise went on for considerably longer than the lesson plan allowed, which was the result of the learners' desire to compose the best possible diary entry. Secondly, the overall quality of the work was of a very high standard with very little need for correction of the end product. Thirdly, the exercise was received positively by the students as a whole, and writing was not perceived as an onerous task.

Another area in which the motivation of the students was clearly vital was to the ongoing projects which the learners regularly completed as a part of the syllabus of the camp. To exemplify, let us take two simple lessons and expand: one lesson was on the broad subject of sport, and the second was connected with discussing and describing one's own country. In each case the final part of the lesson, devoted to free production, was to complete a project in groups. It was decided that the learners would be divided into their class teams for the project, and instead of simply preparing a poster describing their own country or favourite sport, they would have to create their own visions. This was intended to work on two specific levels: firstly, being in their teams it would be far easier to motivate the students with positive rewards; secondly, the learners would have a far greater level of ownership as they would be using their own ideas which would help them to bond together better. The

results were far better than anticipated as the students spent a lot of time working to produce a piece of work which was actually somewhat beyond their level of linguistic competence and was also very well presented in the posters. When compared to groups not using the point system of motivation, and projects which asked the learners to talk about real sports or countries the volume, level and quality of work was clearly superior in the 'motivated' groups.

One other interesting observation of note in connection with this method of motivation was made during a number of pronunciation drills. A number of the students were troubled by the prospect of drilling, especially Yoh and Rika (both Japanese), and the French student Nathalie. With the Japanese students, this was based on their inherent introverted personality, and the fact that Japanese students suffer from the problem of pronouncing the English 'r' and 'l' phonemes. With Nathalie, it was more a question of attitude towards the language (which in her case was decidedly negative), and the strong interference of L1 accent in L2 speech. In terms of the Japanese learners, the natural introversion and desire to stay in the background was overcome in two ways; firstly because of their competitive natures, and secondly because their peers were actively encouraging them to be successful, rather than laughing at their failures. With Nathalie, her negative attitude towards the English language was overcome by the encouragement of her peers, and her sense of belonging to a team, and working towards the success of this team.

Concluding remarks

It was the intention of the author from the outset to demonstrate that motivation is a prime factor in the acquisition process, and that the competitive nature of children can be utilised (indeed manipulated) in order to provide a platform for internal motivation. The case study clearly demonstrated that simple tools can be employed to gain an advantage for the teacher. A summer camp was deliberately chosen as the subject of the study as the students who take part in such camps are often disinclined to learn as they are 'on holiday' and do not wish to spend time in a classroom. The students enjoyed the competition, indeed it was one of the specific aims of the study to try to keep things as healthy as possible in order to utilise the so-called 'fun factor' to facilitate the acquisition process. Equally, in terms of observations conducted of classes where the points system was not implemented, such factors as discipline and the quality of the output (especially written) of the students was clearly superior in the 'motivated' group. While it is obvious that further study is required on a larger scale and over a longer period, the tentative conclusion that may be drawn here is that competition in the language classroom is an incredibly useful tool in the armoury of the teacher in terms of motivating learners to be successful.

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Exploring Strategies for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in an English Learning Context

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Abstract

While globalization in the cyber age has turned our world 'flat' (Friedman, 2007), and transformed the mentality of job recruitment (Giddens, 1990; Ritzer, 2004; Tomlinson, 1999), how to cultivate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to safeguard their local cultural heritage and yet foster their ability to communicate in the global world is an important issue for EFL teachers (Korsgaard, 1997). 'Culturally Relevant Pedagogy' (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1992) was such a cultural concept to address the minority learners' cultural needs of academic gap in cultural discontinuity in mainstream English schools (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Most CRP studies focus on between minority learners' home cultural experience and the language interactions with teachers in schools. Not many studies investigated CRP in EFL context within different cultural contexts. Affective support in critical open discussions is thus an emphasis in this study because social constructivist approach is not assumed in Chinese culture.

The purpose of this research is to explore EFL culturally relevant pedagogy by qualitative methodology. Nine experienced EFL teachers were interviewed for cultural teaching beliefs, affective support, cultural accommodating strategies and possible challenges. The result showed that affective personal support, and immersing cultural teaching with contrastive cognitive analysis are effective, yet challenges exist due to examination-orientation cultural backgrounds. Implications and are provided for optimal cultural development in EFL context.

1. Introduction

Globalization in the cyber age has turned our world ‘flat’, according to Friedman (2007). Helping learners understand the western culture from non-western learners’ viewpoints in a culturally proper way is a key for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers particularly at the tertiary level. ‘Culturally Relevant Pedagogy’ (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1992) was advanced as just such a cultural concept, designed to address the cultural needs of minority learners’ in mainstream English schools; it was developed further in practice (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Irvine, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a,b; Tsai, 2009). With their recent popularity in educational and social studies, most CRP studies focus on the academic gap in the form of cultural discontinuity between minority learners’ home cultural experience and the language interactions with teachers in schools. Few studies have investigated CRP in the EFL context with its different needs according to different cultural contexts and practices. While cross-cultural communication with westerners has helped to improve Chinese EFL learners critical dispositions and attitudes according to the western model, it led to affective discomfort and cultural conflicts (Chiu & Cowan, 2010; Chiu, 2011a). Affective support related to in-class social interactions is thus an emphasis in this study. The purpose of this research is to explore culturally relevant educational pedagogy in an EFL context as the pilot study of a culturally relevant development research series. The research question is: What strategies constitute effective pedagogy in implementing Culturally Relevant EFL?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Ladson-Billings (1995a) was the first author to explicate the theoretical framework of culturally relevant research in a pedagogical context. Ladson-Billings (1995a, p. 478) proposed a theoretical basis for the following concepts of culturally relevant teaching: the conceptions of self and others and knowledge of concepts. First, culturally relevant teachers believe in ‘all students’ capabilities in academic success, seeing their pedagogy as art and viewing themselves as members of community’ (p. 478). Knowledge is ‘shared, constructed, and viewed critically’ (p. 481). Teachers should be passionate about knowledge, enough to ‘scaffold and build bridges to facilitate learning’ and use multifaceted assessment in multiple forms of excellence (p. 481).

Culturally relevant teachers meet the following criteria in their daily teaching:

- The use of dialogues: conversations when assessing knowledge claims (p. 473)
- The ethic of caring: teachers affectionately connecting with all students, committed to students’ lives, community welfare and social justice (p. 473-4)
- The ethic of personal accountability: objectively arguing for ‘a position whether they themselves agree with the position or not’ (p. 474)

To summarise, culturally relevant teachers converse with students, show caring, and demonstrate commitments to ideological and value positions in helping students to understand knowledge claims.

2.2 Strategies of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Cultural theories associated with language acquisition have been an issue researched by western educators (Kramsch, 1991; Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Hinkel, 2011). However, there is an urge for more in-depth discussions (Hinkel, 2011, p. 6) of language teaching, to better connect ‘the teaching of language to that of culture’

(Kramersch, 1991, p. 236). Kramersch (1991) found that in many language classrooms, culture is frequently reduced to 'foods, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts' (p. 218), and opined that the impact of culture on language acquisition and language use is much more complex than 'the four Fs' (p. 218), which are often transmitted by reading newspaper headlines, customs, cuisines, and learning courtesies. Current cultural teaching strategies covered in the western research include a diversity of methods with various theoretical orientations. According to Hughes (2001), effective techniques for teaching cultural awareness include (p. 167-8): comparison, culture capsule, drama, audio motor unit, news, and media. Comparison method aims at comparing items of the target culture with the culture of origin as distinctly different examples. The discussion focuses on why these differences may cause problems (Hughes, 2001, p. 167).

2.3 Chinese Cultural Influence

Western critical thinking literature shows a gap in respect of the cultural considerations of Chinese students in exercising critical thinking in public. The western social constructivists call for a social-cultural norm rather like the "coffeehouse culture" of polite critical comment (Connery, 1997; Rheingold, 1993). Learners from Confucian cultural contexts, which emphasize 'group identity and harmony maintenance' (Hinkel, 2011, p. 10) will not necessarily understand the Anglo-Saxon cultural contexts due to their Socratic component. Hence students are conditioned in Confucian contexts to help them to act properly within the Confucian paradigm. In addition, in view of the affective and cultural attributes of the Chinese context, critical thinking also needs to be exercised with cognitive flexibility (Lipman, 1995).

3 Research Methodology and Method

3.1 Research Method

The study applied qualitative research methodology and used in-depth interviewing as the method of data collection for teachers' theoretical orientations, beliefs or knowledge about an aspect of language teaching. The interviews focused on the EFL informants' fundamental educational belief and their affective and social practices in providing culturally relevant education in English classes. The Instrumentation section below summarizes the questioning.

3.2 Instrumentation

In the in-depth interviews, the questions focused on the provision of affective and social support, and the chosen strategies for attending to individual students' different needs. The instrument was theoretically driven by Ladson-Billings (1995) and modified after a pilot study with two senior native English teachers. There were sub-themes in the instrument: the first one (Q1) dealt with the teachers' educational beliefs about cultural teaching and learning (Ladson-Billings, 1995); the second pair (Q2-3) on the pedagogy of social and affective support (Sheehan, 2000); and the last pair (Q4-5) on strategies followed to develop cultural understanding (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Each interview lasted for approximately 90 minutes.

3.3 Research Procedure

The researcher interviewed eleven tertiary EFL teachers who were from different backgrounds, yet all had a minimum of six months language teaching and living

experience. The informants' experience covered a variety of EFL/ ESL teaching including: a normal university in China, one in Guam, a U.S.-Taiwan teacher exchange program, distance tutoring for the UK Open University. and language centers in the U.S. and U.K. universities. The study used stratified sampling for more comprehensive data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). There were 4 teachers of more than 11 years of EFL experience, 4 teachers of 6-10 years of EFL teaching experience and 3 teachers of less than 5 years of teaching experience. There were 4 from U.K., 3 from U.S., 1 from South Africa, 1 from New Zealand, 1 from Japan, and 1 from Taiwan. The different backgrounds and experiences of teachers could open up research opportunities to different educational beliefs and diverse teaching pedagogies for better understanding of culturally relevant teaching and learning. After the interviews, transcripts were e-mailed to interviewees within 24 hours to guarantee the reliability of the data.

4. Results

4.1 Cultural Awareness Issues for English Native Instructors

Before concentrating on purposeful social interactions and pedagogical strategies, there are important cultural awareness issues arising as part of the irbeliefs for English native speaking instructors and local English instructors. First, for English native speaking instructors, it is important to understand in depth the learners' culture at a deeper level and clarify misunderstandings if any. Many English speaking instructors could not understand why their students think in a certain way or act in a certain way. For example, Informant I said: 'Some of our white colleagues do not understand the cultural background of students and their suffering..' This message pointed out the truth that, in order to teach culturally relevant pedagogy, native English speaking instructors need to be aware in-depth of their students' culture of origin. Culturally accepted values and ways vary between different cultures and different occasions. Sometimes students are silent in the English class out of reverence and politeness, acting towards authority as culturally appropriate, and not out of resentment towards English or the instructor.

4.2 Cultural Awareness Issues for Non-English Native Instructors

On the other hand, local English instructors have to face the issue of identity in teaching culture to the local students. Teacher G explained: 'I think it is the challenge of an In-between Identity because local teachers are not exactly English, but need to carry on the cultural ambassador mission to connect and bridge between our culture of origin with the English culture at its diverse versions.' Therefore, if local instructors aim to teach English culture to students of the same origin, it is important for them to have confidence in one's own identity and be the 'cultural ambassador' in order to effectively communicate and connect sufficiently with current generation with the regional culture. Informant K added one more perspective in the non-Anglo teacher identity: 'Bilingual local teachers should perceive themselves privileged over mono-lingual native speaking teachers for three reasons: realistic and desirable model communicator in EFL; understand better local EFL students' language and culture problems, and the use of mother tongue to help learning in difficult concepts/ issues.' Instead of perceiving themselves as inferior, non-English native EFL instructors need to be confident in teaching culture because they portrait a role model, and understand the learners' mother tongue and culture better in order to carry on the cultural facilitator' task. Additionally, there is a second issue in communicative purpose to primarily model after the U.S. over regional Asian Englishes. Informant K thus said, 'We EFL

teachers should not teach English about the U.S. only. Since students are more likely to encounter those ‘non-native’ users of English, the Asian cultural content should be taken into account and shift away from the current Anglo-American-centred paradigm.’

4.3. Social interactions in cultural teaching

Informants reported their use of pairing and discussion, yet the key still lay in providing adequate ‘affective support’ to the EFL learners, and in activities recognising different learning styles. Informant B explained the importance of affective support, ‘Without *affective support* and *relationships with students after class*, ‘Are there any questions?’ is only a western norm of teacher-student interaction technique. Chinese culture is a more collectivist, group-oriented rather than individual one...’ Informant A commended accommodation to the use of all learning styles, ‘I think it is important to engage all students by appealing to all learning styles if possible. Some students are oral learners, while others are visual, or kinetic learners. I often start with visual ‘showing’ the phrases, using electronic Smart Board to elicit pair/ group oral practices, finally acting, singing, or even dancing. Students will internalize the language patterns and vocabulary better if the classroom activities attend to their needs and motivate them.’ Regarding fostering the silent ones, Informant F said ‘confidence building and not losing face’ are important: ‘I will go around the class to reach out to the silent ones. If they do not readily have an answer, I will move on to ask those more active and verbal ones...I do so not to short-circuit their critical thinking, but try not to embarrass them or single them out for pressures, particularly in CHC context where ‘face’ is an important issue. I try hard not to intimidate them or embarrass them, so they may grow to maintain confident in the English oral class.’

Informant B added,

As far as themes are concerned, culturally important themes to students can appear in the first stage of the cross cultural learning to have comfortable start, later gradually to bridge to more complex topics like current issues at the later stage. However, culturally inspiring themes may not appear to be readily culturally appropriate to CHC students, because it can occasionally be overly sensitive to students and shut them down in the class discussion flow.

To sum up, pairing and discussions are frequently used for social interactions, but more cultural sensitivity and suitable strategies are still needed to keep silent EFL learners confident and motivated.

4.4 Pedagogical Strategies of cultural teaching and learning

4.4.1 Media Integration

A variety of strategies were used for fostering cultural teaching and learning. Informant A took full advantage of modern technology by showing online newspapers like New York Times, real life objects from U.K./U.S. in digital photos, pop music in MP3, films, You-tube links and even Facebook.

Informants E, G and H offered students practices in singing Scottish songs with CD and filling the blanks for English-Scottish lyrics, recording real life simulations like running Dictation and mini-Olympics during London Olympics 2012 and with the introduction of culture of origin with video and power point presentations.

4.4.2 Dialogical Strategy

Most informants use dialogical strategies of group and class discussions on culturally relevant issues. Informant B's top three strategies include personal experience sharing, face-to-face class discussions and journaling:

In daily teaching, I attempt to immerse cross-cultural teaching and learning by discussing with them different values and perspectives in the English speaking culture, including concept of personal space and privacy issues... Chinese people do not approach strangers easily, yet if they do, they tend to do so physically and in a socially close manner. In the U.S. culture, normally, people keep an arm's length away during a conversation and will back up unconsciously...

In addition to discussing the cultural differences in values and practices, another strategy mentioned by Informant H is role exchange with students in cultural learning, by asking 'Now you are the teacher. Educate me on.... Or why do people sometimes...?' 'Can you explain to me the practice of ...?' Moreover, Informant G pointed out the use of open in-depth class discussions on certain cultural practices/values while understanding the origin and deep meaning of learners' cultural backgrounds:

In order to understand other cultures, it is necessary to understand the origin and meanings behind their cultural backgrounds, so that we can understand why their cultures are different from our culture of origin. Take Saudi Arabian culture as an example. Both males and females decide their life-long commitment in marriage in a short length of time. I myself think this is quite unbelievable! However, they have followed the same tradition for thousands of years without any questioning! This is something worth teachers and students' discussing. Students can choose to disagree with the practice, but they still need to learn to respect the background and reasons behind such a tradition so convincing that people have carried out the practice.

Informant D also warned that teachers need to be 'impartial to all cultures, nationalities, religions, and political parties, so that they can teach students objectively without bias'. In a prejudice-free learning environment, students will better understand the deeper meanings of cultural exchange. While having open discussions about certain cultural practices and values, EFL teachers have to be sensitive and fair enough in their wording and attitude, so that students of this culture would not be offended and freeze up their cultural learning process. Meanwhile, other EFL students of different cultural origins will also learn a good model of cross-cultural communication.

4.4.3 Comparative Strategy

Rather differently, British Informant R used a phonetic chart to compare English pronunciation with Italian and Spanish which are phonetic languages with Chinese and Japanese, which are graphic languages. For example, the word 'castle' in English is silent in the fricative 't', while 't' is pronounced distinctively in 'castello' in Italian, and in 'castillo' in Spanish, as derived from the Latin root. This type of word can be problematic to Latin learners in English classes because in their mother tongues, they mostly say what they read without much variation.

On the phonetic chart, the teacher can demonstrate the challenges to students of different culture origins in their English pronunciation. He needs to provide cognitive input and explain how to work with vocal chords, lower lip, stick tongue out, or

curling tongue in certain English words. The English word 'cello' adopted its Italian pronunciation, so it is not pronounced as *sello*, which is a surprise to Chinese and Japanese learners. Many Chinese learners have encountered difficulties in 'th' (I 'think' so as I 'sink' so), and a (as in 'Kate' or as in 'cat'), while Japanese learners have difficulties to curl their tongue for the 'r' sound as in *rose*. It is also difficult for Spanish learners to accurately pronounce 'j' and 'h' because they are different in their mother tongue. After the cognitive input of explaining the differences, learners processed those sounds and produced cognitive output. Therefore, the teacher first highlighted the differences on the chart, then demonstrated the correct and the incorrect ways, and finally asked those learners to practice minimal pairs (*sheep* versus *ship*) aloud to each other.

5. Discussions

This section discusses the social support and pedagogical strategies in relation to EFL learners' affective, social, and cultural dimensions during the cultural teaching and learning process in English classes. First, English native speaking and non-native English speaking instructors need to deal with different cultural awareness issues before they can create a social-cultural norm like the 'coffeehouse culture' in the west (Connery, 1997; Rheingold, 1993). For English native speaking instructors, it is important to understand the EFL learners' culture in-depth, and to clarify bias, stereotyping or misunderstanding if any. Some of the English native speaking instructors have difficulties in conducting cultural dialogues with their EFL learners because they could not understand why their students think in a certain way or act in a certain way. Stereotypes and bias may dominate when cultural understanding is not sufficient. Informant I pointed out that some English native colleagues may not understand learners' cultural backgrounds and suffering/ difficulties, and thus lack empathy with learners' difficulties. When a teacher authority's perspective of the local learners' cultural practice is biased to some extent, it would be challenging to create the 'coffeehouse culture' within a harmony-oriented and authority-reverent culture. Therefore English native instructors are only potential cultural ambassadors in EFL classes if given an adequate foundation regarding social interactions. Affective and social teacher-student relationships can be fostered by caring and understanding of the learners' culture of origin, and clarifying some bias either way in cultural coffeehouse chat. Due to different communication assumptions between the East and the West (Scollon, 2011), public messages which differ from the commonly accepted values of EFL learners' culture of origins may become emotionally hurtful and culturally unacceptable in an Asian Chinese context, which prioritizes social harmony, echoing Chiu's (2009) study.

Meanwhile, non-native English speaking instructors need to be confident in their cultural identity and pragmatic cultural communication. Since the majority of EFL learners desire Anglo instructors as ideal teachers, local instructors often struggle with their own cultural identity and teacher identity in teaching English culture to students of the same origin. Local instructors' sense of inferiority in their cultural identity and teacher identity comparing to Anglo colleagues may hinder the development of coffeehouse chat for cultural purposes. As Informant K said, local EFL instructors can be better held accountable (Ladson-Billing, 1995a) and have confidence in themselves because as effective role models in EFL, they understand EFL learners' errors better and can communicate in mother tongue in cases of language comprehension or cultural difficulties. Local instructors can be ideal 'cultural ambassadors' by helping

effectively communicate and connect learners' culture with English culture. In addition to identity issues, local teachers can use English as the pragmatic tool to mediate cultural communication to promote local and regional/Asian culture, so that English classes do not focus only on U.S. primarily or U.K. exclusively. Engaging EFL students to be more 'culturally relevant' to be open up for public 'coffeehouse' dialogues may lead to development of teachers' own in-between identity. It can also lead to 'cultural inappropriateness' during the social interaction processes; hence local instructors need to educate learners to be more open-minded to other cultural practices and learn to take critical thinking, which is a common value in the west, not as negative attack but as criteria-based and reasoned communication for optimal cultural learning.

Partially similar to the views of Hughes (2001), technology integration, dialogical and cultural comparative strategies are effective tools, yet need to be immersed within the culturally relevant environment. Technology and strategies do not necessarily lead to culturally appropriate pedagogies in an EFL context. Ladson-Billings' (1995a) theory of culturally relevant pedagogy requires the ethic of caring, and the use of dialogues in cultural teaching and learning. The use of online technology like YouTube, real life simulations and comparative strategies help to gather attention and promote motivation for cross cultural learning. However, what matters most of all is still immersion of these strategies with affective and social support for EFL learners. As Informant B further explained, even with genuine care and love in teacher-student relationship outside the classroom context, there may still be culturally inappropriate discussion topics and deter further communication. Informant A said, 'Language and culture are not separable because a language exists within its culture. A teacher's role needs to go beyond the textbook content and help learners to understand cultural differences...', thus involving accountability considerations.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the educational beliefs and culturally relevant pedagogies of EFL teachers in different backgrounds and contexts, and confirmed the importance of affective support in social-cultural interactions for cultural teaching and learning. The fundamental educational belief held by those interviewed is loving and caring for EFL learners and understanding their cultures of origins in a broader context as cultural facilitators or ambassadors, expressed by: understanding EFL learners as unique whole persons with emotions, cognition, familial/parental academic pressures, and cultural backgrounds. Regarding culturally relevant pedagogy in social interactions, this featured: immersing cultural teaching in daily class activity, fostering interest and immediacy by teachers' own personal cross-cultural sharing, utilizing real life simulations, media uses of modern technology, and extending open discussions from familiar and safe topics to culturally inspiring and challenging topics. However, technology integration, dialogical and cultural comparative strategies are effective tools, yet need to be immersed within the culturally relevant environment. Meanwhile, the culturally relevant pedagogy may appear too culturally inappropriate at first and challenge EFL learners' cultural boundaries. Future research is recommended to explore the opportunities and challenges of cross-cultural understanding and cultural teaching in EFL to optimize students' cross-cultural communication competence and global competitiveness.

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The logo for the International Association for Foreign Language Research (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The logo is partially overlaid by a large, faint, light blue circular graphic that spans across the middle of the page.

Practical application of Learner Autonomy in teaching and learning of FFL.(French as a foreign language). Example of A1-A2 level of the Common European Framework for Languages

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0383

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Introduction

In today's evolving world, there is a need to make teaching and learning of foreign languages more dynamic and interesting. Learner autonomy has recently become an area that many have come to learn about. Although many teachers have knowledge of it, this area still remains abstract and many have not been able to put it into practice. Some talk about it in their papers and others completely ignore it. Learner autonomy is a very important and integral part of today's teaching and learning of foreign languages. It is possible for learners, beginners of the A1-A2 level of the Common European Framework of reference for Languages, to experience autonomy in their learning process. In this paper we will show how learner autonomy can be applied in a very practical manner. We shall first examine a few theories of Learner Autonomy, factors that enhance learner autonomy, the atmosphere that encourages autonomy, the role of the teacher and learner cannot be overemphasized. We shall also look at the reason why we decided to use the basic learner (A1-A2) and finally give a practical step by step procedure on how learner autonomy can be achieved at that level.

Brief overview of Learner Autonomy based on existing Literature.

Before we go into the crux of our discussion, it would be important to examine several definitions/ theories of Learner Autonomy by popular researchers.

First of all, Holec (1981) describes learner autonomy as the ability to take charge of his or her own learning" meaning that the learner has the responsibility of being in charge of his or her own learning process. Holec(1998) goes further to explain that the Learner can define what to learn according to his needs, and also how to learn and how to assess the results obtained. That is the "What" "why"& "How" of the learning process, thereby developing the learner's capacity to "learn how to learn". According to Mangenot F (2006) "fundamental aspect of language learning, learners need to learn how to learn, and thus acquire...autonomy"

He also stresses the fact that the learners ability to learn how to learn allows him to acquire a certain level of autonomy. Gruca & Cuq (2003) observe that Learner Autonomy is "the progressive disappearance of guidance", meaning that the usual/traditional role of the teacher is gradually disappearing. For Robert J-P(2002) there are "different levels of autonomy; acquired gradually, it would be an illusion to speak of "real autonomy" at the beginners level of language learning". Robert explains that learner autonomy comes gradually and in stages and that complete and total independence is not possible at a very early stage of language learning. Aoki N(1999) buttresses Robert's point by saying that "autonomy doesn't mean complete independence"

Meanwhile, Little (1991) emphasizes on autonomy as a capacity for reflection and critical thinking, the learner develops a psychological relation to the process and content of his learning.

Factors that enhance Learner autonomy

There are several factors that can enhance learner autonomy. According to Yaroson (2009) the following can be considered as very important points to note in order for learner autonomy to thrive. Firstly, Individual work in the resource/multimedia center should be encouraged. The hours of face to face experience between the teacher and the learners must be reduced. Classroom tasks and collaborative work in small groups should be encouraged. The learners should be allowed free speech in the class. Finally the teacher and the learner both have roles to accomplish in the process of learner autonomy.

Teacher's role in learner autonomy

In order to make learner autonomy a success the teacher has a big role to play. He/ she must re-examine his /her usual "comfortable" teaching habits. The teacher must be enthusiastic about what he's doing, he must be aware of the challenges involved in modern teaching /learning of Foreign Languages and be willing and ready to change old habits and ways of teachin

According to Gruca & Cuq (2003), the teacher as "one who transmits knowledge", as "master of orchestra" and as "all knowing" is outdated. Barriere I (2006) contrasts the traditional/modern role of the teacher: traditionally he is one who is "authoritative, one who knows and tells" while the modern teacher's role is no longer to transmit knowledge but to lead the learner to acquire strategies, by providing tools." Berard E(2004) adds that "teacher animates, organizes and solicits. He/she makes sure that the communication in the class is easily transposable to real life situations...with native speakers." we realize that the teacher has to provide an 'autonomy friendly' environment for his/her students. Holec (1998) also describes the new/modern teachers as "human resources" who take up the role of trainer/coach, adviser, a guide and a provider of material..."

the teacher shouldn't spoon feed the students but encourage them to be adventurous and should Lead the learners to discover new things on their own. Yaiche F (1996) observes that some teachers feel threatened by learner autonomy...they continue in old ways and rob learners the opportunity to take charge of their learning. The teachers shouldn't do that but be more open. The teacher should be more practical than theoretical, and not be afraid to test the theories that he/she has studied. More modern/up-to-date teaching & learning material should always be used. He/she should motivate and encourage learning strategies among the learners. There's a popular saying in language learning circles that says that the teacher should not be a "sage on the stage but a guide by the side".

Role of the learner

Just as the teacher has a big role, the learner equally has a huge role in ensuring his own success in this process. The learner has to take an active role: learn to speak, act, ask questions, be curious about the language in question, and avoid a passive /lazy attitude. He should take control of his learning. He is no longer needs to sit passively and soak up everything the teacher says, like a sponge. Through autonomy the learner is completely involved in his learning. There are all sorts of material available to the learner He must learn how to learn. He must be interested, to be able to develop the said autonomy. The learner must also take his own assessment into account.

The autonomy friendly classroom/environment

In order to ensure the success of learner autonomy, the right environment is necessary. So the teacher needs to provide that environment that is suitable. For example, the seating arrangement in the class should be in form of an arc (Cuq & Gruca, 2005) which gives room for free discussions and activities Learners are encouraged to work in little groups.

They should be allowed to talk freely and not be shut down or criticized by the teacher. The teacher has the responsibility of encouraging the use of new technologies /online resources.

He should also constantly encourage auto- correction/correction by peers. Communicative/collaborative activities and projects must be an important part of his program. Such a conducive atmosphere helps them grow and also develop a sense of belonging.

Why A1-A2 level of CEFL?

The A1 & A2 levels are the basic levels described by the Common Framework, the earliest stage of language learning known as “break through” and the “way stage” levels.

Here are the learners’ competences at the end of each of the first two basic levels, according to the CEFL. Basic user: A1: Break through level: “Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/her and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.”

Basic user: A2: Way stage level: “Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.”

With these descriptors in mind we are able to understand what is expected during and at the end of this basic learning level. Some may think it is too early to introduce the concept of autonomy because of their lack of understanding of learner autonomy. But this is the best time to begin, so that the learner gets used to individual and collaborative work, discovery and self assessment thus learning to take an active role in his learning. The learner quickly discovers strategies that will help to ease language learning. He learns very early not to be totally dependent on the teacher and learns to use resources (for his own level) at his disposal.

Practical steps for autonomous learning experience (A1-A2 class)

After much teaching and observation and reflection over the years and, I believe the following practical steps can be experimented in order to include learner autonomy into the A1-A2 level class.

- Explain to the learners what auto-learning is and their involvement in it.
- Discuss with the learners and know what their general learning needs /interest areas are.
- Schedule auto- learning time within the regular class schedule in the Multimedia /resource center(also encourage them to plan time outside regular class time)
- Prepare and present to them several types of learning material/resources, online activities, etc in line with their areas of interest/learning needs.
- Allow them to choose what they want to learn.
- Program a time frame for the learning experience, bearing in mind the learners with similar interests/ needs.
- Encourage individual unsupervised autonomous learning sessions.
- Have supervised autonomous learning sessions, where they can ask the teacher for assistance, but the teacher cannot offer assistance only if they ask.
- Group sessions can also be organized among the learners with similar topics/interest, where they can interact and share learning experiences and help each other.
- Encourage auto-evaluation /peer evaluation using already pre-prepared criteria.
- A “show & tell” session can be organized during regular class time, where the groups can showcase/teach the general class what they have learnt: this gives an avenue for collaborative work in preparation for the activity.
- Revision games/activities
- At the very end, an evaluation/appraisal of the whole experiment by the teacher is important, so he /she is able to reflect and know how to improve in the future and to ensure further success of the whole process of learner autonomy.

Conclusion and suggestions for further research.

In this paper we have examined several theories of Learner autonomy and have discussed the implication of the teacher and learner, each having a specific role in making it work. We have also looked at how the learning environment counts in making the learner at ease and helps him/her explore, discover and develop their learning strategies that will enhance autonomous learning progress. Several steps are suggested on how to practically make the experience a reality in the A1-A2 level, which is the lowest level of language learning as described in the Common European framework of reference for languages. At this level, proper habits can be formed, and the learners will be able to learn how to learn and appreciate working in a different way and thus they can be more dynamic and adventurous learners as they climb the ladder of their foreign language learning experience. Teachers and researchers in foreign languages are encouraged to move from being theoretical and be more practical and not be afraid to put into practice the theories they have learnt. They will see how their teaching will be more dynamic and the learning experience will be more exiting for the learners in their care.

For further research in this area, teachers should, after trying out the steps suggested in this paper, should do an overall evaluation of the whole process, finding out the weaknesses and strengths. They should also encourage feedback from their peers and especially from the learners. And more recommendations can be made for improving the practical application of learner autonomy in beginner levels of foreign language learning classes and other levels in general.

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Content-Based Instruction: English and Art History

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Abstract

At a university in Nishinomiya, Japan, undergraduate economic students are required to take two years of English language classes. This presentation will focus on 160 students (the majority freshmen) and observations of their performance and motivation in a language class using content-based instruction (CBI) over the first semester of the 2013 school year. The content used in this course's CBI is art history, with particular attention to 2D images from western cultures from early 1400s to late 1800s. This presentation will also focus on how six elements of a language course (Brown, 1995) were used in creating this course. These stages include a needs analysis, goals and objectives, assessment, materials (including how the materials and content were constructed), teaching method and tasks, and evaluation of the course (a PMI survey given at the end of the semester) and possible changes to be made in the fall semester. The goal here is to inspire debate and discussion with attention on CBI and its pros and cons and to question current curriculum in university language courses.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years I have been frustrated finding materials to teach university students English in Japan. I am sure I am not the only teacher that has faced this dilemma. Most textbooks or workbooks feature lessons on food, fashion, directions, things students can or can't do and so on. Not that I think these topics are unworthy of use in a language class, but I feel how these topics are presented in the materials or the textbooks available to students is confusing at times. One week the topic is "around town" and the next week the topic is "movies" and the week after that it's "weather." It seems like the words and grammar learned a few lessons ago are not used again.

One of the keys to acquiring a language and learning new vocabulary is repetition. If too much time has passed between the previous meeting of a word and the present encounter with the word, then the present encounter is effectively not a repetition but it is like a first encounter (Nation, 2001). That is what I find with a lot of material in current texts and workbooks: a lack of repetition due to the topic changing drastically each lesson. This was the challenge I faced: I need to get more repetition in classes, and I need to avoid changing the topic drastically each lesson.

While discussing this challenge with my colleagues, about how can we improve our classes, I was reminded about a lecture I saw on YouTube. It's called The Last Lecture: Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams. The lecture is filled with great ideas and advice on how to deal with the obstacles in our teaching and personal lives. One part of the lecture that jumped out at me was his presentation of Alice. Alice is project-based program that teaches students computer programming. In it he says, "The best way to teach someone something is to have them think they are learning something else. I've done it my whole career. And the head fake here is they are learning how to program, but they just think they are making movies and video games" (Pausch, 2007). The "head fake" is a type of indirect learning. He also mentions that programming can be a hard thing to learn, but by using these "head fakes" learning was fun.

For some (most?) Japanese students learning English is hard, so how can I make learning English fun, or at least get some head fakes in my lessons to make it seem like they are learning something else? This endeavor will be the basis for this paper. I will present four major pillars of the course and follow that by showing my decision making process in constructing the course, Western Images. A course that uses art history as the content in a teaching method called, content-based instruction, combined with vocabulary acquisition of the first 2,000 frequent words and tasks that entail "languaging" and paired dictation to help Japanese students have fun learning English. Finally, I will summarize the results of a PMI survey from the first semester. With this feedback I will propose changes to improve the course and also give other ideas for the creation of future courses as well. But first, let's look at the four pillars I have used to make Western Images.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are four major pillars that help support the course, Western Images. They are content-based instruction, vocabulary acquisition, languaging, and art history. I will

attempt to present each pillar and give reasons why they are beneficial to the course starting with content-based instruction.

The first pillar of the course involves content-based instruction (CBI). It is different from other methods of language learning, in that the instruction of the course is not focused on language alone. There is another learning element occurring during instruction. Not only are students learning a different language, an L2, but they are also learning about a different subject. That subject is the content in CBI. Met helps us define 'content' in CBI. The 'content' in content-based programs represents material that is cognitively engaging and demanding for the learner, and is material that extends beyond the target language or target culture (Met, 1999). Crandall and Tucker (1990) also give us a handsome definition of CBI: Content-Based Instruction is an approach to language instruction that integrates the presentation of topics or tasks from subject matter classes (e.g., math, social studies) within the context of teaching a second or foreign language.

With the help of CBI, the problem, confusion in the weekly change of topics, can be avoided. Also, CBI is can represent the "head fake" Randy Pausch mentioned in his Alice program. "The best way to learn something is to think you are learning something else." Well, in the case of the Western Images course, students are learning how to use English to ask and answer questions about other cultures, but they think this is just an art history class.

The second pillar involves vocabulary acquisition. Recently, second language vocabulary acquisition has been well researched. How to learn new words is an important component to learning a new language efficiently. It is useful for beginning learners of English to know the 2000 words that have the highest frequency. If you know the top 2,000 words and their families, you will know around 85% of the words in any general English text, and around 95% of the words in an everyday conversation (Barker, 2010). But what does it mean to "know" a word?

Knowing the meaning of a word is just one step to truly knowing a word. Knowing a word well involves knowing its spoken and written forms, knowing its related inflected and derived forms, knowing its meaning and its range of senses, knowing how to use it in a sentence, knowing the other words that it typically goes with it, knowing any restrictions or limitations of its use (Nation, 2010). So when a student encounters a word only once, the chances that the student truly knows the word is very, very slim. This means that the student must encounter the word multiple times, or have lots of repetition, to have a better understanding of a word.

The third pillar of the course deals with languaging. Languaging, or talking-it-through, is not something new. When some people want to understand something and can't figure it out by going over it through their head, they may say it out loud or speak to a person near them. The idea is not that the person will give the answer, but that the problem can be observed in a different perspective. The same can be done trying to learn a new language.

When language is used to mediate problem solutions, whether the problem is about which word to use, or how best to structure a sentence so it means what you want it to mean, or how to explain the results of an experiment, or how to make sense of the

action of another... “linguaging” occurs. Linguaging about language is one of the ways we learn a second language to an advanced level (Swain, 2005). Also, linguaging in groups or collaborative settings can also be beneficial to learning a language. In Western Images linguaging in groups is an essential component to the course.

The fourth pillar for Western Images is the content itself, and that is art history. But why study art history? Today more than ever people encounter visual images. TV, Internet, smart phones, tablets; we are looking at more information and visual images than ever before. We should learn how to correctly encounter and interpret these images. In addition art history is the also the study of new ideas. Students should learn how artists looked at art and how they decided to change the world around them or create something new. If students have trouble solving problems or being creative, the one thing that can help is to study the people that have solved problems or have been successful at being creative.

There are a number of other reasons to study art. The Fine Arts Department at the University of Hong Kong lists several aims of their program and a number of skills students learn from studying art history (Table 1.0 and 1.1). For a CBI English class, art history provides a subject that is cognitively engaging and demanding for the learner and extends beyond the target language or target culture as mentioned earlier by Met.

Table 1.0

Aims for Studying Art History

- to understand our visual environment
 - to interpret our own culture, as well as other cultures and value systems of both the past and the present
 - to appreciate diverse art forms
 - to enhance cross-cultural communication
 - to develop global perspectives in the contemporary world
 - to reveal the processes of human creativity
 - to play an essential role in aesthetic education
-

Fine Arts Department. University of Hong Kong.

Table 1.1

Skills Gained from Studying Art History

- critical thinking and creative thinking
 - analytical writing
 - visual analysis and interpretation
-

-
- cross-cultural communication
 - historical or archival research methods
 - self-directed learning
-

Fine Arts Department. University of Hong Kong.

These four pillars, CBI, focus on vocabulary acquisition, languaging, and studying art history, provided me to build a base to create the course, Western Images. To help create the curriculum for the year, I used J.D. Brown's book *The Elements of Language Curriculum* (1995).

METHOD AND COURSE

In the book *The Elements of Language Curriculum*, J.D. Brown lists six elements that are essential for a successful language course. The six elements are needs analysis, goals and objectives, testing and assessment, materials, method and teaching, and evaluation. Going through each one, I will present each element and my choices based on each element to create Western Images.

The first element is a needs analysis. A needs analysis is a systematic collection and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of a particular institution that influences the learning and teaching situation (Brown, 1995). To carry out this needs analysis I asked the teachers about the curriculum and students, and considered my own experiences teaching non-language learners.

Here are several pieces of information I was able to collect. Freshmen economic students have a mixed level of abilities. Students have anywhere from a 200 – a 400+ TOEIC score. Students have 14 classes per semester. There are two semesters in a year. Each class is 90 minutes long. There are about 35 students in each class. The English courses are required classes. Students must take two years of English or students can test out of the course. Students are economic students, not language learners.

With this information in mind I reflected on my own beliefs. I feel students should receive a well-rounded education while studying at a university. The content of the courses should be academically challenging. Students should be able to experience the content outside of class in the “real world.” The skills learned in the course should also be transferable. If you can do it in English, you can do it in Japanese. Students should interact with each other and be accountable for the performance of the group. To become stronger users of English, students need repetition and lots of it. For the freshmen students I need to make the input comprehensible. I decided to set the bar using the first 2,000 high frequency words at 85%. I also feel that students are missing opportunities to use English in other academic settings. Finally I thought about what I could bring to the table. I have a high interest in US pop culture and sport and western art and culture. Therefore, I decided to create an English course using art history as its content using CBI as a method of teaching.

The second element in a successful language curriculum is setting goals and objectives. Brown (1995) defines goals as general statements concerning desirable

and attainable program purposes and aims based on perceived language and situation needs, and he feels objectives are specific statements that describe the particular knowledge, behaviors, and/or skills that the learner will be expected to know or perform at the end of a course or program. I compiled a list of goals and objectives for the course Western Images (Table 2.0 and 2.1).

Table 2.0

Goals for Western Images

- Improve students listening, speaking, reading and writing levels.
 - Increase student's vocabulary knowledge and fluency in all 4 skills
 - Increase student's knowledge of the history of western culture by studying visual images over the last 600 years, with particular emphasis on 2D images.
 - Build an appreciation of Art, its past, present and future.
-

Table 2.1

Language and Content Objectives for Western Images

- Students will work on their vocabulary knowledge by writing information about the 1st and 2nd 1,000 words in English and words from the Academic Word List.
 - Students will focus on common English errors.
 - Students will be able to work together to create a 10 Q & A list from a biographical passage.
 - Students will perform in pairs and groups using English.
 - Students will have knowledge of over 100 works of art from the past 600 years.
 - Students will be able to do a visual analysis of art.
-

Once the goals and objectives have been set, there needs to be a way to properly assess the students. Have they accomplished the objectives set in the course and if so, how successful were they at completing the objectives? How can we measure what the students achieved at the end of the course? This can be done by testing.

There are different kinds of tests. There are diagnostic and proficiency types of tests, but what is desired for testing at the end of the course is achievement testing. Achievement testing is used to help develop the curriculum, especially in terms of revising the goals and objectives, and more importantly to determine how affectively the students have mastered the desired objectives. But one test should not determine the overall performance of a student throughout the course. To help determine students' performance, individual homework and group work is added to the test results for a final grade. One final note on tests and tasks in Western Images, all tests and tasks are done in English only. Not only does this give the students an atmosphere of a foreign class, it forces students not to rely on Japanese, but to think and use English in the classroom.

After considering the needs analysis, setting goals and objectives and stating the protocol for the testing and assessment, materials need to be decided. There are four main materials used in the course. Those materials are Common English Errors for Japanese Learners (CEE) and Learning English Vocabulary (LEV) by David Barker and Western Images course book with weekly Western Images presentations. The

CEE and LEV books are mostly used as references. One element I like in CEE is that it preaches “No matter how useful a phrase is in the L1, it doesn’t mean that there is an equivalent phrase in the L2.” The LEV book can be used to help students learn vocabulary used in the course. Students are given a word list for next week’s lesson. They must choose words they do not know well and write out the word’s information in the back of the book.

Choosing the content and making decisions on the layout of the Western Images course book was challenging, but fun at the same time. One of the decisions I made was that in the book paintings and 2D images from Western cultures would only be used. This was done intentionally to limit the language used. Also, I would make two books. One book for the first semester would be from the early 1400s to the late 1800s. The second one would be from the late 1800s to present day. Each book contains exercise areas for over 50 images and 10 artist biographies. The tasks involve getting the student’s first impression, learning details of the art, and making a visual analysis of the painting. The artists’ biography pages have a “Question and Answer” task for students to work together to complete. It is in the Q&A task that languaging occurs.

The weekly Western Images presentations, used with the Western Images course book, are a series of tasks for students to practice and learn English while learning art history. There are a few guidelines I followed to make the presentations more efficient for learning. The content in the presentations must be comprehensible to the students. To help make the presentations comprehensible I used the Compleat Lexical Tutor (Cobb, 2005) website. By using this software I was able to delete words with low frequency, alter the text to fit the presentation, and create new text where it was needed. In addition to the presentations being comprehensible, they must be challenging, but not impossible. The presentations must be engaging and hold students’ interest. The tasks must be short and roles should change constantly. And there should be a routine the students can recognize and follow. These four materials, Common English Errors for Japanese Learners, Learning English Vocabulary, the Western Images course books, and weekly Western Images presentations, helped build a language class that uses content-based instruction, vocabulary acquisition, languaging, and art history.

The fifth element in a successful language course is method and teaching. The methods of the course are content-based instruction and languaging. These methods have been discussed earlier. The final element, which is arguably the most important, is evaluation. Without evaluating the course it is difficult to make the necessary adjustments needed to improve the course. At the end of the semester a PMI open survey was distributed to the class. PMI is short for plus, minus, and inquiry. This can be helpful for getting feedback from students about the course, lessons and teaching. The results of the survey showed the majority of the students liked to learn about the artists, the paintings, and the history of the art. Some students wrote that they became more interested in art, liked learning about deeper meanings. However, some students liked to learn art, but wanted to learn other subjects as well. Some other minus comments were there was too much homework, more speaking and less writing. With this feedback I will be able to make adjustments necessary for a better class next semester.

DISCUSSION

The first half of Western Images has been completed and I have received feedback from students. There will be some adjustments in the second semester. Some adjustments are to have students present an image of an artist or write art reports. I intend on using other exercises, for example mind mapping or 4-3-2. I can also try to tailor it to some proficiency level exams. A final adjustment I need to make is to balance the language needs of the course better with the content needs. At times I found myself pushing to get more content in, while not focusing enough on the language needs of the course.

After the completion of the course and the adjustments made to improve learning process, there are several areas I would like to research. One area of language I would like to research is fluency. Will fluency show a significant increase after taking a year of Western Images? Another area is motivation. Does motivation increase or decrease while taking a content-based instruction course. I would also like to compare and contrast CBI with other courses. Is Western Images more or less proficient than other English courses?

Finally, I would like to create other courses using CBI as its method, but changing the content. For example, it would be easy to use the Western Images course as a blueprint or template for other types of courses. I am currently teaching a North American Sports course that focuses on individual athletes. Another topic of interest could be pop culture in the USA. That class could focus on musicians, actors, inventors, politicians, & anyone that has helped shaped a society. There are a lot of topics to consider, but what makes teaching helpful is the teacher's interest in the subject that is taught. If the teacher is engaged in the subject being taught, the students can pick up on that as well. This is why content-based instruction can be useful in teaching English as a second or foreign language.

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The logo for the International Association for Language Acquisition (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters "iafor" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially obscured by a larger, fainter red circular arc in the background.

English as a Lingua Franca: ELF Learners' Views on Varieties of English and Cultural Identity

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Abstract

English is now used more for global communication in multilingual contexts, across linguistic and cultural boundaries, rather than among L1 speakers in the traditional English – speaking countries (Canagarajah, 2005). The nature of English as a lingua franca indicates that a means of communication should not adhere to any native speakers of English norms. In this paper, how undergraduate ELF learners view both their own varieties of English and their peers' varieties of English has been explored. In addition, how ELF learners view their own cultural identity has also been investigated. The study took place at an international university in Thailand where English has been used as a lingua franca. The semi- structured interview data used in this study gained from the eleven participants whose L1s are not English. The data suggest that ELF learners have respected their own English and a variety of English used by other L2 learners of English. Even some phonological features produced by some particular learners are hard to understand, these don't affect their interpretation and understanding. All participants fully understand that English in this local landscape has been used as a medium of communication and for them English is an additional language to their own mother tongues. In the area of cultural identity, ELF learners agree that they value their own culture and their peers' cultures. As a teacher of English, multilingualism and multiculturalism should be promoted in language learning classrooms.

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Background of the Study

English has become a global language and it is now used more for global communication in multilingual contexts, across linguistic and cultural boundaries, rather than among L1 speakers in the traditional English – speaking countries (Canagarajah, 2005). The borderless use of English has changed the original roles and functions of English and the phenomena have led to changes in English speakers' attitudes, perceptions, and even awareness towards the language and cultural identity. As Brumfit (2001) states, the English language no longer belongs numerically to speakers of English as a mother tongue, or first language. The ownership means the power to adapt and change of any language in effect rests with the people who use it, whoever they are, however multilingual they are, however monolingual they are. Therefore, it is not beyond the reality that the existence of English as a means of communication should not adhere to any native speakers of English norms.

If English has been widely used by more bilingual speakers of English than first language speakers of English, it is important to recognize that over three-quarters of the world population are non-English-speaking (McKay, 2012, p. 29). In this manner, non-English speakers who are mainly the population in the Outer Circle and Expanding Circles tend to bring along their linguistic and cultural resources in their communication and this has been led to the creation and formation of non-English speakers' identities. This can be apparent in the Expanding Circle countries where English has been used among non-native speakers of English. Therefore, it is appropriate to state that English in the Expanding Circle countries has mainly been used as a lingua franca (ELF). As Seidlhofer (2011, p.17-18) states, English as a lingua franca is guided by quite different needs and wants. It is spreading in various and varied manifestations and adapted to the needs of intercultural communication. The main objective is to make use of the language shared by all interactants, the lingua franca, in order to achieve the fullest communication possible.

The use of English in the Expanding Circle countries, as suggested by Baker (2009), necessitates a reconsideration of the supposed inexorable links between culture and language. Baker (2009) states that languages and their relationships to cultures and identities need to be understood as fluid, and emerging in instances of communication, rather than as a priori defined categories. Drawing on concepts from culture and identity relating to English as a lingua franca, there is far less research on how ELF learners consider or perceive themselves, ELF peers, and English native speakers in relation to communication and cultural identity.

Objectives of the Study

There are two objectives in this study.

1. to explore ELF learners' opinions towards their ELF peers' varieties of English
2. to explore ELF learners' opinions towards their own English and cultural identity

Research Questions

1. What are the ELF learners' opinions towards their peers' varieties of English?
2. What are the ELF learners' opinions towards their own English and cultural identity?

Limitations of the Study

This is a small-scale research conducted in an international university in Thailand. Therefore, the findings cannot represent the full potential of all ELF learners in Thailand and Expanding Circle countries. However, the findings can be used to expand and conduct further research studies that may be significant to English language teaching and learning in that context.

Research Methodology Context, Participants, and Research Design

Context of the Study

The study was conducted at Assumption University of Thailand, where English has been used as an international language and as a lingua franca. According to the survey on the enrollment of foreign students in Thai higher education institutions (2008), it was shown that there are 16,361 foreign students enrolling in 96 Thai higher educational institutions and Assumption University was ranked in the first top five universities, where the highest number of foreign students has reached 2,558. Data presented to the External Assessment Committee for the 3rd cycle of EQA assessment by ONESQA (2011) have shown that the number of non-Thai students of the university have slightly grown to 3,143 (16.42%) in the year 2010 and most importantly, this number consists of 87 nationalities (Rattanaphumma, 2011). Among these nationalities, Chinese students are the majority group and followed by Korean, Burmese, and Vietnamese.

Participants

The eleven participants were all first year undergraduate students with a level of English at above intermediate (all of them have gained a cumulative GPA. higher than 3.00) and got grade "A" in "Language and Communication Skills" course in semester 2/2012. They were both Thai and non-Thai students whose L1s are not English. The list below shows the participants' nationalities.

Nationality	Number
Burmese	1
Zimbabwean	1
Korean	1
Bhutanese	1
Thai	4
Nepalese	1
Indian	1
Srilankan	1

Research Design

In this study, the data were drawn from the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A.) which were taken from January to February 2013. The participants were asked and informed of the key research ethical issues, i.e., anonymity, sensitive information, and ownership of the data prior to an individual interview with the researcher. The interview schedules were set on the accessibility of the participants and it was recorded by audio equipment with the participants' consent. The data were subsequently analyzed, transcribed, and coded. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, the validity was checked by interpretive validity. This strategy is to obtain participants' feedback, which involves discussing the findings with the participants (Dornyei, 2007). Additionally, the reliability was obtained by interrater reliability. Categorization of data was undertaken and the findings were interpreted into themes. The degree of interrater reliability, as suggested by Mertens (1998), can be expressed either as a reliability coefficient or as a simple percentage of agreement between the two data sets. In this study, the percentage of agreement was applied.

Results and Discussions

ELF Learners' Opinions towards their Peers' Varieties of English

Even all participants have used English as a lingua franca, they agree that a variety of English accents and pronunciation has not caused any communication problems among their non-native speakers of English peers. The high value has been placed on the achievement of understanding or communication rather than on the correctness or standard of the language. As one of the participants, Rada (Nepalese learner), said: "*I really don't care if my peers use English correctly or not. Understanding what they are trying to say is more important and I don't have the problem with that.*" Rada made clear that she felt very comfortable when she used English with her peers. Even though there were some inaccurate or incorrect grammatical features used by her peers, she did not feel negative at all. She understood well that English was not her and their first language. Rada's view has been supported by the following views from other participants.

I understand that we are not a native speaker of English; therefore, I am okay with my friends' English accents. They are not native speakers and I don't expect them to use correct grammar and have beautiful accents. (Suzie: Korean student)

I am trying to understand what my friends are saying and I am positive towards their English (accents). Everyone is trying hard to understand each other so forget about their English accents. (Thana: Thai student)

This is the world of globalization, so it is good to learn English. My friends and I can't be a native speaker of English; therefore, sharing ideas is the most important thing. If we need to share ideas, I am happy with our mutual understanding. (Ohm: Indian student)

I feel comfortable to use English with my non-native peers. I have friends from many countries and their English is good enough for communication. (Sherub: Bhutanese student)

According to the above data, it can be seen that mutual intelligibility plays an important role in communication purposes. Although participants don't have any problem with message understanding, most of them facilitate their own understanding by employing some communication strategies. In the case of Sherub, Bhutanese student, he always accommodates his peers who are less competent by repetition, coinage, and simplification. This is evident when some particular English accents or pronunciation are hard to understand. The usage of English has been modified to achieve mutual intelligibility.

I try to use Thai English accents when I talk to my Thai friends. I also modify my tone to make it easier for my Thai friends to understand my English. I sometimes speak slowly and use broken English. It helps. If my English is not clear to them, I frequently repeat the statements. (Cath: Zimbabwean student)

When our conversation is not clear to me, I pay more attention and I try to guess the meaning. I sometimes use English that is similar to my friends'. Worse than that, I use broken English sometimes. (Rada: Nepalese student)

I speak more slowly and clearly. I emphasize key words to achieve our communication. (Kitti: Thai student)

The data above can be supported by Jenkins (2007, p.24) who contends, "it would no longer be necessary to spend classroom time on the non-core items for production, but only to learn them receptively. I also made a case for developing learners' accommodation skills so that they would be in a better position to adjust their pronunciation in accordance with the needs of specific interlocutors. This approach, I believe, resolve the intelligibility-identity conflict by enabling NNSs to express both their L1 identity and membership of the international ELF community, while remaining intelligible to their ELF interlocutors, and still able to understand ENL accents." Similarly, Seidlhofer (2011, p.98) views how ELF users use English in different settings and with a great variety of linguacultural backgrounds as negotiate meanings. She states that ELF users exploit the potential of the language, they are fully involved in the interactions, whether for work or for play, they are focused on the interactional and transactional purposes of the talk and on their interlocutors as people rather than on the linguistic code itself.

To conclude, ELF learners perceive that an emphasis of mutual intelligibility plays a vital role in their interaction. They agree that English is very important to learn as it has been an international language or a lingua franca. The main role of English is to get message across or share ideas. Therefore, English used or spoken by their non-native speakers of English peers sounds acceptable for them. During the conversation or interaction, none of the participants pays attention to correct English or beautiful accents; on the contrary, they are aware of mutual understanding. More interestingly,

ELF learners put more effort to ensure mutual intelligibility by various communication strategies. This can be explained by Seidlhofer (2011, p.97) that ELF users are performing their own ELF, shaping both the language and their identities in the process.

ELF Learners' Opinions towards their Own English and Cultural Identity

Ample evidence from the interview data has shown that ELF learners view the role of English as a lingua franca or a world language. Therefore, they perceive that their own English pronunciation or accents which are mixed with L1s are acceptable for international interaction. More importantly, they feel happy to be able to speak or use a second language which has become an international language. They also view that it is not a matter of native speaker norms but it matters if their English can get message across. In the case of cultural identity, it is evident that all participants consider themselves to belong to their L1 communities rather than to conform to native speaker norms. It is true that some participants have a strong desire for a native speaker accent; however, when they were asked if they liked their own English, all participants were reasonably positive toward their own English use. In addition, the responses reveal that they are also positive if their English use (pronunciation or accents) are recognizable to their peers as being influenced by their L1s.

I am happy with my English. I want my friends to recognize me from my Thai English. I am proud to be Thai. (Thana: Thai student)

It is good to learn English but there is no need to imitate or assimilate their culture. Be your own when you speak English. (Cath: Zimbabwean student)

I am very okay with my English. It is better to create your own accents. I prefer to be how I am right now. I am happy with my English accents. Using our own English makes me feel very comfortable. Try not to copy other Englishes. (Sherub: Bhutanese student)

I know that I have Burmese accent but who care. We speak English with friends from different cultures and we can share ideas. This is fine for me. (Shoon: Burmese student)

I am proud of my language and proud to speak English with my own style. Even my English is mixed with Indian accent, I am okay with that. I know that we can't be a native speaker. It is impossible, so it is good to be bilingual or multilingual. I am happy to be able to use good English, good grammar, and good vocabulary. (Ohm: Indian student)

From the above data, this can be seen that ELF learners are positive towards their own English and their cultural identity. In fact, they perceive that maintaining own English should be encouraged and this can be part of the cultural identity. This can be explained that the role of English as a lingua franca has established a community of diversity. Therefore, achieving cross-communication and cross-culture may be seen more essential than having a native-like English norm. It should be noted that the concept of "native speaker" does not affect the way English is used in the settings.

ELF learners' perception towards their own identity supports the sense of the identity as a non-native speaker of English. This suggests that English has been appropriated to serve the social and communicative needs and purposes of communities of users beyond those residing within the Inner or even the Outer Circle (Seidlhofer, 2011, p.91). Likewise, the role of culture in the teaching of English as an international language can be grounded in the local cultures and identities of its speakers (McKay, 2002).

Implications and Recommendations of the Findings

Based on the findings, it is implied that the context of teaching and learning English in Thailand, where English has been used as a lingua franca or international language, should adopt the goals of a lingua franca approach. The approach has been initiated by Kirkpatrick (2007) who contends that a lingua franca approach based on the goal of successful cross-cultural communication could be advantageous to both teachers and students. Therefore, a curriculum should be adapted or adopted to match the reality of the context. Kirkpatrick (2007) suggests a curriculum which would include at least three strands:

- Students would need to be alerted to which linguistic features cause particular problems of mutual intelligibility.
- The curriculum would need to focus on how cultures differ and the implications of such differences for cross-cultural communication.
- Students would need to be taught the communicative strategies that aid successful cross-cultural communication.

For teachers of English, they should have broad perspectives about the roles and functions of

English. Moreover, they should understand the goals of language learning in current situations and reality, and select appropriate choices of teaching methodologies and assessments to match needs and problems of students and the contexts as a whole. It is suggested that students should learn from the models and practice that they find available; teachers teach their own Englishes and elements of others that they make themselves aware of (Nelson, 2011).

For learners and users of ELF, who are interested in using English mainly for communication purposes, should be enabled to keep their individual discourse styles, their individual capacity for wit, humor, social charm, or repartee, in other words their very own social persona in the medium of the English language (House, 2011, p.199).

In relation to teacher education, educational administrators should tailor training programs or courses to local purposes (Seidlhofer, 2011). The focus should be on the education, not just training of teachers so as to provide the essential understanding of the nature of language and its use that underpins their pedagogic practices.

Conclusion

Even the study is a small-scale research, it should be noted that the findings gained from learners' opinions have led to more attention and challenges to language teaching and learning in the Expanding Circle contexts. Voices from learners have shown that reconceptualization of language planning should be rethought to serve the real needs and goals of communication of English as a lingua franca. The focus on

interactional phenomena, the achievement of mutual intelligibility and intercultural understanding should be brought into real practices in language teaching and learning.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A. Interview topic areas

- First and second language learning background/experience
- Family background
- Opinions towards peers' English use
- How to achieve mutual intelligibility
- Strategies used in communication
- Opinions towards own English
- Opinions towards own identity
- Opinions towards English
- Ideal person as a good or admired language user

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Leadership And Politics Of Stress And Crisis Management In Learning And Teaching In The School System

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Abstract

Effective management of stress and crisis in learning and teaching in the school system is highly important. This is of the fact that no system can succeed or achieve its goals in a strenuous and crisis ridden environment. To manage and control stress and crisis situation in learning and teaching, the role of leadership cannot be over-emphasized. This paper explains the fact that stress is an unavoidable issue in any system. It goes further to establish the various causes and effects of stress and crisis in the school system. The paper finally puts in place strategic actions for managing crisis and stress in learning and teaching in our school system.

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Introduction

In any organization or institution, leadership plays a major role in crisis and stress management. Specifically, leadership promotes a coherence and peaceful environment for the smooth running of the organization. To build a compassionate environment that could aid greater productivity, crisis and stress should be managed in such a way that both the leadership and subordinates are made to benefit positively. Stress and crisis could stand as great threat against the actualization of an organizational goals and aspiration. To avoid this, the leadership has a great responsibility to put all machineries in place against this menace.

Conceptual Clarification

Leadership

Leadership has been described as “the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal setting and goal achievement (Stodgill, 1974)”. Also, Tannenbaum and Associates (1959) see leadership as “inter-personal influence exercised in a situation and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specialized goal or goals”. Morgan and Turner (1976:12) view leadership as “influence exercised in a situation through communication process toward the attainment of specific goals”. The definition of Bass (1990:20) is more encompassing when he noted that, leadership has to do with “the focus of group processes, as a power relation, as an instrument in the attainment of goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, and as the initiation of structure”.

Gibbs (1954) described a leader as “a person who co-ordinates the behavior of others or simply a person who occupies a position”.

All the above conceptualizations bother on the fact that, leadership depicts the process and efforts of a person or group of people to influence the behavior of others in a particular setting so as to achieve a goal or goals.

Politics

Ake (1979) opines that politics is the “competition among groups to make public policy conducive to the realization of other interest and ideologies”. Dahl (1964) defines politics as “any persistence pattern of human relationship that involves, to a significant extent, power, rule or authority”. To Lasswell (1930) politics is seen as “who gets what, when and how” while Aristotle opined that politics is the essence of social existence – That is, when two or more men are interacting with one another, they are therefore involved in a political relationship. Whereas, Easton (1960), defined politics as “the authoritative allocation of value in the society”.

Politics in the school system (which is our concern here) deals with power acquisition and allocation of resources with the aim of making resolution on any conflict that may arise in the course of resources allocation.

Crisis

Crisis, according to Ojo (2006:369) “is a turning point, often brought about by a convergence of events, which creates new circumstances, threatening established goals and requiring action”. It is further characterized by presumed tensions and uncertainties. The Macmillan English Dictionary defines crisis as “a dangerous situation in someone’s personal and professional life when something could fail”. Crisis is therefore a dangerous situation which can bring retardation or drawn to a particular system.

Stress

Stress is a worried or strenuous situation that hinders someone from relaxing caused by pressure at work or by the reason of personal problem. Obaparusi (2008:73) stated that stress “is a person’s psychological reaction to any upsetting or adverse situation”. Having gone through the above conceptual clarifications, it is imperative to look at the management of crisis and stress by the leadership of an organization and institutions.

Stress as an Unavoidable Fact of Life

It is important to understand that stress is an unavoidable fact of today’s life as it has always been. As analyzed by Udoh (2003:236-237), some stress is a part of our daily life, which we cannot completely shield away or wish away. Everyone is subjected to them. Certain kinds are actually helpful because they keep us on our toes. On the other hand, too much of stress on the mind and body can make our life miserable. Too much stress inundated with worries in a person, induces illness without knowing the cause. Therefore, how a person handles such stress determines the magnitude of the impact that such stress have on his health and happiness. If a person allows stress to build up in his mind and body it can produce tension which are serious enough to interfere with his normal daily activities. Tension generally precedes anxiety and depression, and both are injurious to health and well being.

It is hard to tell the magnitude of stress that any individual can be subjected to before he gives up. Individual vary in their stress level. Individuals have different tolerance levels and they react to the same stressors in different ways. Some individuals can take a great deal of stress in their strides and so the effect on them is not as devastating as it would be on those who have very low stress level. Also, the ability to cope with stress is subjected to at the number of stressors that an individual is subjected to the same time. Undoubtedly, no matter how strong an individual’s constitutional make up is in terms of his stress threshold, if he is subjected to a combination of several stressors for a prolonged period, the health consequences would be disastrous. Everyone has his or her optimal stress level depending on one’s physiological make-up as already indicated as well as one’s past experiences. But the important point to note is that everyone must strive to keep stress in the right amount, the right kind and the right duration so that it does not become distress. Distress generally results from either frustration, unvaried and prolonged stress (Udoh, 2003:236-237).

Observable/Common Causes of Crisis and Stress Situations and Its Effects in Learning and Teaching

At this juncture, we need to look at some observable and common causes of crisis and stress situations during learning and teaching period.

- 1). Shortage of teachers and the lobby for more at the Local Government Education Areas (LGEA). This poses and results in tension on the part of the leadership. As we know, all subjects are important to the educational development of students at this level. The leader may take it upon himself to make case for this at the appropriate quarter. This may not be an easy task as he needs to put in all his efforts to solve this problem. His inability to get this problem solved becomes a source of concern to him especially when the authority is not ready to recruit more hands.
- 2). Troublesome and recalcitrant subordinates – Every system enjoys a smooth and peaceful atmosphere when the leader enjoys the support and cooperation

of the subordinates. The reverse is the case when the relationship between the leader and the subordinate is strained. Such a leader is always disorganized since whatever measures he put in place may face stiff opposition by the subordinates. Recalcitrant subordinates always tends to frustrate the efforts of the leader. This, they do by exhibiting “low trust, low supportiveness and low interest in listening to and trying to deal with problems that confront the organizational members” (Blums, 1997). The refusal of subordinates to participate may cause anxiety and stress for the leader.

- 3). Undue provocation and agitation by parents. Some parents are perpetually stress induced agents. They tend to impose their will on their leadership of the institution not minding the level of misdeed of their children (The teacher is always at fault: I don't treat my child like this. After all, I pay your salary). These and others are the belief system of some parents. Such parents create tension and stress for the leadership. The leader may continue to accept this in a bid to sustain the population of the school most especially where students' enrolment is low.
- 4). Inadequate teaching materials and infrastructures – This has become a source of concern to many leaders in our various schools. Teachers in the various villages and hamlets especially in the remote areas are usually subjected to strenuous situations. Some are made to trek many kilometers to their places of work while others have to wait for at least three days before they can get to the city due to shortage of vehicles in such routes. Base on the above, poor working condition is a major source of stress. Poor working condition according to Aqulanna (2001) relates with poor salaries and wages, irregular management of salary and allowance, lack of materials and tools to work with, insecurity induced by continual threats of retrenchments and perhaps dismissal.

This argument was supported by Adigun (2008) that poor working conditions in organization and the likes induce stress in workers. This appears to be related to so many factors such as poor salaries and wages, irregular payment of salaries and allowances, lack of materials and tools to work with, very hot offices due to non-supply of electricity, and insecurity induced by continual threat of retrenchment and perhaps dismissal.

- 5). Government policy. Recently, some head teachers in Ekiti State Nigeria are undergoing stress due to the pronouncement by the state government that their promotion would henceforth be based on their students' performances in the various examinations most importantly the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). Those whose students fall under the category of low academic performance may be under pressure at the same time undergoing sleepless nights looking for a way out. Therefore, government policy can be a major cause of stress in our school system.
- 6). Financial, marital and health challenges are the topmost stress generating factors today particularly among those who per capital income either as employees or self employed is very low. The absence or insufficient of money in a home to cater for the numerous needs creates tremendous stress and nightmare for the head of the family (Udoh, 2003). In a similar vein, any crisis witnessed in one's marital life always extends to the office. A couple that engaged in a serious battle with each other may likely witness a transfer of

- aggression on getting to their various offices. They will therefore muddle things together due to lack of concentration in office work. Instead, their minds are centered on the problem left behind at home. Coupled with the above is someone having health challenges. The illness is a source of stress to him. Inability for the man to meet the costs of mediation poses a great danger.
- 7). Performance failure on the part of the students can pose a great stress on the leadership of the institution. Whenever students exhibit poor performance, it makes the teachers and leadership of little impact.
 - 8). Pressure at work due to low welfare package, too much workload and overtime without pay could also be a source of stress.
 - 9). Broken promises by the Parents Teachers Association.

It needs be noted that the situations mentioned above are not by any means exhaustive.

Meanwhile, a school of thought has argued that stress could be of benefit in some cases. A stressed person could automatically become a charismatic leader. The sociological literature as put in place by Weber (1947), and analyzed by House (2008:347) postulated that “charismatic leadership is born out of stressful situations”. It is argued that such leaders express sentiments deeply held by followers. These sentiments are different from the established order and thus their expression is likely to be hazardous to the leader. In addition, “since their expression is hazardous, the leader is perceived as courageous”. Thus it can be hypothesized that a strong feeling of distress on the part of followers is one situational factor that interacts with the characteristics and behavior of leaders to result in charismatic effects (House, 2008:347).

Obaparusi (2008:74) also supported this view when he submitted that “minimal and occasional stress may however be beneficial because it pools these high performance into the bloodstream and this helps the individual to perform at peak rate whether in meeting a schedule goal or in rising out in active against an offensive situation. Immediately the situation is over, the body returns normally”.

Be that as it may, “whether or not followers distress is a necessary condition for leaders to have charismatic effects or for persons with such characteristics to emerge as leaders is an empirical question that remains to be tested (House, 2008:348).

The discussion above is theoretically and generally submitted by Obaparusi (2008:75) when he highlighted that the following could be the resultant effects of any stressors not well controlled.

- Increase in number of times the officer is away from work for domestic reason, thereby reducing punctuality at work.
- Excessive, fatigue and sleeping at work due to nocturnal (night) weakness;
- Repeat and unresolved conflict between the officer and his superior over his recent unexplainable behavior at work;
- Relationship with colleagues, subordinates and superiors is affected due to his irritability and easy provocative tendencies.

Strategic Actions for Managing Crisis and Stress in our School System

It has to be stated that crisis and stress could be disastrous to any academic institution if not well managed. Armstrong (2005:837) stated that “there are four main reasons why organizations should take account of stress and do something about it”:

- 1). They have the social responsibility to provide a good quality of working life.
- 2). Excessive stress causes illness
- 3). Stress can result in inability to cope with the demand of the job, which of course, creates more stress.
- 4). Excessive stress can reduce employee effectiveness and therefore organizational performance.

In the management of crisis and stress in an institution, both the leadership and the subordinates should be greatly involved. The readiness of the subordinates is of utmost important since every efforts put in place by the leadership are meant to change the situation and reduce the stress and stop the crisis.

According to Lemay (2002:153),

“crisis situations often require immediate decisions. The crisis nature of such decisions enhances the problem of time and uncertainty and may change the psychology of the participants as well... all involved feel greater pressure to achieve consensus as how best to deal with the crisis. By their very nature, crises upset the normal order of decision making. Routine solutions do not apply. Past experiences may be nonexistence or of limited relevance. Sometimes the nature of the crisis if serious enough will demand broad consensus and a bipartisan agreement about how to deal with it”.

The regular push for crisis and stress management in an institution is understandable and highly germane. As Afolabi (2001:191-192) puts it, “there is widespread recognition that of all resources that manager utilizes to achieve corporate objectives, human resources is the most important. All other resources (money, machines, materials, information, etc) are inanimate and will require the human resources to activate and energise them”.

Since human resources is the most important, leadership has a great task to put all measures in place to realize and make sure that such resources is not allowed to suffer or be subjected to “unnecessary stress and crisis situation that could demoralize them”.

In learning and teaching, the following measures are therefore put in place to manage the aforementioned causes of stress.

- 1). Make good use of the available teachers. There is a common parlance the managers work more available when they are given less of what they requested for. While at the same time the head is expected to listen to the complain of his subordinate and treat them in such a way that subject area does not suffer a neglect.
- 2). Building a compassionate environment is the sole responsibility of a leader. To achieve this, a leader must put the following in place:
 - Build confidence in the followers;

- Elevate followers need for higher level;
- Elevate followers subjective probabilities of success;
- Ensure a change in organizational culture;
- Heighten motivation to attain designated outcome (extra effort);
- Build trust.

As a leader, you need the subordinate to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. At the same time the subordinates has the greatest responsibility of respect and cooperate with the leader whose has been put in charge. Subordinates are to obey the rules.

- 3). The low population of a school notwithstanding, no parent is expected to hold a head-teacher to a ransom or put him in his/her pocket. The final authority in a school system rests on the shoulder of the leadership. Instead of being a subject of concern to the school, such a pupil should be shown the way out of the school. This will definitely reduce the tension being caused by his parents. No one should be too big or too low to be told the truth.
- 4). The leadership of the school system should improvise for the insufficient infrastructure and teaching materials and aids in their various schools. One thing is certain, there cannot be a perfect situation in any system. As a result of this, leaders are expected to always find a way out of every situation that confront them. At the same time, the leader should not relent in his effort in presenting this case to higher authority from time to time since certain instructional materials could not be improvised by the school system.
- 5). Every government policies are made to bring improvement to the school system. Ability for a leader to align himself with the policy will reduce the stress such a leader is undergoing. At the same time, such policies must be backed by resources needed to pursue them. The onus is therefore on the authority or government to provide every resources for the policy to see the light of the day.
- 6). With most things in life, peace is highly essential to every parts of our lives. Peace should start from home. Every man needs wisdom to have a marital bliss. This can only be given by God. When the peace of God is present in a home, even with the little available resources, stress is reduced. Apart from this, a leader is expected to seek counsel. This could be in form of seeking medical advice on how to overcome the strenuous situation. Good financial plan is of utmost importance. Do not allow your spending to be above your earnings. Avoid unnecessary debt that could tarnish and bring shame to one's life.

Conclusion

Crisis and stress are recurrent issues in any organization or institution. Having this knowledge, control of stress should as a matter of fact form a major part of any occupational health programme. Not this alone, a good leader must always be sensitive enough to understand any change in attitude exhibit by the subordinates at every point in time. Before a situation results in full scale crisis, there is always a way out if only the leader can put all machineries in places for a conducive environment for the subordinates to thrive well knowing fully that, everyone is important no matter his/her level or status in such an organization.

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*A Contrastive Study Of Request Production By Canarian Spanish Undergraduates:
Speech Vs Writing; Spanish Vs English; Dct's Vs Role-Plays*

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Abstract

In this presentation I will report on the results of an empirical research carried out at the ULPGC (Canary Islands, Spain), to study the strategies used in the production of requests by a group of young undergraduates. The purpose of the research was actually three-fold. Firstly, we aimed at providing data regarding the realization patterns of requests made both orally and in writing, by our informants in mother tongue, Canarian Spanish. This variety has been widely studied, as Corrales, Álvarez and Corbella's (2007) bibliographical compilation proves. However, as Morgenthaler (2008: 27) states, while many studies on Canarian Spanish have adopted a quantitative or variationist sociolinguistic perspective, other fields related to qualitative sociolinguistics, pragmatics or ethnomethodology remain almost totally unexplored. The present work is, to the best of my knowledge, the first investigation that tries to shed some light on the type of strategies used for making requests by speakers of Canarian Spanish. This first phase of our research was related both to cross-cultural pragmatics and intra-lingual pragmatic variation.

Secondly, since all our undergraduates were students of English as a Foreign Language, we also examined the requests they made as non-native speakers of English, also in writing and in speech. This second phase had to do with inter-language pragmatics. Two different methods were adopted for the elicitation of data for these two parts of the study, namely, an open tape-recorded role-play and a written questionnaire, following the format of the Discourse Completion Tests (DCT).

Thirdly, we also try to determine to what extent the results in each phase differ or not depending on the language and the method used in the elicitation of data, thus contributing also to the growing debate on the validity of research methods.

To complement our study, we also collected a total of 100 naturally occurring requests over a period of two months. In short, the research questions our study addresses are the following:

1. Which realization patterns (in terms of strategies and modification devices, if any) do Canarian undergraduates choose most frequently to make requests in situations of social distance/closeness and social power/equality?
2. Do they modify these patterns when they make requests in English?
3. Are there any noticeable differences in the realization patterns of requests made by Canarian undergraduates depending on the data collection procedure (namely, DCT's and oral role-plays)?
4. What basic features do the requests collected from natural data through field notes have? How do they differ from the elicited data?

Due to time restrictions I just briefly describe the research setting, the informants and the methodology, before focusing directly on the results.



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1. The setting

The research was carried out at the Faculty of Philology, located in one of the two city campuses of the ULPGC, at the beginning of the first semester (September /October) of the 2012-13 academic course. At that time the last academic course of the old degree in English Philology (following the 1994 Plan) was still under development, though now it is just being brought to complete extinction (it will be finished by the end of July 2013).

2 The informants

The informants who participated in the written questionnaire for this study were 35 undergraduates,¹ all studying the above mentioned old degree in English Philology. Although we did not factor into our analysis their gender or age, we can say they were 28 female and 7 male students, whose ages ranged from 20 to 29, their mean being 23. For the oral role-plays we relied on a small group of 10 self-selected students. All the undergraduates who participated in our research were of Canarian origin and the majority of them can be said to belong to a low-middle or middle social class. As regards their command of the English language, we can say that most of them had managed to pass the subjects *English language I* and *English language II* in previous courses and therefore they were supposed to have achieved a B1 level of English proficiency.

3. The Methodology:

As already explained, in our research we used a total of three different methods: written DCT's, oral roleplays, and natural data collection.

For the first phase of our research we employed the same written questionnaire used by Lorenzo-Dus and Bou Franch in 2003, in both Spanish and English versions. The Spanish survey was passed during the second week of September, and two weeks later we passed the English questionnaire. In the handout we have just included the English transcription of the six situations employed with indication of social distance and social power.

In order to perform and record the role-plays, in the second phase of our study, we made appointments with our students to meet them in pairs during the second week of October. The situations that we used were either invented or adapted from various sources, and they were performed first in Spanish and then in English. They are also described in the handout. Later on, the recordings were transcribed and analysed for the study and classification of the data.

For the third phase of our study, we collected a total of 100 natural requests over a period of two months. The requests were registered from spontaneous conversations held in various places (home, office, supermarkets, shops, park, airport, official

meetings, classroom) by different people (family, colleagues, friends, students, strangers, neighbours). Every time we heard a request made by anybody around us we tried to either write it down immediately or memorize it, taking as many notes as possible about the situation. The data were then transcribed and analysed manually.

4. The results

Let's see now the results obtained in each of the three phases of our research, namely, the native-speaker (Canarian Spanish) analysis, the non-native English speaker analysis and the natural data analysis. The quantitative and qualitative analyses are complemented with a study of the statistical significance of our findings. For this we employed a hypothesis test.² In statistical terminology we considered a binomial test of equal proportions, where the distribution of the proportions has been approached, asymptotically, by a normal distribution (Rohatgi, 1976).

4.1. Native speaker analysis: written and oral requests

After distributing our Spanish DCT among our 35 undergraduates, we obtained a corpus of **210** written requests in Canarian Spanish. Similarly, with the six situations included in our recorded role-play activity, (which was carried out by 10 self-selected students of the same group of informants,) we collected a total of **60** oral requests in Canarian Spanish. Let's comment on the results in each.

4.1.1 Request patterns in our written DCT in Spanish

We will describe the request patterns both in terms of the strategy types and the internal/external modification devices used. For the classification of the requests strategies we have simplified Díaz Pérez 2003's proposal, following Trosborg (1995), by omitting his "category 0 (no realization)". Table 1 below offers our data regarding the strategy types used by our informants in each of the six situations of the Spanish DCT. The strategies are supposed to vary in correlation with the two main factors that characterize each situation, namely social power and social distance, with the level of imposition also having a role to play. However, as Thomas (1995: 129) explains, sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between them, and "in fact some studies conflate the two" so that although identified as separate dimensions, in practice that distinction is often not maintained. The reason is that "power and social distance very frequently co-occur, as we tend to be socially distant from those in power over us. But this is by no means always the case".

On the other hand, it is interesting to note here that when studying politeness in Spain, Hickey (2005: 321) mentions that many studies on the linguistic mechanisms to perform speech acts in Spanish agree that although this language has various forms of indirectness, Spaniards "use them differently and less frequently" than speakers of other languages. In fact, Iglesias (2001: 274-75) highlights the fact that "the imperative in Spanish is not inherently impolite". In line with these ideas, we can observe that in our data there is a considerably high number of direct requests,

amounting to 72, which constitutes 34,2% of the corpus of written requests in Canarian Spanish. In addition, and in agreement with the results of previous studies, the majority of the requests made by our informants fall into the category of the hearer-oriented conventionally indirect strategy, as expected. No other strategies were used here by our informants.

A quantitative analysis of the data in Table 1 below reveals that the highest number of direct requests occur in those situations (S) which either involve familiarity with the hearer, namely, S-2 (coke, n=33), S-4 (notes, n=12), S-5 (Dad's car, n=9) or social power on the part of the speaker, like S-1 (bookshop, n=11). Similarly, the highest figures for hearer-oriented conventionally indirect requests appear in two situations of social distance, S-3 (pen, n=34), S-6 (letter of recommendation, n=29), followed closely by S-5 (Dad's car, n=26) which involves social closeness but a highly imposing request of someone who is supposed to have more power, the speaker's father. Surprisingly, S-1 and S-4 elicit a similar number of hearer-oriented conventionally indirect requests (n=24 and n=23, respectively), even though the former is much less imposing than the latter.

As regards the modification devices used in requests, and their classification into internal and external, we have used Alcón Soler et al, 2005's proposal (see Appendix C), which we have slightly adapted to our results. Table 2 below shows the data obtained in this first phase of our research, dealing with the patterns of requests in Canarian Spanish. In the tables, the external modification devices are marked in grey shading.

In the light of the data in Table 2, it appears that 'attention getters' are the type of modification device, which is much more frequently used by our informants as they occur in 51.4% of the requests. They are followed at considerable distance by 'please', which is used only in 36 of the 210 requests of the corpus, thus obtaining a percentage of only 16.9%. In decreasing order of frequency, other devices used are 'grounders' (n=21) 'softeners' (n=17), 'openers' (13), 'other syntactic mitigators' (n=11) and hesitators (n=2), with no 'intensifiers' occurring at all. These figures seem to suggest that the requests made by our Canarian Spanish undergraduates tend not to include too many nor too varied mitigators, the internal type being particularly scant.

Comparatively, the highest number of modification devices occur in S-3 (n=50), requesting a pen of a stranger, followed by 39 mitigating devices in S-5, borrowing Dad's car –a much more imposing request in terms of the value of the object requested– and 35 mitigators in S-1, requesting for information of a stranger.

Seemingly, for these informants requesting of a stranger (S-1 and S-3) is an act that results in a higher amount of 'attention getters' (n=31 and n=23, respectively) and more 'softeners' (14 in S-3). In contrast, the highest occurrence of 'please' (whose general frequency is considerably low) occurs (n=12) in S-2. This could be explained by the need to mitigate the demand of the imperatives, since this is the situation that

elicited the highest number of direct requests (n=33). The use of this polite marker in Spanish (*por favor*, 'please') deserves some comments here and also in the other phases of our research, as will be seen. Currently, there are two informal versions of *por favor*, of increasing use especially among youngsters: one is the shortened form *por fa*, and the other is the shortened and diminutive *por fi*. We have detected that they are used relatively frequently in those situations of social proximity (-SD) and even between strangers of equal social power (-SP), though in this case with a lower frequency. They are used both as 'attention getters', as in (1) and (2), or as external modification devices, as in (3) and (4):

- (1) *Por fi, ¿me puedes traer una coca-cola?* ('Please, can you bring me a coke?' S-2)
- (2) *Por fa, ¿me dejas tu coche?* ('Please, can you lend me your car?' S-5)
- (3) *Pásame una cola, por fi.* ('Pass me a coke, please' S-2)
- (4) *Pásame cuando puedas los apuntes del otro día, por fa.* ('Pass me the notes from the other day, when you can, please' S-4)

On closer inspection, and leaving 'attention getters' aside to concentrate in the rest of the devices, we can also see how the highest number of modifiers (n=27) occurs in S-3, which, as already stated, involves a request of a stranger. In particular, this situation elicited the largest amount of 'softeners', mostly of the type underlined in (5)

- (5) *Disculpa, ¿me podrías dejar el bolígrafo un momentito* ('Excuse me, could you lend me your pen just a little moment?').

Both S-4, 'borrowing notes', and S-6, 'letter of recommendation', follow with 20 modification devices, probably because of the level of imposition they involve. In S-4, half of the devices have to do with 'grounders' to justify the need to request, such as the one in (6)

- (6) *Oye, ¿me dejas tus apuntes? Es que no pude venir a clase* ('Hey, will you lend me your notes? It's just that I couldn't come to class').

In S-6 we find 'other types of syntactic mitigators' (n=6), such as the ones in (7) and (8)

- (7) *Si no es mucha molestia, me gustaría pedirle que me escribiera una carta de recomendación para hacer un curso en Inglaterra* ('If it's not too bothering for you, I'd like to ask you to write a letter of recommendation for me to take a course in England')
- (8) *Si fuera tan amable, ¿le importaría redactar una carta de recomendación para solicitar una beca?* ('If you are so kind, would you mind writing a letter of recommendation for me to apply for a grant?')

There are also more ‘openers’ (n=5) and ‘preparatories’ (n=3), as shown in (9) and (10) respectively:

(9) *¿Le importaría escribirme una carta de recomendación que necesito para poder*

ir a estudiar a Inglaterra? (‘Would you mind writing me a letter of recommendation that I need to be able to go and study in England?’)

(10) *¿Podría usted hacerme el favor de escribirme una carta de recomendación?*

(‘Could you do me a favour and write me a letter of recommendation?’)

In S-5, most devices are ‘attention getters’ (n=21), followed by ‘please’ (n=7, three of them in the shortened form *por fa*) and some ‘grounders’ (n=4).

4.1.2 Request patterns in our oral role plays in Canarian Spanish

Table 3 below shows the data obtained through this method regarding the request strategies used. It is obvious that the most frequent request strategy is once again the conventional indirect hearer oriented type. The percentage of direct strategies is also similar (31.6% here vs 34.2% in the DCT’s), just slightly smaller. What clearly differentiates the results in this second phase is that three informants resorted to speaker-oriented conventionally indirect strategies and two of them used an impersonal perspective, something that didn’t happen in the DCT’s. This seems to imply that this method elicits more varied requests, regarding request strategies.

As far as modification devices are concerned, Table 4 below shows the types used by our informants in the oral role-plays. When analysing the data obtained through this method plays we can observe that the six devices that are more frequently used by our informants are the same as those in the DCT’s, although in a slightly different order. ‘Attention getters’ continue being the most favoured device (33.7%), followed by ‘grounders’ (29.2%) and ‘softeners’ (10.1%). Another important difference is that in the oral role-plays three new modifiers are used, namely, one ‘expander’, two ‘promises of reward’ and resorting to a ‘negative verb’ in the request head act. Thus, this method also seems to elicit a higher number of ‘grounders’ and ‘softeners’, and in general more varied types of modifying devices.

As regards the asterisk added to the figure (2*) for ‘please’ in S-2, it has to do with the special use of this politeness marker, *por favor* (‘please’) in one of the oral role-plays. It is interesting to note that although here one student used the informal shortened and diminutive form *por fi*, he did it in a repetitive or reduplicative way, which intensifies its force, as seen in (11):

(11) *Cari, guapa, por fi, por fi, por fi, por fi, ¿podrías dejarme los apuntes del otro día que tuve que ir al médico?* (‘Sweetie, be a dear, please, please, please, please, could you lend me the other day’s notes, as I had to go to the doctor?’)

This informant repeated *por fi* four times, but in our frequency count we considered it just as one single occurrence, not four.

4.2. Interlanguage analysis (non-native English speakers): written and oral requests

In the lines below we offer and examine the data of the English corpora, namely a corpus of 210 written requests produced by our 35 informants and a corpus of 60 oral requests made by the same 10 self-selected non-native English speakers.

4.2.1 Request patterns in the written DCT's in English

In comparison with those in Tables 1 and 2, the figures in Table 5 below show some differences in the request patterns followed by our undergraduates when writing requests in English. As can be observed, the most favoured strategies are again the conventionally indirect hearer-oriented type (n=119), followed by the direct strategy (n=60). However, the number of occurrences of the latter has diminished and the conventionally-indirect speaker-oriented strategy is now also used in 30 requests. In addition, one informant employed an impersonal perspective in one of the situations. These features seem to indicate that our undergraduates are aware of some important differences that exist between the typical patterns that they use for the realization of polite requests in Spanish and those in English. Likewise, it is interesting to note the relative decrease in the percentage of direct requests, even though it is still high for the typical standards in the English speaking societies.

Table 6 below offers data regarding the modification devices used by our informants in the DCT in English. As shown, when writing requests in English our informants seem to use more (n=246 vs n=212 in Spanish) and more varied mitigating devices. In fact, they use almost all the types. They maintain their preferences as they seem to use much more frequently the same two types of mitigating devices that they favoured in the Spanish version of the questionnaire, though their occurrences are higher, and so are their highest percentages, i.e. 'attention getters' (52.4%) and 'please' (21.9%). Notwithstanding, they also use more 'openers', more 'intensifiers' and more 'preparators' than when requesting in Spanish; the number of 'softeners', 'grounders' and 'other syntactic mitigators' is comparatively lower, though.

4.2.2 Request patterns in the oral role plays in English

The data obtained regarding the strategies used by our informants when requesting orally in role plays are collected in Table 7 below. As shown in this table, the strategy most frequently used by our informants when requesting orally in English is once again the conventionally indirect hearer-oriented type. In comparison to role-plays in Spanish, the most noticeable feature here is the increase in the percentage of speaker-oriented conventionally indirect strategy (16.6% vs 5% in Spanish). This reflects our students' awareness of the greater tendency towards this strategy among native English speakers. In contrast, the percentage of usage of the impersonal perspective is a bit lower here (1.6%) than in the case of role plays in Spanish (3.3%).

Regarding the internal and external modification devices, what the figures in Table 8 indicate is that ‘attention getters’ continue being the most frequently used device, with similar percentages, followed by ‘grounders’ and ‘please’, which noticeably increases its percentage of use here (23.1% vs. 8.9% in Canarian Spanish role plays). This seems to reflect students’ awareness of the typically higher frequency of use of this device in English than in Spanish. Intensifiers also increase their usage (3,3%) compared to the Spanish data (0.6%), while we find neither ‘expanders’ nor ‘negative verbs’, but there is one ‘hesitator’ used by one informant as seen (marked in italics) in (12):

(12) Alejandro, I’m sorry but there’s a problem with your paper, *and, er, I don’t know how to say this*. You have to hand it in two weeks before, so sorry.

4.3

4.4 Natural data analysis

With the field notes we took over a period of 2 months we obtained a corpus of 100 naturally occurring requests produced by different speakers in different situations. We summarise all the data in Table 9 below, which includes two sections: 9.A presents the strategies used and 9.B the modifying devices; in this case all of them are external.

As can be observed, the majority of the requests collected occurred in situations of social proximity (family or friends/colleagues environment). This probably explains why, in contrast with the results in the other phases of our research, most of the requests here (53%) are direct. However, in 13 of these contexts of proximity conventionally indirect requests were used, instead. On the whole, the hearer-oriented type was much more frequently used than the speaker oriented strategy (42% vs. 5%). Likewise, 14 situations involving social distance elicited direct requests, usually mitigated with ‘please’ or ‘other syntactic modification devices’, such as *cuando puedas* (‘when you can’), or *si eres tan amable* (‘if you are so kind’).

Another noticeable feature is the considerably smaller number of modifying devices used, which lowered to only 5 types: in decreasing order of frequency, we have ‘attention getters’, which again have the highest percentage of usage, ‘grounders’, ‘please’ with a remarkably low frequency of use (only 10%); ‘other syntactic modifiers’ and ‘preparators’. The explanation for this could be that in this phase of our research we had limited access to situations which involved social or power distance, which normally tend to provoke a higher and more varied number of devices.

Finally, once again we observe that the two informal versions of the politeness marker *por favor*, namely *por fa* and *por fi*, are used in situations of social proximity, and there are three occurrences of each. (13) and (14) are examples produced by the writer’s son:

(13) *Dame tu ratón, por fa*. (‘Give me your mouse, please’)

(14) *Tráeme el libro, por fi*. (‘Bring me the book, please’)

4.4 Statistical significance of the results

As regards the significance level, Table 10 below offers the critical p-values³ obtained after studying the relationship between the situational factors and the type of strategy and the number of mitigating devices used, in the light of the data described in each of the tables above for the different phases of our research. For the interpretation of the critical p-values given for each of the tables, we must take into account that the closer the critical p-value is to zero the stronger the influence of the variable studied and, therefore, the relationship between the strategy used and the corresponding situational variables becomes obvious.

As observed in Table 10, this relationship only seems to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) in Tables 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9A/B, respectively dealing with the strategy types used by our informants when producing requests in writing and in oral role-plays in their mother tongue (Canarian Spanish), both the strategies and mitigating devices used when writing in English and both the strategies and modifiers registered in the natural data. The interpretation for this is that the situational factors play an important role in both the strategy types and the number of modifiers used by the requesters, the tendency being to favour direct requests and fewer modifying devices, mostly the external type, in situations of social proximity.

In addition, when contrasting the results in terms of the method used, the p-value is 0.0000, which means that the difference is statistically significant. However, when comparing the findings in terms of the language used, the p-value reaches 0.1131, therefore the difference between the results in English and those in Canarian Spanish is not statistically significant. In other words, the method used (written DCT's vs. oral role-plays) to elicit the data seems to have an influence on the results, while the language employed does not determine a statistically significant difference in our findings. This might be explained because of a certain degree of interference of the students' mother tongue (Canarian Spanish) on their production in the target language (English).

5. Concluding remarks

In this research we have explored the main request patterns followed by a group of Canarian undergraduates studying English as a Foreign Language at the UPLGC within the framework of speech act theory and politeness theory. For each of the three research phases, our findings reveal the following points:

As regards the results of the written DCT's, we can observe that, when comparing the patterns of the requests made by our informants in Canarian Spanish with those they made in English, the former include a higher number of direct strategies (72 vs. 60). Besides when writing requests in English, our students used a number of speaker-oriented conventionally indirect requests ($n=30$), a strategy they never resorted to when writing requests in Spanish. In addition, one informant employed an impersonal

perspective in one of the requests, something that didn't happen in the Spanish version.

As far as the modification devices are concerned, they are more numerous in the written requests made in English (246) than in the Spanish ones (212). A case in point is that of 'please', which is used in 54 English utterances versus 36 written requests in Canarian Spanish. Similarly, requests in English include more 'attention getters' (129 vs. 109) and 'openers' (10 vs. 13). Surprisingly, our students employed more 'softeners', 'grounders' and 'other syntactic mitigators' in their Canarian Spanish requests than in their English version. These results seem to suggest that while these undergraduates have learnt some aspects of politeness in English which differ from those of their own native language and culture, they still need to learn to use other markers of politeness in the target language, i.e., our informants are aware of some of the differences that exist between requests in Spanish and requests in English, but they still need to learn to use more and more varied modification devices, particularly of the internal type, as well as to adopt the speaker-oriented perspective, which is more typical of politeness in English.

When comparing these results with those obtained in the oral role plays, we notice that in the latter the number of modification devices is higher and more varied, as they used other types they didn't resort to when writing, such as 'negative verbs', 'promise of reward', 'expanders' or 'intensifiers', the latter being used only twice in the English written requests.

There are also some noticeable differences which have to do with the language used. Thus, students use 'please' much more often when they use English, while the percentage of usage of some modification devices is also higher in the requests they make in this foreign language. Another observation is that the Spanish equivalent to 'please' adopts two colloquial forms, *por fa* and *por fi*, which tend to be used in situations of social closeness or proximity.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the high percentage of direct requests which range between 34.2% in written requests in Spanish and 28.5% in written requests English, the lowest frequency. Apparently, this reveals students' awareness of the fact that direct requests are less appropriate in English. Interestingly, in the oral role-plays both in Spanish and English the percentage is the same, 31.6%. This preference for directness is confirmed by the natural data, which record 53 occurrences of this type of request, among the 100 collected. These figures prove the tendency among Canarian Spanish speakers towards positive politeness, an orientation that actually abounds in the Spanish-speaking world.

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The logo for 'iafor' is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The logo is partially enclosed by a large, light blue circular arc that starts from the bottom left and curves towards the right. A red arc is also visible, starting from the top left and curving downwards.

situations strategies	1. bookshop n	2. coke n	3. pen n	4. notes n	5. car n	6. letter n	TOTAL n (%)
conv. Indirect hearer-oriented	24	2	34	23	26	29	138 (65.7%)
Direct	11	33	1	12	9	6	72 (34.2%)

Table 1: Distribution of request strategies used in written requests in Canarian Spanish

Situations→ modifi- cation devices	1. bookshop n	2. coke n	3. pen n	4. notes n	5. car n	6. letter N	TOTAL n (%)
Attention getters	31	17	23	5	21	12	109 (51.4%)
Openers	0	0	3	2	3	5	13 (6.1%)
Softeners	0	0	14	0	3	0	17 (8%)
Preparators	0	0	0	0	0	3	3 (1.4%)
Grounders	0	0	7	10	4	0	21 (9.9%)
Hesitators	0	0	0	0	0	2	2 (0.9%)
Other syntactic mitigators	1	0	1	2	1	6	11 (5.1%)
Please	3	12	2	6	7	6	36 (16.9%)
TOTAL n	35	29	50	25	39	34	212

Table 2: Internal/external modification devices used in Canarian Spanish written requests

situations strategies	1. music n	2. notes n	3. paper n	4. librarian n	5. money n	6. extension n	TOTAL N (%)
non-conv. Indirect	1	0	0	1	1	0	3 (5%)
conv. Indirect hearer-oriented	9	8	1	3	7	5	33 (55%)
Impersonal perspective	0	0	0	0	0	2	2 (3.3%)
conv. Indirect speaker-oriented	0	0	0	0	0	3	3 (5%)
Direct	0	2	9	6	2	0	19 (31.6%)

Table 3: Distribution of request strategies used in oral role plays in Canarian Spanish

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Situations→ modifi- cation devices	1. music n	2. notes n	3. paper n	4. librarian n	5. money n	6. extension n	TOTAL n (%)
Attention getters	10	9	8	8	10	8	53 (33.7%)
Openers	2	2	0	0	2	1	7 (4.4%)
Softeners	3	0	0	2	7	4	16 (10.1%)
Intensifiers	1	0	0	0	0	0	1 (0.6%)
Negative verb	0	2	0	0	0	2	4 (2.5%)
Preparators	1	3	0	0	0	0	4 (2.5%)
Grounders	10	7	7	7	6	9	46 (29.2%)

Other syntactic mitigators	0	1	5	0	0	2	8 (5%)
Promise of reward	0	1	1	0	0	0	2 (1.2%)
Expander	0	0	0	0	0	1	1 (0.6%)
Please	3	2*	1	4	2	3	15 (9.5%)
TOTAL n	30	27	22	21	27	30	157

Table 4: Internal/external modification devices used by our informants in oral role plays in Canarian Spanish

situations strategies	1. bookshop n	2. coke n	3. pen n	4. notes n	5. car N	6. letter n	TOTAL n (%)
Impersonal perspective	0	0	0	0	0	1	1 (0.4%)
conv. Indirect hearer-oriented	28	3	26	21	11	30	119 (56.6%)
conv. Indirect speaker-oriented	1	0	6	5	17	1	30 (14.2%)
Direct	6	32	3	9	7	3	60 (28.5%)

Table 5: Distribution of request strategies per situation by non-native English speakers

situations→ modification devices	1. bookshop n	2. coke n	3. pen n	4. notes n	5. car N	6. letter n	TOTAL n (%)
Attention getters	31	20	28	10	23	17	129 (52.4%)
Openers	0	0	7	4	3	5	19 (7.7%)
Softeners	0	0	10	0	1	1	12 (4.8%)
Intensifiers	0	0	0	0	0	2	2 (0.8%)
Preparators	0	0	0	1	3	1	5 (2%)
Grounders	0	0	6	4	4	3	17 (6.9%)
Other syntactic mitigators	0	0	1	3	2	2	8 (3.2%)
Please	7	17	9	9	3	9	54 (21.9%)
TOTAL n	38	37	61	31	39	40	246

Table 6: Internal/external modification devices used in written requests in English

situations→ strategies	1. music n	2. notes n	3. paper n	4. librarian n	5. money n	6. extension n	TOTAL n (%)
conv. Indirect hearer-oriented	10	9	0	2	8	1	30 (50%)
Impersonal perspective	0	0	0	0	0	1	1 (1.6%)
conv. Indirect speaker-oriented	0	1	1	0	0	8	10 (16.6%)
Direct	0	0	9	8	2	0	19 (31.6%)

Table 7: Distribution of request strategies used in oral role plays in English

situations→ modification devices	1. music n	2. notes n	3. paper n	4. librarian n	5. money n	6. extension n	TOTAL n (%)
Attention getters	10	7	9	6	9	8	49 (32.4%)
Openers	2	1	0	0	0	1	4 (2.6%)
Softeners	1	0	2	0	1	3	7 (4.6%)
Intensifiers	0	0	1	1	1	2	5 (3.3%)
Hesitator	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (0.6%)
Preparators	0	0	0	0	0	3	3 (1.9%)
Grounders	9	7	3	5	9	7	40 (26.4%)
Promise of reward	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (0.6%)
Other syntactic mitigators	1	1	2	0	0	2	6 (3.9%)
Please	8	6	2	5	8	6	35 (23.1%)
TOTAL	31	22	21	17	28	32	151

Table 8: Internal/external modification devices used for requesting in oral role-plays in English

situations→	PROXIMITY	SOCIAL	TOTAL	EXAMPLES
9.A: Strategies	(52 situations)	Distance/Power (48 situations)		
Direct	39	14	53	<i>Go to bed!</i>
Conv. Indirect H-O	10	34	44	<i>Could you tell me who's teaching this afternoon?</i>
Conv. Indirect S-O	3	0	3	<i>Can I use this lane?</i>
9.B: EXTERNAL MODIFIATORS				
Attention getters	0	37		<i>Excuse me, do you mind the dog?</i>
Preparators		6		<i>Can you do me a favour? Call Miguel</i>
Grounders	0	16		<i>Can you grease my office lock? It doesn't work properly</i>
Please	6	4		<i>Give me a napkin, please</i>
Other syntactic modifiers	0	9		<i>Would you help me weight the oranges, when you can?</i>
TOTAL	6 modifiers	72 modifiers		

Table 9: Natural language requests data

TABLES	T-1	T-2	T-3	T-4	T-5	T-6	T-7	T-8	T-9A	T-9B
p-values	0.0000	0.1617	0.0000	0.0020	0.0000	0.0215	0.0376	0.0224	0.009	0.0000

Table 10: Critical p-values obtained after applying the hypothesis test to the data in each of the tables

*The Effects of Input-based and Output-promoting Practice on L2 Pronunciation
in the Foreign Language Classroom*

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Abstract

This paper presents an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of form-focused instruction in pronunciation instruction by reporting the findings of a study which examined the effect of explicit corrective feedback on the pronunciation of weak forms that are challenging to Japanese EFL learners. The study involved 61 students and took the form of a quasi-experiment with one experimental group (N=30) and one control group (N=31). The students in the experimental group participated in two treatment sessions deploying phonetic training and communicative tasks during which their mispronunciations were corrected explicitly (i.e. directly drawing their attention to the error) while the control group focused on other tasks. The participants' ability to pronounce the targeted form was measured on a pretest and a posttest which included several receptive and productive tasks. The result showed that the experimental group outperformed the control, although the impact on the productive acquisition was limited. The findings of this study would serve as a basis for guidelines on dealing with pronunciation errors and some suggestions for further research of the acquisition of L2 phonology.

Key words: form-focused instruction, phonetic negotiation of form, pronunciation pedagogy, weak forms.

Introduction

The last two decades have witnessed a growing body of research in the effectiveness of instruction on second language (L2) morphosyntactic development from the perspectives of form-focused instruction (Ellis, 2008, 2012; De Graaf and Housen, 2009). Such research demonstrated that the treatment of errors during meaning and form-oriented activities results in increased control over the targeted forms, provided that the pedagogical intervention is focused explicitly, implicitly or both (Long & Robinson, 1998; Muranoi, 2006). The theoretical underpinnings of form-focused instruction (FFI) are cognitive models of L2 acquisition (Long, 1991), in which noticing the mismatch promotes “cognitive comparison” of the interlanguage system with the target system, leading learners to modify their current interlanguage system and produce modified output to test the hypothesis. The final process for hypothesis modification is considered to be the learners’ intention to continue the ongoing communication (Muranoi, 2000).

The impact of FFI on L2 pronunciation has been investigated in terms of learners’ interaction and performance in several ESL and EFL settings in the last decade (Abe, 2010; Couper, 2009; Park, 2000). In a meta-analysis of pronunciation FFI research, Saito (2012) synthesized the results of 15 quasi-experimental studies and found that the largest effects were generally obtained with (explicit) FFI, claiming that “FonF enables learners to achieve improvement both at a controlled and spontaneous levels”(p.850). Saito (2011) reports his study that, if corrective feedback and explicit instruction is appropriately provided at the beginning of FFI lessons, L2 learners could make the best of subsequent contextualized input- and output-based practice in order to establish the new phonetic representation as well as to proceduralize the newly-acquired phonetic knowledge in a wide variety of lexical and phonetic contexts. Sicola (2008) further revealed that L2 learners could be able to negotiate phonological forms when working on meaning-based tasks with their use of corrective feedback, modified output, and other processes, promoting attention to the segmental form during negotiation. However, Yam (2005), on the basis of her full-scale study deploying pre- and two post-tests with 137 subjects, questions the efficacy of pronunciation FFI, stating that “The communication-based methodology that has proven to be effective is tested mainly on the area of syntactic and semantic acquisition [...]. Thus, the same kind of treatment may not be effective to the acquisition of pronunciation since phonetics and phonology is a unique module of its own” (p.159).

This current study presents an attempt to remedy the situation by reporting the findings of an inquiry, which compared the effect of phonetic negotiation of form as corrective feedback on the pronunciation of weak forms in pronunciation FFI. In recent literature of English as an international language (EIL), weak forms or vowel reduction are not considered significant segment among international non-/native interlocutors (Jenkins, 2000; Deterding, 2011). In Jenkins’ (2000) *Lingua Franca Core (LFC)*, a phonological syllabus designed specifically for learners of English to be spoken by and with non-L1 English speakers and which includes phonological features crucial for ELF mutual intelligibility excluded weak forms. In the mean time, however, the overall frequency of

weak forms or schwa is reported in the previous studies as in Gonet, Szpyra-Kozłowska, & Swiecinski (2010), Porzuczek, A. (2010), and Rojczyk & Porzuczek (2012) to mention a few. Shockey (2003) claims that “one obvious factor which does not seem to have received much attention in the literature is the connected speech processes [...]: especially if taught by non-native speakers of English, students are unlikely to have had significant contact with naturally reduced speech” (p. 119).

The acquisition of English weak forms has posed difficulty to non-native speakers of English for long in perception and production (Cruttenden, 2008; Rogerson-Revel, 2011). Cruttenden (2008: 308) states “If listening to native speakers, they should be aware of the types of assimilation and elision which have been described above; otherwise, they will find it difficult to understand much of ordinary colloquial English. This knowledge is particularly important because a second language is often learned on a basis of isolated word forms; in the speech of the native, however, the outline of these words will frequently be modified as has been seen”. The L2 English weak forms has been examined from several perspectives, yielding positive effects of instruction in the formal setting (Gómez Lacabex, García Lecumberri, Cooke, 2009; Nowacka, 2011; Porzuczek, 2010); nonetheless, to the best of the author’s knowledge, the analysis of the effects and effectiveness of pronunciation instruction in the formal setting has received little scholarly attention. Thus, a study examining perception and production training effects on the acquisition of English weak forms by Japanese EFL learners attempts to fill the gap in the literature, because EFL learners tend to have difficulty in learning the L2 phonological form

The main purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the new approach with Japanese college students with the following research hypothesis; the subjects would benefit more from FFI approach than the traditional approach in improving certain connected speech features in English. To obtain significant data for this issue, this study explored the effects of an instructional technique in which a linguistic error was made explicit to activate learners' cognition encouraging learners to notice the gap in the target phonetic form and restructure their interlanguage phonology. The following two major questions were investigated:

- (1) Dose FFI, in which a teacher provides explicit instruction through phonetic negotiation of form, affect their interlanguage phonology?
- (2) If FFI has an effect on EFL learners’ acquisition of the English weak forms, does the approach affect the receptive and productive acquisition of weak forms?

Method

Setting

The study was conducted in a regular classroom setting in Japan, and the participants were second-year students of high-school level enrolled in their intact EFL classes at a technical college. Their English levels at school were equivalent: low to intermediate. In this classroom-based study, the effects of FFI and the control treatment were compared quantitatively.

Treatment

The assumption underlying the current study is that not only input but also output-promoting tasks play a critical role in second language learning experiences. In pronunciation teaching, production activities through output of the target forms could enable learners to test their learned metalinguistic knowledge in meaningful communicative activities.

The subjects in the experimental group (EG) received a negotiation of form treatment in perception training, which was comprised of noticing and form-negotiation task. In this treatment, the participants paid attention to sound discrimination, in which they were given a clear account of formal properties of English weak forms one by one in contexts, focusing on the phonetic characteristics of the speech sounds. This is to cultivate learners' metacompetence in L2 pronunciation, which was proposed by Wrembel (2003, 2009) in pursuit of effectiveness of pronunciation instruction in a Polish EFL context, encouraging her students to notice the target feature of English phonetics and access the rule under their own initiatives in a normal classroom setting.

Then, the teacher asked the participants to find missing such function words as *a*, *to*, and *of* in pairs in the dialogue. After pair-discussion of noticing, they shared their findings in class and are expected to use and produce the target pronunciation in the following tasks of production. Form-negotiation treatment was also provided in the production training. In this type of activity, learners were requested to use the target form in a meaningful conversation, paying attention to their accuracy in spontaneous speech. In the course of output, corrective feedback was offered by the classroom teacher to encourage participants to produce more output, notice their errors, and self-repair in the phonetic forms.

The control group (CG) received explanation of English weak forms and listen-and-repeat exercises during oral reading. Both EG and CG were taught by the present author. The treatment procedure is outlined in Table 1.

One week before the instructional treatments began, a pretest was conducted to examine whether two groups were at the same level in terms of weak forms usage. The treatment started one week after the pretest, and a post-test was provided right after the final treatment was completed. The whole procedure lasted over three full weeks.

Table 1: Treatment procedure

	EG(n=30)	CG(n=31)
Session1 (45min)	Warm-Up: Sound Discrimination Exercise	
	Task1: Find Missing <i>a</i>	Listening to a passage
	Task2: Find Missing <i>to</i>	Repeating after an instructor during Reading Class
	Task3: Picture Description	
Session2 (45min)	Warm-Up: Sound Discrimination Exercise	
	Task4: Find Missing <i>of</i>	Listening to a passage
	Task5: Find Missing <i>to</i>	
	Task6: Picture Description	Repeating after an instructor during Reading Class
	Task7: Free talk	

Assessment

The evaluation instrument used to assess participants’ pre- and post-treatment performance was divided into four subtests: two for perception and two for production. The perception test consisted of 10 sound discrimination and 20 dictation tests. The participants’ task consisted of ticking one of the options provided on the answer sheet and write down a word, which was recognized by them while listening to the sentences recorded on CD. The sound source was taken from Hewing (2003).

Table 2: Examples of test sentences.

He threw the ball at me
Bill and Mark have left
Ask them to come to the party

The production test consisted of recording of two subtests reading a passage and a picture description task. The samples were digitally recorded and saved as audio file on a PC computer at 22 kHz with 16-bit resolution using Olympus Sonority Plus for Editors. In this classroom-based study, the effects of FFI and the control treatment were compared quantitatively.

The data collected from pre- and post-tests were analysed by two native speakers of American teachers, both of whom were EFL experts, and one non-native Japanese who was also an EFL teacher and had MA in Phonetics awarded from a British university. Each participant was examined and scored on the basis of their recorded performance. The score of each participant was a total of three examiners. Each examiner followed the guideline provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Scoring for production
She likes to visit the museum

[tə] ...	5 points
(pause)[tə] ...	4 points
[tu] ...	3 points
[tu:] ...	2 points
[tʉ] ...	1 points

Results

The perception and production test scores were submitted to independent samples of *t*-tests to examine if there was a significant difference between EG and CG. Then, those scores were submitted to two sample *t*-tests in order to explore the effect of output. There were no significant differences found between the groups on the variables of pre-instructional ability. Perception, $t(58) = 0.03, p > .05, d = 0.1, ns$, and Production, $t(58) = 0.03, p > .05, d = 0.1, ns$.

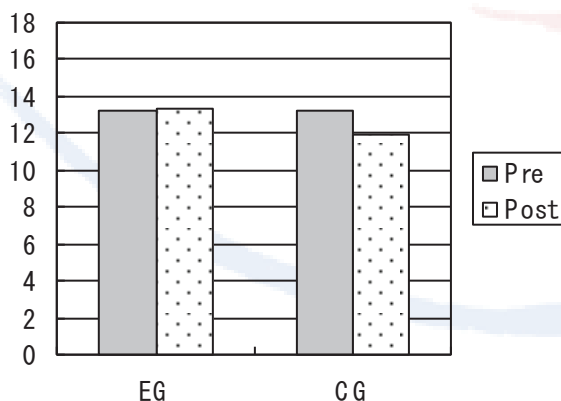
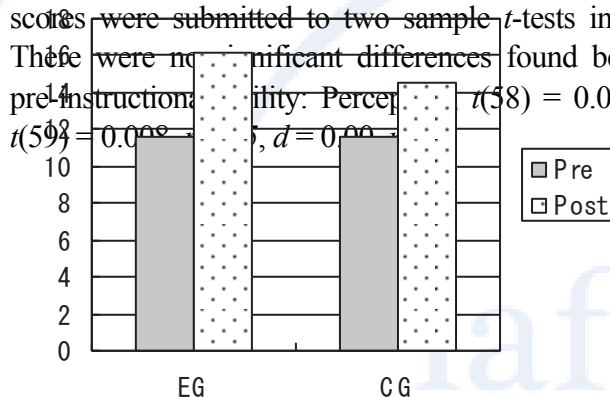


Figure 1: Perception tests

Figure 2: Production tests

In order to verify the main hypothesis of the experiment, which predicted that EG group would outperform the control as a result of treatment, i.e. metalinguistic training, *t*-tests for independent variables were carried out as in Table 3.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for the total scores of perception and production

		Pre-test			Post-test		
		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Perception	EG	30	11.57	1.92	30	16.20	2.82
	CG	31	11.55	2.20	31	14.52	2.66
Production	EG	30	13.27	3.19	30	13.30	1.47
	CG	31	13.26	4.27	31	11.93	1.64

Statistically significant results were obtained in the case of perception tests, $t(58) = 2.40$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.62$. The result of the production tests was also statistically different, $t(59) = 3.34$, $p < .005$, $d = 1.37$.

In order to determine the overall effect of formal instruction in pronunciation, *t*-tests for dependent variables were performed to compare pre-test and post-test scores for each group separately. The *t*-tests with each group indicated that both groups made significant gains ($p < .05$) from their pre- to post-test performance in perception. The differential scores were statistically significant pointing to visible improvements in perceiving aspects of weak forms as in the result of explicit instruction; EG perception ($t(29) = -7.40$, $p < .001$, $r = 0.81$) and CG perception ($t(30) = -5.44$, $p < .001$, $r = 0.71$). The paired *t*-tests revealed that a significant difference of EG and CG alike was not found in production tests; EG production ($t(29) = -0.076$, $p > .05$, $r = 0.02$, *ns*) and CG production ($t(30) = 1.76$, $p > .05$, $r = 0.31$, *ns*).

The results can be summarized as follows: (1) FFI had positive and immediate impacts on L2 learning of English weak forms perception; (2) FFI treatment had greater effects on learners' performance than the control treatment.

Discussion

Pronunciation FFI might not have provided a unified result in the current investigation of the effects of instruction in the past decade as has been seen in Saito (2012) and Yam (2005) among others. However, the current study found the immediate positive effect of FFI in pronunciation pedagogy since the gains in perception and production EG received at the post-test phase was more statistically significant than the ones of CG, by integrating phonetic negotiation of form in pronunciation FFI. Kul (2011, 2013) is a study which replicated Abe (2010) at a university in Poland and reported a significant gain in the learners' side. This suggests that the specially designed perception training and the output-promoting production task were more beneficial for L2 learning of weak forms than CG, where FFI treatment was not provided. This could be stipulated that the noticing function of each perception-training might have raised the learners' consciousness of

English weak forms and have triggered noticing and subsequent cognitive comparison. Comparing the learners' output with the model after teacher's feedback have been quite useful since each learner could immediately receive feedback with respect to their own phonological problems they noticed.

However, this study also revealed that the production at the post-test phase did not result in great improvement. Given more time and practice, more participants would begin to show improvements that might influence the overall statistically significant difference. With the FFI treatment, the teacher could promote activation of such cognitive processes as noticing, cognitive comparison as an option of pronunciation teaching in the EFL classroom setting.

Conclusion

The present study has demonstrated that the learners' overall performance in perception and production significantly improved over time due to explicit form-focused instruction. Several factors including methodological limitations may have affected the argument and outcomes; however, this study to some extent has been successful in exploring the relationship between an instructional approach and phonological acquisition, and in proposing that the FFI in pronunciation pedagogy could be more effective than the traditional approach. Further research should also consider whether focus-on-form treatments involving both implicit and explicit formal instruction can help learners improve their performance.

The study could further examine the durability of the instructional effect deploying a delayed post-test to examine whether FFI indeed has some effect on learners' restructuring of their interlanguage phonology. The finding would lead us to assume that instruction that appropriately incorporates the FFI task can have a lasting positive effect on L2 phonology.

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Identities in University Teachers' L1 Use in L2 Class

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Abstract

This research originally set out as an in-depth case study of three university English teachers' codeswitching behaviours in the English Language and Literature Department at a leading university in mainland China. Its emphasis on content-based English courses rather than skill-based ones as often seen in literature represents the originality of its own.

Three data collection methods were employed during Phase I of the study which lasted over 11 weeks: recordings of lessons, interviews and stimulated recall. Recordings were coded using standard models (adapted) for the purposes of comparison across types and then subjected to microanalysis on the basis of findings from protocol analysis.

Analysis of codeswitching categories identified a predominance of extended expositions of Chinese literature, culture and philosophy etc., which differed significantly from findings in previous studies. Hence follow-up interviews (Phase II) were prompted to further investigate the reasons behind such codeswitching behaviours. Interviewing data were analysed thematically. It was discovered that the involvement of Chinese literature, culture and philosophy etc. reflected a particular cross-cultural view of content-based teaching in the Chinese context as well as the impact of cultural and professional identity on the participants. Furthermore the delivery of contents and comments from the Chinese perspective in class was conducted strategically to "help the students realise and understand their cultural identity".

This research reveals the relationship between teachers' L1 use in L2 class and their cultural, disciplinary and professional identities and the importance of developing a cross-cultural-oriented pedagogy to better suit the competence of English majors in China.

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INTRODUCTION

In this small-scale exploratory study involving three university teachers, an investigation of teachers' language use in classrooms serves to prompt an investigation of their cultural, professional and disciplinary identities in the context of an English department in a Chinese university.

Based on the findings from previous literature (Guo, 2007; Gao, 2005; Liu, 2003) and the fact that teachers and students in the English classes in Chinese universities share the same native language and culture, it can be expected that Chinese will inevitably be used in the classes observed. Furthermore in China, where English is learnt as a foreign language, the English teachers speak in class is usually one of the key source of L2 input students can acquire. Consequently teachers' language use in class is of particular importance, as it significantly affects students' L2 learning processes and achievements.

In terms of the setting of the context in this study, English departments in China exist in different types of universities, including comprehensive universities which offer a wide range of subjects, teachers' colleges, science and technology oriented universities, and universities focusing on foreign language teaching and learning. Its widespread presence is considered to reflect the prosperous development of English language education in China over the past decades.

English departments in Chinese universities and English Language and Literature (henceforth ELL) as a discipline have undergone tremendous changes over the past century. It started off being viewed as a humanities subject during the early 20th century, as the American model was borrowed by Chinese scholars who studied in English departments in American universities. From 1950s to 1990s, due to the economic and social development in China, there appeared a lack of intellectuals who could communicate fluently in English. Thus, an urgent need to develop such talents with proficient English language skills became a requirement for all English departments in Chinese universities, which resulted in a massive expanding of English departments in almost every Chinese university. While the priority was placed on language skills training, it was criticized that English departments had become language centres and English majors in China were losing their disciplinary advantages as all the other undergraduate students were learning English language skills as part of university curriculum as well. To react to that criticism, an approach called "developing interdisciplinary intellectuals" were proposed at the end of the 20th century. Students were encouraged to study both English language skills and another subject such as journalism, diplomacy, business administration etc., however this approach, which was seemingly in accordance with the economic development in China at that time, eventually was proved to be unsustainable either (Wang 2001; Huang 2010; Liu 2000; Zheng 2006). Therefore, returning to the humanities area has been proposed by several scholars as the most appropriate direction to improve the prospects of disciplinary construction for English departments. It is hoped that by building a curriculum around liberal arts education, it is beneficial for English majors to develop critical and independent thinking abilities as well as a cross-cultural awareness which they have long been criticized for lacking. Moving into a humanities-oriented direction for ELL as a discipline will involve not only the re-

development of the curriculum but also deciding on the qualities needed for the teachers who are able to teach the content courses in the new curriculum (Hu and Sun 2006; Wen et al., 2010; Jin 2010; He et al., 2008).

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This is a mixed methods research study, which is divided into two phases. It takes the form of a case study involving three English teachers at university. Three research methods are utilized: classroom observation, interview and stimulated recall. Phase I of the study aims to answer the research question mainly regarding participants' L1 use in L2 class (codeswitching) such as when, how and why they switch from one language to the other. Based on the preliminary findings from Phase I, follow-up interviews are conducted during Phase II of the study to further explore issues concerning the cross-cultural pedagogy and teachers' identities reflected in their language use. A combination of both skill and content courses are observed. The table below shows the details:

Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C
American Literature	Western Philosophy	Advanced English (skill course)
Advanced English (skill course)	British and American Poetry	

Analysis of the data from the current research study utilizes a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses of all the various data sources. Analysis of data from Phase I aims to identify the themes within participants' L1 use in L2 class and to categorise these in terms of functions. Time coding is completed with all recorded lessons aiming to capture the total amount of Chinese/English spoken in class as well the amount of time spent on speaking Chinese in different codeswitching categories. Analysis of data from Phase II concentrates on using thematic analysis to explore the potential themes in each interview talk, integrating the themes from each interview, and collating all the interview data under appropriate themes or sub-themes in preparation for the reporting of the results.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After examining the teachers' L1 use patterns, ten major functions were categorized. The categorisation process was developed based on the adoption of categories from previous studies (Guthrie, 1984; Guthrie and Guthrie, 1992; Polio and Duff, 1994; Liu et al., 2004; Macaro, 2001b, Anton and DiCamilla, 1998; Flyman-Mattsson and Burenhult, 1999; Atkinson, 1987; Brice, 2000; Cook, 2001) and the research questions of the study itself. The table below illustrates the ten categories.

1	Translating long, difficult and illustrative sentences
2	Explaining / paraphrasing / interpreting new vocabulary or difficult phrases
3	Giving procedural instructions
4	Explaining grammar
5	Providing background information
6	Lecturing text-related culture/literature/philosophy
7	Asides/anecdotes/personal opinions embedded in interpretation/

	lecturing on the text
8	Raising questions
9	Meta-textual comments concerned with interpretation, evaluation of the text, etc.
10	Emphasizing pronunciation

The microanalysis on the codeswitching categories and the time coding reveal a significant amount of L1 usage in “lecturing text-related culture/literature/philosophy” where teachers switch from English to Chinese to provide students with literary, philosophical and cultural knowledge from both the English and Chinese perspectives. This pattern occurs frequently in skill courses as well in which the language, rather than the content, is supposed to be the focus of the course. Additionally teachers tend to use their L1 often to tell “asides, anecdotes or personal opinions embedded in interpretation/lecturing on the text”. Analysis of interviews and stimulated recalls confirms teachers’ deliberate use of this codeswitching category as a pedagogical approach to provide students with such knowledge, as they believe this type of knowledge is essential but currently missing from the curriculum. They are also convinced that the real essence of studying ELL as a discipline is to be equipped with knowledge from both English and Chinese perspectives and the ability to understand and process such knowledge critically. Therefore it requires the teachers employ a comparative or cross-cultural teaching method in class.

In the process of exploring the possible factors affecting teachers’ L1 use in L2 class, teachers’ identities (cultural, professional and disciplinary identities) have emerged as one salient factor. The influence can be viewed in lesson recordings as well as in interviewing data. It is also one of the reasons, which prompted the second phase of the study in which issues regarding curriculum, cross-cultural content teaching and identities are further investigated.

Cultural identity in the current context refers to teachers’ stance as being Chinese and deeply influenced by Chinese culture. Close investigation of codeswitching items identified through categorisation revealed that teachers’ positions changed from being merely a teacher to being more of a Chinese person than a teacher under certain circumstances such as telling asides and lecturing Chinese literature/culture/philosophy, especially when they were conducting cross-cultural comparisons between the Western societies and China. Since neither knowledge of Chinese literature, culture and philosophy nor cross-cultural comparison is considered to be part of the requirements of the courses (as the courses are English language skills or Western Literature, Culture and Philosophy per se), this suggests that the impact of teachers’ cultural identity, particularly their national pride concerning Chinese literature, culture and history plays an important role in the content they deliver and their language choice in class. Examples provided below are extracted from all the subjects taught by the participants.

- 1) 所以英国文学要追溯到 10 世纪以后。你们接受外来文化的时候要有一个概念。我经常想，英国连莎士比亚有没有这个人需要考证，这在中国我们会觉得是很可笑的事情。莎士比亚是在文艺复兴时期。但是 10 世纪对于中国

文学已经很晚了。中国文学动辄就是公元前，对不对？所以你们接受外国文学要有一个概念。但是你们也不要 **cultural chauvinism**, 不要有大国沙文主义。(The history of English literature can be approximately dated back to the 10th Century. You have to have the sense of chronology when learning foreign literature and culture. English people have to conduct textual research to determine whether or not there ever existed such a great writer called Shakespeare, which would sound like a joke in China! Shakespeare lived in the Renaissance but the 10th Century was already a late stage for Chinese literature. We often see Chinese literary works from BC, right? So you have to be able to distinguish the time sequence when learning foreign culture and literature. However we should not feel cultural chauvinism either.)

- 2) 我很认同我老师讲过的一句话：往往最慢的东西却是最快的。中国人说电光火石之间。中国人认为到达智慧那一瞬间的美妙是需要经过千年的等待来赢得。中国的禅宗最讲究这一点。禅宗说：挑水砍柴，皆有佛理。在挑水砍柴这些 **monotony of everyday life**, 琐碎的，单调的生活中，让你的心慢慢清澈起来，也许某一天，刹那之间，就开悟了。对智慧的领会，这是中国人，东方人，比较推崇的方法。(I really appreciate what my teacher once said: the slowest is usually the fastest. Chinese people say “at the moment of lightening”. Chinese people believe that to reach the instant of achieving wisdom, one has to wait for thousands of years. Chinese Zen particularly emphasizes this. Zen says: “Buddhism exists everywhere, even in the process of carrying the water and chopping the woods.” In the monotony of everyday life, your heart gets purified gradually. Maybe one day, all of a sudden, the truth dawns on you. This is the method to achieve and understand wisdom adored by the Chinese and Asians in general.)

Apart from cultural identity, which seems to have an impact on teachers' L1 use in L2 class (codeswitching), it has been perceived from the analysis of lecture talk that a certain number of codeswitching items have reflected teachers' disciplinary identity as well. Disciplinary identity refers to the perceptions they possess of themselves, which are affected by specific research interest areas.

- 1) 在中文里，“元”的意思是表示最初的。还有，比如说“玄”。在古代，“玄”与“元”是相通的，都表示开始的意思。唐朝的柳宗元有个弟弟叫柳宗玄。但是在唐玄宗的时代，他要避这个“玄”字的讳。又不能改成“元”，否则兄弟俩就同名了。所以后来他就改成了这个“远”。(In Chinese, Yuan means the first. Another word with the same meaning is **Xuan**. In ancient China, Yuan equaled Xuan. They both meant the beginning of something. There is a poet in the Tang Dynasty called Liu Zong Yuan and his brother was named Liu Zong Xuan. However in the reign of Emperor Xuan, one's name couldn't contain the word Xuan. Therefore he had to change it. But he couldn't change it to Yuan, which had a similar meaning because in that case he and his brother would have the same name. So at last he changed it to another character: Yuan.)
- 2) 外国人研究《水浒》很有意思。那天我看见一篇文章，题目就叫“**Wu Song – A Misogyny**”. **Women-hater**. 在中国，没有人会认为武松仇恨女人。但是在外国人眼里就不一样。这是很有意思的。(It is interesting to know how

foreigners study “Outlaws in the Marsh”. I read a paper titled “Wu Song – A Misogyny”. Women-hater. In China, nobody would think he is a women-hater but foreigners do, which is very interesting.)

The examples above taken from Teacher A’s class demonstrate that he lectures on literary themes to students not only in literature class but also in skilled-based English language classes. The remarks made on all these subjects are mostly L1, rather than L2, which is supposed to be the dominant language in class. However knowledge of literature and culture etc. is not supposed to be part of the syllabus in a skills-based course where improving students’ language skills is the main task for a teacher. It is thus speculated that Teacher A’s language use in class is to a certain extent affected by his own research interests in literature and the fact that he sees himself more as a literature teacher than a language teacher.

The following two examples are taken from Teacher B’s classes. In his British and American Poetry class where poems should be the topic, due to his own academic background and research interests in philosophy, he tends to incorporate philosophical knowledge in his talk. This knowledge is often drawn from the Chinese perspective.

- 1) 这句话让你们想起了谁？对，庄子。庄生晓梦迷蝴蝶，望帝春心托杜鹃。庄子说：我在梦中看到自己变成了一只蝴蝶。我醒来后就暗自揣测，到底我是我，蝴蝶是蝴蝶，还是我就是那蝴蝶，那蝴蝶就是我？这个问题大家对于现代科学意识非常强的人来说，觉得庄子是在胡说八道。他在讲什么？但是如果你不要抱着成见，去体悟这句话，你就知道这句话有它的深度。我在何种意义上是我？To what degree can I identify myself? 什么是我？我是什么？那个我是思考的我还是感觉的我？我究竟以怎样的方式知道我？That’s really a question. (Whom does this sentence remind you of? Yes, Chuang-tzu. He dreamed of himself becoming a butterfly and when he woke up, he started to ponder: are the butterfly and I two separate things or are we the same thing? It sounds nonsense to people with a very strong sense of modern science. What is he talking about? But if you think about it without any prejudice, you would understand that he had a point. To what degree can I identify myself? What is “me”? What am I? Is that me - the one who is thinking or the one who is feeling? How can I know about “me”? That’s really a question.)
- 2) 中国人有一种很高的艺术境界，叫物我两忘。物中有我，我中有物。分不清哪个是我，哪个是物。这也是禅宗的境界。西方人是物我二元对立的。野渡无人舟自横，是无我之境。泪眼问花花不语，是有我之境。朱光潜说，无我是一种静谧的美。这是一种境界很高的美。(Chinese people can achieve a very high level in art which is known to happen only when you forget everything around you, including yourself. You see things in yourself and yourself in things. You cannot distinguish yourself from other beings. This is also the state that the Chinese Zen promotes. However, as for the Westerners, other substances and they themselves are independent. In the poem “A boat alongside a wild ferry lies by itself”, it describes a state where I totally forget the existence of myself; whereas in the poem “I asked the flowers in silent tears but gained no answers”, it depicts a condition in which “me” does exist. The Chinese scholar, Zhu Guang Qian says: “A condition where “me” does not exist is a quiet beauty.” This is beauty at a very high level.)

The setting for the current study is an educational environment in which teachers and students share the same cultural background and English is the second language for both parties, teachers realise the importance of students' knowledge of Chinese language and culture in the process of understanding content in English and understanding the culture of English-speaking countries. They thus borrow such knowledge and utilize it to help students better understand the lesson contents from the English perspective. Since students' knowledge of Chinese language and culture is to a large extent equivalent to that of teachers, and one's knowledge of native language and culture is a crucial factor of the formation of one's cultural identity, it can be predicted that certain contents these teachers deliver in class are likely to reflect their cultural identity. Under certain circumstances, teachers tend to seize the opportunity and extend the classroom discussion by providing students with knowledge about Chinese literature, culture and philosophy etc. which is not even part of the syllabus. In the process of providing such extra knowledge, their feeling of cultural superiority is revealed. It can be argued that teachers choose to switch to Chinese in this situation, rather than using English, because given the consideration that the teachers and students share the same first language and cultural background, using Chinese on these occasions is more likely to awaken students' sense of attachment to Chinese culture as well and build up the rapport in class. Teachers' identity in this context can be seen as static on a certain level since the influence of their cultural identity on their ideology has been formed outside the classroom and is thus brought to the class with them. However it can also be viewed as dynamic, as the process of interacting with students who share the same native language and culture with the teachers shapes the ways in which this cultural identity is represented and understood.

Both Teacher A and B have expressed in the interviews that they are aware of the impact of their cultural identity. Teacher A states that he feels prouder of the Chinese literature and culture in the American Literature course than in skills-based courses. He further claims that *"comparing Chinese and Western literature tends to lessen my appreciation and admiration of the history of Western literature"*. On the one hand he understands the existence of *"cultural chauvinism"* which seems to be inevitable; on the other hand he suggests that efforts should be made to reduce it to the minimal amount. Teacher B, on the other hand, reveals a stronger sense of cultural identity. When asked the reason for providing students with extra knowledge on Chinese literature, culture and philosophy etc., he answers: *"First of all, you are a Chinese. If you do not understand your own culture, how can you call yourself Chinese?"* It seems that according to Teacher B, since the students are Chinese, the mastery of Chinese culture is a prerequisite for learning anything else. He acknowledges the influence of first language and native culture and regards that this type of influence is unavoidable in the second/foreign learning environment.

The impact of cultural identity is also reflected in the teachers' constant reference to the Chinese standpoint during the interviews. For instance, Teacher A considers that *"the ultimate goal of researching American and British culture is not to understand American and British culture only. More importantly, it represents a search for ways to make other cultures useful for the Chinese culture"*. Meanwhile Teacher B also explains that while providing students with Chinese elements creates a comparative dimension with regard to the Western counterpart, the fundamental aim is to *"confirm*

with ourselves to see to what extent our moral standards are valid and justified". It is considered that teachers' insistence on the Chinese standpoint, owing to the influence of their cultural identity, urges them to include extra knowledge from the Chinese perspective in class and this has an impact on their teaching practice.

The formation and shaping of the teachers' disciplinary identity is considered to be affected by a number of factors: their perceptions of the development of their department, the current national curriculum, and the specific research areas they are interested in. Among these factors, their perceptions of the development of their department contradict the current national curriculum. According to the national curriculum, the teaching and learning of English language skills occupies a dominant position, whereas the teachers contend that the time for English language education should be eliminated and courses on liberal arts (humanities) substituted. Their sense of discipline is associated with the ideal development direction of their department, of which they have a clear picture. In disciplinary terms, they feel affiliated to the English Language and Literature Department and guided by a curriculum which values liberal arts education instead of the current curriculum filled with (in their view) excessive emphasis on English language education. Meanwhile their perceptions of the development of their department are influenced by their individual research interests. For example, Teacher A's research interest lies in literature, thus when he describes the development direction of his department, he traces it back to the curriculum before 1949 when literature was the focus and suggests returning to the curriculum of that time. On the other hand, Teacher B is interested in researching philosophy and cultural studies: therefore he speaks of the future direction of the department from a broader perspective and highlights the importance of developing students' cultural awareness and sensitivity in a liberal arts education model.

Results from Phase I of the study indicate that teachers employ codeswitching as a pedagogical strategy to deliver the contents outside the syllabus and the contents they deliver are influenced by their research interests. They are both aware of such usage and provide their reasons for this. Teacher A understands that *"the elements of literature/culture which I include in the skills-based course are not part of the syllabus and should be taught in courses such as The History of Western Civilisation or Western Culture. However these courses are not included in the curriculum so I have to add this type of knowledge in my skill course because the students need it"*. As far as Teacher B is concerned, he admits that he prefers to use poems as a type of text and encourage students to ponder the cultural background and themes of the poems. Additionally, when asked about the differences between teaching skills-based courses and content-based ones, he stated that in his skills-based courses he will also relate the texts to philosophy sometimes because *"pure language skills will bore the students and few of them are truly interested in learning language skills"*.

It seems that the reason disciplinary identity is affecting the teachers' talk in class is that these teachers feel responsible for providing students with the knowledge they are unable to obtain within the current curriculum and yet they choose to provide such knowledge in L1 instead of L2. However it can be argued that the disciplinary identity plays an important role because fundamentally the teachers feel that they have no choice but to be viewed as English language teachers by both the national curriculum and academics from other disciplines but they refuse to see themselves in this way. Instead they tend to perceive themselves as subject experts. In the interviews when

asked what type of teacher they see themselves as, Teacher A says that since he has been teaching American Literature for years, he sees himself as more of a literature teacher, although he understands that he also teaches English skill courses. However Teacher B does not believe he is purely a philosophy teacher. Compared with the teachers in the philosophy department, he considers himself as “something in-between”: *“I can’t be too philosophical in class. It is not entirely like teaching philosophy in English. I have to consider students’ L2 level when selecting texts for reading. At the same time I will keep in mind if the texts I select can provide them with some philosophical thoughts and inspire them to think actively”*.

It seems that there is a dilemma with regard to his professional identity for Teacher B. On the one hand, the outside world tends to view him as an English language teacher, which he refuses to accept: *“I am definitely not an English language teacher. I am a teacher who uses English to spread humanities knowledge but I refuse to be viewed as an English teacher”*. It can be argued that these teachers are struggling to avoid being perceived as English language skills teachers because English language teaching is not a discipline but more of a “service” provided for other professions. They prefer to be acknowledged as part of the humanities academy, where they are recognised as experts in certain subjects.

The findings also reflect the point Beijaard et al. (2000) make about teachers’ perceptions of their professional identity affecting their willingness to cope with educational change and to implement innovations in their teaching practice. Teachers A and B in the present research tend to view themselves as literature/philosophy teachers more than English language teachers; therefore they choose to respond to the national curriculum in their own particular way through reducing the English language teaching while increase teaching subject knowledge in their classes. In addition, their perceptions of professional identity as humanities teachers provoke them to actively encourage the reform of the current curriculum and in the meantime replace the content-based instruction with content teaching approach to accommodate their innovative ideas towards the lesson contents, simply because the current curriculum is forcing them to become the type of teacher they do not want to be.

CONCLUSION

To summarise, this study sets out to investigate three university teachers’ L1 use in L2 class in an English department in a leading Chinese university. Classroom observation (lesson recordings), interviews and stimulated recalls are used. Analysing teachers’ lecture talk in class results in the categorisation of ten different patterns where teachers switch between L1 and L2. Among these ten patterns, the significant and salient one *“lecturing text-related culture/literature/philosophy”* prompts the second phase of the study where follow-up interviews conducted further reveal that teachers’ switch between two language in order to convey knowledge about literature, culture and philosophy etc. from both English and Chinese perspectives reflects a cross-cultural pedagogy which is considered by the participants as necessary and effective in teaching ELL in China. In addition, their language use in class is closely related to and affected by their cultural, disciplinary and professional identities. They are aware of the influence of such identities and believe that various reasons could be accounted for bringing the identities into class such as their personal research interests, national curriculum and their beliefs on ELL disciplinary construction in China.

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The Effects of Reading Circles and Graded Reading on EFL Reading Self-efficacy and Anxiety

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of reading circles and graded reading on the EFL reading self-efficacy and anxiety of first-year university students in Japan. For this quasi-experimental mixed-methods one-semester study, data was collected from 358 first-year university students studying at a Japanese university. 116 participants participated in an in-class reading circle program, 117 participants participated in a graded reading program as part of their homework, and 125 participants served as a control group. Quantitative data was collected through participants' self-assessment of perceived reading self-efficacy and anxiety and their attitudes toward the specified program in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered at the beginning and end of the participants' first semester at university, and qualitative data was collected through participants' comments in open-ended questions at the end of the treatment. A repeated measures one-way ANOVA test was performed to determine any increase or decrease in the participants' reading self-efficacy and anxiety. The results showed similar improvements across the board for participants' EFL reading self-efficacy and anxiety, including the control group, which amounted to insignificant results for the specified programs. A probable limiting factor that influenced results was the short duration of the treatments, thus the researchers intend to continue the study for a full school year to track any developments. Impending analysis of the qualitative data will offer further insight into results and ways of improving the implementation of student-centered reading activities.

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Introduction

Reading in a foreign language is a well-researched area of foreign and second language acquisition. The breadth of research extends into many areas of language acquisition and has informed researchers and practitioners on the importance of vocabulary learning, discourse and graphic representations, the training of reading strategies, and the need to develop language awareness and attend to language and genre form. Research in reading instruction has advocated the need for extensive reading, the advantages of combining reading and writing, and the importance of learners making the transition from 'learning to read to reading to learn' (Grabe, 2001).

Extensive reading and reading for pleasure have received particular attention in EFL research and across a wide range of contexts with many studies reporting benefits in vocabulary acquisition, in increasing reading rate, reading proficiency and attitude (Robb & Susser, 1989; Horst, 2005; Takase, 2006; Iwahori, 2008). More recently, another reading-based activity gaining consideration in the EFL classroom is reading circles, a cooperative learning approach which can bridge the solitary task of reading with the opportunity to increase peer-learning. L1 and ESL studies have found favorable results with the use of reading circles in advancing reading skills and increasing reading level as well as improving the classroom environment by increasing cooperation, peer-learning, and confidence and self-efficacy in reading (Pitman, 1997; Burns, 1998; Kim, 2004; McElvain, 2010). Although much of the research on reading circles in the EFL context has focused on learners' attitudes towards the activity (Mark, 2007; Williams 2011), Chiang and Huang (2005) found that it improved the learners' interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes of communication.

Theoretical approaches in EFL reading research have often evaluated successfulness of reading programs, particularly extensive reading, in achieving its ultimate goal: learning language and becoming a better reader. However, when considering the process through which a learner is expected to achieve that goal; that is to say the learner will develop the habit of reading in English, increasing their exposure to the language, and resulting in general improvement of their language proficiency (Green, 2005), the initial habit formation becomes a crucial step in this process and deserves attention. Thus, learners' willingness and motivation to engage in the program as well as their self-perception as a reader can have a great impact on this crucial step. Students perceived ability or anxiety to take part in the program or activity would then be an enabler or inhibitor to achieving the program goals.

The current study will explore the issue of learners' perceived reading self-efficacy and anxiety in the implementation of reading programs in a Japanese university. This article will introduce the Japanese EFL reading context and describe reading self-efficacy and anxiety. The study design, analysis, and results will be described. Finally, discussion of these results and the study's limitations will be presented.

University Learners and EFL Reading in Japan

Issues in implementing foreign language reading programs are relevant in Japan, where prioritizing reading instruction for passing university entrance examinations is common practice. Despite strong advocacy for specialized reading programs like extensive reading and focusing on reading for pleasure in school curricula,

implementation of such programs is not commonplace and more traditional teaching methods, such as direct translation of texts or a grammatical approach to teaching reading, have been sustained in many institutions (Noro, 2000). This approach is particularly true at the secondary level due to the aforementioned university entrance examination system. Nuttall (2000) described this approach as a vicious cycle in which students become slow readers, come to not enjoy reading, lose interest, and don't understand the content.

This cycle leaves very little to impress upon students when entering university where more innovative and research-based curricula include extensive reading programs, reading for pleasure, and or reading circles as a regular part of classroom activities or outside of class. By this point, Japanese learners' perceived ability to read has suffered tremendously, and so without some kind of intervention, students may not be willing to engage in L2 reading.

Reading Self-efficacy and Anxiety

Self-efficacy refers to one's beliefs in one's ability to succeed in a specific task (Bandura, 1977). If given a specific task, such as reading an academic essay in English, a person who believes that they can successfully accomplish the task could be described as having high self-efficacy. A person who does not believe that they can successfully accomplish the task could be described as having low self-efficacy. Moreover, Bandura (1986) puts forth that "what people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave." (p. 25) In other words, a person who believes that they will succeed in a specific task will behave in one way while a person who believes they will not succeed will behave in a different way. Thus, beliefs affect behavior.

To illustrate, imagine two students have taken a reading test and both students have failed it. The student A has high self-efficacy whereas the student B has low self-efficacy. Generally, people with high self-efficacy tend to set higher goals for themselves, have strong commitment to completing tasks, visualize success scenarios for themselves, view difficult tasks as a challenge and attribute failure to a lack of effort (Bandura, 1993). On receiving a failing grade, student A will be more likely to take action that will lead to an improved grade on the next test. On the other hand, people with low self-efficacy tend not to set high goals, have weak commitment to completing tasks, visualize failure scenarios for themselves, view difficult tasks as personal threats, and attribute failure to a lack of ability (p. 144). On receiving a failing grade, student B will be less likely to take action that will lead to an improved grade on the next test. In fact, this student may rationalize that they are not good at reading and may even give up on the subject. Essentially, students with high self-efficacy will perform better than those with low self-efficacy (Mills, Pajares & Herron, 2006). In fact, self-efficacy can predict how well a student will perform (Woodrow, 2011; Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991; Schunk, 1991).

Self-efficacy is not static, but may actually be increased by experiences of success, encouragement from others, seeing others achieve success in the same activities or emotional states (Bandura, 1977). In particular, creating experiences of success, or mastery experiences, for students will increase students' self-efficacy (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2008). These sources of self-efficacy can increase a learner's perceived self-efficacy thus contributing to higher achievement.

Anxiety as an affective factor has been prominently featured as a part of EFL motivational theories. Recent studies have shown that self-efficacy has a regulatory effect on anxiety and that anxiety has an indirect effect on self-efficacy (Mills, Pajares & Herron, 2006; Woodrow 2011). Of particular interest to this study is the construct of reading anxiety, which is different from general foreign language anxiety. Reading anxiety varies depending on the target language, which is not the case with general foreign language anxiety. Specifically, reading anxiety may change depending on whether the writing system of the foreign language is familiar or not. Also, reading anxiety increases if students feel that the material they are reading is difficult, especially if the content is above their level or culturally unfamiliar (Saito, Garza & Horwitz, 1999).

Students who exhibit a high level of reading anxiety may become discouraged when reading a foreign language text. They may expect to understand everything that they read and will feel frustrated when they do not. Students who have high reading self-efficacy can overcome this anxiety and will be able to persevere in reading a text. However, if the anxiety is too high, it could lead to the students disengaging from the text (Saito, Garza & Horwitz, 1999). Since reading self-efficacy can overcome the debilitating effects of reading anxiety, it is important to look into the relationship between these two constructs. While this relationship has been observed in studies on academic self-efficacy (Pajares, 1996; Rouxel, 1999; Mohammadyari, 2012), there has been little research in the EFL reading context.

Purpose of Present Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effects of a graded reading program and a reading circle program on first-year university students' EFL reading self-efficacy and anxiety. The following research questions were explored:

- 1) What effects does the implementation of reading circles or graded reading have on Japanese university learners' reading self-efficacy?
- 2) What effects does the implementation of reading circles or graded reading have on Japanese university learners' reading anxiety?
- 3) How do the two reading programs differ in results?

Method

Participants

The participants were 358 first-year majors in economics (male = 248, female = 110) at a private university in Western Japan. All participants were enrolled in two compulsory English courses in the department. The study was conducted with twelve different sections of the same course, which is described as a general four-skills English course. Most students entering university in Japan have had approximately six years of English education as prescribed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). A student demographic questionnaire established that about half of the participants had taken an English proficiency test. Self-reported participants' scores in TOEIC ranged between 180 and 625, with an average of 436. STEP test scores ranged between pre-2nd grade and 3rd grade. According to Educational Testing Service public survey results, the average TOEIC score of STEP pre-2nd grade holders was 392 and STEP-3rd grade holders was 365. No participant reported having experienced reading circles or a graded reading

program. Thus, the participants consisted of Japanese learners covering a range of abilities entering their first-year of university.

The twelve sections were divided into three treatment groups according to the instructor: the graded reading treatment (n=117), the reading circle treatment (n=116), and no-treatment (n=125) which served as a control group. Each group had four course sections.

Treatments

Graded Reading Program

Graded reading entails self-selection of leveled readers designed to engage language learners in the act of reading English for pleasure, while at the same time building reading fluency. The instructor's goal with the graded reading program was to give students an opportunity to read English texts solely for pleasure. If students could have enjoyable, memorable experiences as they engaged with English texts, the hope was that motivation to read more (and consequently learn more English) would increase.

The participants in the graded reading group were asked to read five graded readers at or below their reading level throughout the course of the semester for homework. Because only five books were assigned for the duration of the 14-week semester, it is perhaps inaccurate to describe this treatment as an authentic graded (or extensive) reading program. A full-fledged extensive reading program would require students to read at least one graded reader per week (Day and Bamford, 2002). Due to the constraints of the course, implementing this type of program was not possible. Thus, it is more appropriate to describe this treatment as a *quasi*-graded reading program. Nevertheless, the program followed the basic principles of extensive reading proposed by Day and Bamford (2002). Table 1 outlines these principles.

Table 1

Top Ten Principles for Teaching Extensive Reading

1. The reading material is easy.
2. A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics must be available.
3. Learners choose what they want to read.
4. Learners read as much as possible.
5. The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding.
6. Reading is its own reward.
7. Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower.
8. Reading is individual and silent.

9. Teachers orient and guide their students.

10. The teacher is a role model of a reader.

Adapted from Day and Bamford (2002)

At the beginning of the semester, participants were taught a method for determining their reading level. A graded reader was considered to be at a student's appropriate level when they could read 60 to 100 words per minute at an unhurried pace, with the target number of words being 80 words per minute. Another target was that students must comprehend most of what they read. If a student did not understand more than five words during the minute of reading, they were advised to drop down one graded reading level.

Assessment of homework completion involved having participants submit a handwritten, one-page review of the story they read. They were encouraged to give an honest opinion about the story, and discouraged to copy from the book. The participants were not tested on their knowledge of the stories they read, because this would run counter to the goal of having them read purely for pleasure. Because the assessment of whether students actually read their books or not is based solely on the instructor's subjective interpretation of the submitted book reviews, there is a limitation as to the accuracy of the results of the data collection from this group.

Reading Circles Description

Reading circles (RC) are essentially groups of students who get together and talk about what they are reading. Daniels (1994) is often mentioned for exploring the use of reading circles in elementary and junior high schools in the US, and he defines it as "small, temporary discussion groups of students who have chosen to read the same work of literature". He described 11 key guidelines for a reading circle. Considering that this was in an L1 context, Furr (2007) who began using reading circles in Japanese universities recognized that these key ingredients would have to be modified for EFL learners particularly the students' linguistic level. Reading circles in this study followed guidelines summarized in Table 2:

Table 2

Key Guidelines for RC in EFL context

1. Teacher-selected materials.
2. Small groups formed by students or teachers.
3. Different groups are usually reading the same text to enable whole class discussion.
4. Groups meet on a regular schedule.
5. Students use notes to guide reading and discussion.
6. Discussion topics come from the students.

7. Goal is to engage in natural conversations about books, so personal comments and digressions are acceptable.
 8. The teacher becomes facilitator, not a group member or instructor.
 9. A positive atmosphere should be fostered in the classroom.
-

Adapted from Furr (2007)

One aspect of the reading circle, which varies from a regular book club, is the roles that each participant performs in preparation to and during the circle. The five roles, the *discussion leader*, the *summarizer*, the *connector*, the *word master* and the *passage person* (Furr, 2007) invite participants to read from the perspective of their role, prepare discussion points according to their reading, and present it to their peers in the reading circle. The discussion leader is in charge of directing the group discussion and making sure that each member participates. The summarizer outlines characters and events and then writes a short summary. The connector finds personal connections in the story or connects it to the outside world. The word master finds five meaningful words in the story and explains their meaning in context. The passage person finds three passages and prepares discussion questions about the passages. Both the word master and the passage person have to state their reason for choosing the words or passages. The performance of their roles is supported with role sheets that can guide them or make suggestions in how to prepare for the meeting. The instructor evaluated participants' preparation by doing a quick check of role sheets at the beginning of the reading circle. A short vocabulary quiz including a cloze-test of a summary of the short stories was given twice during the semester.

Materials

Students in the graded reading group were given the opportunity to select their graded readers (as opposed to having the teacher select reading materials) from the university library containing hundreds of graded reading titles from different publishers in the hopes this would increase their motivation and enjoyment of reading texts in English.

In contrast, materials for the reading circles were teacher-selected. Initially, it was hoped that participants would be able to self-select materials for reading circles. However, after surveying materials available in the library, it seemed that practical issues would arise since participants in the same reading circle would require the same reading material. Although the library holds a variety of graded readers, there were few titles that had multiple copies. Thus, to assure the smooth operation of the treatment in order to properly investigate the research questions, the researchers decided to provide short stories to the participants. The texts were original stories created for L2 learners. The texts were run through Cobb's online-based Web Vocabprofiler (Heatley, Nation & Coxhead, 2002), and it was found that stories ranged between 214 and 555 headwords with more than 85% of the text in the first 2000 words of English. Words that did not fall into the first 2000 word-level were mostly proper names. Printed materials were distributed in class and an electronic version was made available to participants through the university learning system to assure that they had access to the assigned reading.

Instrument

Two sets of questionnaires were used in the study. The first questionnaire, the reading self-efficacy and anxiety questionnaire (Appendix A and B), was administered to all participants. It consisted of 15 items evaluating participants' perceived ability to complete specific reading tasks on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (I cannot do it at all) to 6 (I can definitely do it). The reading anxiety items were 8 statements relating negative feelings in regards to reading in English. Participants responded to the statements on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The reading self-efficacy and anxiety questionnaire was piloted with a group of students in other sections of the same course in the first week of classes.

In addition to measuring reading self-efficacy and anxiety, researchers wanted to gain insight into the participants' attitudes towards the two treatments. The second questionnaire, the attitudes towards graded reading/reading circles questionnaire (Appendix C, D, E, F), was administered to the two treatment groups at the end of the semester. The participants answered on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) for 9 items referring to the participants' perceived enjoyment and usefulness of the reading treatments. Items 33 and 34 referred to the amount of time participants spent on the reading treatment. Five open-ended questions allowed for participants to write their impressions, and an additional question on the reading circle questionnaire asked for participants to rank the roles in the reading circles.

Procedure

Data collection began in the second week of classes. A consent form and demographic survey were filled-out and signed by all participants. The reading self-efficacy and anxiety questionnaire was then administered to all three groups.

Following the data collection, participants in the graded reading group (n= 117) were given an orientation session. Goals for the program, selection method for the materials, and assessment of the program were introduced. Participants and the instructor visited the campus library for their first graded reader selection.

Similar to the graded reading group, participants in the reading circles group (n= 116) were given an orientation session following the administration of the questionnaire. Participants were given explicit directions about the purpose of the activity, the organization of reading circles and procedures for tasks in and out of the classroom. Groups of 5 or 6 students were formed according to a randomly assigned seating arrangement at the beginning of class. Within their groups, students distributed roles for their first reading circle to be held the following class and received the assigned short story. Participants were asked to read and prepare for their respective role outside of class. In the following class, the instructor reviewed tasks to be performed by each role during the reading circle and gave discussion leaders in each group a performance checklist and a list of useful words and phrases to facilitate group discussion and participation. The reading circles lasted on average between 15 and 25 minutes. Groups who finished early were given an additional discussion question or task. A whole-class discussion followed during which individual students volunteered or were asked to report the group's discussion. This time was also used to clarify some aspect of the story or text. This procedure was repeated four times in the fourteen-week semester at an interval of two or three weeks.

Participants in the control group received no specialized reading treatment outside of the set course curriculum.

The second round of data was collected in week 12 of the semester. The same reading self-efficacy and anxiety questionnaire was administered to all participants. The attitudes towards graded reading/reading circles questionnaire was given to the treatment groups.

Analysis

Data collected over one semester was processed for analysis. To assure consistency in the sample groups a pre-questionnaire was given to participants to determine whether some of them had experienced study abroad or were familiar with the treatments in this study. Data from such participants were not kept for analysis.

Data collected in the piloted questionnaire used to measure reading self-efficacy and anxiety were analyzed using the Rasch rating scales to validate items in the questionnaire. Three items (item 2, 3, and 23) were found to be slightly problematic in regards of the Infit meansquare, falling outside the prescribed range of 0.6-1.4 for lower stakes test (Wright, Linacre, Gustafson & Martin-Lof, 1994). However, further statistical analysis of item validity with and without the items showed an insignificant difference in results; thus, the three items were kept for the questionnaire used in the study.

Data collected from Time 1 were analyzed again using the Rasch rating scales and showed similar results with item misfit for items 2, 3 and 23. To avoid issues in item reliability, the three items were not kept for the analysis.

Data collected from the attitudes questionnaire Likert-scale items were also analyzed using the Rasch rating scales and the means were calculated to compare the attitudes of participants in the two treatment groups. Comments in the open-ended questions are currently being transcribed for further analysis.

Results

Reading Self-efficacy

The means for reading self-efficacy for the control group, the two treatment groups, and the combined group are summarized in Table 3. The means in all three groups increased between time 1 and 2.

Table 3
Reading Self-efficacy Means by Groups

	No Treatment			Graded Reading			Reading Circle			Combined		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Time 1	47.96	7.0	12	48.33	6.9	11	48.19	7.2	11	48.15	7.0	35
	*	1	5	*	1	7	*	0	6	*	2	8
Time 2	51.98	6.5	12	53.41	7.2	11	52.90	7.3	11	52.75	7.3	35
	*	6	5	*	2	7	*	3	6	*	3	8

* $p < .05$

A repeated-measures analysis of variance revealed that there was a significant increase in reading self-efficacy in the no treatment group, $F(1, 124) = 85.48, p < .05$, in the graded reading group, $F(1, 116) = 70.90, p < .05$, as well as the reading circle group, $F(1, 115) = 90.57, p < .05$.

The mean difference for each group was calculated, and a one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether the treatment groups had a greater influence on reading self-efficacy. The results showed no significant differences between groups, $F(2, 355) = 1.14, p > .05$. These results suggest that despite an overall increase in reading self-efficacy, participants in the treatments groups did not gain additional benefits from the graded reading or reading circle program.

Reading Anxiety

Table 4 shows the means and standard deviation for reading anxiety. All groups showed a decrease in overall means over the course of the semester.

Table 4

Reading Anxiety Means by Groups

	No Treatment			Graded Reading			Reading Circle			Combined		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>
Time 1	51.04*	4.90	125	50.77	4.72	117	51.32*	5.93	116	51.04*	5.19	358
Time 2	49.96*	4.39	125	50.20	6.14	117	50.01*	5.55	116	50.05*	5.37	358

* $p < .05$

Results from the repeated-measures ANOVA in each group revealed that both the no-treatment and the reading circle group had a significant decrease in anxiety, $F(1, 124) = 14.48, p < .05$; $F(1, 115) = 11.95, p < .05$, respectively. However, the graded reading group showed no significant decrease in anxiety, $F(1, 116) = 1.60, p > .05$.

A one-way ANOVA performed with the mean difference for each group showed no significant difference between the three groups, $F(2, 355) = 1.01, p > .05$. Thus, changes in reading anxiety cannot be attributed to the reading treatments.

Attitudes towards Graded Reading and Reading Circles

The results of the attitudes questionnaire for the two treatment groups are summarized below. Items 24 to 32 refer to the participants' perceived enjoyment and usefulness of the reading treatments. Table 5 shows the means for each item in the grading reading group, the reading circle group, and their combined scores. Both groups responded with an average of 4 or higher to all items.

Table 5

Attitudes Questionnaire Item Means

Items	Graded Reading (n = 117)	Reading Circles (n = 116)	Combined (n = 233)
Q24	4.56	4.42	4.49
Q25	4.59	4.07	4.33
Q26	4.81	4.03	4.42
Q27	4.70	4.39	4.54
Q28	4.35	4.22	4.28
Q29	4.19	4.23	4.20
Q30	4.03	4.27	4.15
Q31	4.67	4.52	4.59
Q32	4.64	4.17	4.40
Total Mean	4.51	4.26	4.38

Scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the participants' attitudes in the graded reading treatment and reading circle treatment. There was a significant difference in the scores for graded reading ($M=58.06$, $SD=8.01$) and reading circle ($M=55.75$, $SD=8.87$) treatments; $t(231) = 2.08$, $p < .05$. The standard effect size index, d , was $.27$. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference between the two was $.12$ to 4.5 . These results suggest that participants in the graded reading treatment generally had more positive attitudes towards the treatment than participants in the reading circle treatment.

Discussion and Limitations

Preliminary results showed that all groups, including the control group, had a significant increase in reading self-efficacy, but there was no significant difference between groups. Regarding anxiety, the no-treatment group and the reading circles group showed a significant decrease, but the graded reading group did not. A number of limitations to the study may have influenced these results. One limitation was the duration of the treatments. The study was conducted over the course of 12 weeks, in which participants met for class only once per week. Thus, participants were exposed to the treatments for a relatively short amount of time.

Another related constraint was the nature of the English courses in which students were enrolled. The purpose for the courses was not solely to teach reading. The reading activities were incorporated into a broader curriculum of a general, compulsory four-skills English program. This too reduced the amount of time available for participants to engage with the treatments. For example, the reading circle group was only able to participate in reading circle activities 4 times during the course of the semester. The graded reading group was only able to read five graded readers. Considering the limited amount of time participants were exposed to the treatments, it is not surprising to see little to no change in self-efficacy and anxiety results when compared to the control group. For example, a study by Omura (2002)

showed that insignificant results after one semester were attributable to an extensive reading programs short duration:

After completing the ER program for one year (two semesters including a summer break), significant improvement was found ... in reading as well as overall scores when compared to those students who did not participate in the ER. This finding leads the researcher to predict that the insignificant results after one semester was attributable to the short duration of the ER program (p. 44).

Another potential influence on results is the learners' beliefs and background about EFL reading. Background and beliefs about reading have a great influence on how students approach reading in EFL (Green, 2005), and so regardless of the treatments, the switch from the type of English reading performed in high school to that which is done in university may have changed participants' self-efficacy and anxiety over the course of the semester. In Japan this change is so drastic, in large part due to the absence of entrance exams upon entering university, that it could have had a significant influence on the changes experienced by participants. The researchers are still in midst of processing qualitative data from the participants that may shed some light into these potential influences.

Although these empirical results do not lend to practical guidelines in support of the reading programs evaluated in this study, theoretical underpinnings may justify the continuance of this study. For example, considering that self-efficacy is not static, but may actually be increased by experiences of success, encouragement from others, seeing others achieve success in the same activities or emotional states (Bandura, 1977) teachers can provide their students with many opportunities to help improve their self-efficacy. In particular, creating experiences of success, or mastery experiences, for students will increase students' self-efficacy (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2008). The success felt when a student completes a book such as a graded reader may help to improve students' EFL reading self-efficacy and could be a useful homework practice in EFL courses. Reading circles may also help to increase self-efficacy. For example, by working in groups and seeing other students succeed at similar tasks and receiving encouragement from peers, students' self-efficacy can benefit through modeling experiences and social persuasion. Therefore, the use of these programs in the EFL classroom is in line with theoretical principles and merits subsequent inquiry.

Conclusion

This article introduced a quasi-experimental mixed-method study investigating the effects of reading treatments on Japanese EFL learners' reading self-efficacy and anxiety. Due to limiting factors, most importantly the length of the study, the researchers have decided to continue the study in the second semester since one-semester may not have been long enough to observe any changes. The treatments will continue for another semester in the same fashion, and the questionnaires will be administered again at the end of the school year. Moreover, pending analysis of qualitative data may provide greater understanding of the effectiveness of these reading programs.

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Appendix A

READING SELF-EFFICACY & ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE (JAPANESE VERSION)

Reading Self-efficacy Questionnaire

以下の項目は英語のリーディング技能に関する内容です。各項目につき、どの程度できるかを自己評価し、1～6の数字で答えてください。なお、1～6の数字については、以下の基準を参考にしてください。

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	全くできない	きつとできない	たぶんできない	たぶんできる	きつとできる	確実にできる
1	英語の幼稚園児向けの絵本を読んで、その内容の詳細を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
2	英語で書かれたカレンダーの曜日の名前を読んで理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
3	英語で書かれたカレンダーの月の名前を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
4	英語圏の中高生向けに書かれたマンガ（20ページ）を読んで、そのあらすじを理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
5	英語の歌詞を読んで理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
6	新しく買った電子辞書の、英語で書かれた取り扱い説明書を読んで理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
7	アメリカ映画の英語字幕を読んで理解する					1 2 3 4 5 6
8	英語圏で発行されている新聞の一面を読んで、主旨を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
9	ファースト・フード店で、英語のメニュー（項目）を読んで理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
10	よく知っている有名な人に関する記事を英語圏で発行されている新聞で読み、その主旨を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
11	英語で書かれたパーティーの招待状を読んで、詳細（時間・場所など）を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
12	自分の好きな教科に関連した、英語で書かれた学術論文を読んで、主旨を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
13	英語で書かれたボードゲーム（人生ゲームのようなゲーム）のルールを読んで理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6
14	英語話者の大人向けの短編（5ページ）を読んで、詳細を理解する。					1 2 3 4 5 6

15	英語で書かれた大学のキャンパス図を読んで理解する。	1 2 3 4 5 6
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Note. Adapted from Burrows (2012)

Reading Anxiety Questionnaire

以下の項目は英語リーディングの不安に関する内容です。なお、1~6の数字については、以下の基準を参考にしてください。

1	2	3	4	5	6
強く反対	反対	やや反対	やや賛成	賛成	強く賛成

16	英語で読んでいるものを自分が理解できているかどうか分からない時、不安になる。	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	英語を読む時、単語は理解できることが多いが、著者の言いたいことはよくわからない。	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	英語でいっばいのページを目にするといつも恐怖を感じる。	1 2 3 4 5 6
19	トピックをよく知らないものについて英語で文を読むと緊張する。	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	英語を読んでいる時、知らない文法に遭遇すると不安になる。	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	英語を読む時、全ての単語を理解できないと緊張して混乱してしまう。	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	英語の学習で一番難しいのは、読めるようになることだ。	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	自分で黙読するのは嫌ではないが、声に出して読むのはとても嫌だ。	1 2 3 4 5 6

Note. Adapted from FLRAS (Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999)

Appendix B

READING SELF-EFFICACY & ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)

Reading Self-efficacy Questionnaire

Please use the following scale (1-6) to answer the questions. Choose the number that best describes how sure you are that you can perform each of the English reading tasks below. All of the items refer to reading in English.

1	2	3	4	5	6
I cannot do it at all.	I probably cannot do it.	Maybe I cannot do it.	Maybe I can do it.	I probably can do it.	I can definitely do it.

1	Read and understand the specific details of a pre-school children's book written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2	Read and understand the days of the week on a calendar written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3	Read and understand the names of the months on a calendar written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4	Read and understand the plot of a 20-page comic book written for English-speaking junior high or high school students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5	Read and understand the lyrics of a song written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6	Read and understand the directions (written in English) on how to use a new electronic dictionary.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7	Read and understand the English subtitles in an American movie.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8	Read and understand the main point of a front-page article in a newspaper published in an English-speaking country.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9	Read and understand the items on a menu written in English at a fast-food restaurant.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10	Read and understand the main point of an article in a newspaper published in an English speaking country that is written about a famous person you know.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11	Read and understand the specific details (ex: time, place) of a party invitation written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12	Read and understand the main ideas of an academic essay written in English related to your favorite school subject.	1 2 3 4 5 6
13	Read and understand the rules to play a boardgame written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
14	Read and understand the specific details in a short story (5 pages) written for English-speaking adults.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15	I can read and understand a college campus map written in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Note. Adapted from Burrows (2012)

Reading Anxiety Questionnaire

Please use the following scale (1-6) to answer the questions. Choose the number that best describes how you feel about reading in English.

1	2	3	4	5	6
strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree

16	I get upset when I'm not sure whether I understand what I am reading in English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	When reading English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the author is saying.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	I feel intimidated whenever I see a whole page of English in front of me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19	I am nervous when I am reading a passage in English when I am not familiar with the topic.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	I get upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading English.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	When reading English, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	The hardest part of learning English is learning to read.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	I don't mind reading to myself, but I feel very uncomfortable when I have to read aloud.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Note. Adapted from *FLRAS* (Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999)

Appendix C

ATTITUDES TOWARDS GRADED READING QUESTIONNAIRE (JAPANESE VERSION)

英語 Ib の授業では、私達は英語を勉強する手段としてグレーディッドリーダーズ (graded readers) 活動を取り入れました。これに対するみなさんの意見を知りたいので、どうぞ以下の質問に教えてください。コメントがあれば、質問 67 に書き込んでください。ご協力ありがとうございます。

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	強く反対	反対	やや反対	やや賛成	賛成	強く賛成
24. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動に参加するのは楽しかった。	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. グレーディッドリーダーズの話を読むのは楽しかった。	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. 自分で読むものを決めたほうが、グレーディッドリーダーズ活動において、私は読むことをもっと楽しめる。	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動は文章を理解するためには良いやり方である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動はボキャブラリーを習得する良いやり方である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動は異文化理解に対する意識を高めるよい方法である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動は分析的な思考力を高めるよい方法である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動は英語力全体を高めるよい方法である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. グレーディッドリーダーズ活動を使って英語をまた勉強したいと思う。	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. グレーディッドリーダーズを読むとき、ふつうどのくらい時間をかけましたか。 1=0時間 2=30分未満 3=30分以上~1時間未満 4=1時間以上~1時間半未満 5=1時間半以上~2時間未満 6=2時間以上	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. グレーディッドリーダーズのレポートを準備するのに、ふつうどのくらい時間をかけましたか。 1=0時間 2=30分未満 3=30分以上~1時間未満 4=1時間以上~1時間半未満	1	2	3	4	5	6

5=1 時間半以上～2 時間未満 6=2 時間以上	
35. 今年度の始めに初めてグレイディッドリーダーズ活動について聞いた時、どう感じましたか。	
36. 全て活動を終えた今、グレイディッドリーダーズ活動についてどう感じますか。	
37. あなたの意見では、グレイディッドリーダーズ活動は、英文を勉強する他の方法と比べてどうですか。	
38. あなたのグレイディッドリーダーズ活動に対する、全体的な意見を書いてください。	
39. グレイディッドリーダーズ活動について他に何かコメントがあればどうぞ。	

Adapted from Williams (2011)

Appendix D

ATTITUDES TOWARDS GRADED READING QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)

In English 1b class, we have used graded readers to study English text. I would like to know your opinions about this.

Please answer the questions below to help me understand what you think about reading circles. You may write your answers in English or Japanese. Use question 67 to write any additional comments.

Thank you for your help. Your opinions are valuable.

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=somewhat disagree 4=somewhat agree 5=agree 6=strongly agree

	strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree
24. I enjoyed participating in graded reading activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I enjoyed the stories I read in graded readers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Choosing my own reading materials increased my enjoyment of the graded reading.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Graded reading is a good way to understand text.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Graded reading is a good way to learn about vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Graded reading is a good way to develop cross-cultural awareness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Graded reading is good for developing critical thinking skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Graded reading is good for overall English language development.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I would like to study English again by using graded reading.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. How much time did you usually spend reading graded readers? 1=0 hours 2=less than 30 minutes 3=30 minutes to 1 hour 4=between 1 and 2 hours 5=between 2 and 3 hours 6=more than 3 hours	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. How much time did you usually spend	1	2	3	4	5	6

preparing graded reader report? 1=0 hours 2=less than 30 minutes 3=30 minutes to 1 hour 4=between 1 and 2 hours 5=between 2 and 3 hours 6=more than 3 hours	
35. How did you feel when you <i>first</i> heard about graded reading at the beginning of the school year?	
36. How do you feel about graded reading now that you have finished the course?	
37. In your opinion, how does graded reading compare to other ways of studying a text?	
38. Please write your overall impression of using graded reading?	
39. Do you have any other comments about graded reading?	

Adapted from Williams (2011)

Appendix E

ATTITUDES TOWARDS READING CIRCLES QUESTIONNAIRE (JAPANESE VERSION)

英語 Ib の授業では、私達は英語を勉強する手段としてリーディングサークル活動を取り入れました。これに対するみなさんの意見を知りたいので、どうぞ以下の質問に教えてください。コメントがあれば、質問 67 に書き込んでください。ご協力ありがとうございます。

1	2	3	4	5	6
強く反対	反対	やや反対	やや賛成	賛成	強く賛成

24. リーディングサークルに参加するのは楽しかった。	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. リーディングサークルのために話を読むのは楽しかった。	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. 先生が選んだものを使ったほうが、リーディングサークルにおいて、私は読むことをもっと楽しめる。	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. リーディングサークルは文章を理解するためには良いやり方である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. リーディングサークルはポキャブラリーを習得する良いやり方である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. リーディングサークルは異文化理解に対する意識を高めるよい方法である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. リーディングサークルは分析的な思考力を高めるよい方法である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. リーディングサークルは英語力全体を高めるよい方法である。	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. リーディングサークルを使って英語をまた勉強したいと思う。	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. リーディングサークルのためにストーリーを読むとき、ふつうどのくらい時間をかけ	1	2	3	4	5	6

<p>ましたか。 1=0時間 2=30分未満 3=30分以上~1時間未満 4=1時間以上~1時間半未満 5=1時間半以上~2時間未満 6=2時間以上</p>	
<p>34. 授業のためにロールシートを準備するのに、ふつうどのくらい時間をかけましたか。 1=0時間 2=30分未満 3=30分以上~1時間未満 4=1時間以上~1時間半未満 5=1時間半以上~2時間未満 6=2時間以上</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6</p>
<p>35. 今年度の始めに初めてリーディングサークルについて聞いた時、どう感じましたか。</p>	
<p>36. 全て活動を終えた今、リーディングサークルについてどう感じますか。</p>	
<p>37. あなたの意見では、リーディングサークルは、英文を勉強する他の方法と比べてどうですか。</p>	
<p>38. あなたのリーディングサークルに対する、全体的な意見を書いてください。</p>	
<p>39. リーディングサークルについて他に何かコメントがあればどうぞ。</p>	
<p>40. 好きな順番に5つの役を並べた時のランキングを教えてください。 (1一番好き~5一番好きじゃない) 簡単に理由も教えてください。(DL=ディスカッションリーダー, S=サマライザー, C=コネクター, WM=ワードマスター, PP=パッセージパーソン)</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	

- | |
|----|
| 3. |
| 4. |
| 5. |

Adapted from Williams (2011)

Appendix F

ATTITUDES TOWARDS READING CIRCLES QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)

In English 1b class, we have used reading circles to study English text. I would like to know your opinions about this.

Please answer the questions below to help me understand what you think about reading circles. You may write your answers in English or Japanese. Use question 67 to write any additional comments.

Thank you for your help. Your opinions are valuable.

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=somewhat disagree 4=somewhat agree 5=agree 6=strongly agree

	strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree
24. I enjoyed participating in reading circles.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I enjoyed the stories I read for reading circles.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Teacher-selected reading materials increased my enjoyment of reading circles.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Reading circles are a good way to understand text.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Reading circles are a good way to learn about vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Reading circles are a good way to develop cross-cultural awareness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Reading circles are good for developing	1	2	3	4	5	6

critical thinking skills.	
31. Reading circles are good for overall English language development.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32. I would like to study English again by using reading circles.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33. How much time did you usually spend reading? 1=0 hours 2=less than 30 minutes 3=30 minutes to 1 hour 4=between 1 and 2 hours 5=between 2 and 3 hours 6=more than 3 hours	1 2 3 4 5 6
34. How much time did you usually spend preparing your role for class? 1=0 hours 2=less than 30 minutes 3=30 minutes to 1 hour 4=between 1 and 2 hours 5=between 2 and 3 hours 6=more than 3 hours	1 2 3 4 5 6
35. How did you feel when you <i>first</i> heard about reading circles at the beginning of the school year?	
36. How do you feel about reading circles now that you have finished the course?	
37. In your opinion, how do reading circles compare to other ways of studying a text?	
38. Please write your overall impression of using reading circles?	
39. Do you have any other comments about reading circles?	
40. Please rank the 5 roles in order of preference (DL=Discussion Leader, S=Summarizer, C=Connector, WM=Word Master, PP=Passage Person). Briefly explain your answer. (1=Most favorite ~ 5=Least favorite) 1. 2. 3. 4.	

5.

Adapted from Williams (2011)

The logo for the International Association for Language Acquisition (iafor) is centered on the page. It features the word "iafor" in a lowercase, blue, serif font. The text is surrounded by two large, overlapping, brush-stroke-like arcs. The upper arc is a light red color, and the lower arc is a light blue color. The arcs are thick and have a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance.

iafor

Rethinking Main Objectives for Teaching English (REMOTE)

Dr. Abdelhamid Bessaid

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0139

The European Conference on Language Learning 2013
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A primary aim of this research has been to compare the particular linguistic practices into which learners are socialized **outside** their schools with the practices they encounter **inside** their institutions. Besides, teaching English language out of home is a part of an unbalanced equation that strings English as an alien language. This linguistic attitude stretches back to tricky reasons that themselves are worth points of request.

Language is 'par excellence' a human means of communication, i.e. Language is above all a practice, a daily practice that fills every second of our lives, including the time of our dreams, speaking and writing, it is a social function that is manifested and known through its exercise. Yet, the paramount question under debate is; what kinds of approaches to meet the new challenges?

A series of questions are to be asked among any learner of English:

- What do non-native students need to do with English?
- Which of the skills do they need to master and how well?
- Which kind of English functions both socially and economically in the same rate?

English for specific purposes' ESP' is an exciting movement in English language education that is opening up rich opportunities for English teachers and researchers in new professional domains. John.A.M & Dudley- Evans.

The growing demand for highly proficient speakers of specialized academic and workplace English in the south of Algeria, for instance, is drawing increasingly large number of teachers into the ESP profession and awarding them higher salaries and prestige than were previously given to language instructors. For such specific reasons ESP is taught as a tailor-made language package to specific communities of learners with highly specialized language needs far from the bulk number of unbalanced equations that features English language learning worldwide.

While examining the set of definitions cited above, one may say that the majority of researchers agree on the fact that ESP is about both specific context and the learners' specific needs for learning the target language.

ESP VS GENERAL ENGLISH

ESP learners are often adult highly motivated learners, having already some background knowledge of the English language; they generally seek to learn English to fulfill particular purpose; academic, professional or scientific. Therefore, they are aware of their needs, i.e. the target needs. As a result, learner's awareness is supposed to be of significant importance and even much higher than that of General English.

Hutchinson et al (1978:53) support this view stating that: "what distinguishes ESP from General English is not the existence of a need as such but rather an awareness of the need."

Another difference lies on the learners' aim; though they focus on passing examination. This does not give much attention to learners' level of proficiency whether they know how to speak English or not and whether they are able to communicate effectively in the English language or not. As opposed to ESP whose main aim and focus is to help learners to better communicate in their target situations.

This view is supported by that of Mackay et al (1978:28) who deem that English is taught "not as an end itself but as an essential means to clearly definable goal." That objective may vary according to the situation; academic, professional, or scientific needs. That view was lately reinforced by Strevens (1980) who argues that: "ESP differs from, general English in that it is based on a close analysis of the learner's communicative needs for a specific occupation or activity, as well as a detailed analysis of the language of that occupation or activity"

McDonough (1984) goes forward where she maintains that the ESP practitioner needs to understand the requirements of other professionals either in academic or professional fields. For this reason, he should be open to adopt new means and flexible ways to accommodate new ideas.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ESP

It is of apogee importance to note that ESP this unplanned movement has been developed at different speeds in different countries depending on the needs for English. Hutchinson et al (1987) have identified five phases of development where they join each stage to one particular activity which has relation with the notion of special languages. The first stage of ESP development has dealt with Register analysis.

1-Register Analysis

The first phase dealt with the grammar and vocabulary of the language. Before exploring this phase, i.e. 'register analysis' or as Swales tends to label 'lexicostatistics' (1988:189) or 'Frequency Analysis' by Robinson (1991:123). One may feel the need, first of all, to define the term register. According to Spolsky (1998:34) "Register is a variety of language most likely to be used in a specific situation and with particular roles statuses involved. Examples might be a toast at a wedding, sports broadcast or talking to a baby. A register is marked by choices of vocabulary and other aspects of styles"

In an attempt to join register analysis to ESP; one may find that materials' writers tend to analyze the set of grammar and vocabulary of the various registers then put forward the kind of courses, syllabus and curricula depending on what they have identified and what they have judged relevant to a particular specialty.

A Course in Basic Scientific English compiled by Ewer et al (1969) is considered as a good example. Ewer et al (1969:222) point out that: "In order to get a working idea of what this basic language is consisted of, a frequency analysis of English actually

used by scientific writers was required". They move further where they reveal that "In subject, it covered ten main areas of science and a large number of individual disciplines from anatomy to volcanology".

The main focus of materials' writers was on the words and sentence levels. According to Dudley-Evans et al (1998) the assumption behind register analysis was while there is no difference between scientific and technical writing and General English; there was much focus on a certain grammatical and lexical forms. Basturkmen (2006:35) extends this view by stating the example of "Analysis of scientific and technical texts by Barber (1962/ 1985) which showed that the passive tense is used more frequently in such writing than in general English and identified a set of sub-technical vocabulary items that were more likely to occur".

As it has been already advocated above, register analysis operates only on the word and sentence levels, and does not go beyond these levels. As a reaction to register analysis, another approach emerged beyond the sentence level which is best known under the term 'Rhetorical' or 'discourse analysis'.

2-Rhetorical or Discourse Analysis

At this stage, ESP shifted attention from emphasis on language at the sentence level to the level above the sentence. According to Hutchinson et al (1987) ESP at this phase, because closely involved with the emerging field of discourse or rhetorical analysis where the organization of sentences to form discourse is the core of this approach.

Because Discourse Analysis (DA) is also a key-concept, one may feel the need to afford an appropriate definition. According to Dudley-Evans et al (1998:87) discourse analysis is defined as: "Any study of language or, more specifically, text at a level above that of the sentence is a discourse study. This may involve the study of cohesive links between sentences, of paragraph structure, or the structure of the whole text. The results of this type of analysis make statements about how texts –any texts–work"

This approach has been developed in the 1970s. The pioneers, as cited by Robinson (1991), are H. Widdowson; L. Selinker, L. Trimble, L. John and M. Todd-Trimble. Robinson (1991: 24) advocates that "the focus was on the text rather than on the sentence, and on the writer's purpose rather than on the form"

Discourse Analysis is, therefore, the way sentences are combined together to perform an act of communication, which the syllabus and the material are based on the findings of the latter as well.

In this vein, Hutchinson et al (1987) maintain that text-diagramming exercises constitute a mean for teaching students to recognize textual patterns and discourse markers. As an example, they have mentioned English in Focus Series (OUP).

Another example of discourse analysis is the Nucleus Series cited by Dudley-Evans et al (1998).

3- Target Situation Analysis (TSA)

In the third phase of development, ESP shifted attention much more to the communicative approach where its main focus is to enable learners to function adequately in their target situation. Hutchinson et al (1987:12) define target situation as “the situation in which the learners will use the language they are learning.” At this stage, ESP course design according to both authors (1987) should proceed by:

- ◆ First: identifying the target situation.
- ◆ Second: carrying out a rigorous analysis of the linguistic features of that situation.
- ◆ Finally, the identified features will form the syllabus of the ESP course.

Chambers (1980:25) names the label ‘Target Situation Analysis’ to this analytical approach. He states: “By the language I mean the language of the target situation. Thus, needs analysis should be concerned with the establishment of communicative needs and their realizations, resulting from an analysis of the communication in the target situation—what I will refer from now on as target situation analysis (TSA).

One of the significant examples of Target Situation Analysis is the one developed by Munby in *Communicative Syllabus Design* (1978). According to Hutchinson et al (1987), Munby (1978) analyzed learners’ needs in terms of communication goals, the setting where a particular language would be used to communicate, means which can be either oral or written, and the language skills possessed by learners, function and structures.

4- Skills and Strategies

During its fourth phase of development, ESP has witnessed a radical change since no more attention was given to the surface of language’ forms and the main focus was on thinking processes that govern language use. Hutchinson et al (1987:13) argue that: “...no need to focus closely on the surface forms of the language, the focus should rather be on the underlying interpretive strategies, which enable the learner to cope with the surface forms”

Dudley-Evans et al (1998) move a step ahead where they associated the focus on skills with the idea of communicative language teaching. According to them, these interests have grown and developed naturally from what they have labeled ‘functional-notional material’. While examining this phase, one may say that:

- ◆ Strategy analysis seeks to emphasize much more on the learners’ expectations for the way they should learn than what they want to learn.

◆ Depending on the particular characteristics of a typical situation; there are priorities among skills, i.e. a skill which is emphasized in one situation such as reading, is inappropriate for another situation, consequently another skill will be more adequate such as writing. In this regard, Dudley-Evans et al (1998:24) maintain that:

"In many situations, especially when the medium of instruction was not English, for example in Latin America, this meant a focus on reading. In other situations it might involve a different skill, such as listening for international students embarking on academic courses in the UK.

As an example of this approach Dudley-Evans et al (1998) think that the course which has been developed at Malaya University which is entitled 'Skills for Learning', focuses on the reading skill.

To sum up, ESP at this phase has dealt with the thinking processes which imply the use of language with the focus on the development of learners' skills and strategies to acquire a second or a foreign language.

1- The Learning-Centered Approach

At this stage, ESP has rather shifted attention to the learner who is considered to be a key-parameter in the ESP teaching / learning process, and whose needs, wants, and lacks are viewed as the starting point in the process of syllabus design. The latter should suit and fulfill precise purposes either for the learner's present situation or for his future career.

A syllabus has been defined by Hutchinson et al (1987:81) as: "what is to be learnt with some indication of the order in which the items should be learnt and the interpretation that is put to".

From the above mentioned definition, it can be said that the syllabus should be designed according to the learners' needs, wants, and lacks. This process is commonly known under the label 'Needs Analysis', which is the vital part in the process of materials' preparation and production in the area of ESP.

Once materials designers and curriculum developers get a full idea about what learners want to learn, lack or simply need, as well as the related information about those learners; the socio-economic and cultural context in which the language program will be designed and for whom it will be implemented. It will be possible for them to set the course' objectives and determine the content of the course.

This process will not then be achieved unless an assessment and evaluation of the learners' abilities to function easily in the target situation-to which the course syllabus and materials have been identified- occurred. In this sense, Dudley-Evans et al (1998:26) argue that: "The concept of a learning-centered approach is outlined. This involves considering the process of learning and student motivation very fully and working out exactly what is needed to enable students to reach the end target"

Put it another way, the ESP learner alongside with the process of needs analysis became the main core of this approach at this stage of ESP development.

Types of ESP

As it has been said earlier in this work, ESP is a sub-field of ELT. The latter also has its proper sub-sections, too. The most prominent two branches of ESP are: ESP for language learners in the university, or EAP; English for Academic Purposes, and ESP for language learners in the workplace, or EOP; English for Occupational purposes. The former comprises; an ESP program for students of Law, Nursing, Business, Tourism, Shipbuilding, or for International Teaching Assistants; the latter shells the ESP program for international Medical Graduates in Residency, a program for Management in the House-Racing Business, a program for Entry-Level Manufacturing Workers, a program for Union Members, a program for Brewers, and a program for a House-Cleaning Service.

1-English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

English for Academic Purposes, EAP hereafter, can be referred to studying or teaching English in Academic contexts, such as universities in order to fulfill Academic Purposes.

In this vein, Kennedy et al (1984:4) point out that: “EAP is taught generally within educational institutions to students reading English in their studies”. EAP may constitute of teaching specific skills such as: reading texts, writing reports, taking notes and so forth for students at the tertiary-level institution.

2-English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)

EOP refers to English which is either used or learned to fulfill occupational purposes which may include: administration, banking, law, medicine, and so forth. Kennedy et al(1984:04) write: “ EOP is taught in a situation in which learners need to use English as a part of their work profession”.

A similar, but a more recent definition has been given by Dudley-Evans et al (1998:7) in which they assert that: “ The term EOP refers to English that is not for academic purposes, it includes professional purposes in administration, medicine, law and business and vocational purposes for non- professionals in work or pre-study work”.

3-EAP vs. EOP

In 1987, Hutchinson et al while drawing a distinction between ‘EAP’ and ‘EOP’ as the main subfields within ESP state that “ there is no clear-cut distinction” and they argue that “ in many cases the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up, or returns to, a job”.

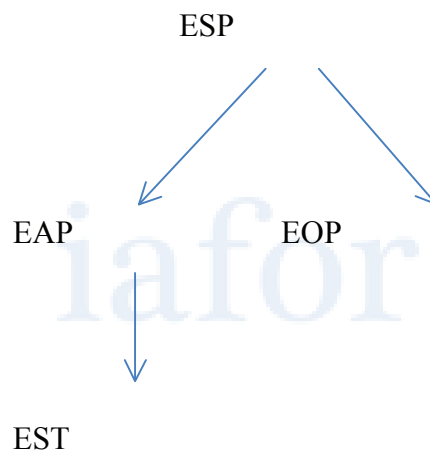
Years later, Robinson (1991:100) offers a distinction between these two subfields by stating that: “EAP is thus specific purpose language teaching, differentiated from EOP by the learner: future or practicing student as opposed to employee or worker”.

In other terms, the main concern of both EAP and EOP is the learner where his either present or future situation may define his needs as well as the type of ESP course he may be involved in.

4- English for Science and Technology (EST)

The third branch of ESP is ‘EST’ which has been a matter of debate among researchers among them: McDonough (1984), and Dudley-Evans et al (1998); whether it is a branch of its own or a sub-branch shared by both ‘EAP’ and ‘EOP’.

The following diagram illustrates this idea:



In this diagram, McDonough (1984) has put EST as a subdivision of EAP in which he emphasized the view that it has an academic orientation. EST refers to teaching English for Scientific and Technological purposes. In this trend, Kennedy et al (1984:6) argue that: “The term ‘EST’ presupposes a stock of vocabulary items, grammatical forms, and functions which are common to the study of science and technology”.

They elaborate further for more precision and clarification to this notion by stating that “EST is simply an important branch of ESP dealing with scientific content”.

Features of ESP Courses

As far as ESP learners are concerned, one may say that they are often adult learners who already have a background in English and who seek to learn English for a “clearly utilitarian purpose” (Mackay et al 1978) to meet specific target needs.

In most cases, those learners are supposed to have an intermediate or advanced level. Yet, in this case, the use of authentic materials as a component of the ESP course adopted or adapted is inevitable. Therefore, it can be noticed that the use of authentic materials is one of the features of the ESP courses.

In 1983, Carver states that there are three features common to ESP courses. He summarizes them in what follows:

- Authentic materials;
- Purpose-related orientation;
- Self-direction.

As it has been cited above, the use of authentic materials is a common feature of the ESP course mainly in self-directed study and research tasks. While discussing the use of authentic materials, one may find that many authors among them Robinson share the view that “Authenticity is a key concept in ESP courses”. (Kennedy et al, 1984; Robinson, 1991; Dudley-Evans et al, 1998; Basturkmen, 2006). Dudley-Evans et al (1998:28) define authenticity as follow: “Authenticity lies in the nature of the interaction between the reader (or hearer) and the text. Part of the process of needs analysis is finding out exactly how learners use different sources so that activities in the ESP class can reflect what happens in real life”.

The second feature of the ESP course as expressed and discussed by Carver (1983) is:

“Purpose related orientation”, i.e. the situation of communicative tasks required by the target situation”.

According to Carver (1983), the main aim of the ESP course is to enable learners to become communicatively competent in the target field through note-taking, conducting researchers and presenting oral tasks.

The last feature as viewed by Carver (1983) is a *self-direction* or what he defines as: “...turning learners into users”. Therefore, it is crucial for the ESP practitioners to base his course on a needs analysis procedure at the first step, while in the second step he is invited to encourage his students to decide what, when and how to study, i.e. displaying a certain level of autonomy or freedom.

In this respect, Kennedy et al (1984:141) write: “A prime concern for the teacher is to enable a student to become more and more autonomous in his learning as the course goes on”.

It is also widely agreed among researchers (Robinson, 1991; West, 1994; Dudley-Evans et al, 1998; Basturkmen, 2006) that ESP courses are strongly subject to time. In other words, those learners, who seek to learn English for a specific purpose, have a limited period of time in which they are supposed to learn English. Therefore, they need to be taught only a limited range of the language rules which they will need for the field of specialty they are involved in.

To sum up, ESP courses hold specific characteristics which may differ from other courses. Learners’ needs, wants, and lacks constitutes the primary step in the process

to needs analysis upon which it could be possible for the teachers to design an 'REMOTE English'.

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Developing an Academic Vocabulary Test for Thai Tertiary Students

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Abstract

A number of studies on vocabulary instruction reported that there was a strong relationship between students' comprehension of text and their academic achievement (Nagy, 1988; Anderson & Nagy, 1991; Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1998). According to Gunning (2002), the lack of academic vocabulary is one of the main problems with vocabulary in reading. In Thailand, limited knowledge of English vocabulary is regarded as one of the major problems for students learning English at the tertiary level as it may inhibit their success in their academic programmes (Gunning, 2002). It was found that the success of a Thai EFL college reader in English language reading was influenced by his knowledge of language structure and vocabulary (Adunyarittigun, 2002). The Academic Word List or AWL containing a widely accepted account of 570 word families frequently mentioned in academic texts of different subjects was developed by Coxhead (2000) who claimed that her academic word list covered 10% of the tokens in her 3,500,000 running word academic corpus and around 8.5% in an independent corpus. It can be assumed that knowing those academic words might be able to enhance students' reading ability. This study was, therefore, conducted to be an alternative means for examining Thai university students' existing knowledge of academic English vocabulary and to find an effective way to improve their reading ability. The Academic Word List was used as a resource for developing an academic vocabulary test for Thai university students.

Keywords: Academic English vocabulary, Thai Tertiary Students, Academic Word List, Receptive vocabulary, Productive vocabulary

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Introduction

Academic words are commonly found in different kinds of academic texts and they are about 9% of the running words in the texts. Nation (2001) classified the vocabulary of academic texts into 4 groups: (1) general service or basic vocabulary or high-frequency words, (2) academic words; (3) technical words, and (4) low-frequency words. The Academic Word List or AWL was developed by Averil Coxhead for her MA thesis as a very useful resource for teachers and learners of English for Academic purposes (<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/>). The AWL is composed of a widely accepted account of 570 word families frequently mentioned in academic texts of different subjects. Her academic word list covered 10% of the tokens in her 3,500,000 running word academic corpus and around 8.5% in an independent corpus.

Testing Academic Vocabulary

Academic proficiency can be transferred across languages (Cummins, 2000). The students who have developed literacy in their first language tend to make remarkable progress in acquiring literacy in their second language. Bernhardt (2005) supported this assumption by stating that it is not only the interdependence of L1 and L2 that affects second language learning, but also the quantity and conditions of language transfer. Academic vocabulary can be divided into two main types: receptive and productive vocabulary. The former refers to the ability to understand a word when it is heard or seen while the latter is the ability to produce a word when writing or speaking (Zhou, 2010). In addition, learners' receptive vocabulary size seems to be much larger than their productive vocabulary size (Ibid).

In Thailand, a limited number of research in academic vocabulary was conducted. The findings showed that Thai students' English proficiency is considered unsatisfactory, particularly their reading ability (Pumirat, 1992), and Thai students had a problem in predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words in context due to their inadequate knowledge of language structure and vocabulary (Adunyarittigun, 2002). Tanghirunwat (2003) examined the reading difficulties of Thai engineers reading manuals and textbooks and reported that the participants had difficulties with vocabulary, grammar and the content of technical texts when they read manuals and textbooks. Wiriyakarun (2011) developed an academic vocabulary test to examine Thai tertiary students' knowledge of academic vocabulary and the relationship of their knowledge to their success in academic study. It was found that there was a moderately positive relationship between the subjects' academic English vocabulary knowledge and their academic achievement. The subjects demonstrated reasonable knowledge of academic English vocabulary in terms of both receptive and productive skills. Also, the subjects were more able to acquire the academic words receptively more than productively.

Test validation

The issues of test validity and reliability are regarded as major concerns in test development. A validation study needs to be undertaken to evaluate language tests. In other words, the quality of language tests can be determined by examining their reliability and validity. A good test should measure what it is intended to measure. Messick (1989) states that all test constructs and score interpretation can reveal test values, i.e. scores can reflect the “truth” about test-takers.

The Academic Vocabulary Test which was first developed by the researcher in 2011 had some flaws especially marking problems for the part of productive vocabulary. In this study, the first version was revised to focus specifically on testing receptive vocabulary knowledge as it can enhance the students’ reading ability. To evaluate the quality of the test, a validation process was also undertaken. The reliability and validity of the test were carefully measured to ascertain that it can be used as a measure for testing academic vocabulary.

Methodology

1. Participants

There were 51 undergraduate students, both males and females, studying at King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi, participating in this study. The reason why these students were selected as the subjects was due to their specific background of academic English vocabulary and experience in academic reading and writing from the required English courses taken at KMUTT.

2. The Academic Vocabulary Test

The Academic Vocabulary Test was used as a research tool for assessing the participants’ existing knowledge of academic vocabulary. It was based on Coxhead’s Academic Word List, and it was a revised version of the test designed by the researcher of this study. The first version was developed in 2011 and it consisted of two main parts: receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. The findings show that the criteria for marking the productive part were rather subjective. Therefore, the revised version aimed at testing only the receptive skill. The test content in the stems consists of statements which were extracted from the British National Corpus. The options were definitions provided in both paper-based and on-line dictionaries.

2.1 Test specification

This test is composed of 50 MC items that test receptive vocabulary only. The researcher selected 50 academic words (5 words from 10 sublists) as follows:

Table 1: The selected academic words

Item no.	Sublist no.	Words
1-5	1	available, estimate, function, response, and significant
6-10	2	evaluation, distinction, potential, maintenance, and investment
11-15	3	published, criteria, consent, demonstrate, and circumstances
16-20	4	goals, undertaken, error, dimensions, and adequate
21-25	5	pursue, decline, fundamental, network, and challenge
26-30	6	transformation, subsidiary, revealed, rational, and flexibility
31-35	7	release, submitted, extract, transmission, and comprise
36-40	8	inspection, restore, visual, accompany, and crucial
41-45	9	anticipated, supplementary, subordinate, controversy, and device
46-50	10	encountered, enormous, persistent, ongoing, and colleague

In each item, the stem is contextualized i.e. there is a sentence in which a target word is underlined. To complete the test, the students were to select the definition that is the meaning of the underlined word. For example,

Some aircraft maintenance engineers work away from home in remote locations for extended periods of time.

- a. the act of repairing a building or old furniture so that it is in good condition again*
- b. the act of repairing something that is necessary to keep in good condition*
- c. the process of working on a new product, plan, idea etc. to make it successful*
- d. a new idea, method, or invention*

The test was administered to the students who were from two fields of study: information technology and computer engineering. These subjects had different levels of proficiency in English. The timing for the test was 1 hour.

Findings

Test quality

The reliability of the test was estimated by determining the internal consistency coefficient. This test consisted of dichotomously scored items, and the internal consistency for the whole test was calculated using KR20. It was found that the reliability coefficient for this test was 0.78 which is considered acceptable for a classroom test, but not for a proficiency test. Moreover, to become a standardized test the reliability should be 0.90 and above (www.washington.edu/oea/score1.htm).

The test also underwent a validating process. Three experts were asked to validate the test using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence. Item analysis was also conducted to find out difficulty indexes and discrimination indexes of the test. As for the validity of the test, it was found that its content validity was 0.76.

Item difficulty indexes and discrimination indexes of the test were examined. The item difficulty index (also known as the p-value) reveals the percentage of students that correctly answered the test items. The acceptable range is 0.20-0.80. The items that have p-values below 0.2 are very difficult items that should be reviewed. On the other hand, the items with p-values above 0.9 are very easy items and should be carefully reviewed. According to the findings in Table 2, it can be concluded that there were only two items that are too difficult and should be revised. They are item 15 and item 16. As for the item discrimination index (r), it shows the relationship between how well the students did on the items and their total exam scores. It is also referred to as the Point-Biserial correlation (PBS). The acceptable range is 0.20 or higher. There were 20 items that have low discriminating values e.g. item 1, item 2, item 4, item 5, item 11, item 12, item 15, item 17, item 19, item 23, item 24, item 25, item 33, item 34, item 35, item 40, item 42, item 44, item 45 and item 47. This indicates that the students who overall did poorly on the exam did better on these items than students who overall did well.

Test results

Table 2: Descriptive statistic for the whole group's test scores

N	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	Median	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
51	24.27	0.968	42	13	22	29	0.69	-0.19

Descriptive statistics were used to measure the central tendency and dispersion of the test scores on the Academic Vocabulary Test. According to Table 2, the individual test-takers are widely dispersed around a mean of 24.27 out of 50 which supports the fact that the test can discriminate between individual test-takers. The least able test-

taker has scored 13 whereas the most able one has scored 42. The positive skew shows that the distribution is said to be right-skewed which means it was rather difficult. As a kurtosis value of +/-2 is acceptable, the distribution with negative excess kurtosis shows that the distribution has a lower, wider peak around the mean and a thinner tail which means the distribution is flatter than normal distribution.

Table 3: Test of normality

Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
Statistic	df	Sig.
.161	51	.002

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was then applied to investigate whether the test scores were normally distributed. The SPSS package was used to test whether the test scores were normally distributed. It was found that the significant value was lower than the critical value of 0.05 indicating that the test scores were not normally distributed.

Table 4: Means of the test scores of sublists

Sublist	k	Mean	SD	Rank
One	5	2.92	1.02	1
Two	5	2.57	1.56	5
Three	5	1.72	1.04	10
Four	5	2.45	1.06	6
Five	5	2.80	1.37	3
Six	5	2.12	1.42	8
Seven	5	2.30	1.11	7
Eight	5	2.90	1.50	2
Nine	5	1.96	1.15	9
Ten	5	2.57	1.47	4

In Table 4, the mean scores for each sublist were presented. With regard to Coxhead's (2000) description of the Academic Word List, the AWL sublists are

categorized according to their frequency of appearance in a broad range of academic texts. Therefore, the test-takers should have been more familiar with the words presented more frequently in the early sublists but the test-takers seemed to know the meanings of the academic words in less frequent levels no matter what sublist they belong to. It can be assumed that the frequency of academic words presented in academic texts or corpus was not related to the subjects' knowledge of receptive academic words. In other words, the students might acquire receptive academic words through other means such as classroom learning or learning experience rather than the extent they were exposed to them in the academic texts.

Table 5: Test Scores for items in Sublist 1

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
1	available	43	0.84	-0.12
2	estimate	29	0.57	0.19
3	function	9	0.18	0.34
4	response	37	0.72	0.11
5	significant	31	0.61	-0.19

As can be seen in Table 5, it seemed that almost all of the test-takers knew the word 'available' in Item 1 more than they did other words. More than half of them knew the meaning of the words in Items 4, 5 and 2. Only a few of the test-takers knew the word in Item 3. According to the p-values, Item 1 seems to be very easy whereas Item 3 is too difficult. Items 1, 2, 4 and 5 had low discrimination indexes which means the items had a low discrimination ability.

Table.6: Test Scores for items in Sublist 2

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
6	evaluation	25	0.49	0.45
7	distinction	26	0.51	0.21

8	potential	19	0.37	0.30
9	maintenance	29	0.57	0.34
10	investments	32	0.63	0.39

Table 6 compares the mean scores for each item in Sublist 2. The most known word was 'investment' in Item 10. The words in Items 9, 7, and 6 were also known by more than 50% of the test-takers. The least known word in this group was 'potential' in Item 8. However, all of the items in this subgroup had acceptable p-values which means they are good items. Item 7 had a fair discrimination ability whereas the other items had high discrimination abilities.

Table.7: Test Scores for items in Sublist 3

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
11	criteria	10	0.20	0.16
12	published	21	0.41	-0.01
13	demonstrate	26	0.51	0.30
14	consent	22	0.43	0.40
15	circumstance	9	0.18	0.05

In Sublist 3, the most known words among the test-takers are 'demonstrate', 'consent' and 'published' in Items 13, 14 and 12, respectively. The words 'criteria' in Item 11 and 'circumstance' in Item 15 seem unfamiliar for them. According to the p-values, none of the items are too difficult except for Item 15. However, according to the discrimination indexes, Items 12 and 15 had very low discrimination abilities. Item 11 had a low discrimination ability, but Items 13 and 14 had high discrimination abilities.

Table 8: Test Scores for items Sublist 4

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
16	error	45	0.88	0.21
17	goals	37	0.72	0.11
18	undertaken	16	0.31	0.28
19	dimensions	11	0.21	0.16
20	adequate	16	0.31	0.26

Table 8 reveals the scores for each item in Sublist 4. The words ‘error’ in Item 16 and ‘goals’ in Item 17 were very well known by most test-takers, whereas the other words were not commonly known among them. According to the p-values, all of them are good in terms of their difficulty. Items 17 and 18 had low discrimination abilities, but Items 16, 18 and 20 had fair discrimination abilities.

Table 9: Test Scores for items in Sublist 5

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
21	pursue	24	0.47	0.26
22	decline	21	0.41	0.38
23	fundamental	29	0.57	0.15
24	network	31	0.61	0.10
25	challenge	38	0.74	0.11

As seen in Table 9, all of the items are considered good items in terms of difficulty as they have acceptable p- values. The sum score for each item is not too high or too low. Regarding discrimination ability, Items 23-25 had low discrimination ability, Item 21 had a fair discrimination ability, and Item 22 had a high discrimination ability.

Table 10: Test Scores for items in Sublist 6

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
26	transformation	21	0.41	0.57
27	subsidiary	28	0.55	0.36
28	revealed	17	0.33	0.03
29	flexibility	28	0.55	0.53
30	rational	14	0.27	0.45

Items 28 and 30 in Sublist 6 were considered difficult items as the sum scores are less than 20. Other words in Items 26, 27 and 29 were moderately difficult. However, all of the items had acceptable p-values which means they are good items in terms of difficulty. However, with regard to discrimination ability, Item 28 had a low discrimination ability. Item 27 had a high discrimination ability, and the other two items had very high discrimination abilities.

Table 11: Test Scores for items in Sublist 7

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
31	release	23	0.45	0.39
32	submitted	18	0.36	-0.20
33	extract	14	0.27	0.06
34	transmission	36	0.70	0.11
35	comprise	24	0.47	0.11

As shown in Table 11, Sublist 7 contains 5 items whose meanings most test-takers knew. All of them had acceptable p values, however, the sum scores of Item 32 (submitted) and Item 33 (extract) were below 25 which means less than 50% of the test-takers answered these items correctly. The others were not too easy or difficult. Items 32, 34 and 35 had low discrimination indexes which means they had low discrimination abilities. Only Item 31 had a high discrimination ability.

Table 12: Test Scores for items in Sublist 8

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
36	inspection	32	0.63	0.25
37	restore	39	0.76	0.28
38	accompany	20	0.39	0.37
39	visual	31	0.60	0.38
40	crucial	26	0.51	0.15

In Sublist 8, it seems that all of the items can be regarded as good items due to their acceptable difficulty values. However, Item 38 (accompany) was quite difficult according to its sum score. Regarding discrimination ability, Item 40 had a low discrimination ability, Items 36-37 had fair discrimination abilities whereas Item 38 had a high discrimination ability.

Table 13: Test Scores for items in Sublist 9

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	<i>r</i>
41	anticipated	13	0.25	0.22
42	supplementary	31	0.61	0.19
43	subordinate	18	0.35	0.32
44	device	28	0.55	0.06
45	controversy	10	0.20	-0.13

As the acceptable range of the p-values is between 0.2-0.8, all of the items in Sublist 9 were within the range. They can be regarded as good items in terms of difficulty. However, the sum scores of Items 43 (subordinate) and 45 (controversy) were lower than 25 which means they were too difficult. Items 42, 44 and 45 had low

discrimination abilities. Item 41 had a fair discrimination ability. Item 43 had a high discrimination ability.

Table 14: Test Scores for items in Sublist 10

Item	Word	Sum (N=51)	p	r
46	ongoing	30	0.59	0.33
47	colleague	24	0.47	0.16
48	persistent	29	0.57	0.32
49	encountered	22	0.43	0.29
50	enormous	26	0.51	0.45

Table 14 shows that all items in Sublist 10 were widely known by most test-takers; they were not too easy or difficult. They are all good items with acceptable p-values. Concerning discrimination ability, it seems that Item 47 had a low discrimination ability. Item 49 had a fair discrimination ability. Items 46 and 48 had high discrimination abilities. Item 45 is the best item in terms of discrimination ability.

Discussion

In evaluating a language test, a number of aspects are involved: e.g. reliability, validity and practicality. The Academic Vocabulary Test was administered to a group of Thai tertiary students and then the test results were employed as a resource for test evaluation. Results show that the test had an acceptable reliability coefficient and the validity of the test was approved by the experts in the field. The test was very practical in terms of both administration and scoring as it consisted of objective test items and objective scoring procedure. However, some flaws of the test were found. For example, some items were too difficult but some were too easy due to their unacceptable p-values. These items should be reconsidered and revised to help increase the reliability of the test. Moreover, the content of the test were based on the British National Corpus. Therefore, some items may be too context specific, i.e. the British oriented content, which made them too difficult for Thai students who might not be familiar with the British context. To solve the aforementioned problems, some bad items should be revised or eliminated. Some more items may be added to enhance test reliability. The stems of some items should be rewritten to be closely related to a Thai context that can enable the test to be more valid. This study can be

replicated with a larger number of subjects as well as test items to find out the perfect numbers of test-takers and test items that can yield acceptable reliability value to develop the test to become a standard one. To answer the question about the suitability of the test as a measure to examine vocabulary knowledge, it can be said that the Academic Vocabulary Test is a rather effective measure due to the aspects of reliability, validity, and practicality. However, the findings of this study show that the test-takers were able to answer a number of less frequent words. This can be supported by Nguyen and Nation's (2011) suggestion that the reasons why the learners may be able to know the meanings of the words in less frequent levels were guessing, the existence of loan words, the mismatch between frequency of words in the British National Corpus and the learners' curricula, and poorly designed items. Therefore, a further study should be conducted to find out obscured truths of the Academic Word List.

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How Edmodo and Google Docs Can Change Traditional Classrooms

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Abstract

Edmodo is a free and secure educational learning network. It looks similar to Facebook, but has been designed and developed to be a private and safe learning environment. Edmodo provides a simple way for teachers to create and manage an online classroom community as well as enable students to connect and work with their classmates and teachers anywhere and anytime. Since Edmodo also allows teachers to create small groups in the virtual class, Google Docs, in which individual or multiple users can simultaneously edit documents in real time, can be synchronized with Edmodo to motivate and facilitate students' knowledge construction individually and collaboratively. This study aims to investigate how a teacher makes use of Edmodo and Google Docs to change her traditional English classroom, the teacher's and students' perceptions of using them, including problems and suggestions. The subjects of this study were a teacher and 87 students at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand. The research instruments used were a diary, a questionnaire, Edmodo, and Google Docs. A diary was kept to find out how the teacher used Edmodo and Google Docs and to record her perceptions, while a questionnaire was employed to investigate students' opinions towards and suggestions about using Edmodo and Google Docs. The data automatically recorded by Edmodo and Google Docs were also collected to examine their use. The results of this study may inspire other teachers to reappraise the way they conduct their classes.

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Introduction and Literature Review

In general, teachers of English have physical classrooms as their workplace to do their jobs, teaching English, and their students also have these physical classrooms as their learning space. However, the rise of the Internet and online communication technologies has changed the way people work, communicate, socialize and learn as a 'network society' (Castells, 1996:21). Accordingly, learning is rapidly changed, especially among young learners or digital natives. These learners are seen as "native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet (Prensky, 2001). Therefore, their preference for learning, their learning styles and strategies are also enormously changed. For example, the research conducted by the British Council in 2007 revealed that 69% of learners around the world said that they learned most effectively when socializing informally. The result of this research also showed that students with strong social networks performed well academically (Arroyo, 2011). Therefore, if teachers want to remain relevant to their students and be effective teachers, they need to use 'learning technologies' to help students reach the world outside the classroom. Teachers should also become network administrators to find out what social networking sites students like to use and introduce free learning opportunities through helpful sites for them (Dalton, 2009). As in Thailand, currently, there are about 18 million Facebook users and the largest age group is 18-24 (Millward, 2013). This may show that a large amount of Thai youngsters are starting their new way of enjoying their lives by socializing online. Accordingly, it could be a big challenge for teachers to change their traditional classrooms and teaching strategies by making use of new communication technologies to encourage their students to learn better in class as well as in their real world. As a matter of fact, there are many academic websites or programmes that teachers can utilize to promote their new way of teaching. The only problem is whether or not the teachers get used to those tools as Lipsett (2008) reveals an important finding of the research conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), the UK's largest independent provider of research for education, that a third of 1,000 teachers struggled to use the technology which schools were equipped with because they lacked necessary skills to make the best use of the technology available to them. So that is why non-digital-native teachers may think of a simple tool like Edmodo that they can learn how to use it by themselves.

Edmodo, which is available at www.edmodo.com, has been designed and developed by Jeff O'Hara and Nick Borg since 2008. This website is a free, private, and secure learning network which looks similar to Facebook (Jarc, 2010), so it may not cause students to face any difficulties. They may also find it easy for them to connect and work with their classmates and teachers online. Moreover, teachers may like Edmodo because it provides simple functions for teachers to create and manage their online classroom community. In addition, Edmodo offers privacy to both teachers and their students. Only teachers can create and manage accounts and only their students, who receive a group code and register in the group, can access and join the group. No one else can participate or spy on the group. Via Edmodo, teachers can send text (SMS) alerts, messages attached with a file or a link, reply students' messages, send out quizzes and assignments, receive completed assignments, give feedback, assign grades for 'assignments', store and share content in the form of both files and links, conduct polls, maintain a class calendar, and contact with the whole class, small groups, or even individual students. Students can also send a message attached with a file or a link, store and share content in the form of a file or a link, submit homework, assignments, and quizzes, receive their teacher's feedback,

messages, alerts, and reply to the teacher, vote on polls as well as set their own calendar. Students can communicate with their teachers, the whole class, and their small group. The only limitation is that they cannot communicate with individual students via Edmodo. At present, Edmodo also offers a connection to Google Docs (Google Drive) as a new channel in order to enable teachers and students to work online more effectively and conveniently. Google Docs (Google Drive) is a simple freeware tool which enables individual or multiple users to edit documents simultaneously in real time. Since Edmodo allows Google Docs to be synchronized with the website, both Google Docs and Edmodo could motivate and facilitate students to construct their knowledge individually and collaboratively. So that is why the researcher would like to see how the teacher made use of Edmodo and Google Docs to change her traditional classrooms, the teacher's and the students' perceptions towards both tools as well as problems and suggestions.

Research Methodology

1. Subjects

The subjects in this study were the teacher researcher and 87 students. The teacher researcher was the teacher of the second English course for the undergraduates at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand, which was LNG 102: English Skills and Strategies. The students were the students of the course. They were 3 groups of students from the Computer Engineering Department, the Multimedia Technology Department, and the Industrial Education and Technology Department.

2. Methodology

At the beginning of the semester, the teacher set up 3 online classes via Edmodo. Then all her students were asked to register and join the online classes according to their groups. Small groups of about 4-5 students were then set up via their Edmodo online class in order to allow students to work on the required tasks of the course collaboratively. Then the teacher blended her physical classes with the online classes throughout one semester.

3. Research Instruments

The research instruments that the teacher used in this study were a diary, a questionnaire, Edmodo and Google Docs. The teacher kept a diary throughout the semester in order to see how the teacher made use of Edmodo and Google Docs and her perceptions. The questionnaire was employed to investigate the students' opinion towards Edmodo and Google Docs as well as their suggestions. The data automatically recorded by Edmodo and Google Docs were used to examine how the teacher and the students used them.

4. Data Analysis

The data from the teacher's diary entries were analyzed and grouped into three groups: dates, activities on Edmodo and Google Docs, as well as reasons or opinions. Then, the researcher further categorized the information by dividing it again into two groups: how the teacher and students use Edmodo and Google Docs, and her perceptions towards both tools. The data from the five-point Likert-type scale questionnaire were analyzed by using a rating guide as follows: 4.21-5= like....very much, 3.41-4.2= like, 2.61-3.4 = neutral, 1.81-2.6= do not like, 1-1.8= do not like...very much, while the data from the open-ended questions were grouped to see salient

points of problems and suggestions. Finally, the data collected from Edmodo and Google Docs were analyzed and grouped in terms of activities the teacher and students did during the semester.

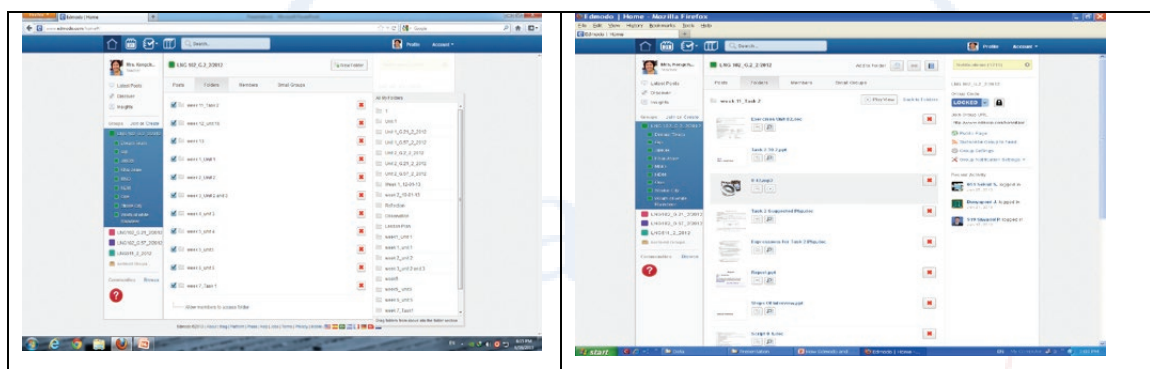
Results and Discussions

1. Functions used via Edmodo

According to the diary entries, it can be seen that among all functions of Edmodo, the teacher like to use the “folder” function very much as can be seen from the diary extract below:

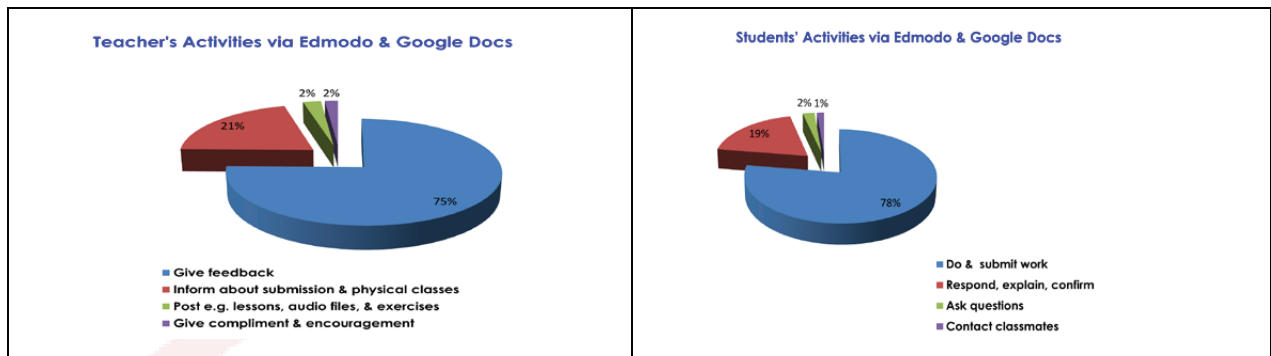
“I like the “folder” function in Edmodo very much because it allows me to post my PowerPoint presentations, exercises, audio files, and even a link for my students to study in advance before coming to class”. April 19, 2013

The data automatically recorded via Edmodo as can be seen in the charts below, show that the teacher uploaded her PowerPoint presentations of the lessons, audio files, and also exercises for her students in advance. This means that if her students access the online group through Edmodo and click “Folder”, they can study whatever the teacher has posted before coming to class.



2. Teacher’s Activities and Students’ Activities via Edmodo and Google Docs

The second finding was about all activities the teacher and the students did online throughout the semester. From the left pie chart below, we can see that 75% of all the activities the teacher did via Edmodo and Google Docs were giving feedback to the students’ work. Moreover 21% of her activities online were informing her students about submission and physical class’ issues. However, only 2% of the activities were for uploading lessons and the other 2% were for giving compliment and encouragement.

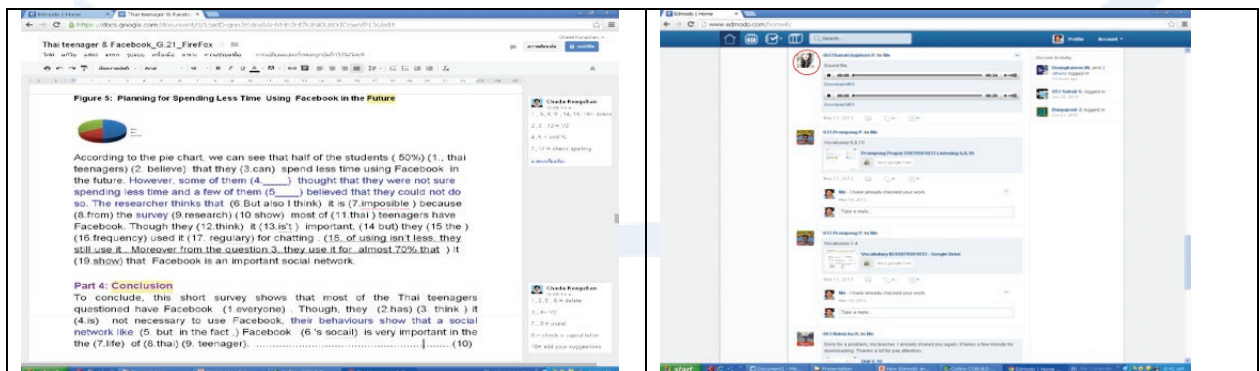


For the students, the right pie chart shows that 78% of all the activities they did were doing and submitting the work. The students responded to the teacher’s post, explained their work and confirmed their submission about 19 % out of all the activities they did online. Unfortunately, they asked questions and contacted their classmates only 2% and 1% of all their activities, respectively. This might be because Edmodo does not provide an active notification as Facebook. So they might not know whether or not their team was online. Some students told the teacher researcher informally that they also used Facebook and Skype to contact their team while working.

3. Changes in Traditional classrooms

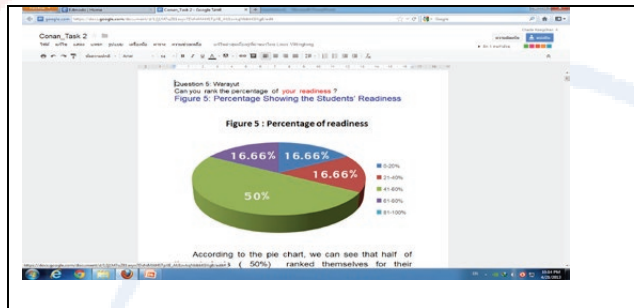
3.1 Flexibility

In traditional classes, students generally do their course work such as a writing task only on paper, but the students in this study could do their individual work and group work online through Google Docs and submitted them via Edmodo. From the right chart below, it can be seen that whenever the students submitted their work, the teacher could check the work, and gave feedback to her students online. Moreover, whatever each member of the group posted to the small group, the teacher and other members of the group could see it. In addition, with Google Docs, the students and the teacher could work together online at the same time on the same document. For example, according to the right chart below, while one student was working on describing his pie chart, another student was writing the conclusion of the report and the teacher was giving feedback to the students’ work. While other members of the group were writing, other students might work on other parts of the same task. For example, as shown in the left chart below, one student was submitting her audio files of the interview which was one part of the same task to the teacher.



Furthermore, the teacher could track the students' work online in real time as shown in the diary extract and the chart below:

"In class, I changed my class to a writing workshop. I asked students to bring their computers to class and work in a group searching for the countries they liked and making a note in a note form. I checked their work and gave comment and suggestions for them group by group. For the groups that did not bring their computers to class, I asked them to work at a library, a computer centre, a self-access learning centre or their department. I could also track their work in real time through Google Docs and Edmodo. I was very happy that I could do so and my students were also happy that they did not miss their work".
21st Jan., 2013



The data from Google Docs above shows that Google Docs could help the teacher track her students online by the symbols that automatically shown up when students were online. For example, the symbols on the top right corner of the chart show that there were 5 students online at the same time. Moreover, if anybody typed anything on this document, the teacher could see his movement according to the colour that represented each student.

3.2 Knowledge Construction

For knowledge construction, all of the students in each group helped each other to construct the task together. From the diary extract below, it can be seen that one member of the team designed a note- recorded form and asked other members to fill their data they got from the interview into the form. Moreover, the teacher could encourage other classes to use this form, too. This shows that Google Docs and Edmodo can facilitate not only students but also the teacher to construct their knowledge collaboratively.

"I saw the head of one small group post the information via Edmodo to ask his team to fill the data they got from the interview into the note-recorded form he had designed onto Google Docs. As soon as I saw it, I had an idea to ask other teams to do so because the form could help students gather their data more easily. I was so glad that I could use my student's idea to encourage other students to learn from their friends. In other classes, I could open his work for others to see it easily".
18th Mar., 2013

3.3 Pace and Speed of Teaching and Learning

For the pace of learning and teaching, the diary extract below shows that all students could work on their own pace without interrupting other students in their class.

*“I changed my class to be a writing workshop again. Every team brought their data and worked via Edmodo and Google to **fill their data** into the note-recorded form. While my students were working, I was **checking** their work online. Some students were **transferring their interview audio files from their mobile phones to submit** me by uploading them onto Edmodo. There were some teams that had not finished their interview, so I asked them to **interview their interviewees outside class** and bring their data in class. I liked the writing workshop via Edmodo and Google Docs because it could help me manage my classes flexibly. **My students also kept on working according to their steps without interrupting other students in their class**”.*
25th Jan. 2013

The following diary extracts also show that Google Docs and Edmodo could help the teacher and the students work faster.

“I found out that Google Docs and Edmodo could help me work faster checking students’ work and giving feedback and suggestions”.
18th Mar., 2013

“These two weeks were the study break at my university. However, there were no problems because my students could work online and I could track their work online, too.”
19th Mar., 2013

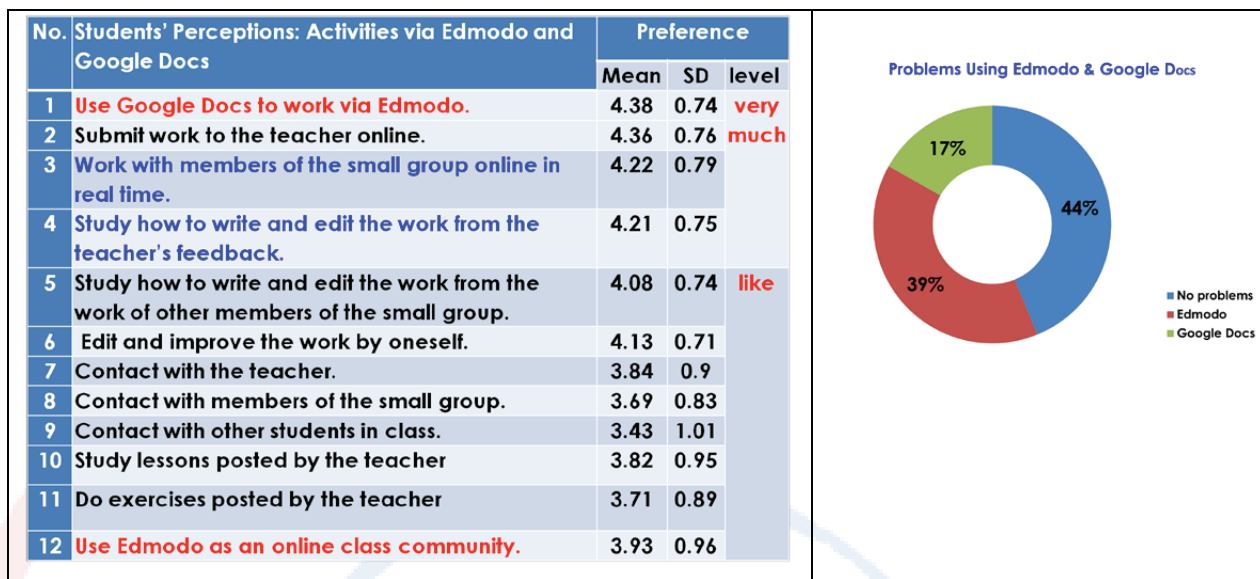
3.4 Chance for Learner Development

For the last change, the researcher thinks that it is the most important thing because weak students could have a chance to develop themselves and work better in their physical class since they had a chance to study the lessons online in advance and review the lessons after class. On the other hand, good students could also do much better in the physical class, too if they studied the lessons online before coming to class and after class. The diary extract below shows the teacher’s idea toward the chance for weak students.

“This week I taught note taking for a long talk in class. One of my students told me that before coming to class, he worked on the listening exercise on note taking from a long talk from the exercise and the audio file which I had posted via Edmodo. He said although he listened to it twice, he could fill in only half of the note exercise. I was so glad that my weak student studied the listening exercise before coming to class”.
1st April, 2013

4. Students’ Perceptions towards Edmodo and Google Docs

The fourth finding is about the students’ opinion. The table below shows that the students liked using Google Docs, submitting their work to the teacher, and working with members of the small group online in real time via Google Docs and Edmodo very much. They also liked studying how to write and edit the work from the teacher’s feedback online very much. However, for other activities, they revealed that they just liked them, especially using Edmodo as an online classroom community.



The finding on the students’ perceptions towards using Edmodo as an online class community may be further explained by the pie chart above. It shows that 44% of the students stated that they did not have any problems using Edmodo and Google Docs, while 39% of them indicated that they had a problem about Edmodo and 17% about Google Docs. For Edmodo, they stated that the only main problem was why the teacher did not use Facebook because they accessed it every day. For Google Docs, the only one problem the students mentioned was about sharing. They stated that if they did not set up, “share”, the teacher and their team could not work on the same document. The reasons for the above complaint might be because the teacher overestimated her students. Since her students were technology and engineering students, she believed that they should have studied how to use Edmodo and Google by themselves without any needs for an explanation or demonstration as shown in the diary extracts below:

“I gave my students their group codes, asked them to join the groups, and study the lessons, sound files, and exercises I posted via Edmodo without explaining how to do so because I thought that it was easy and should not have caused any problems.” 7th Jan., 2013

“I asked my students to study how to use Google Docs from the Power Point presentation, which I posted via Edmodo, by themselves”. 14th Jan., 2013

Suggestions

To conclude this study, some crucial suggestions should be stated as follows:

1. Teachers who would like to use Edmodo and Google Docs to change their traditional classrooms may have to think of a workshop introducing these two tools for students before starting using them. They may consider the necessity of individual classes because some classes may not need any demonstrations while other classes might require a simple workshop.

2. Teachers may also use other functions of Edmodo like a quiz, an assignment, and a progress which shows students' marks from the quiz and the assignment because Facebook does not offer these functions. Accordingly, their students may have no doubts using Edmodo anymore.
3. Teachers might also encourage students to study the lessons they posted in the "folder" function more often in order to help them develop themselves better- both weak students and good students.
4. For a "chat" function and an active notification that indicates who is online in real time, Edmodo might develop them later if the designers get the requirement from teachers and students.

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AQUISITION OF QUESTIONS IN PRESCHOOL TURKISH CHILDREN

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Abstract

In this study, age differences in language use in Turkish were examined. The aim was to elucidate where potential age differences exist in production and comprehension phases among the yes/no (mI) and various wh- question types: “kim” (who), “ne” (what), “nerede” (where), “ne zaman” (when), nasıl (how), and “niçin” (why). Children’s production and comprehension of questions were examined in two experiments to discover possible patterns in question acquisition. For Exp. I, a production study, questions were collected from 9 children (2.0 - 4.8 year-olds) from a data base existing on the web (childe). The data showed a high frequency of “ne” (what), and “nerede” (where) questions by age 2.0. “Kim” (who), niçin (why) and “nasıl” (how) questions were infrequent but increased with age. “Ne zaman” (when) questions were rarely asked by subjects of any age. From the frequency data a rough chronological order of acquisition was inferred: ne (what), nerede (where), mI (yes/no), kim (who), niçin (why), nasıl (how), ne zaman (when). In Exp. II, which assessed comprehension, 9 children (the same subjects) were tested. Results showed that the frequency of correct answers increased with the age of the subjects. It was also found that word type was a salient factor in determining age differences in frequency of correct response. Further aim of the research was to capture any subject-object asymmetry of what and who questions and their changes over time. Argument-adjunct asymmetry was also investigated within where questions, so as to control for the conceptual differences of different question types.

Key words: first language, question acquisition, preschool children

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1. INTRODUCTION

Preschool children from about 1;06 (year; month) begin to ask wh- questions, but learning to produce questions of various types is a slow and gradual process (Fletcher, 1985). There is individual variability in the exact time when a certain wh- question type is learned, but generally children do not use the full set of wh- questions until age four or five. Studies on the development of wh- questions have generally looked at the order of acquisition and the different factors affecting the order. For example, Ervin-Tripp (1970) reports that the developmental sequence with which children correctly respond to questions is yes-no, what, where, whose, whom, who, why, how, and when.

Ervin-Tripp attributed this developmental order of response to

- (1) varying syntactic complexity required to answer the questions;
- (2) varying cognitive complexity required to answer the questions;
- (3) varying cognitive complexity related to the various wh- question words;
- (4) varying degrees of abstractness related to the wh- word types.

There are different wh- questions, which are generally classified into two groups.

- (1) Argument questions- ask about a major constituent in a sentence, and they include all what and who questions and some of the where questions (e.g. *Where* did Mary go?). Argument questions can be subdivided into subject questions and object questions. Subject questions ask about the identity of the subject in a sentence (e.g. *who* is kicking the girl?), while object questions ask about the identity of the object in a sentence (e.g. *who* is the girl kicking?).
- (2) Adjunct questions- ask about the semantic relation of the entire event encoded in the sentence, and they include all why and when questions and some of the where questions (e.g. *Where* did Mary meet John?) (Stromswold, 1988).

1.1. Factors Determining the Order of Development of Wh- Questions

Argument questions have consistently been reported to develop before adjunct questions, specifically, in the order of what/where, who, how, why, which/whose/when (Smith, 1933; Bloom, Merkin and Wootten, 1982; Tyack and Ingram, 1977).

In addition to factors mentioned by Ervin-Tripp, some others can be listed and discussed in a detailed way below as some important factors determining the order of acquisition across question types.

- (1) Cognitive/semantic complexity: what and where questions, encoding more concrete concepts of objects and places, are acquired before why, how and when questions, representing more abstract concepts of causality, manner and time (Tyack and Ingram, 1977).
- (2) The relative syntactic function of the wh- words and the nature of the verbs: what, who and where questions encode pronominal references and copula or general-purpose verbs (e.g. *do* and *go*) are used in those questions. In contrast, why, how and when questions encode

sentential references and more descriptive verbs (e.g. push and kick) are used in those questions (Bloom, Merkin and Wooten, 1982).

(3) Communicative function: wh- questions with functions that match the children's current interests and needs were used more frequently and thus, developed earlier (Clancy, 1989).

(4) Input frequency: significant correlation between the order children produced wh- questions and their mothers' frequency of use of those questions. The child, who was exposed to more frequent input of how questions, acquired the question type earlier than the other child (Clancy, 1989).

In most of the studies, authors often came to the conclusion that a combination of factors is responsible for the acquisition order of wh- questions. However, a study (Rowland et al., 2003) put its emphasis on input frequency and it was found that the input frequency of particular "wh- word + verb" combination predicts the acquisition order better than semantic and syntactic factors.

1.2. Subject- Object Asymmetry in Argument Questions

Findings on the order of acquisition of subject and object argument questions are more controversial. For example, Stromswold (1988) reported that children learned object questions before subject questions, while opposite results were reported by Hanna and Wilhelm (1992). Tyack and Ingram (1977) also suggested that the direction of asymmetry was different in different question types.

There are at least three possible factors involved in the subject-object asymmetry:

- (1) wh- movement (Hanna and Wilhelm, 1992)
- (2) animacy of the wh- words (Tyack and Ingram, 1977)
- (3) input frequency (Clancy, 1989).

1.3. Yes/No Questions in Turkish

Yes/ no questions are formed by attaching the particle "mI" in Turkish; this morpheme gets cliticized to the predicate of the sentence and then has the whole sentence in its scope:

- (1) Ahmet sinema-ya git-ti mi?
 Ahmet cinema-Dat. Go-Past -Q
 "Did Ahmet go to the movies?"

The position of the yes/ no question particle is after the tense suffix and before the (subject) agreement marker; however, if the verb is in the definite past, the particle will follow rather than precede the agreement marker. The following examples illustrate the position of this particle:

- (2) Yarın sinema-ya gid-ecek **mi**-sin?
 tomorrow cinema-Dat. go-Fut. Q-2sg.
 “Will you go to the movies tomorrow?”

1.4. Wh- questions in Turkish

Turkish differs from English in the position of wh- words in wh- questions. Consider the sentence in (3):

- (3) a. Çocuk elma istedi.
 b. The child wanted an apple.
 c. What did the child want *t*?
 d. The child wanted what?*
 e. Çocuk **ne** iste-di?
 child what want-Past

3(a) and 3(b) are declarative sentences where subjects and objects are in the canonical positions. English has SVO order, while Turkish has SOV order. In 3(c) the object is wh-word *what* and it is placed at the top of the sentence. If it stays in the canonical position, the sentence becomes ungrammatical (except when it is used as an echo question), as in 3(d). On the other hand, in Turkish, a wh- word remains where non-wh-words are situated in canonical word order, and thus 3(e) is grammatical “*t*” in 3(c) is the trace of the wh- element. In Turkish, the wh- is placed in the same place of trace.

- (4) a. Ali istifa-sın-ı **yarın** ver-ecek.
 Ali resignation-Poss(3sg.)-Acc. tomorrow hand in-Fut.
 b. Ali istifa-sın-ı **ne zaman** ver-ecek?
 Ali resignation-Poss(3sg.)-Acc. when hand in-Fut.
 “When will Ali hand in his resignation?”

In 4(b), the wh- element “**ne zaman**” is the temporal adjunct. This example and others with different wh- elements illustrate that in simple Turkish wh- questions, the wh- constituent does not move to sentence initial position at S-structure (Kornfilt, 1997).

2. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to elucidate where potential age differences exist in production and comprehension phases among the yes/ no and various wh- question types. Further aim of the research was to capture any subject-object asymmetry of what and who questions and their

changes over time. Argument- adjunct asymmetry was also investigated within where questions, so as to control for the conceptual differences of different question types. Nine Turkish-speaking children from age 2.0 to 4.8 were the population of the present study.

(1) In the production experiment, each of the child's responses received semantic scores. The semantic score, which was given to all seven question types, was used to determine the order of development of different question types. One point was given when the child used the appropriate wh- word for the target question type.

(2) In the comprehension experiment, responses were scored categorically correct or not, according to procedures outlined by Tyack and Ingram (1977):

- "who" questions require an animate human response,
- "what" questions require an inanimate or non-human response,
- "where" questions require a location response,
- "why" questions require a causal response,
- "how" questions require a response indicating manner, and
- "when" questions require a response indicating time.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Production: Development of yes/ no and wh- questions

The order of wh- questions was examined using the semantic scores. "What" (32.4%), "where" (12.5%) and "yes/no" questions (40.0%) were maintained a level of high occurrence when compared to other questions for all age groups of children. "Why" (9.6%), "how" (2.7%), "who" (2.0%) and "when" (1.3%) questions maintained a low occurrence across age groups when compared to other question types.

At the age of 2.0, Turkish children were already able to use "what" (83.3%) and "where" (16.6%) questions and these two question types were the first occurrences in their question production.

The improvement of "yes/no" (42.1%); "who" (5.2%) and "why" (5.2%) questions appeared later but not a longer period of time from 2.0 to 2.4

According to the results, it is clear that "how" (5.2%) questions are produced earlier than "when" (3.8%) questions (how: 2.8; when: 4.0). these suggested that children of age 3.8- 4.0 still had difficulties in using when questions.

From the above interpretation, the following order and age of development was suggested: What (at/ before 2.0) < Where (at/ before 2.0) < yes/no (at/ before 2.4) < who (at/ before 2.4) < Why (at/ before 2.4) < How (at/ before 2.8) < When (at/ before 4.0). The order of development was similar to that reported in other studies (Ervin-Tripp, 1970; Tyack and Ingram, 1977; Cairns and Hsu, 1978; James and Seebach, 1982; Fletcher, 1985; Wong and Ingram, 2003) except that the age of question acquisition in Turkish occurs earlier than in some languages such as English. The reason why questions occur earlier in Turkish children can be that question formation is an early acquisition in Turkish, due to morphosyntactic simplicity.

3.2. Production: Asymmetry in what, who and where questions

Comparisons of children's production in using the same question word for two different syntactic information were carried out by examining the occurrences of what, who and where questions.

For "what" questions: what- subject: 27.7%

what- object: 78.0%

For "who" questions: who- subject: 20.9%

who- object: 1.3%

For "where" questions: where- adjunct: 13.8%

where- argument: 63.8%

Children produced what- object questions more accurately than what- subject questions and produced who- subject questions more accurately than who- object questions. The results suggested that the animacy effect and uneven distribution in input frequency as possible factors for the asymmetries observed. What- object and who- subject questions are probably easier for children to produce because of the association between the animacy and the syntactic role of the wh- word. The wh- word *what*, which usually refers to inanimate entities, is more likely to take the role of object, while the wh- word *who*, which usually refers to animate entities, is more likely to take the role of subject. Therefore, young children depending on this association produced what questions at object position and who questions at subject positions more easily.

Moreover, subject- object asymmetry in what questions was disappearing in older children, but asymmetry in who questions, favouring the object position, remained across the age groups. The differences in pattern of asymmetry of what and who questions suggested that input frequency and animacy effect might not be sufficient to account for the asymmetries in both what and who questions. As children's language knowledge develop with age, it is likely that they are less dependent on differential input, and the association between the animacy of wh- words and the grammatical role of subject or object for their later learning of wh- questions. While these factors might explain the change in pattern of the asymmetry in what questions, a third factor, communicative function is hypothesized to be responsible for their infrequent use of who-object questions in all three age groups. As it is mentioned in the introduction part, question forms that served children's immediate communicative interests

and needs will be adopted for active use earlier (Clancy,1989). Children's primary use of interrogatives was for obtaining information in their immediate contexts (Vaidyanathan, 1988).

For where questions, the percentages showed a significant main effect for question type, where- adjunct: 13.8%; where- argument: 63.8%. The production data from Stromswold (1988) indicate that for the same question type, the *wh*- phrase would occur in argument position earlier than in adjunct position. For example, where- argument questions such as "*where* is the book?" would occur earlier than where- adjunct questions like "*where* did Mary meet John?" The literature also suggests that where- argument questions are among the earliest acquired. Cognitive proposals attribute the relative difficulty of adjunct questions to the complexity of concepts of cause, manner and time in comparison to concepts underlying names of people or things (Tyack and Ingram, 1977).

3.3. Comprehension: Development of yes/no and *wh*-questions

In the comprehension experiment, responses were scored categorically correct or not, according to procedures outlined by Tyack and Ingram (1977). "Yes/no" (91.4%), "what" (88.5%), and "where" (85.3%) questions were maintained a level of high occurrence when compared to other questions for all age groups of children. "Who" (78.7%), "how" (69.3%), "why" (64.0%) and "when" (60.6%) questions maintained a level of low occurrence across age groups when compared to other question types.

At the age of 2.0, Turkish children were already able to comprehend these four question types but in different cognitive levels. These suggested that "yes/no" (68.4%); "what" (59.0%); "where" (42.5%) and "who" (22.2%) questions began to develop at or before 2.0 from the aspect of comprehension. From the results, it is seen that comprehension of yes/no and who questions (age: 2.0) occurred earlier than their production (age: 2.4).

The improvement of why (13.5%) questions appeared later but not a longer period of time from 2.0 to 2.4. Furthermore, "when" (45.2%) and "how" (38.0%) questions were able to be comprehended at/ before the age of 2.8. Because previous research (executed in different languages) has found that *wh*- words vary in abstractness, age differences in comprehension were predicted to vary along these same lines also in Turkish. Past research indicates that "what", whose referents are concrete, is one of the earliest *wh*- words acquired (Ervin-Tripp, 1970; Tyack and Ingram, 1977). "When", whose correct response requires the comprehension of an abstract temporal relationship, is one of the last *wh*- words acquired (Cairns and Hsu, 1978; Ervin-Tripp, 1970; Tyack and Ingram, 1977). Comprehension results illustrated some other different results from the production experiment in that when questions began to be comprehended until the age of 3.0 but their production was observed at the age of 4.0. Although the development of different *wh*- questions was in the same order with the other languages the age of question comprehension in Turkish children was earlier than children learners of other languages.

3.4. Comprehension: Asymmetry in what, who and where questions

Comparisons of children's comprehension in the same question word were carried out by examining the accurate answers given to what, who and where questions.

- For “what” questions:** what- subject: 84.5%
 what- object: 82.8%
- For “who” questions:** who- subject: 94.1%
 who- object: 5.9%
- For “where” questions:** where- adjunct: 15.0%
 where- argument: 85.0%

The results of comprehension experiment also provided parallel information when they were compared to the results of production experiment. However, it is clear that comprehension of these structures were earlier than their productions. Even the production of a structure was not observed at an age its comprehension existed in that age.

4. Conclusion

In the present study, children's production and comprehension of questions were analyzed to discover possible patterns in question acquisition in Turkish. Some differences but generally the similarities were examined when the results of the study was compared with the other related studies made in other languages.

From the data interpretation, the following order and age of development was suggested:
What (at/ before 2.0) < Where (at/ before 2.0) < Yes/no (at/ before 2.4) < Who (at/ before 2.4)
Why (at/ before 2.4) < How (at/ before 2.8) < When (at/ before 4.0)
(The order of development reported in other studies is: “yes-no < what < where < whose < whom < who < why < how < when”)
The order of development was similar to that reported in other studies except that the age of question acquisition in Turkish occurs earlier than in some languages such as English.

To summarise, different wh- structures show different patterns of wh- word acquisition and frequency of type use. In this study, frequencies are used to show an order of question acquisition in preschool Turkish children and to see if there is any similarity or difference when it is compared to other languages especially English. It is thought that as Rowland (2000) mentioned “frequency statistics may be a good starting point, given that the speech that a child hears is arguably the most direct, easily observable, perhaps most intuitively plausible, influence on language acquisition”. Thus, depending on this idea, the reasons affecting the order of question acquisition was also tried to be explained.

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*Important Factors Contributing to Language Learning During Short-term Study
Abroad: A Socio-cultural Perspective*

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Abstract

Overseas summer study tours have become a trend in the acquisition of foreign language, and thus an important issue involving diverse disciplines. From a socio-cultural perspective, when a second language is learned in a foreign setting, it should be perceived as a collaboration of both the participant and other interlocutors through social interaction in the target culture. Indeed, when students learn a second language on a study tour, the outcomes are affected by a complex of students' dispositions, features of their environment, and host communities' stances toward their guests (Kinginger, 2009). Yet, in previous studies, these factors have not been well discussed, especially from the participants' perspective.

This article explores the important factors contributing to the success of second language learning through short-term study abroad from the perspectives of adult learners. A qualitative case study methodology is used. Seven Taiwanese college teacher learners, all with non-English major backgrounds, were selected to participate in a four-week summer language study abroad program to the United States. Ten key factors contributing to the success of a language tour are identified, in aspects of participant, host, program design, context, and peer support. It is suggested that, in order to maximize the benefits to language learning, the learners' total experience during each phase of the study tour, from pre-departure, throughout participation to after returning home, should be considered.

Key words: second language learning, socio-cultural perspective, short term study abroad

Reference

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1 INTRODUCTION

There has been a trend towards utilizing short-term study abroad as one of the methods to learn a second language and foreign culture, and this trend has attracted the attention of many researchers in the linguistic field. From a sociocultural perspective, the effectiveness of a learner's language learning does not depend only on an individual's cognitive function, but is facilitated by various factors in the learning context. Yet, most of the previous studies were results-based, used quantitative methodology, and targeted young college students (Kinginger, 2009). Whereas short-term study tours may have the potential to promote language learning for adult professionals, it is not clear what factors may contribute to their success in a foreign context. As part of a larger research project, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the important factors contributing to adult language learning on short-term study abroad. The author has chosen a qualitative case methodology.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Second Language Acquisition from a Sociocultural Learning Perspective

Mainstream cognitivists propose that language learning, just like any other learning, is ultimately a matter of change in the mind of an individual. The focus is on identifying the nature and source of the second language linguistic knowledge system, and on explaining developmental success and failure. However, since the mid-1990, the field of second language acquisition study has been transformed from a cognitively orientated to a socially oriented conceptualization (Block, 2003). Among these social-oriented alternatives in second language acquisition, Vygotsky's (1994) sociocultural perspective sheds light on learning processes as they occur in interactive settings. He argues that both social interaction and cultural context are integral to cognition because "man is a social creature, that without social interaction he can never develop in himself any of the attributes and characteristics which have developed as a result of methodological evolution of all human kind" (p. 352). Thus, learning must be understood as the "product of a collaborative construction of understanding" (Vygotsky cited in Billett, 1994) in accord with "sociocultural evolved means of mediation and modes of activities" (Vygotsky cited in Harley, 1993).

Other scholars, advocating a sociocultural orientation, focus not just on learning outcomes, but also on learners' mediated participation in social interaction with others (Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000). Sfard (1998) observes that such an approach leads to the discussion of learning "as a process of becoming a member of this community and

acting according to its particular norms” . In short, the result of language learning in study abroad is mediated by the interactions between the learners and the hosts in the learning context.

2.2 Factors Affecting Language Learning in Study Abroad

Kinginger (2009) reviewed the literature related to study abroad and language learning. He stated that, when students cultivate language abilities in their host communities, the qualities and outcomes of this process emerge from a complex interplay of students’ dispositions, features of their environment, and host communities’ stances toward their guests.

Researchers in the field of recreation and tourism emphasize the importance of multi-phased experiences in leisure programming, and propose three basic phases: anticipation, participation, and reflection (Rossman and Schlatter, 2003). They believe that, if programmers only plan for intervention for participation and do not consider the total experience, important opportunities for intervention and facilitation of the desired outcome will be missed. In this study, the factors related to the success of language learning, which occurred in the three phases of pre-tour, during tour, and post tour will all be considered.

2.2.1 Pre-tour

Some authors argue that high expectations can be counterproductive because individuals can grow frustrated or discouraged when the actual experience proves to be more challenging than he or she had initially expected (Schwartz, 2004, Seider et al., 2012). However, Jackson (2008) proposes that students can benefit significantly from comprehensive pre-sojourn preparation. He suggests that preparation should include language-related issues, intercultural adjustments, learning strategies, as well as an awareness of their own culture.

2.2.2 During Tour

In previous studies, authors have proposed different factors, which may have a direct effect on learning results during participation in a study tour. For example, Wang, Peyvandi, and Moghaddam (2011) found that experiential characteristics, such as cultural touring, having opportunities to meet local people, participating in local events, and engaging in daily local activities, played a very important role in contributing to the success of a short-term study tour. Kinginger (2011) suggests that

the language educators' expertise in the choice and design of the study abroad program is vital to language learning results. He states that students will benefit from programs especially designed to foster language learning through observation, participation, and reflection. Also, administrators should be sensitive to the learners' psychological pressure to perform, and should provide them with coping strategies (Jackson, 2008). Students need time to explore their new environment, to interact with the locals, and to reflect on what they have discovered. This requirement creates a challenge for program administrators to properly balance students' time for academic classes, excursions and exploration. Some authors emphasize the importance of reflection in improving learning results, suggesting the use of strategies of diary writing, on-site debriefing, learner-centered debriefing sessions (Jackson, 2008), and cultural projects (Raschio, 2001).

2.2.3 Post-Tour

Adequate debriefing after returning to one's home country is an essential, yet often overlooked, element (Jackson, 2008). It provides the sojourners a chance to share their experiences, which can help to consolidate their own learning and motivate others to participate in the program.

The literature related to language acquisition on study abroad in terms of sociocultural theories and travel learning experiences reveals that many diverse and important factors, such as the learners' pre-disposition, the hosts, the learning context, or the program arrangements, may influence the language learning experience. Yet, little comprehensive discussion of key factors related to the success of a study abroad program has been undertaken. This study, which investigates factors affecting the language learning of adult learners who chose to participate in a summer study tour, may help to fill the gap.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative case study was used as the main research methodology in order to gain in-depth views of the setting and the participants through a variety of lenses. The case of Teacher Summer Study Tour, known as TSST, was purposely chosen because most international study tour programs have been designed for college students, while only a limited number have been designed for adult professionals, especially for college teachers. The TSST program was set up by Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages in Taiwan, and was open to staff members who taught non-English majors and who had

never studied overseas. The program involved spending 4 weeks during summer vacation at a catholic college in the United States. The hosting school arranged for a number of diverse learning activities, including formal instruction, lodging in the faculty dormitory, dining with the sisters, weekend visits or stays with an American family, visiting other institutions of higher education, interacting with the administrators on campus during coffee time, and a variety of short excursions or field trips. After returning home, all participants were required to submit a written report in English, and to participate in a debriefing on campus, in order to share their experiences. Seven participants of the program from 2009-2011 agreed to participate in the study. These included three females Susan, Wendy, and Helen (pseudonyms), and four males Louis, King, James, and Bill (pseudonyms). Their ages ranged from 43 to 60. Their backgrounds were quite diverse in terms of expertise, English proficiency, and travel experience.

3.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

In-depth interviews, Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET), and participants' PowerPoint files and written reports were employed in the study. First, a semi-structured question protocol was designed in order to understand the learning experiences of the participants and the important factors related to their English acquisition and cultural learning. Secondly, ZMET, as proposed by Zaltman and Coulter (1995), was used as a supplementary tool of data collection. This involved photo images, provided by the participant, with verbal in-depth personal interviews centered on the photos. Participants chose photos, which were most significant to their language and cultural learning, and a guided conversation related to the thought and feeling behind the selected photos was conducted and audio-taped. Thirdly, other documents collected were the presentation PPT prepared by the participant at the farewell party at the host school, and the personal written report of reflection prepared after returning home. Since different methods of data collection were employed, a high level of credibility was achieved in the study by comparing these data in order to verify their truth value in regards to the factors affecting linguistic gains in the learning process.

After all digitally recorded responses were collected and transcribed the method of open coding was used to analyze the transcripts. The process involved coding, and finding concepts and categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

4 FINDINGS

From the transcripts of seven college teacher learners, ten factors associated with language learning during a short-term study tour, from pre-, during, and post-tour phases, were identified. These were categorized into four domains as shown in Table 1: learners, hosts, program arrangements, and learning context.

Table 1 Ten important factors contributing to adult language learning in a short-term study tour

Phases Domain \ Factors	Pre-tour	During tour	Post-tour
Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expectations ✓ Preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Active engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Efforts in continuing to learn English
Hosts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reception by the host ✓ Instructional techniques 	
Program Arrangements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Integrating Academic Lectures and Leisure Activities ✓ Emphasis on reflection and sharing 	
Learning Context		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Learning atmosphere ✓ Socio-emotional support from peers 	

4.1 Pre-tour

4.1.1 Learners' Expectations

Whether or not a participant's expectations were realistic was a key factor influencing language learning. The participant King, who had a high expectation of significantly improving his English proficiency, ended up with disappointment. "*I had been really expecting to improve my English*" (King, post-interview, 20120920). This disappointment adversely affected his personal interaction with the locals throughout the tour. Verifying Schwartz' proposal (2004) regarding high expectation and learning counter-productivity, this finding revealed that an unrealistic expectation, such as significantly improving one's English, was negatively related to the learning gained from a short-term study tour.

4.1.2 Learners' Preparation

Four participants made special efforts to review English in preparation for the overseas tour. These personal efforts seemed to help them to adapt more readily in a foreign setting. For example, the participant Louis aggressively made efforts to improve his English by attending a special English program offered by the home school and by hiring a private English tutor for three hours a week. He also confessed

that he selected an American Net friend who lived in Cleveland on purpose, imagining he might possibly meet his Net friend there (Louis, post-interview, 20110913). He claimed that these preparations made him less afraid to interact with locals after he arrived. He emphasized, *“At least I got more used to their accent and was less afraid when I interacted with them”* (Louis, post-interview, 20110913). Another good example was Susan. In order to prepare for the trip, she began to read English magazines and listen to English DVDs (Susan, pre-interview, 20110630). Although she was still very nervous about everything after arrival, she felt that these preparations helped her to grasp some key words in conversations (Susan, post-interview, 20110913).

Many participants commented if they had known more program details prior to the tour, they would have learned more. For instance, Bill commented, *“If I had known more about the program and was better prepared, I would have gained more from the trip”* (Bill, post-interview, 20120511). Another participant James reported, *“If I know more about the program, I can prepare for it and learn better when I get there”* (James, pre-interview, 20110926). Since all participants were college teachers, who were used to organizing and preparing in advance, they would naturally expect to have more control of their own study process through better preparation before their arrival at the host school. This study also verified that the preparations should include not only English, but also the cultures of one’s own city and the host city. In a follow-up interview, Wendy reflected as to how little she knew about her own culture and institution. She said, *“I sincerely suggest that future participants should prepare to introduce Taiwan and Wenzao (home school) because, wherever we went, we were asked the same questions. It was a shame that we were not able to tell a more comprehensive story”* (Wendy, post-interview, 20110914).

4.2 During tour

Although having been immersed in English for only four weeks during the short term study trip, most participants reported that they had experienced significant improvement in English learning, especially in listening and speaking proficiency. Seven key factors, in the domains of learners, hosts, program arrangements, and learning context, were found to be correlated to language learning.

4.2.1 Active Engagement by the Learner

When the learners were willing to actively engage in various learning activities, they were more likely to benefit from the learning experiences. For example, during a visit to Little Italy, James, as a typical active learner, took the initiative to talk to artists on the street. He recalled, “*The progress of language learning was quite fast through these casual encounters*” (James, post-interview, 20110916). James also took a restaurant menu back to his room and looked up the listings one by one in the dictionary. Another example was Susan, who asked the sister to teach her how to sing a song that she had heard in a mass (Susan, ZMET, 20120907). The participant Helen concluded in her interviews, “*When we entered the scene, we had to speak to the locals. If we were talking to a kid, the language used would be different. So, we started to guess what he meant. This kind of unintentional encounter was very helpful*” (Helen, post-interview, 20120918). All of these participants reported satisfaction in advancing their language and cultural learning through the summer journey.

On the other hand, the participant King, who had the highest score in a pre-departure test, had difficulty in comprehending the native speakers in the foreign setting, and reported frustration in learning the language. Thereafter, he followed an inverted learning mode and withdrew from learning opportunities.

I didn't know what to say to them. I could not understand their accent. It was too fast for me. Although we were encouraged to chat with the sisters, however, I am not an extroverted person. It was difficult for me if we didn't know each other for long. Not to mention, I didn't know any of the sisters there, and I was not a member of the church. (King, post-interview, 20120920)

These results reveal that the level of engagement was associated to the learning modes of the participants. Participants who were extroverted by nature were more inclined to take risks while being engaged in the learning process; participants who were introverted tended to avoid personal interactions and were less engaged.

4.2.2 Reception by the Host

The reception by the host was the key to success in the study abroad program. If the reception by the host was friendly, hospitable and caring, positive reactions would most likely occur, thereby facilitating language learning. For example, one participant reported, “*They took the initiative and tried various ways to communicate to us about their culture. When our English was not good enough, they would just try one way or the other...Therefore, I believe the attitude of the hosts, as well as the culture, are*

very important” (Wendy, post-interview, 20110914). The frequency of interactions was also important. Six participants mentioned that the daily meals with the sisters in the mother house was paramount in learning the culture and language, and that their English improved most from interacting with the sisters. The participant Louis said, *“During the meal time, the sisters were doing the job of previewing and reviewing the lessons for us”* (Louis, post-interview, 20110913).

4.2.3 Instructional Techniques

The findings of this study indicated that effective instructional techniques to promote language learning in study abroad depended on four factors: instructors’ sensitivity to language problems, learners’ contextual knowledge, adult learners’ characteristics, and cultural differences.

First of all, the participants reported that, if the instructor was familiar with their language problems and spoke slowly by using simpler words in a communicative way, the instruction was perceived to be more effective to their language learning. *“On the first day, I could not understand their English because I was very nervous. But, gradually, I realized that they were so nice and would speak at a very slow speed, including in the classroom. So on the second day, I started to understand what they were saying”* (James, post-interview, 20110908).

Secondly, the learners’ contextual knowledge related to the subject under discussion was found to directly affect the learning result. Susan recalled how lost she was during an American politics class. *“After entering the classroom, I realized it was about American politics, [..sigh]. Why didn’t they tell us earlier or give me some learning materials to prepare in advance? You know how many professional vocabularies there were?”* (Susan, post-interview, 20110913). This problem also came up during coffee time with the administrators. Wendy reported, *“I was not able to introduce our school to them. I did not know how to say these departments in English and I was not familiar with their job either”* (Wendy, post-interview, 20110914).

Thirdly, it was apparent that the learners preferred more personal interactions and sharing of life experiences in class. They were good at reflection and weak at memorizing new words. Louis said, *“It was a challenge to teach seniors like us. If the professor kept talking more than ten minutes, we would fall asleep”* (Louis, post-interview, 20110913). Moreover, they appeared to be more interested when the course content was related to their own concerns.

Finally, some cultural aspects, such as the concept of gender differences, are very different between East and West. For example, the host school assigned a male advisor in the dormitory to assist and encourage the learners to follow the “English Only” policy while interacting in an off-class setting. Whereas all of the male learners reported positive interactions with the advisor, most of the female learners expressed that they felt somewhat nervous and uneasy (Susan, ZMET, 20120907). It was apparent that, for most middle-aged Asian female learners, it was not easy to interact with a male advisor in the dormitory. The problem was related not only to speaking a second language, but also to cultural and gender differences.

4.2.4 Integrating Academic Lectures and Leisure Activities

Many participants reported that they benefited most from a curriculum design which allowed them to combine what they learned in class with what they experienced in the real world. The concepts, knowledge, or keywords learned from academic lectures could be used as a scaffold to support their learning through leisure or cultural activities. The experiential elements in the leisure activities in return enhanced the learning gained from the academic instructions. The participant King said, *“I think a tight connection between the lecture and the trips was important. If the learning material was simple and clear and we could do some preparation so as to apply what we had learned afterwards during the trip, it would make a big difference to the learning effect”* (King, post-interview, 20120920).

4.2.5 Emphasis on Reflections and Sharing

Many of the participants reported that the process of sharing and reflecting on what they had learned that day facilitated not only their language learning, but the whole learning process. In her report, Susan wrote, *“Every day everyone we met would ask, ‘What did you learn today’, which forced us to think about our learning and how to share the feelings”* (Susan, WR, 201109). Consequently, daily reflections and sharing helped the learners to review, organize, and integrate what they had learned during the day, and to share it with others using the target language. This daily practice incorporated meaningful learning into the second language learning process. On recalling interactions with the sisters, Susan said, *“I realized that it was a reflection on life, rather than only a reflection on knowledge I learned...It should not only be a habit; it is an attitude”* (Susan, ZMET, 20120907).

The final presentation, which was described as a formal event, was also found to have an impact on the participants’ learning, including language learning. During the

presentation, some participants were impressed by their ability to speak in public using English. In recalling her performance, Helen said, *“After four week of immersion, I found I had some improvements in English so I could speak impromptu in the presentation”* (Helen, post-interview, 20120918). Susan stated, *“For a short-term study tour, a final presentation is a must because it offers a stage for the learners to demonstrate what they learned from the program. Without it, the learners would never know how much they have learned and it will be difficult to share their learning results with others* (Susan, post-interview, 20110920). This result verifies that critical reflection, mediated by quality personal interactions and observations, is key to facilitating learning (Kolb, 1984). This study also adds to the literature that describes critical reflection as an on-going process, which can be more effective through the guidance of a knowledgeable and experienced mediator. It was through daily sharing with the sisters that the participants were able to generate profound meaning in relation to their lives.

4.2.6 Learning Atmosphere

In the interviews, the participants reported that they felt secure, welcome, supported, encouraged, and inspired in their new environment. These contextual characteristics were important in assisting the learners to fit in their new environment, and to interact with the locals throughout the learning process. As Susan said, *“Their attentiveness was found in every single aspect of our life, for example, in the welcoming sign at the entrance or the basket full of treats in my room”* (Susan, ZMET, 20120907). Wendy said, *“In an environment with no fear, my potential was recognized. People were very warm to me and reassured me in whatever I said. They were patient and polite in listening to me. Maybe that was exactly what I needed”* (Wendy, post-interview, 20110914).

4.2.7 Socio-emotional Support from Peers

Five participants mentioned the importance of peers' emotional and cognitive support in the learning process. As Wendy reported, *“I was the most nervous one in the whole group, but my colleagues kept giving me support”* (Wendy, post-interview, 20110914). They helped each other by preparing for class together, by backing each other up answering questions in class, and by working together on their final presentations. The participant James described an “unspoken consensus” among the teacher learners in class. *“In class, it seemed we had a tacit understanding in volunteering to speak. Every time when the instructor asked a question, someone would volunteer to speak with an unspoken consensus,”* said James (James, post-interview, 20110908). Peer

encouragement and cooperation in class provided psychological support to the participants, who gradually immersed themselves in the target-language learning environment.

4.3 Post-tour

4.3.1 Efforts in Continuing to Learn English

Most of the participants reported they had improved their English to varying degrees, especially in speaking and listening skill. However, these positive linguistic gains were found to diminish with time, unless efforts were taken to continue the English learning process. Louis commented on the status of his English learning one month after returning home, *“Unless I force myself to speak in English when I run into a foreign teacher, I am not used to speaking English now”* (Louis, post-interview, 2010913). Another learner James admitted that he was not that confident speaking English only one month after he returned from Cleveland. Five of the participants expressed a desire to attend an English learning course on campus in which they could continue to advance their English (Bill, post-interview, 20120511). The only exception was Helen, who aggressively continued to learn English on her own afterwards. She subscribed to Studio Classroom¹ and bought an I-pad so that she could learn English more conveniently. In addition, she attended a TOEIC² certificate course, and took a TOEIC proficiency test afterwards. She was happy with a score of 810 on the test. She attributed the improvement, especially in listening comprehension, to the short-term study tour (Helen, post interview, 20120918).

Finally, it should be noted that the various learning factors reported by the participants were interrelated throughout the learning process. For example, King’s unrealistic expectation for language progress caused frustration in personal interactions. Consequently, he adopted an introverted learning mode and withdrew from the learning process, which resulted in a negative language learning experience for him. During the tour, the reception by the hosts and the learning atmosphere directly influenced the willingness of the learners to participate in various learning activities. In addition, learners who gained a positive learning experience through the journey

¹ A monthly English magazine issued in Taiwan to help readers learn English. Radio and television programs accompany each article and air Monday through Saturday. The radio programs are also available on MP3 and on Internet.

² TOEIC stands for Test of English for International Communication, which is an English language proficiency test for people whose native language is not English. Details can be found at http://www.toEIC.com.tw/about_01.jsp.

were more motivated to continue to learn the language after returning to their home country.

5 CONCLUSION

The results of this study revealed the complexity of the second language learning process for adult learners who participated in an overseas summer study tour. From the perspective of the learners, ten important factors, which were of benefit to their ability to learn language in a foreign setting were identified. Several major conclusions have been drawn, and are listed as follows:

- (1) The language learning experiences of a summer study tour were shaped by many diverse factors in the learning process, through the phases of pre-tour, during tour, to post-tour.
- (2) The key factors contributing to the success of the language learning process were to be found in the domains of: the learners, the host, the program arrangements, and the learning context.
- (3) The key factors affecting language learning were interrelated, and had a combined effect in the learning process.

What implications from this study can be of benefit to institutions, program designers, and learners in the future in order to maximize the language gains on a study tour? First of all, it is important to encourage learners to set realistic goals regarding language gains before departure, and to adequately preparation for the trip. Learning institutions should arrange an organized orientation for the learners to provide detailed information related to the program, the hosting school, the host culture, the home culture, and the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. An English enhancement course and introduction to informal conversation, which includes “break the ice” topics, should also be part of the orientation. Furthermore, during the tour, learners should be encouraged to be open-minded and flexible, and to take advantage of various learning opportunities afforded in the new environment. The hosts involved in the program should provide a friendly, supportive, and motivating atmosphere in order to alleviate the stress and anxiety of the newcomers. Times devoted to reflection and sharing should be arranged to enable learners to meditate on what they have learned, and to provide a more in-depth learning experience. After returning home, language learning development continues to be shaped by the individual’s personal efforts and the learning environment. After all, the concept of life-long learning is key to extending the language advances gained through the study tour.

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*Importing Language Assessment?
The Reception of the Common European Framework of Reference in Australian
Universities*

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Introduction

Since 2001, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has been recognised as a fundamental resource for the development of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines and testing. However, its implementation outside Europe is hotly debated around the world: the CEFR is sometimes considered as an efficient way of achieving forced harmonisation, particularly in assessment fields (Krumm 2007), but is also sometimes construed as a marketing tool or, worse still, as “another instance of linguistic imperialism” (McBeath 2011). While the CEFR is now a clear example of the globalization of education policy (Byram 2012), it has gained little ground in Australia. In regards to specific language policies in force in this country (Lo Bianco 2004), could the CEFR be used as an effective and reliable reference to develop both strategic language policy documents and practical teaching and assessment material? In this paper, the analysis of the potential role of the CEFR in the Australian tertiary sector is based on quantitative and qualitative data collected from academics and students who responded to a nationwide online survey. By bringing to light and discussing some of the more controversial positions, our aim is to contribute to both local and international debates on the CEFR as a universal framework.

The implementation of the CEFR outside Europe: an international debate

Today, the CEFR is recognised as emblematic of the globalization of education policy (Byram 2012). As of 2013, thirty-nine language versions were available, including not only various European languages, but also Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, French Sign Language, just to name a few. In Europe, as shown in the latest extensive survey done by the Council of Europe in 2007, the CEFR has been adopted and adapted in 30 of the 47 Member-States. In the report documenting this survey and presented during the Intergovernmental Policy Forum held the same year (Martyniuk and Noijons 2007), it was reiterated that the CEFR is a reference tool designed to coordinate educational goals at all levels. This framework is useful in developing both strategic language policy guidelines and practical teaching material. In Europe, it remains the most reliable reference for curriculum planning, and contributes to greater transparency and coherency across the educational sector in general.

As clearly stated in the introduction, the CEFR provides “a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe” (Council of Europe 200, p.1). The Framework is a descriptive scheme, which combines general competences (such as knowledge, skills, existential competence, and learning ability) with communicative language competences (at a linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural level). Overall, thirty-four illustrative scales are summarized in a global scale composed of six levels (from A1 for “basic user/beginner” level, to C2, for “proficient user/mastery” level). It is important to note that the CEFR is “action-oriented” and language independent, and its designers insist that it be considered as a non-prescriptive and flexible framework. Among them, Brian North uses a musical metaphor to describe it as “a concertina-like reference tool, not an instrument to be applied” (2007, p.656).

Nevertheless, soon after its publication, the CEFR received severe criticism, both on the theoretical and political aspects of its implementation. In 2004, a debate was launched in the Guardian by Glen Fulcher, a respected linguist in Great Britain who argued that the implementation of the CEFR could lead European countries to build

tests from an “unsafe” framework due to the lack of relevance and validity of level descriptors in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The Dutch CEF Construct Project (Alderson et al. 2006) subsequently pointed out that the descriptors provided in the CEFR are limited and should only serve as a starting point for specifying test content. In response to criticism from experts in the SLA field (Hulstijn 2007) concerning the validity and reliability of scales used in the development processes of assessment systems, a report was published by the Council of Europe in 2007 to “rectify imbalances in interpretation and use” (Byram 2012, p.5). Nonetheless, the CEFR is still valued as an efficient way of achieving forced harmonization inside and outside Europe, particularly in the field of assessment (Weir 2005), despite sometimes being perceived as “another instance of linguistic imperialism” (McBeath 2011). In addition to the challenges linked to the inadequacy of level descriptors in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) context (Little 2007) or for migrant populations (Krumm 2007), other cases of misuse have also been reported, such as irrelevant recruitment assessment practices seen in corporate outsourcing in India and the Philippines (Lockwood 2012).

In this controversial situation, the authors of the CEFR and their supporters constantly rally against misinterpretation and misuse of the Framework by highlighting its flexibility (North 2004; Coste 2007; Little 2007). Fleming (2006) reports that “Can do” statements are often viewed by critics of the CEFR as too narrow, functionalist, and even behaviourist. Nevertheless, Fleming concedes that “competence frameworks have the potential to focus on the importance of use and purpose, implying a more dynamic rather than static concept of language” (2006, p.54). Moreover, in 2007 Davidson and Fulcher developed a specific descriptor for service encounter specification from the generic model on offer at Level A1 in the CEFR, and found it “a valuable starting point for language test development” (2007, p.231). Jones and Saville later conducted a project called Asset Languages in the UK which called for “the need to develop contextualized, practical ways of realizing the CEFR’s potential as a framework for teaching and learning” (2009, p. 51). These pragmatic findings of the potential and necessary contextualization of the CEFR point to ways of addressing criticism and scepticism concerning the validity of the Framework. Similarly, it is important to regularly reiterate the aims of the project launched by the Council of Europe, and, as Trim (2012) reminds us, the CEFR was conceived to promote language learning not as an end in itself but to support methods that strengthen democratic practices by developing the learner’s independence of thought and action, and by increasing one’s sense of social responsibility. According to all the experts involved in the project, the teaching of language should be available to everyone on a lifelong basis, and should meet the needs of the learner, rather than being teacher- or subject-oriented. Trim declares that “the Framework should be flexible, open, dynamic and non-dogmatic, since the aim was not to prescribe how languages should be learnt, taught and assessed, but to raise awareness, stimulate reflection and improve communication among practitioners” (2012, pp.29-30).

The CEFR around the world

Today, the growing influence of the CEFR beyond Europe is being increasingly documented. Various papers and books describe the impact of the Framework wherever it has been officially adopted through governmental agencies, or more commonly, incorporated by policy makers and institutions in specific contexts. Numerous case studies and language policy analyses have clearly demonstrated the

impact of the CEFR throughout Asia or in the Americas. Many reports have come out of China (Fu 2010; Bel and Yan 2011; Zou 2012), from Japan (Nishiyama 2009; Chevalier 2011; Himeta 2011; O'Dwyer and Nagai 2011), Korea (Finch 2009; Park 2011), or Taiwan (Wu and Wu 2007; Cheung 2012; Wu 2012). The American continent offers many case studies: from Argentina (Porto 2012), Canada (Vandergrift 2006; Faez et al. 2011; Wernicke and Bournot-Trites 2011), Colombia (Lopez and Janssen 2010; de Meijia 2012), Mexico (Despaigne 2011), and the USA (Byrnes 2012). Conversely, the Middle-East offers only a few papers: from Turkey (Glover 2010; Üstünlüoğlu 2012), and Iran (Normand-Marconnet 2009), although there doesn't seem to be any documentary evidence from Africa.

The situation in Australia

Australia is a country characterized by a high degree of multilingualism and multiculturalism, with a long and chequered history of language policy (LP). In this context, Lo Bianco (2004) identifies five LP areas. The first one is *Britishism*, which promotes English only and is modelled on Southern British norms. Prestige foreign languages, typically those found in British Public schools, (especially Latin, premised on the idea of “mental training” and classical literature, as well as French, followed by German and Italian) assert only a very limited presence. The repression of immigrant and indigenous languages was a feature of the deployment of this discourse. Unsurprisingly, then, *Australianism* was a nationalist reaction to British English, especially in folk literature, and was favoured by those of Australian or Irish birth, and other immigrant groups seeking to promote Australian norms of English and a newfound openness to indigenous languages. *Multiculturalism* originated in the second generation of predominately Australian-born children following massive World War II immigration. During the 1970s, this discourse became the dominant paradigm of LP, where “foreign” language teaching was discouraged in favour of local immigrant and indigenous community languages. It transformed primary schools into sites of language study and saw a huge expansion of languages offered. *Asianism* has a longer history and strongly emerged following the admission of the UK into the European Common Market in the mid 1970s. “Asian Literacy” grew rapidly and became dominant in the late 1980s-1990s, both for commercial and strategic reasons. In 1994, it was reduced to four “priority languages”: Mandarin Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean, although in 2012, Korean was replaced by Hindi. Finally, *Economism* appeared during the nineties. Both sides of politics adopted neo-liberalist and globalisation principles in education, which began to be considered as a saleable commodity. Australian universities – with schools rapidly following suit – became major providers of education, albeit in English, to the Asian market, whilst promoting English and commercially viable foreign languages.

The available academic literature on the reception of the CEFR in Australia is still very limited. In light of the LP discourses currently in force, it is interesting to consider the often negative opinions and reactions expressed by researchers and experts in the field of education, who argue that standards in general impose uniformity and globalization, and that the CEFR in particular “has emerged as a mechanism for control of foreign language education throughout every level of the educational system” (McNamara and Elder 2010, p.197). Moreover, the proficiency orientation and the absolute scale on which the CEFR is based do not take into account the context in which a language is acquired, unlike achievement orientation currently promoted in Australia for Asian languages (Scarino 2012). These kinds of

reactions stem from a combination of Australianist reasoning (i.e. the country should have its own distinctive assessment systems designed for its particular needs) and are influenced by both multiculturalist and Asianist discourses. On the other hand, the increasing influence of the CEFR on the English testing sector in Australia has been reported as an unavoidable phenomenon, as revealed in an official report on English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) published in 2007 (Elder and O'Loughlin 2007). This trend was confirmed in an interview with Dr Miloanovic, the Chief Executive of IELTS (co-owners of Cambridge ESOL) which appeared in The Australian newspaper in August 2011.

Our survey: an overview of students' and academics' perceptions

Design and methodology

This survey expands a collaborative project involving all language programs in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at Monash University. As a first step, the learning outcomes of Monash language programs were aligned with those of the CEFR in 2011 and an interactive website was developed in 2012. In addition, one short online questionnaire was designed to collect feedback on this implementation through "Survey Monkey" software, which relied on data collated from both staff and students at Monash University. Then in mid-2012, to reach a broader audience, an invitation to participate in the online survey was sent through the Language and Cultures Network for Australian Universities to its 600 affiliated members in Australia. The purpose of this survey was to gauge the current perception of the CEFR in the Australian tertiary sector, and using this preliminary overview as a starting point, we plan to conduct further investigation across the sector (policy makers, educational authorities, etc.) in the near future.

In this paper, the following research questions are addressed: i) What reception does the CEFR enjoy in Australia compared to the current situation in other non-European countries? ii) How do Australian students and academic staff react to the CEFR?

For this, the questionnaire consisted of eleven items, including closed and open-ended questions, as well as statement-type items on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1, *strongly agree*, to 5, *strongly disagree*). Additional comments were encouraged by leaving appropriate sections for open-ended responses. The quantitative data were collected and analysed using tools provided by Survey Monkey (i.e. Excel tables), and the qualitative data were converted using both Survey Monkey and Nvivo10 software in order to enable discourse analysis.

Overall, 135 respondents contributed to this survey. In keeping with the Human Ethics Certificate Approval granted by Monash University, the survey ensures complete anonymity and no details regarding the institution of the respondents were requested (except for those from Monash University who participated in the first survey).

Quantitative results

The results of the first three questions have been summarized in Table 1, and show that among the 73 students and the 62 staff members who participated in the online survey, 66% were familiar with the CEFR, and 60% were aware of the Common Reference Levels (from A1 for Basic User to C2 for Proficient User). Overall, it seems that academics were better informed than students.

Table 1

Do you know:	Total responses		Academics		Students	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The CEFR	88	46	51	9	36	37
The Six Levels Scale	81	54	48	13	32	41

In the following question, which allowed for various options, respondents were asked how they heard about the CEFR and the Six Levels Scale. As shown in Table 2, most of them selected the categories *scientific literature* and *material used in class*, which suggests they had had more opportunities to learn about the Framework mainly during research activities or through professional practices. Furthermore, the additional data provided by the open-ended responses to this question show that opportunities for finding out about the CEFR were the result of personal collaboration with colleagues rather than through institutional promotion.

Table 2

Answer Options	n	%
In class, during language studies	18	16%
Through material used in language classes	23	20%
Through scientific literature	25	22%
By visiting the Monash website	15	13%
Other	27	23%
Total	116	100%
Other:		
previous position	7	26%
through colleagues	8	30%
professional dev	4	15%
websites	4	15%
survey	2	7%
other	2	7%
Total	27	100%

In the next question, two-thirds of participants recognized that the use of the CEFR within their institution was or could be useful (36% responded *Absolutely*, 29% *Somewhat*). While a large proportion were hesitant (30% replied with *Don't know*), it was mainly academic staff who disagreed with this statement (5% of the total answers).

Regarding the perceived benefits of the CEFR, the results from the Likert-scale items show that our participants equally acknowledged the CEFR as providing both academic and professional benefits. The overall consensus is illustrated by a close rating average for academic (2.09) and professional (2.11) benefits, while the rating average was 3.73 for the *No benefit* response, although one-third of the respondents stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

To elaborate on the positive impact of the CEFR on the institutions, a series of five Likert-scale items was also included. According to the rating average and the grouping of *strongly agree/agree* categories in percentages, our participants were more likely to acknowledge that incorporating the CEFR would be particularly useful as it evaluates outcomes against an international standard (rate of 1.95 and 74% of positive answers). The fact that the CEFR provides a means of aligning assessment

with proficiency level and promotes better curriculum design across languages was also well recognised (rate of 2.08 with respectively 73% and 70% of positive answers). To a lesser degree, the positive impact of the CEFR is linked to the easiness of “can do” descriptors used to map language levels (rate of 2.09 and 68% of positive answers), and to the CEFR’s implementation all around the world (rate of 2.18 and 64% of positive answers).

The question that followed sought to clarify the perceived rejection of the CEFR. 42% of the participants recognized that the negative perception of the CEFR and the Six Levels Scale in Australia was in fact largely due to limited knowledge within the Australian education system (rate of 2.72). Furthermore, the reasons given for the limited uptake of the CEFR in Australia were not because it was too complicated (rate of 3.54) or didn't provide a clear picture of language proficiency (rate of 3.44). Almost half (42%) disagreed too with the suggestion that standardisation and harmonisation meant less flexibility and reduced diversity in language programs (rate of 3.22). Finally, there seemed to be a high level of indecision regarding the fact that the CEFR is not streamlined to the Australian context (rate of 3.07 and 40% of *Neither agree nor disagree* responses).

For the two last questions, 74% of our respondents agreed with the idea that their institution should not only promote the use of the CEFR, but should also organize training sessions prior to its implementation. It is particularly noteworthy that the strongest opposition to these statements came from academics (80% of the negative responses), whereas the need for training was mostly expressed by students (60% of the positive responses).

Qualitative analysis

As previously mentioned, the researchers found it useful to undertake a qualitative analysis based on the comments collected from the questionnaire's open-ended responses, and coded them according to the institution (MU for Monash University; OU for other universities) and their category (A for students, B for staff). The 67 additional remarks were grouped into three main categories (22 quotes in the *No idea* category, 14 quotes in the *Cons* category and 31 in the *Pros* category). These three categories were then divided into subcategories according to the different clusters which emerged. Where possible, we selected representative quotes to illustrate the main findings from our corpus.

In the first of these three categories, the majority of comments were simple quotes such as “don’t know” and “no idea”. Nevertheless, some elaborated on this, stating, for example, “I am not actually sure about the question of CEFR in the Australian context...about it not being adapted for Australia. So I put neutral. And I don’t have personal knowledge of whether the CEFR is well known in Australia or not” (staff MU71). Others added they would like more information, such as student MU65: “Have never heard about this, perhaps it would be good to promote/explain a bit more about what it is in class or via email, etc.”

Although limited in number, the comments provided by 14 of our respondents (13 academics and one student) grouped into the '*cons*' category nevertheless illustrate the variety of criticisms to be found in the academic literature. Four clusters were identified: the applicability of the CEFR in a non-European context; the limitations of the CEFR in terms of assessment and curriculum design; the risks of benchmarking, and finally, its relevance compared to other existing standards. Not surprisingly, the

main source of doubt and negative opinions from six of our respondents focused on the applicability of the CEFR and the Six Levels Scale to non-European languages, especially Asian languages, for example: “I doubt if it can measure script-based Asian language proficiency correctly” (staff MU75); “there is an assumption that CEFR suits all languages - it is totally impractical for non-European languages and this needs to be more widely acknowledged and recognised. Until this happens, many in the non-European language sector will continue to feel excluded and sick and tired of saying ‘It is different for character languages.’ The European context is different, that does not [mean] that it cannot be used in Australia but it does mean that it doesn't suit as well as the European context” (staff OU6).

Others pointed out the limitations of the CEFR in terms of assessment or curriculum design, sometimes quite vigorously: “A level description is not a test against which an outcome can be measured – saying a curriculum has a level does not mean the students have been measured against the levels. They can perceive by self-assessing how close or how far they may be but it is NOT a reliable measure in ANY WAY” (staff OU8). Another academic explained the risks linked to the use of the CEFR as a benchmarking tool as follows: “One major problem in Australian unis [universities] is the ongoing reduction in teaching hours per subject at each level (1st/2nd/3rd-year). In attaching the CEFR to outcomes for subjects, it becomes clearly obvious which programs are achieving (or say that they achieve) certain levels of competency. Reduction in face-to-face hours generally means lower levels of achievement according to the CEFR. As the decisions to reduce hours are based solely on economic bases, and not on proficiency/outcomes, the CEFR could serve as a means to prove the teaching/learning case for a minimum of contact hours” (OU50). Finally, the relevance of the CEFR in Australia compared to other international standards was also questioned: “It is unclear to me why CEFR has been chosen among all systems to be the standard. For example, why haven't we chosen the system used by the U.S. State Department or other? These are equally as recognisable outside of Europe” (OU21).

The *'pros'* category is composed of 31 comments divided into the following five sub-categories: the support in implementing the CEFR, the positive reception of the CEFR in general, the positive impact on curriculum and assessment, additional fields of implementation, and the necessary adjustments in terms of professional development. In the first sub-category, respondents clearly supported the successful implementation of the CEFR into their institution: “We have used the CEFR in the Spanish Program at [our university] for more than five years now, with great success.” (staff OU38) and spoke of it enthusiastically: “I am a fan of the European Reference Framework and in this day and age of globalisation, the more ‘international’ education is, the better!” (staff OU19). In the second sub-category, we grouped together the positive comments of the CEFR such as: “self-explanatory” (staff OU32); “incorporates intercultural and socio-cultural features” (staff OU41); or “promotes academic mobility” (staff OU42 and OU52). We included also the positive reaction to the CEFR in terms of curriculum design and assessment by these two students: “The actual framework itself makes a lot of sense and is easy to understand at first glance. I think it would be a good thing to know if you're a (for example) level B2 in reading & listening, but only a B1 in writing & speaking. Perhaps then a grade of Credit would make a bit more sense (rather than thinking you are just mediocre overall)” (student MU44); “Best part about [this] system is that it provides clear goals/guidelines that must be met by students and set by assessors as to reach the next 'level' ” (student

MU70). Other comments focused on the potential extension across the sector for international students (staff OU3), and even to promote cohesion between secondary and tertiary levels: “I’d like to think we could adapt this to secondary level and promote a cohesive approach across Australia. Unity=strength” (staff OU24). Finally, some participants recognized the potential and the positive impact of the CEFR on their institution, provided that a review of the programs (staff OU29) and some professional development activities were included in the implementation process of the Framework and the Six Levels Scale: “I would be very interested in running some PD for teachers in how to implement the framework reference and combine this with state and national descriptors” (staff OU3).

The future of the CEFR in Australia?

In the context of Australian LP history and the provision of languages, what are the prospects for adoption, modification, or outright rejection of the CEFR?

To better evaluate these eventualities, we examined data showing the reactions and views of those most concerned, that is, academics, language teachers and students. However, the literature on policy borrowing suggests that other actors are involved in determining how and to what extent external innovations are transferred and taken up in any given context.

It is likely that the current lack of enthusiasm and close-mindedness towards the CEFR will change in Australia given current developments in LP at the macro level, as the government appears to be moving towards a more standardised national language provision. Another possible avenue for the adoption of the CEFR are second language teachers in schools, many of whom appear to have a different attitude and are more open-minded towards its potential. These are just two potential areas which may bring about change, although the pace of this change will be unpredictable. Undoubtedly, there is a need for further analyses to evaluate the impact that the contextualization of the CEFR will have on language assessment in Australia.

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*Metacognitive Reading Strategies for French Micro-Structure Textual
Comprehension by Metacognitive Competences of the 3rd year Srinakharinwirot
University Students*

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Abstract

This research aims at identifying reading strategies and microstructural comprehension in an autonomous learning context. In order to achieve this goal, the first step of this research used the tenets of the metacognitive theory to create an analysis framework. The second step employed a number of theories on reading processes to complete the framework. In the third and last step, the characteristics of the action of understanding were employed in an empirical study examining the practices of a group of Thai students of French language. A better understanding of the interactions between their various practices will be beneficial in solving comprehension issues.

This study sheds light on these processes through two different observational situations involving intermediate level students. The first situation was composed of the examination of the activities “prior”, “during” and “after” the reading of a series of selected texts and of the justification for these activities. This was done in order to better understand the students’ strategies and to allow the classification of these strategies.

In the second observational situation, the students’ answers to questions pertaining to the series of texts and which required the microstructural treatment of words and of groups of words were examined. The readers were required to take into account a variety of linguistic and extra-linguistic issues, which are of great significance to the understanding processes.

In this analysis, microstructural comprehension is the result of global comprehension. The investigation relies on the relations between text and paratext, on functional words, among them French pronouns and “determinants”, and on concepts implicitly transmitted.

Keywords: metacognitive strategy, metacognition, comprehension, microstructure

1. Introduction

Reading is a fundamental component of knowledge acquisition. In a foreign language pedagogical context, a better understanding of textual comprehension and its processes would be invaluable to further the learners' autonomy in acquiring new knowledge and gaining proficiency. A survey of research done on comprehension issues, on the Thai school system and curriculum, on the teaching strategies as well as the author's previous work allows to outline textual comprehension difficulties. These difficulties can be directly related to knowledge or linguistic deficiencies and, further, by the learners' incapacity to choose and interpret appropriate reading strategies to the context at hand. Often, various aspects of the French language, among them the morphology of words due to the application of grammatical rules, are miscomprehended initially by Thai learners. Furthermore, inadequate teaching strategies such as rigid and strict school exercises, which do not help learners, convey personal reflections can generate textual miscomprehension.

The greatest obstacle to textual comprehension in a foreign language is, of course, deficiencies in the knowledge of the language. This could be better mitigated by metacognitive competencies. Thus equipped, readers would be able to employ the best strategy to any given situation. They would be able to adjust and to solve problems with adequate and thoughtful solutions. Learners could also adapt metacognitive skills to all sorts of learning circumstances as those competencies are wide-cutting and encourage autonomy. In other words, those learners would be able to take control of their learning situations and face them without the continuous support of a teacher.

2. Metacognition

Two characteristics of metacognition must be outlined: (a) the self-knowledge of one's own learning processes and the results, (b) the regulation mechanisms or cognitive functions. Metacognition is the "knowledge on knowledge" which proceeds through two paths: one is declarative; the other, procedural. (Doudin & Martin, 1992) In the educational field, learners demonstrate their metacognitive competencies either when they are able to show explicit knowledge of their own cognitive processes, or when they intellectually control and adapt those processes in order to reach their learning goals.

C. Bégin (2008) distinguishes metacognitive strategies in a two-step approach. First, the anticipation is the attempt of predicting or calculating the information, knowledge, procedures actions and situations that must enter into play or that would be useful to the task at hand. This step aims at evaluating the resources necessary for the operations needed towards reaching the work objectives. Second, during self-regulation, learners will be observing their own mechanisms and functions in order to adjust their actions and information gathering to the proposed tasks and their requirements. This step allows adaption by the most efficient use of personal and

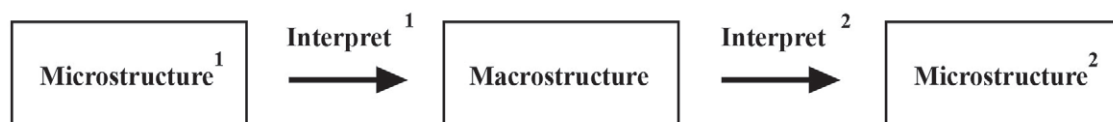
environmental resources. Learners are therefore led, on the one hand, towards improvements and revisions to the various situations and events and, on the other hand, towards adaptations connected to the knowledge and resources available.

3. Metacognitive Reading

In general, after a global overview of the text, a reader will turn his attention to the text microstructure. This involves the lexical and syntactical knowledge necessary to reorganize the information found. Comprehension does not allow putting aside implicit information by limiting itself to a linear, word by word, reading. Macrostructural treatment necessitates a specific intervention, for example, at the level of the paragraph, of the page, or of the entire text. To have the text remain coherent in his mind, the reader must identify and comprehend the various links and relationships between all its parts.

The interpretation of the microstructure (M^2) in the present research derives from macrostructural comprehension preceded by another type of microstructural comprehension (M^1). The type of comprehension examined in this study requires a continuous and focused attention on linguistic knowledge and high level interpretative competencies.

Figure 1 : Double Interpretation of the Microstructure



4. Comprehension

With textual comprehension, the reader cannot avoid interpretive operations. Nevertheless, contemporary studies on the issue, show ambiguous views, most particularly when it comes to the chronological order of the understanding and interpretive processes. C. Vandendorpe (1992) believes that the hermeneutic approach puts interpretation at a later stage than comprehension. However, the approach used in the present study proposes that readers use comprehension and interpretation simultaneously in order to find the meaning in the text.

Three factors, borrowed from U. Eco's view (1992), may influence interpretive operations. The first factor touches on the components or characteristics of the text, for example: the language used, its theme, its length, its structure, and so on. The second factor, the characteristics of the reader, comprises naturally the reader's

personal traits such as previous knowledge, linguistic or reading skills, interests, goals, etc. Interpretation is therefore affected by the life of the reader, by social and cultural experiences, acquired knowledge, feelings, preferences, etc. Finally, the third factor is the intention of the author found in the message or the text in either explicit or implicit manner depending on the style as well as the type of text. The more direct, explicit, the message delivered by the author, the easier it will be for the reader to decide on how to interpret the text.

Logically, in order to make sure that the reader's interpretation matches the message the author wanted to convey, it would be preferable that both protagonists share the same competencies and the same knowledge. Nevertheless, because the author is not present during the reading, it is sometimes difficult to truly understand the ideas presented through the text. Interpretation remains the selection of the most plausible hypothesis. There are neither true nor false interpretations; there are rather plausible or implausible, perceptive of superficial interpretations. Interpretation has therefore an undefined character that brings us to further our study.

5. Research Methodology

5.1. Research Objectives

This study focused on:

- The metacognitive strategies for reading used by the students in order to understand texts in the French language;
- The metacognitive competencies used for microstructural comprehension or precise comprehension.

5.2. Data Collection

This study examined the works of Thai students majoring in French. Based on the criteria of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), these students, with their intermediate level of knowledge and proficiency, can be described as "independent". According to the CEFR, these students should be able to read with a great degree of autonomy, to adapt their approach and the speed of their reading to various texts and objectives and to select adequate reference tools. Furthermore, they should have an extensive and active vocabulary but may face some difficulties with seldom used expressions or words.

This study was divided into two parts: reading strategies and text comprehension competencies. The material used is comprised of five texts excerpted from the classroom manual to achieve the first objective, the students were asked to tell, in Thai, what their activities "before", "during" and "after" the reading of a given text were and to justify those choices of activities. To achieve the second objective, a series of seven to nine questions relevant to the content read was created for each text. They had to justify their answers. In other words, the students had to answer and to explain their reflections for these answers.

6. Result and Discussion

6.1. Analysis of the Metacognitive Strategies

The following tables summarize the metacognitive strategies employed by the students in their reading.

Table 1: Metacognitive Reading Strategies for Text # 1

Before reading	During the reading	After reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan the reading • construct hypotheses • identify the useful previously acquired knowledge • evaluate the time necessary to complete the reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrate paratext comprehension to the text comprehension • survey the unknown vocabulary • identify the main ideas • self-reward • evaluate comprehension • exchange of ideas • reformulate comprehension • consider the useful knowledge for future tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get information on the knowledge pertaining to the text • identify the main ideas • observe the acquired knowledge, both conceptual and procedural • evaluate comprehension • regulate comprehension • consider the useful knowledge for future tasks

Table 2: Metacognitive Reading Strategies for Text # 2

Before reading	During the reading	After reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe self for best working condition • consider the importance of the accomplished activities • construct hypotheses • plan the reading • evaluate time necessary to complete the reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construct hypotheses • identify anterior knowledge useful for this reading • identify the main ideas • evaluate the coherence and the signification of the vocabulary in the text • evaluate comprehension • memorize the acquired knowledge for future tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reformulate comprehension • identify the usefulness of the procedural knowledge • evaluate comprehension • regulate comprehension • reflect on competencies acquired for future tasks

Table 3: Metacognitive Reading Strategies for Text # 3

Before reading	During the reading	After reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe the mental state • plan the reading • evaluate time necessary to complete the reading • construct hypotheses about the text content • identifying previously acquired knowledge useful for the reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying previously acquired knowledge useful for the reading • construct hypotheses about the text content • manage the process • consider the importance of the vocabulary in textual comprehension • evaluate one’s own reading skills • observe self on weak points and mental state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the main ideas • observe self on weak points • evaluate and regulate comprehension • try to commit the new knowledge acquired to long term memory

Table 4: Metacognitive Reading Strategies for Text # 4

Before reading	During the reading	After reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the necessary lexical tools and knowledge • evaluate the time necessary to complete the reading • construct hypotheses about the text content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get information on the useful conceptual knowledge for this text • observe self on mental state • construct hypotheses about the text content • control and evaluate quality of comprehension • regulate the process • regulate the comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe self on the weak points and the work process • evaluate and regulate comprehension • try to commit the new knowledge acquired to long term memory

Table 5: Metacognitive Reading Strategies for Text # 5

Before reading	During the reading	After reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the necessary lexical tools and knowledge • observe mental state • construct hypotheses on the content of the text • find knowledge useful for the comprehension of the text • evaluate comprehension after a first contact with the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take into consideration the global comprehension of the text and the linguistic knowledge being acquired • control comprehension • identify the main ideas • evaluate comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get information on the Internet on subjects dealt with in the text • control, regulate and evaluate comprehension • try to commit the new knowledge acquired to long term memory

These tables demonstrate many significant points. The results show great similarities between all the metacognitive strategies employed throughout the three phases (before, during and after) used for all five texts examined. These similarities may find their origin in the education and learning practices within the Thai school system. The latter promotes the comprehension of explicit messages and meaning at the expense of implicit messages comprehension.

In Thailand, all public and private schools must follow the national curriculum, designed by the Ministry of Education, for 12 years of school preceding university entrance. This compulsory curriculum determines not only the learning objectives but also the processes and means to reach them. These long years of reading practices in the native language are focused on narrative texts with evaluation methods mainly aimed at getting answers to questions of the type “ who does what?, how?, when?, why? or where?” The information necessary to answer this type of questions is generally explicit in the text and does not require intellectual reflections on implicit meaning. Without taking into account the many possible goals of reading or the various possible types of texts, learners are compelled to use the same strategies over and over. These, very often, would not allow them to reach the goals of understanding in more complex situations. The Thai reading approach has therefore created what could be described as potentially prejudicial habits for the students. Among the potential consequences of this training is a severe lack in critical thinking skills, a necessary tool in contemporary society.

The three phases of the activities realized: before, during and after the reading, will now be outlined. Before reading, the students generally prepare the tools such as dictionaries, colored pens or highlighters to help them comprehend the text. The students also try to focus on the work at hand in order to be more efficient in accomplishing the interpretive operations. The obstacles they face during the reading

process are not only lacks of worldly knowledge that could be useful for the content found in the text, but also, and mostly, linguistic difficulties. The analysis of the results demonstrates that these difficulties are the source of much distress among the students. These difficulties could be resolved strategically by using various learning means. The results show that the students place great emphasis on the vocabulary. For them, the knowledge of the formal definition of words is of utmost importance for textual comprehension, which is not always true. There are other significant factors that may come into play such as grammatical rules, para-textual elements, and the context. Furthermore, in French, as well as in English, the use of idiomatic expressions is common and, therefore, a literal interpretation of the words will not necessarily convey the right meaning.

Among the metacognitive strategies that teachers should emphasize are reading planning and self-observation. These skills notably allow the readers to make better use of previously acquired knowledge which requires a great deal of introspective thought. The students are better aware of their reading and comprehension strengths and weaknesses which they could use fruitfully or improve. Furthermore, encouraging the habit of global observation of the texts and the formulation of hypotheses concerning their content can help the students select the appropriate manner to approach a text and help them prepare the necessary tools.

The “during the reading” phase is mainly focused on the full appraisal of the texts. The processes for the regulation of comprehension are consequently used extensively while reading the texts. Nevertheless, these operations seem to have limited scope. The students are drawn almost exclusively to the level of the sentence, not taking fully into account, for example, the whole of the text, sacrificing the ability to insure a complete understanding. This is a drawback when aiming for precise comprehension which is quite often transmitted implicitly. In reality, the links between components of the texts are not limited to the sentence or even to the paragraph. Focusing on the sentence or phrase may therefore place a limit on students’ comprehension.

After creating a mental representation, a meaning, during the reading of the texts, the students went on to the regulation and evaluation of their comprehension. These metacognitive activities are crucial for gaining learning autonomy. By using them adequately, the learners can master their own learning. The teachers could therefore become advisors rather than remain judge and jury over the learning decisions made for the students. Furthermore, the results indicate the appreciation, by the students, of the usefulness of the knowledge acquired as well as the improvements brought by the reading that will be useful in the future. This shows their capacity to develop competencies without the close presence of teachers.

6.2. Metacognitive Competencies Analysis for Microstructural Comprehension

After looking at the metacognitive strategies used by the students, it is now necessary to examine the metacognitive competencies for microstructural comprehension. Quality and relevance of the justifications given for the various answers and the development of metacognitive skills do not seem to be directly linked solely to the

frequency of homework or real-life exercises. A good global understanding is also an important component in this regard. The number of students expressing opinions does not increase with the number of exercises realized. When the students have a good grasp of a text's global meaning, they are more prone to justify and explain their answers and opinions. On the other hand, precise understanding often comes from the reformulation of the global comprehension of the text, sometimes fed by other factors such as worldly knowledge, linguistic knowledge, the imagination or penetrative thoughts, etc.

This study also emphasizes some of the elements detrimental to microstructural comprehension. First, while the students are generally aware of the links between text and paratext and are able to identify and to use the added information the latter provides, their skills in that respect are limited in scope and are focused on a few specific information markers. The analysis shows that most students have no difficulty in recognizing the source of the information but when it comes to paralinguistic elements, such as the quotation marks, they have great difficulty in interpreting them and placing them usefully in their context. The students are able to explain their functions, but their explanations rest solely in the theoretical realm. They have much more difficulty in the practical implications and, therefore, in extricating the true meaning of the text. This is a great drawback when trying to attain learning autonomy. Furthermore, the expression of personal subjectivity, of individual opinions, remains a skill to be explored and acquired. Despite their ability to identify the relationship between text and paratext, the students have great difficulty in expressing their opinions adequately. Their inadequate answers and explanations may stem from an initial misunderstanding of the questions which would indicate a need for better explanation of the requirements of the work to be done and a need to direct the students to follow the directives closely.

Secondly, the students' linguistic competencies must be improved most notably through more sustained teaching of grammar rules in real-life situations. As seen, many students are able to explain those rules but are unable to place them within the context of the text or to perceive their effects. This brings difficulties in understanding many implicit messages. Furthermore, reading the same word over and over, for example the word "beaucoup", can promote the creation of harmful habits. The students will tend to use "beaucoup" always as an adverb rather than as a pronoun it can sometimes become in specific context or sentence. Moreover, cross language knowledge, while often useful, can also have harmful consequences. For example, the students mistakenly take the adjective "européen" (European) to mean the European Union. Another weak point is the quotation of elements of the text as complete answer to certain questions. This does not encourage the development of metacognitive skills and competencies. On the other hand, global comprehension of the text and worldly knowledge may help to alleviate some of the weaknesses in the students' linguistic knowledge.

The analysis shows that students utilize their global comprehension of the text and, sometimes, their previously acquired knowledge in order to find meanings for the words encountered. This confirms an ability for microstructural comprehension. Nevertheless, students need to improve the precision of their answers and to follow more closely the instructions. Many wrong or inadequate answers could be considered right if they are more specific or gave enough details. Students seem to understand the

essential sense of many questions but their answers often are simply not precise enough to be considered correct. As for the instructions, either the students do not fully follow them or they do not understand them. For example, when asked to give examples and then to explain their answer, the students mostly only give examples. In likewise, when asked to interpret a word, they restrict themselves to the dictionary definition which is often a comparable and not the precise meaning of that word in the context of the question.

Finally, the interpretation of implicit concepts and functional words is relatively satisfactory. Here, the students face the same difficulties pertaining to the respect of the instructions given and the filling of imprecise answers. Despite this, their justifications seem better developed. In conjunction with global comprehension, linguistic knowledge, cross-sentence comprehension and individual imagination may help the students in the text interpretation. The results show that questions relating to the students daily lives are easier for them to understand than less familiar topics.

7. Propositions

There are a few improvements that could be brought to the parameters of future studies on reading competencies. Because reading for comprehension makes use of a variety of skills and knowledge, depending on the goals set and the elements studied, future studies of textual comprehension should focus on narrow or well defined objectives. Doing so will help highlight the consequences of variations in the various parameters and obtain clearer results. Furthermore, in order to motivate the learners, the texts should remain short and pertain to notions that are not too distant from their centers of interests.

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**'Who am I when I speak my different languages?':
Activities to help children explore and articulate their language identities
for research and the classroom**

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Key words: language identity, research methodology, classroom activities

Abstract

What does it mean to children to be users of different languages? This paper presents a series of reflective and creative activities, which support children to explore and articulate their identities as users of different languages. The activities were developed as a data collection tool in a recently completed doctoral study of children's language identities. The paper evaluates the effectiveness of the activities as a tool for eliciting the children's explicit representations of themselves in relation to each of their languages in the light of the understanding that individuals construct, represent and negotiate identities, which may be multiple, shifting and sometimes in tension. The paper then proposes the same activities can be used in a classroom context to provide a navigational space in which children explore their use of languages within their different communities and so learn to negotiate their multiple and shifting language identities with greater understanding and confidence.

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**'Who am I when I speak my different languages?':
Activities to help children explore and articulate their language identities
for research and the classroom**

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Introduction

We are living in an era of change and diversity when questions of social identity are at the fore in schools as in the rest of society. Society in England is becoming increasingly heterogeneous and this is reflected in the growing number of languages spoken – more than 196 outside London (*e.g.* Vidal Rodeiro, 2009). This has implications for the ways individuals understand and represent themselves and their place in the world. School communities in England reflect and are part of these social changes, and the increasing diversity is apparent not least in the growing number of languages many pupils speak. In light of the close relationship between individuals' language(s), identities and learning, a recent doctoral study (Levine, 2013) examined the ways a small sample of primary school children identified themselves as users of their different languages in linguistically diverse classes.

The aim of the research was to understand the ways nine children in two linguistically diverse primary schools in the UK explicitly identified themselves as users of their different languages and how they represented and negotiated their language identities in interactions in the foreign language classroom. After a brief introduction to the study, this paper will focus on a set of activities developed to elicit from the children explicit representations of themselves as users of languages. It will then evaluate the effectiveness of the activities as a data collection tool before proposing that the same activities could be used in linguistically diverse classrooms to support children to make sense of their language identities in realistic and self-affirming ways.

In this study, identity was understood, not as the unchanging core of an individual's being, but as the multiple and shifting selves individuals construct, represent and negotiate in social interactions and contexts. Weedon (1987) proposed that identity in general should be understood as multiple, shifting and a site of struggle, and this broadly post-structuralist understanding of identity is now dominant in the social sciences (Block, 2007). Understanding identity in this way had implications for the research methodology: rather than looking to uncover the children's 'real' language identities, the study explored how they constructed their language identities and how they represented and negotiated their subject positions as users of languages within the foreign language learning context.

Researching children's language identities required interpreting qualitative data gathered through close engagement with the children. The research was designed as a case study, with participants selected for 'potential for learning' (Stake, 1998) not representativeness. Nine children were selected from two primary schools in a city in South East England. The children came with a wide range of home language profiles: they spoke different languages; they had been resident in the UK for different lengths of time; three of the

children used faith languages. The primary schools were selected for linguistic diversity of the pupils: in each school 35-40% of the pupils spoke languages in addition to English. Both schools taught a foreign language from Year 3 (when the pupils are seven years old). A 'mosaic approach' (Clark and Moss, 2001) was taken to gathering data. Several data collection tools were used to build up a rounded picture of the ways the children identified themselves as users of languages explicitly and implicitly: activities with the children; interviews with their teachers; observations of the children in foreign language lessons; and recordings of the children in intervention lessons. A grounded analysis of the data provided the central findings, which are represented in a preliminary model of children's language identity which incorporates home and foreign languages, the study's theoretical contribution to the field.

This paper focuses on one dimension of the study: a series of reflective and imaginative activities, which supported the children to explore and articulate their language identities. These activities were developed to elicit from the children explicit representations of themselves as users of languages so this paper evaluates the effectiveness of the activities as a data collection tool before proposing that the same activities could be used in linguistically diverse classrooms to support children to make sense of their language identities in realistic and self-affirming ways.

Activities to support children to explore and articulate their language identities

The purpose of one strand of data collection was to elicit from the children explicit representations of their language identities. This presented a number of challenges. The children participating in the research were ten and eleven year-olds and may well never have given any thought to their language identities prior to the study. Questioning them directly was unlikely to yield rich and detailed data. Furthermore, in this grounded study it was important that the activities should be non-directive, engaging the children's self-understandings and not introducing pre-existing concepts from the literature.

The children's explicit self-representations were elicited through a range of activities, which encouraged the children to explore and articulate what being a speaker of different languages meant to them. At first the activities were straightforward and relatively concrete so that the children could talk about their languages with confidence; more abstract and open-ended activities were used towards the end of the year. The activities are described below with quotations from the children as they were engaged in the activities illustrating how the activities enabled the children to explore and voice their identities as users of languages.

Activity 1: Languages mind-maps

The first activity was a mind-map of the children's languages. The children indicated the languages they used, where they used them and with whom, and also noted if they knew a few words of other languages in a box in a corner of the page. The children then explained their mind-maps to the researcher. In doing so, they spoke about their language biographies, the languages spoken in the home, the faith contexts in which certain languages were used, and where and when the children had started learning their

different languages. The example below presents Anuradha¹'s mind-map of her languages and her explanation:

Picture 1: Example languages mind-map

'My first language that was Urdu. I used to be very good at Urdu but [...]. now that I've been living here for a long time I know less Urdu. [...] I speak Urdu when I'm at home [in Pakistan] talking with my family cos all my family keeps on nagging at me to speak even more.'

'I've been living in England for about three years and I mostly speak English because a lot of people speak English here.'

'Hindi is another version of Urdu so basically a lot of words in Urdu are similar to Hindi so basically I can speak Hindi.'

'[I speak French] in school and with my dad as well. Since my dad had his Masters degree in French, he

I only learnt [Sign Language] like last week. I just don't know that much. I can only do from A to Z and I can say a few words.'

Activity 2: Languages flags

In the second activity, the children drew flags to represent their languages and then to explain their flags to the researcher. They were prompted with questions, for example about the size of the blocks representing their different languages and the positions of the languages on the flag. The example below presents Harunobu's flag and his explanation:

¹The names are all pseudonyms to protect the participants' anonymity.

Picture 2: Example languages flag



'I'm really proud about my Japanese. [...] My parents and stuff are Japanese and so this is most of [the flag], but I have been in England for most of my life so that was the second largest and French I've done just a bit so it's quite small. [...] I'm Japanese and I live in England and I speak England most of the time and French I just learn it. So it goes in that way.'

Activity 3: 'Jelly baby tree'

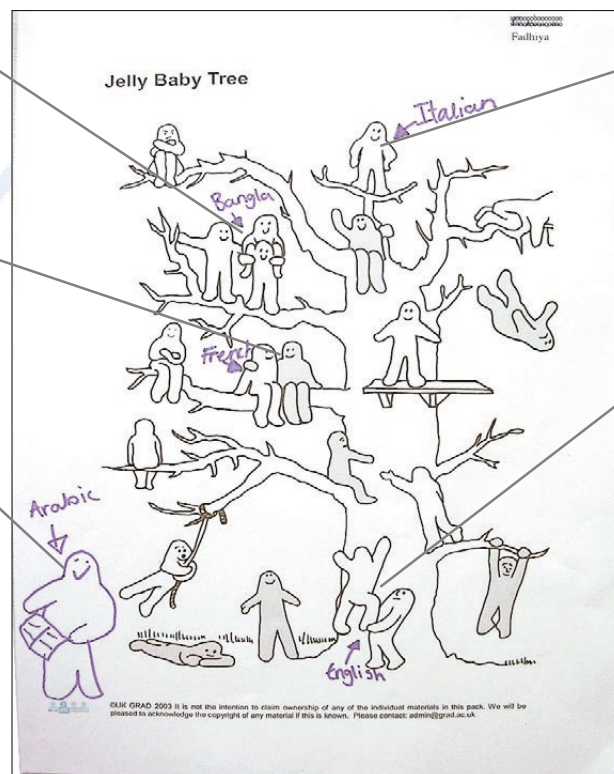
The children were given pictures of a 'jelly baby tree' (see below) and asked to identify figures to represent themselves as users of each of their languages and to explain their choices. The children were encouraged to look at the different figures on the tree and to note their positions and moods and that some were on their own while others with in pairs or groups, before being asked to identify themselves as users of languages with particular figures. Picture 3 indicates the figures Fadhiya selected to represent herself as a user of her different languages. It should be noted that she stopped learning Italian two years before taking part in this activity.

Picture 3: Example 'jelly baby tree'

'I speak [Bangla] with my family. [...] I feel good when I speak it and this one looks happy.'

'I speak [French] sometimes with my friends, with my partners in French.'

'Kids that are Muslim here have to learn at the mosque like we have to come to school. [...] I don't really speak it with anyone cos Arabic's not a language I speak with family cos it's like, I learn [...] to read it.'



'I think maybe the one at the top. [...] I don't really speak [Italian] with anyone.'

'[I'm one of] the ones that are playing cos I speak English with my friends and I play with them and when I play I speak English and stuff.'

Activity 4: Drawing trees

This next activity provided a means of asking probing questions about their perceptions of themselves as users of different languages whilst still taking care not to introduce pre-understandings. It was adapted from a technique Oaklander (1978) developed in a therapeutic context. Oaklander encouraged children with social and behavioural problems to draw themselves as rose-bushes and to explain their pictures aloud. Adapting this, the children were invited to imagine that they were a different tree when they spoke each of their languages and were asked the following questions:

'What sort of tree are you? How old are you? What are your leaves like? How old is the tree? How deep do your roots go? Do you get all the water and sunlight you need?'

Where are you? Is there a fence around you or an open place? What's the weather like? Are there other trees around? What's going to happen to this tree in the future?'

The children then drew the imagined trees in turn. They explained their pictures either while they were sketching or afterwards. The use of metaphor in this way enabled searching questions to be posed whilst always working with children's self-understandings as the children interpreted the metaphors in ways they considered meaningful.

Pictures 4: Examples of drawings of trees



'It's got pretty deep roots because, well, I feel I've had lots of opportunities to get better at English. [...] It's a pretty big tree because I feel like I've done pretty well at learning English. [...] And there's lots of branches because I've branched out to think of new things. [...] But I don't think it's fully grown yet because I've still got a lot of life to learn about new things.'



'It's a healthy tree because I do French lessons every week and that helps. It's not the biggest tree, but as we've only been doing French for two years, it's grown quickly to the size it is now. Its branches are spreading but they haven't spread everywhere yet because I haven't learnt everything. There's still a lot more to go. I like being this tree because I'm like satisfied with what I've done. It's in a park because in the class everyone else is learning French as well, so there are lots of people, lots of trees there.'



'It's a small shrub. [...] I haven't learnt that much of German. It's not totally healthy cos I don't have that many opportunities to learn German. I don't really have lessons and I don't go forward a lot. [...] I want to get better but I'm sort of stuck at one place. [...] But it's got good roots because my father's German. Later on it will grow bigger and better. In secondary school, I probably am going to try to do German. But at the moment, when it's young, it's just small.'



'I haven't really done anything with Spanish for a long time so it's sort of wilting. [...] Because I don't do any lessons with it, I keep going backwards because I forget words. [...] I could have put a bit more effort in learning it and I should have. [...] I'm going to try to do some Spanish in secondary school but I don't know if that will work out. [...] [My mother will] like it a lot and be proud because she's always wanted me to learn Spanish because that's her native language. [...] This tree has] got good roots because my family [speaks Spanish].'

Activity 5: 'My Colourful Languages'

The children wrote poems about themselves as users of different languages using colours as a stimulus. Having first talked about how colours might be associated with objects, places, feelings etc., the children were encouraged in free association, for example linking white with snow, red with anger, green with nature. The children were then asked what colour they were when they used each of their languages and what colour they hoped to become. After discussing their ideas, the children wrote them up as poems. The children were invited to finish their poems with an image which conveyed how they saw themselves as users of all their languages. The poem below was written by one of the participants, Katya. The spelling and grammar are left unchanged. The comments added are taken from Katya's explanation of her poem.

Picture 5 : Example of a 'My Colourful Languages' Poem

'Red is a very confident colour. I feel most confident in English because I've talked it for most of my life. I was born in England; I grew up in England; I live in England. Most of my friends are English and, actually, I speak English with some of my Russian friends too.'

'The blue is getting darker as I learn more. I'm just a beginner but I am learning. I'll keep getting better at French at secondary school.'

LANGUAGE FLOWER

When I speak English I feel confident, and to me the most confident colour is red.

When I speak Russian I'm rosy and pink because I feel warm and soft. And light green which will become darker in dew time.

When I speak French I'm light blue (for now) but will soon get darker and better at it.

And when I speak Spanish I feel like oranges that grow on trees in the fields! And yellow because I don't know much of the language.

The Russian tale of a colourful flower which had a wish for every petal is the flower that I think of when I put all my languages together because I also have a wish for every language to either get better at it or learn more.



'Pink is cosy, warm and soft and speaking Russian is like being at home. I speak Russian in Cambridge and in Russia with my family who are very close and kind to me. I feel happy when I speak Russian.'

'Yellow is the colour of sunshine and the beach. My auntie has a flat in Spain by the sea. We go there quite often in summer and I really like it so I want to learn Spanish at secondary school.'

'In Russia for young children there's a tale of a flower that a little girl gets given and she has a wish for every petal and it's a multicoloured flower. [...] [The petals] were different colours. [...] It has a wish for every petal and I have wishes to get better at languages and to learn more about them and the countries that speak them, so I also have wishes on every petal of every colour of every language.'

Evaluation of the activities as a data collection tool

This section of the paper evaluates the effectiveness of the activities in providing rich and detailed data relating to the varied and shifting ways the children identified themselves explicitly in relation to their languages. The study was designed in the expectation that children's language identities could be most meaningfully explored by building on broadly post-structuralist insights into identity. The following paragraphs evaluate the effectiveness of the activities as a tool for eliciting the children's explicit representations of themselves in relation to each of their languages in the light of the understanding that individuals construct, represent and negotiate identities, which may be multiple, shifting and sometimes in tension.

The aim was not to obtain an objective statement of how the children 'really' saw themselves as users of different languages. Rather, it was to explore alongside the children the meanings they attributed to their languages through listening, questioning, and seeking insights into the different ways the children identified themselves over time. In representing their language identities explicitly through these activities, the children were not relaying facts about themselves as users of languages, but positioning and repositioning themselves in relation to their languages in the context of the research relationship and interactions.

The activities supported the children in the study to explore and represent multiple language identities. All the children depicted themselves as users of English in the school and local community and as learners of French in the classroom, and all but two represented themselves as users of additional languages in their families and communities outside school. The children's explicit self-representations brought to the fore the different ways they identified themselves in relation to each of their languages. As can be seen in the children's comments cited above, they expressed different levels of confidence in their languages. Pedro, for example, drew his trees different sizes to indicate his level of proficiency in his languages. The children also related their use of particular languages to wide-ranging social affiliations, in particular family, national identities and faith communities. Fadhiya, for example, associated speaking Bangla with her family, Arabic with her faith, English with her school friends and French with her class. Harunobu related speaking Japanese to his national identity as well as his family. The children were constructing their multiple language identities in the context of the social identities which they associated with their languages. Katya expressed this with particular insight: *'Sometimes I feel more confident with English but sometimes I feel more confident with Russian because we're both Russian and we understand each other as Russian people and English people.'*

Eliciting the children's explicit self-representations through the activities on different occasions over the school year made it apparent that the children did not represent their language identities in fixed and stable ways. Their self-representations shifted over time. Perhaps not surprisingly the children expressed changing levels of confidence in both home and foreign languages. For example, Anuradha initially expressed concern at her perceived loss of proficiency in Urdu: *'I don't want to be better at [English] than Urdu because I don't want my family to think I'm more British than Pakistani'*. Later in the year, following a visit to Pakistan, she commented: *'I'm fine with how I feel when I speak [English and Urdu] right now. I don't think they can get any better.'* Pedro

described his increasing competence in French, the foreign language he was learning in school but his confidence in his proficiency in Spanish (his mother's language) decreased over the year. At the beginning of the year he described himself as *'forgetting words'* and at the end of the year, Pedro stated: *'I don't really remember anything'*.

The children's self-representations in the activities also brought to the fore shifts in the social affiliations they voiced in relation to particular languages. At times the changes in the children's self-representations pointed to the children's implicit understanding that one language could relate to several aspects of their social identity; on different occasions Anuradha, for example, associated speaking Urdu with her family, and with her identity as a Pakistani and as a Muslim. Other shifts in the children's self-representations indicated that some of the children were developing visions of themselves using their home and foreign languages in new ways in the future. For example, during the year Pedro moved from articulating his aspirations for German only in terms of increased competence to wanting to interact meaningfully with people when visiting Germany. Similarly, at the end of the year of data collection, Katya voiced an ambition to improve her Russian so that she might spend a year living independently in Russia and a growing integrative motivation for learning foreign languages. She explained she aspired to learn Spanish so that she might study there for a year and that learning about French culture had stimulated her interest in Francophone countries and that she wanted to learn French partly so she could travel around Canada.

The children's self-representations elicited through the activities brought into focus tensions and contradictions the children experienced in relation to their languages. For example, Anuradha represented herself as becoming less proficient in Urdu while living in the UK. She jokingly bemoaned her relatives *'nagging'* her to use Urdu more often and *'teasing'* her for speaking Urdu with an English accent, but struggled with the thought that they might interpret her decline in proficiency in Urdu as a sign of her becoming *'more British than Pakistani'*. The contradictions were particularly pronounced in Pedro's self-representations. He talked about his Spanish and German 'roots' but later vehemently denied that he knew his parents' languages (*'Just because your parents are something doesn't mean you are'*) and asserted his identity as *'an English boy'*. Pedro viewed speaking English as *'normal'* and did not want to be different from his peers.

To conclude this evaluation of the activities as a data collection tool, the paragraphs above illustrate that through these activities the children were supported to explore and articulate their language identities and that their self-representations provided rich and detailed data. The children's self-representations enabled their language identities to be analysed in their multiplicity, their instability and their tension, consistent with the broadly post-structuralist understanding of identity which underpins the study. One of the challenges in making sense of this data was to interpret the shifts, tensions and contradictions in the children's self-representations in a discerning way since they did not always reflect an underlying change or struggle in the children's self-perceptions. The changes in the children's self-representations sometimes related to a particular activity and sometimes to the developing trust established between the children and the researcher. Also, shifts in the children's self-representations sometimes reflected a deeper engagement with particular dimensions of themselves through the activities. This will be discussed in the final part of this paper.

The value of these activities in the classroom

As the children talked about their language identities, the affective quality of their comments underlined the strength of the emotions they felt in relation to their languages. Harunobu voiced pride in his Japanese, while Pedro regretted his low level of proficiency in Spanish and German. Anuradha sometimes expressed apprehension and sometimes hopeful anticipation about learning Italian. Harunobu described the loneliness and fear he experienced when he first came to school in England unable to speak English. Anuradha, by contrast, related a feeling of acceptance as a foreigner to speaking English.

Imaginative and reflective activities such as those used for data collection in this study can provide a 'navigational space' (Moje *et al.*, 2004) in which children explore their use of languages within their different communities and so learn to negotiate their multiple and shifting language identities with greater understanding and confidence. This is the focus of this final section of the paper, which reflects on the children's comments about their experiences of taking part in the activities used for data collection in this study, and on the shifts in the children's representations of their language identities in the course of these activities.

Through the activities detailed in the first section of this paper, children who may never have given any thought to their language identities were supported to explore and articulate what being a user of different languages meant to them. It should be emphasised that the activities were designed as a data collection tool to elicit the children's explicit self-representations, not to help the children. Whilst care had been taken to conduct the data collection in a sensitive and ethical way, it was a pleasant surprise when, during the debrief at the end of the year, each of the children independently commented that the activities had helped them to understand themselves and their languages in new ways.

The children all commented that they rarely talked about their languages with other people and that they found it helpful to do so through the activities. Katya described her experience of the activities in terms of '*opening up*' a dimension of her life which she usually kept unexpressed:

'You can tell someone about it and you can actually just think about it yourself for a while cos it's always been stuck inside me but now it's kind come out and I have a chance to think about it. [...] Just kind of having a task like [the poem] to do about feelings for my languages [helped me] because [...] it opened up feelings.'

Pedro and Anuradha commented that they came to a better understanding of themselves and their languages better because the activities required them to think about their languages and put this into words. Pedro explained that the activities had helped him understand himself better '*because in each meeting [he needed] to think about what to say and how [he could] express [his] feelings about the languages.'* Anuradha expressed her new confidence in talking about her language identities:

'Everything we've done actually helped me learn about my own languages cos before I met you I didn't really know about myself and my languages. [...] Now I

feel a bit more confident when we talk about languages. Before I didn't really know what to say but now that we've talked about it a lot I know what to say.'

The children valued the opportunity to think and talk about themselves and their languages, and came to understand themselves through the activities.

Some children identified specific ways in which the activities had helped them with their language identities, commenting on new understandings relating to their confidence in different languages, and of the social affiliations associated with their languages. Pedro commented that drawing trees to represent himself as a user of different languages helped him to make sense of how his proficiency in different languages had changed over time. Katya noted that certain activities had helped her to take a future perspective on their languages. She remarked that writing a poem using colours to stimulate thought about her languages encouraged her to consider *'what [she needed] to do to make them better'*. Anuradha and Katya spoke at some length about how the activities had helped them understand the relationship between their languages and social affiliations. Anuradha explained that she had come to understand how her different languages enabled her to feel at home in a number of different countries: *'I realised how important it is that I have so many languages so if I travel to a part of the world I won't feel like an outsider.'* Katya described feeling more at ease having thought about the significance of being speaking Russian and English and participating in the two cultures she associated with these languages:

'It makes me feel more comfortable knowing how the languages change my life cos Russian changes my life quite a lot. [...] Just talking English all the time outside my home but Russian inside my home makes quite a difference to me. [...] It's a different language, a different life, really. It's just so different. Different food, different reactions sometimes.'

Shifts in the children's self-representations over the year of data collection also indicate the potential benefits of such activities. The activities supported Pedro to articulate the tensions he experienced in relation to his home languages, and through doing so, he was able to reflect on these and come to new understandings: he realised that he would have opportunities to improve his German at secondary school, and glimpsed the importance of German to him in terms of both family history and future social opportunities. Pedro moved from only expressing frustration with his slow progress with German to envisaging spending time in Germany and interacting meaningfully in the language. In a very different way, the activities encouraged other children to consider how foreign languages might feature in their lives. Over the course of the year, Katya began to articulate a nascent vision of themselves as a user of French, the foreign language she was learning in school. She described being motivated to learn French so she could travel in Canada and voiced a developing aspiration to speak Spanish: *'I'd like to go to Spain for a while and try to make some friends out there [...] [Go to] university or something'*. Anuradha, facing an imminent move to Rome, voiced increasing confidence in her ability to learn Italian over the year. At the beginning, Anuradha described a sense of failure in relation to her attempts to learn Italian: *'I feel really bad at it. [...] I just can never remember it.'* By the summer, Anuradha recognised that living in Rome would give her opportunities to learn Italian, and expressed confidence she would learn it successfully as her father had done: *'[My dad learnt Italian] in Italy. [...] If my dad can*

do it, why can't I?'

While the study does not provide 'hard evidence', it seems likely that the children's participation in the activities played a role in their developing self-understandings. The children's comments about their participation in the activities and the shifts in the self-representations of some of the children through the activities indicate that that imaginative and reflective activities such as those used for data collection in this study provide a 'navigational space' (Moje *et al.*, 2004) in which children can make sense of their proficiency in and use of different languages within the diverse social contexts of their lives.

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Learner Autonomy

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Abstract

This paper is going to be centred on how learners' autonomy can be fostered. In the literature part of this paper it is stated that the development autonomous learning plays a crucial role in learning process. Autonomy is about how people control their own lives, so when teaching/learning process is taken for granted, teachers create an environment that the students feel themselves autonomous. So autonomy is analyzed both from the teachers' and students' perspective. It analyzes whether the students are independent or not throughout the learning process. The scope of the research is to analyze the teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy during the class activities. For that purpose the literature part of that research paper is based on teachers' perspective towards their learners' autonomy. The empirical research is conducted on one of main private university in Istanbul. Convenient quota sampling has been used. 37 English Language Teachers covering a wide-range of departments participated in the research. The questionnaire is in *Likert Scale* form from strongly agree to strongly disagree and a space is provided on the questionnaire in order to analyze participants' opinions. Additionally correlation analyses and mean results are found, the results of the questionnaires are correlated with the findings of the literature review. The participants are given a questionnaire that analyzes how teachers assess their learners in terms of they are autonomous or not. The findings reveal that teachers have a significant effect on autonomous learning is general.

I. Literature Review Introduction

Learner autonomy is one of the most important issues in language learning, this view is proposed by new **Basic Education curriculum in Oman** that centres on how learners can take more responsibility on their own learning process. Within this perspective in general, the term “**autonomy**” is about how people can control their lives which can be both individually or collectively, they have responsibility their own learning that cause arguments how to maintain independent thinking in education, which was put forward in 1960s.

In 1981 **Holec** describes autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning”. Holec’s old views play a paramount effect on autonomy and in 1985 he defined autonomy as “conceptual tool.” So in addition to Holec’s views **Dickinson (1987: II)** suggests that autonomy is an activity that the learners are responsible and adds that the decision-makers are the learners. Additionally there are **three major approaches** that are related with autonomy. Some researchers point out the importance of **personal characteristics** some analyze it as a **political concept** and some of them point out **educational practices**. **Little (1990)** and **Kenny (1993)** considers learner autonomy as educational practice. **Little (1970:7)** states that learner autonomy is a fact that is related to learner’s psychological situation that plays a crucial role in the learning process. But **Kenny (1993:46)** takes this comment one step further and adds that autonomy is not only being independent throughout the learning process but also is an opportunity to feel oneself as a being. But on the other hand, in **Benson’s work (1997:29)** autonomy is described within political framework so he takes his work one step further and suggests a new approach that autonomy is compound of rights that the learners should realize in educational system, so according Benson it can be understood that there is global relationship between non-native and native speakers.

Besides, **Benson (2006)** states that, which takes its origin since 1970s, the importance of autonomy in language learning gradually increases. So within this perspective another researcher **Thanasoulas (2000)** adds that an autonomous learners;

- (a) have insights into learning strategies and learning styles,
- (b) take an active approach to the learning task at hand,
- (c) are willing to take risks,(i.e. to communicate in target language);
- (d) are good guessers,
- (e) attend to form as well as to content, that is, place importance on accuracy rather than appropriacy,
- (f) develop the target language into a separate reference system and are willing to revise and reject hypothesis and rules that do not apply and
- (g) have a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language.

When these points are taken for granted, which are mentioned above, it is suggested that they are the general definition of that autonomous learners from the eye of the researchers.

1. Characteristics of autonomous learners

To start with, after analyzing the general concept of “**autonomy**” it should be put forward the autonomous learner in classroom. An autonomous learner in class, whom engaged all the social activities in class and who can internalize the new information and make connections to what she/he knows. According to **Dam et.al (1990:102)**, it is put forward that learner autonomy one can take responsibility of his/her own learning.

Furthermore **Gardner and Miller (1996: vii)** add that autonomous language learners are people, who starts the planning and maintains responsibility for their own learning process. But on the other hand **Nunan (1997:193)** states that autonomous learners are the ideal rather than realistic one. He puts forward that there are degrees of autonomy and learners can't succeed in all degrees of autonomy, so the learners who can reach the highest degree relies on factors such as personal traits, the philosophy of school and the cultural context. But Nunan suggests that the levels of learner autonomy might differ even within single language skills such as a learner has high degree autonomy on listening but whereas in writing skill he/she feels dependent himself/herself to instructor.

So as a result, it is suggested that training independence learning gain importance in other words the biggest responsibility is on the trainers' shoulders, it is stated trainers should be very careful they make learners analysis, so that first of all teachers train their learners in order to become an independent learner.

1.1. Training for Independence in Learning

To start with, after analyzing the general characteristics of autonomous learners, the point that should be taken for granted is, how students become decision makers own their own teaching process.

So in other words teachers have big responsibility, they are rarely aware of their students' learning styles, but in fact learning styles are the most important determiner that shapes learners achievement while learning a language.

Because of that before teaching a language, the learners needs are analyzed and accordingly choose the effective strategy in order to reach the learners to points that they want to.

Moreover, maintaining a pattern-based approach provides the learners with taking the responsibility for his/her own learning with the aim of becoming autonomous. As **Wenden (1985)** reports that learner training is an opportunity in order to provide learners with self-awareness about various perspectives of their learning processes, and increasing the number of learning strategies. On the other hand this term shouldn't be related as 'teaching discrete behaviours', instead of continuing their learning independently the learners should be assisted their learning independently after the course is ended, the learners should be assisted on learning how to learn, and how to benefit from the learning opportunities that are found available in their environment. **Sinclair and Ellis (1985)** propose a model of learner training for learner autonomy which encompasses 8 areas for learner training:

1. Self-awareness - helps the learners to be aware of their selves, attitudes and feelings towards language learning and using the language.
2. Language awareness - helps the learners to have insight into their learning problems, and research is shared from teacher training courses.
3. Language needs and goals - trains the learners to set learning goals.
4. Preparation and organization - helps the learners to discover the value of organizing their learning and how to do it.
5. Risk-taking - helps the learners to take a more adventurous approach in such things as guessing, predicting, and so on.
6. Personal strategies - encourages the learners to experiment and find those which are appropriate for them.
7. Self-assessment - encourages the learners to check up on how well they are doing and record the results of their self-assessments so that they can recognize their progress, and thus be motivated to continue.
8. Preparation for autonomy - helps learners to schedule their own learning, maximizing contact with the target language.

On the other hand the most important point that should be taken into consideration; before applying learner training activities, it is significant to determine the certain fields where the learners need to become independent, and then it is the teacher's job to create materials and activities which enhance the strategies in demand. Activities for learner training can be categorized into 5 classifications:

- 1) The activities that foster awareness of self and language.
- 2) The activities that provide good self-monitoring practices.
- 3) The activities that guide the learners in the field of particular task learning.
- 4) Those that sustain 'global practice opportunities'.
- 5) Those that enable the learners to manage with the communication breakdown.

On the other hand there are 3 pedagogical principles in order to facilitate autonomy

- **Learner engagement:** the learners are eager to share responsibility for the learning process (the affective and metacognitive dimensions).
- **Learner Reflection:** the learners should think critically, as they organize their plans; they monitor and assess their performances. (metacognitive dimension)
- **Preference of target language in the classroom:** the learners should regard the use of target language as the main point of language learning (the communicative dimension and metacognitive dimension)

According to these 3 principles, the teachers should use the target language and ask students to use merely the target language during the classes. Moreover, guiding the students to plan their own learning, goals and learning activities and putting the learners' choices into discussion, analysis and evaluation through the use of the target language, are the responsibilities that a teacher should conceive as important, in addition to this teachers should also enable them to work collaboratively in small groups. It would be beneficial if the teacher asks their learners to write what the learners have done in the lesson so far by writing reflections and keep a record of their works (i.e. plans of lessons, projects, lists of useful vocabulary, and learner generated texts).

On the other hand, there are some methodologies and techniques in order to implementation of learner autonomy so in other words for instance one of the researches is conducted by **Chu Po-ying**. According to the findings it is stated that how students become decision makers on their own learning process. Ying points out students don't have opportunity to become a decision maker in class, the most important of all is when they are the decision makers they don't how to design their own learning process.

So when these points are taken into consideration, a new methodology is put forward that is **Exploratory Practice (EP)**, which is for students in order to guide them how to design their own learning, for that purpose as a assisting tool of the study students journals, worksheets and course feedbacks that students gave reaction to them is used. But it is stated that by using **EP** in classrooms learners have an opportunity to analyze their own learning. As **Allwright (2005: 360)** suggests that one of the benefits of EP is to enhance the “**mutual work**”. So learners who attend the EP courses have opportunity to manage their own learning styles.

As **Dickinson (1993)** suggests that there are features that can be associated with autonomous learners. “An autonomous learner can **(a) identify what has been taught; (b) able to formulate their own learning objectives; (c) select and implement appropriate strategies; (d) monitor these for themselves; and (e) know how to give up on strategies that are not working for them**”. In addition to all these benefits the learners have opportunity to get feedbacks from their own peers that makes them motivated as well; so it can be concluded that EP plays an essential role on students learning.

On the other hand as **Williams and Burden (2001:36)** state that especially for autonomous learners making decision independently plays a central component. So for that purpose “**motivation**” becomes another crucial issue. For instance Chinese researchers state that motivation means **strong power**. So especially the students whose motivation is high, have an opportunity to discover their own ‘**strong power**’ to learn. So that students achieve high results and have intrinsic power in order to become effective learners. In addition to Williams, Burden and **Icy Lee** adds that motivation plays a crucial for learner autonomy, the learners who are more motivated, engage more activities and their enthusiasm towards learning process is enhanced.

So within the framework of these findings, **Spratt, Humphreys, Chan** point out that learners' whose autonomy is high they are also motivated learners. Under this framework in many researches it is stated that motivation plays an important role such as (see **Ryan and Deci, 2000b, for a review**) **Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000)** suggest that in many researches there is a general tendency that autonomy enhance motivation.

Additionally, when these points are taken into consideration, it should be pointed out how teachers can enhance their learners' autonomy. **Lamb and Reinders** suggest that learner autonomy is also analyzed from the teachers' perspective as well.

1.2. Teacher's Perspective towards Learner Autonomy

To begin with, as it is mentioned above that in some respect autonomy in learning gives freedom. So people, who are autonomous have capacity of being free, in other words this idea can be associated with Holec's idea as well as, Holec describes autonomy “the ability to take charge of one's own learning”. From all these view it can be suggested that autonomous

learners have opportunity to think independently that enhances their learning capacity. As a consequence it is said that in second language learning autonomy plays a paramount role. As **Boud (1981:30)** analyze the main goal of learner autonomy, Boud concerns about whether produce a person who is autonomous is high that approach is related to **product-oriented approach** or introduce the learners the activities and then let them free to apply them, which is related to **process-oriented approach**. In other words these two approaches cause a dilemma, because whether the teacher let free the students in order to enhance their autonomy or suppress their freedom. But generally the discussions on autonomous learning are generally based on the freedom within the learning process. In other words, Holec's (1981:3) quotation is taken for granted as Holec suggests that autonomy is "**ability**" to take charge of one's learning.

So from that point of view **Stanchina (1975, cited in Dickinson 1977:15)** suggest that:

"Autonomy is an experiment in how learning can be freed from the bounds of any institution, and in how the individual can reclaim control of and responsibility for his or her own education, while investigating the opportunities to learn from a variety of authentic sources."

From this quote it is understood that, autonomy is free from all limitations everything is under the control of the learners so that they have opportunity to learn from authentic materials. **Dickinson (1977)** also described autonomy "**as the upper limit of self-directed learning**". It can be understood that learners are the decision-makers and they have the responsibility throughout the learning process.

Furthermore, there is another contradictive idea that was Dickinson right or wrong in order to define autonomy within the process-oriented approach. But to be honest in some cases this approach can be classified as true. Because if learning is mentioned as a part of life, then in other words autonomous learners have the freedom and capacity in order to increase their own learning but on the other hand Dickinson knows that learners should be trained "**full autonomy**" so that Dickinson suggests that learners should be apart from all institutions and teachers. When this point of view is taken into consideration **Smith (2003b)** suggests that in recent years the definition autonomy changes and he states that:

"The teacher' seems to be making more and more of an appearance in such discussions, partly as a corrective to earlier misconceptions that 'learner autonomy' refers to a *situation*: that of learning without a teacher (at home, with a computer, in a self-access centre, etc.), and/or that it does away with the need for a teacher. Instead, it has been emphasised (e.g. by Little 1991) that learner autonomy needs to be seen as a *capacity* (for taking control of learning) which can be developed and deployed in a number of ways and situations, including in the classroom. Nowadays, more and more reports are appearing of classroom-based approaches to the development of learner autonomy, partly as a result of the incorporation of autonomy as a goal in national curricula in European countries and elsewhere."

It is understood from this quote that, although without teachers, learners' autonomy can be enhanced but classroom-based approaches develop their autonomy, so communicative aspects enhance their autonomy.

On the other hand, besides **Holec's (1981)** study, **Little (1990:7)** takes the definition of autonomy one step further and rather than analyzing what definition is, he argues that "**what autonomy is not**" and he suggests that autonomy is not similar to self-instruction or being independent and even it isn't constrained with the idea of being without a teacher and the

most important of all is solely autonomy doesn't mean that students do their best on their own. The most problematic of this issue is how theory autonomy can be constraint for a classroom teacher throughout the teaching/learning process and how they can correlate the activities that they conduct in class with the theory of autonomy. So the most important analysis that can be observed throughout the years is, from the teacher's perspective autonomy can be applied and developed in class, without any freedom throughout the learning process. So within this perspective it stated that the developments on autonomy derive researchers in order to analyze a new context that there are types of learner autonomy. As Benson (1997) suggests that there are different versions of autonomy in learning such as technical, psychological and political). **Benson (2001)** states that these different versions autonomy; are concerned with the learning management, cognitive processing and the content of learning. But on the other hand **Smith (2003a:130-132)** puts a difference between "strong" and "weak" pedagogies for autonomy. "Strong" pedagogies can be associated with the idea that learners, who have high autonomous, but in contrast to "weak" pedagogies are concerned with the learners who have lack autonomy. Furthermore, strong pedagogies are based on creating activities, so it is based on process rather than product but on the other hand weak pedagogies are based on the product of instructions.

Additionally **Littlewood (1999:75)** states that rather than "proactive autonomy", "reactive autonomy" is more useful in within the teaching context because it enhances the autonomy throughout the learning process so that learners can reach their goals. Furthermore, when autonomy is analyzed within the teachers' perspective, it is stated that controlling activities can be a problematic issue in terms of applying the activities. But on the other hand, Littlewood make a new comment on "reactive autonomy" and proposes that autonomy can be useful while using in classroom.

As a result, the assumption that can be stated that the lack of autonomy of the learners become a problematic issue both from the teachers and learners sides; besides the efficacy of the lesson declines in addition to these neither teacher don't have the opportunity to determine the content of the course.

Besides, the "weak pedagogies" can't be classified as invalid, it is in fact leads to the question that "*What kinds of learning best lead towards the goal of personal autonomy?*" because teachers don't have a chance to ignore this issue. Because many language teachers are anxious about in order to get little response although they spend never-ending energy. According to **Scharle and Szabo (2000:1)**, the reason behind is that, learners are too much dependant their own teachers, the interesting point is that although the motivated learners are thought that the both teachers and learners' perspective towards autonomy is passive.

Furthermore, these perspectives play a very important role because the general tendency is that teachers' dependence is based on major problems in class such as undesirable behaviours in classrooms.

The importance of this point is, generally the desirable classroom behaviours can be associated with behaviours such as enhancing communicative activities, use target language, listening to each other...etc.

As a result, as it is understood from all these findings that, teachers' beliefs plays an important role, because although however the learners autonomy is strongest isn't important but the most important point is learners need teachers, they work within a cooperation with the teacher rather than over-relied the teacher.

Furthermore, not only teachers' point of view but also learners' perspective should be taken for granted as well.

1.3. The learners' perspective towards Learner Autonomy

Briefly the most important question that should be analyzed the issue of **autonomy** is "*What can learners do to help themselves move towards the goal of personal autonomy?*" It is stated that this question should be analyzed within the teachers' perspective, but learners have to analyze it too. Furthermore, learners want to be autonomous learners for that purpose they can make contributions throughout the learning process. So the question needs to be changed that, "*what can I do in my learning to help myself towards the goal of personal autonomy?*" It is suggested that first of all learners have to be achieved from the life goals that they determine to, then they apply them to their own learning process, so learners' perspective on autonomy are always integrated within life and learning experiences of learning and life. But, teachers' perspective towards autonomy plays a crucial role, because being dependent on teacher decreases the autonomy, which affects the content of the learning. So in order to show the importance of the teacher towards autonomy, there is an example.

For instance as **Lamb** and **Reinders** point out that while learning Cantonese they attend the class because that they are obliged to, so the learners, who attend the activities don't want to be in class. Additionally the teachers' perspective towards learners is rigid and the learning process is based on deductive approach so that the communicative aspect of the class and the autonomy besides the motivation of class is diminished.

As a result, from this example it is suggested that learners' autonomy doesn't depend to the teachers. So, within this perspective as **Dickinson (1977:17)** states that the ultimate goal of the learner is not only being an autonomous learner doesn't mean that being situational-free, because for instance maybe a learner exposed to English and started to learn it at school, although he doesn't want to study English and he don't have opportunity to study another language that he wants to, So within this perspective as Dickinson suggests that there is no intrinsic relationship between the learning situations and behaviours. As a result, these perspective neither for nor against the autonomy. But the point that has to be mentioned that, there is relationship between the overall autonomy of the individual and the learning process.

II. Literature Review Conclusion

To conclude, from all these findings, it is suggested that "autonomy in learning" is integrated with the "personal autonomy". So as it is suggested that there is a relationship between autonomy in learning and autonomy in life. So these two perspectives are analyzed within learners' views. On the other hand, teacher autonomy plays an important role as well. As **Breen and Mann (1997:140)** suggest that teachers have feeling that they became an unimportant position because there is misconception that teachers' perspectives are one step further when in terms of autonomy when it is compared to learners by its own.

Additionally, another point that should be mentioned in the review that, there is relationship between autonomy and motivation for instance the autonomous learners are also the ones who are motivated highly, which is proposed by Spratt, Humphreys and Chan. On the other hand Benson (2001) states that their awareness increases too because they formulate their own activities and the ultimate reason is that they are independent from teachers. In addition to this

by being aware they can conduct their own activities and throughout the learning process so that the efficacy is high.

Furthermore teachers' perspectives play a crucial role in the theory of "autonomy" whether learners are independent from their teachers or dependant to them is a debatable issue, for instance Dickinson suggests that learners should be apart from all institutions and teachers but that doesn't mean that as a teachers rather than let the learners free but on the other hand Schmidt suggests that in recent years the definition autonomy changes and he states that although without being dependant to the teacher learners autonomy can be increased, but classroom-based approaches develop their autonomy, because they have a interaction with the teacher, in this case if the teacher controls the activities but have a positive relationship with the teacher then the teacher has a positive effect on learners' autonomy.

Consequently, according to all findings in the literature it is suggested that teachers are the most important supporters of learning English and especially when it is analyzed within a psychological perspective from the teachers' point of view it is also a better to have high autonomous learners. But in some cases teachers confront with difficult positions so that as **Lamb (1995)** suggests that the best way for them is to enhance their professional profile so for that purpose they can attend in-service training programmes, which increase their own beliefs and thoughts so that they can easily apply them on their classes, so that they have easily have the opportunity to enhance their learners' autonomy.

III. Research Question

- What are the teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy during the class activities?
- **IV. Research Methodology**

This part of the research describes the overall design of the study, setting, sampling procedures, instruments, participants and limitations.

- **Overall Design of the Study**

Learner autonomy is an important issue, because it is the most important determiner that shapes the efficacy of the learning/teaching process. As it is mentioned in the literature part of the research that, briefly learner autonomy is based on learners' independence for instance as **Holec (1981:3)** defines autonomy, "**is the ability to take charge of one's learning**". So it is inferred from that quote learners have opportunity to take own responsibility, for that purpose learners ask themselves "**what can I do in my learning to help myself towards the goal of personal autonomy?**" So it can be inferred that additionally learners can also achieve life goals, they can easily integrate with real life experiences and learning process. So that the target language that they learned not only constrained with the class, but also they can engage with the authentic situations as well. But in fact autonomy isn't observed unilateral-within the learners perspectives-. Furthermore teachers' perspectives become another important issue. Because there are some contradictive ideas that whether the teacher let the learners free or make pressure on them. For instance as **Boud (1981: 30)** makes similar comments and proposes that there are two contradictive approaches, which are **product-oriented approach** and **process-oriented approach**.

Therefore, generally the discussions on autonomous learning are based on freedom within the learning process. But the most important issue is, teachers' perspective is retreated. But in fact the key factor is the teacher, because if the teacher analyzes their learners' needs and accordingly applies the activities then the communication between learner and the teacher is enhanced and the most important of all is, learners don't feel themselves dependent to the teachers. In other words teachers have responsibility in order to provide a secure atmosphere for learners, for that purpose they can be more flexible they can apply semi-controlled activities rather than directly controlled ones. As a result the efficacy of teaching process is enhanced.

To conclude, after analyzing these findings, it is suggested that teachers' perspectives towards the theory, "**autonomy**" plays key factor, because of this reason the scope of the research is based the teachers' perspectives towards their own students and what can teachers do in order to promote the learners' autonomy.

The general outline of this research is; it is a quantitative research, which is going to be conducted in order to analyze the correlation between dependant variable and independent variables. The dependant variable of the research is learner autonomy and the independent variables of the research are teachers' and learners' perspectives. So in order to analyze teachers' perspective towards learner autonomy a questionnaire is going to be distributed to the participants. It is going to be an explanatory research, because at the end of the research the truth of the hypothesis is revealed. Primary sources are used, because the data is collected by the researcher.

Rationale for a Quantitative Research Design

The research is based on quantitative study. The correlations between variables are going to be found. Questionnaires are going to be distributed. The research is based on empirical evidence, which is the ultimate goal in order to design a quantitative research.

- **Setting**

The study is going to be held in private university ELT M.A. Programme class in Istanbul Turkey, where only English is taught learners are all teachers and they have opportunity to make researches about their own fields. The majority of them are adults.

- **Sampling Procedure**

My target population is all ELT teachers in Turkey. My accessible population is M.A. Programme students, who are also teachers as well. My sample is teachers in my M.A. class. Convenient sampling method is used. My unit of analysis is teachers.

- **Instruments**

The questionnaire that I am going to ask is going to be conducted during the academic year 2010/2011. The purpose of the questionnaire is in order to make correlations between the independent variable and dependant variables. The questionnaire consists of 24 variables that are based on teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy.

The learner autonomy is defined as, if the learners are independent from their teachers or not so for that purpose, the teachers are asked about whether their students use materials that they need during learning process or use materials effectively in class in addition to this in order to measure the learners' independency if they select the project that they want to or they have opportunity to evaluate their own homework or exams (**see Appendix 1**).

To conclude, the ultimate goal of the questionnaire is to analyze the correlation between teachers perspective of learners autonomy and if learners are autonomous or not.

- **Participants**

The teachers, who are going to complete their questionnaires (N= 37), are both M.A. students and ELT teachers and 2 of them are Assistant Professors at English Language Teaching Department. All participants completed the questionnaire; some of the questionnaire is distributed via e-mail. 23 of them are females and 14 of them are males. They are aged between 23-40 years old. Participants are working at colleges, state schools and university prep schools.

Limitations

One of the limitations of that research is, the findings are based on teachers' perspective towards learner autonomy in other words because of that the learners' perspective is ignored. It may be create a problem, because the participants-teachers- have different expectations from their learners and another issue that has to be mentioned that their teaching experiences are differ this also affects the results of the questionnaire.

Besides, the setting that the teachers work is an important determiner because especially in colleges and private universities the students come from different social background when it is compared to state schools and universities because the students in private schools have more opportunity to be independent on their own learning process they can reach whatever information they want from everywhere and they are aware using target language effectively. So this fact can be a constraint for the teachers, who completed this questionnaire. On the other hand, another constraint of that research is, the results of the research can't be generalized to all over the Turkey. In addition the data is only collected from the questionnaire results.

V. Data collection

Data was going to be collected from the learners by distributing the questionnaire during the lesson, the last thirty minutes of the lesson is given in order to fulfil the questionnaire results.

VI. Data analysis

The questionnaire data was going to be entered on **Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 18.0** in order to analyze the descriptive statics and mean results and the correlations between the variables. Additionally in order to conduct correlations **Pearson** is used. At the end, for the implication and suggestions part qualitative data is going to be written and conclusion is noted.

VII. Results

- **Results of questionnaires**

For this study, the findings of the teachers' assessment towards learners' autonomy are analyzed. For that purpose correlation studies are conducted and mean values of the variables are analyzed. According to analysis the relationship between variables are noted. The results are noted according to the results of the questionnaire that is conducted by the teachers in university prep school, colleges and state schools.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Gender	37	1,00	2,00	1,5676
Teaching years	37	1,00	5,00	2,5135**
Students ask the teacher	37	1,00	5,00	4,1351**
Students point of views on topics	37	1,00	5,00	3,7297**
Students select the topic that they want to	37	1,00	5,00	3,7297**
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		gender	Teaching years	students ask the teacher	Students select the topic that they want to	students point of views on topics
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-,140	,008	-,141	,036
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,407	,962	,406	,834
	N	37	37	37	37	37
Teaching years	Pearson Correlation	-,140	1	-,196	,139	-,239
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,407		,246	,413	,154
	N	37	37	37	37	37
Students ask the teacher	Pearson Correlation	,008	-,196	1	,256	,727**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,962	,246		,126	,000
	N	37	37	37	37	37
Students select the topic that they want to	Pearson Correlation	-,141	,139	,256	1	,088
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,406	,413	,126		,606
	N	37	37	37	37	37
Students point of views on topics	Pearson Correlation	,036	-,239	,727**	,088	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,834	,154	,000	,606	
	N	37	37	37	37	37

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1.

To start with, according to the analysis of the teachers' ratings on learners' autonomy; it is stated that teachers teaching experience effect learners' autonomy. For instance teachers, who have been teaching more than 10 years are strongly agreed (mean=5) that learners feel comfortable when they don't understand something throughout the teaching/learning process and they feel free when selecting their topic for the projects. On the other hand, the mean results, which is **(the highest 4,1351**)** shown us that students feel free when they ask something during the teaching/learning process, because experienced teachers analyze learners profile at the beginning of the year and they can convert the syllabus and the content of the lesson according to their learners needs. In addition these findings there is weak positive correlation ($p < 0.05$ it is **0.01** between variables. On the other hand, the comments are also evidence for that teachers state that learners prefer experienced teachers the reason behind this, experienced teachers are aware of learners needs and they can easily manipulate their lessons so that both the stress and the threat throughout the teaching/learning processes decreases as a result of this their learners' motivation decreases and they are willing to learn. **(see Table 1)**. Additionally this view is also stated in the review part of that research because as some researchers such as **Benson (1981)** suggests that the key factor is the teacher, because

if the teacher analyzes their learners' needs and accordingly applies the activities then the communication between learner and the teacher is enhanced and the most important of all is, learners don't feel themselves dependent to the teachers. In other words teachers have responsibility in order to provide a secure atmosphere for learners, for that purpose they can be more flexible they can apply semi-controlled activities rather than directly controlled ones. As a result the efficacy of teaching process is enhanced.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Teaching years	37	1,00	5,00	2,5135
Students select partner that they want to while working	37	1,00	5,00	3,8378****
Students study well in target language	37	1,00	5,00	3,4324**
Students choose materials that they want to study	37	1,00	5,00	3,6486***
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		Teaching years	Students select partner that they want to while working	Students study well in target language	Students choose materials that they want to study
Teaching years	Pearson Correlation	1	,211	-,006	-,007
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,211	,971	,967
	N	37	37	37	37
Students select partner that they want to while working	Pearson Correlation	,211	1	,244	,274
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,211		,145	,101
	N	37	37	37	37
Students study well in target language	Pearson Correlation	-,006	,244	1	,656
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,971	,145		,000
	N	37	37	37	37
Students choose materials that they want to study	Pearson Correlation	-,007	,274	,656	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,967	,101	,000	
	N	37	37	37	37

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2.

Another correlation puts forward that according to teachers' ratings, who are strongly agreed (mean=5); it is stated that, learners, who are actively participated in lesson, and select partner while working and choose material for their learning process are autonomous learners because according to findings it is analyzed that they feel free and they have an opportunity to express their own feelings throughout the teaching/learning process so that they are the decision-makers but they trust their teachers feedbacks and willing to study on target language so that their language aptitude can be enhanced. On the other hand, the highest mean results (3.8378****) shows that students communicative aspects are enhanced and they can even choose the learning material that they want to, so it is understood that generally the teaching

process is based on “**Communicative Language Teaching Method**”, this finding is also assisted by teachers’ comments because teachers states that the learners whose autonomous are high are also the successful learners, so as a result of success and autonomy can be associated the reason behind is, as it is mentioned in the review that autonomous learners’ motivation increases for that purpose they are willing to internalize new information’s (see **Table 2**).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Teaching years	37	1,00	5,00	2,5135
Students dictionary usage	37	1,00	5,00	3,1351
Students skimming on general task	37	2,00	5,00	3,5946**
Students scanning on task	37	1,00	5,00	3,7568***
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		Teachingyears	Studentsdictionaryusage	Studentsskimmingongeneraltask	studentsscanningontask
Teaching years	Pearson Correlation	1	,347	,098	-,099
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,035	,563	,558
	N	37	37	37	37
Students dictionary usage	Pearson Correlation	,347	1	,526**	,376*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,035		,001	,022
	N	37	37	37	37
Students skimming on general task	Pearson Correlation	,098	,526**	1	,686**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,563	,001		,000
	N	37	37	37	37
Students scanning on task	Pearson Correlation	-,099	,376*	,686**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,558	,022	,000	
	N	37	37	37	37

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3.

Additionally, another correlation puts forward that, according to the teachers’ ratings, who are strongly agreed that (mean=5), without help learners can easily use dictionary well and know the techniques how to analyze a text (such as scanning or skimming), in addition to this in the comments part teachers added that when they distribute a language test such as proficiency they got highest results so it is concluded they are successful learners. When these points are taken for granted it is understood that autonomous learners are also the high achievers because they are aware of what to do throughout the learning process. The mean results are also the evidence for that because the highest mean result (**3,7568*****) shows that the students, who know how to analyze text feel themselves comfortable because they don’t feel themselves dependant to their teachers, which is another factor that affects their autonomy(see **Table 3**).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Teaching years	37	1,00	5,00	2,5135
Students use words or phrases in meaningful sentences	37	2,00	5,00	3,7838**
Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	37	1,00	5,00	3,8378***
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		Teaching years	Students use words or phrases in meaningful sentences	Students use L1 in order to assist in L2
Teaching years	Pearson Correlation	1	,055	-,047
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,748	,784
	N	37	37	37
Students use words or phrases in meaningful sentences	Pearson Correlation	,055	1	,484**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,748		,002
	N	37	37	37
Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	Pearson Correlation	-,047	,484**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,784	,002	
	N	37	37	37

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.

Furthermore, another correlation puts forward that, according to the teachers' ratings, who are strongly agreed that (mean=5), students are acquiring L2 very well and they actively use second language not only on their learning process environment, but also authentic environment as well.

The reason behind this, especially experienced teachers knows students' needs and accordingly applies the activities in class, they work within a cooperation and even analyze the lesson plan together, so as a result learners don't feel themselves dependant to their teachers. The mean results are the evidence for that, the highest mean result (**3,8378*****) shows that autonomous learners have enough courage to use L2. Additionally the correlation puts forward that there is a fair positive correlation (**p<0.05**), which is **0.01** between teachers' experience and learners' L2 usage in classroom, these analyses are also supported by the teachers' comments they add that students, who have courage don't hesitate use their L2, so that their motivation increases and they observed that when they don't intervene the learning process so the learners' motivation increases so as a result their autonomy increases as well (see **Table 4**).

		Students do their home work creatively	Students decide how to do their homework	Students evaluate their work	Decide when to do their homework
Students do their homework creatively	Pearson Correlation	1	,734**	,684**	,440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,006
	N	37	37	37	37
Students decide how to do their homework	Pearson Correlation	,734**	1	,563**	,263**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,115
	N	37	37	37	37
Students evaluate their work	Pearson Correlation	,684**	,563**	1	,412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,011
	N	37	37	37	37
Decide when to do their homework	Pearson Correlation	,440**	,263**	,412**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,006	,115	,011	
	N	37	37	37	37

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Students do their home work creatively	37	2,00	5,00	3,3243
Students decide how to do their homework	37	1,00	5,00	3,3243
Students evaluate their work	37	1,00	5,00	3,3784**
Decide when to do their homework	37	1,00	5,00	3,4054***
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Table 5.

Another correlation puts forward that, according to the teachers' ratings, who are strongly agreed that (mean=5), students who done their homework creatively and decide how to do their homework's and identify their weakness are aware of their deficiencies throughout the learning process and try hard in order to achieve their goals in order to be successful, in other words throughout the learning process the awareness is raising.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
studentsapplyEnglishrulesconsciously	37	1,00	5,00	3,2162
identifytheirownstrenghts	37	1,00	5,00	3,2973**
Studentslearnwithouthlepoft heirteachers	37	1,00	5,00	3,2162
Valid N (listwise)	37			

The reason behind is that, there is a cooperation between teacher and students, teachers don't make pressure on their

Correlations

		studentsapplyEnglishrulesconsciously	identifytheirownstrenghts	Studentslearnwithouthlepoft heirteachers
studentsapplyEnglishrulesconsciously	Pearson Correlation	1	,553**	,520**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,001
	N	37	37	37
identifytheirownstrenghts	Pearson Correlation	,553**	1	,627**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000
	N	37	37	37
Studentslearnwithouthlepoft heirteachers	Pearson Correlation	,520**	,627**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,000	
	N	37	37	37

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6.

learners, and teachers avoid threats in class, this view can also be associated with class management in other words for that purpose they don't intervene learners' activities directly only control learner, let their students critical thinking, they analyze their students needs and the most important point is they are always encourage their students. As a result, learners' autonomy become high and they are high achievers because they are aware their own weaknesses and want to progress them. The mean results are also evidence for this finding as well. The highest mean results (**3,4054*****) show that autonomous learners and teachers are in cooperation throughout the teaching/learning process so that communicative aspects are enhanced and learners become more autonomous (see **Table 5**).

Furthermore, another correlation puts forward that according to the teachers' ratings, who are strongly agreed that (mean=5), students, who apply English rules consciously, have opportunity to acquire second language the reason behind this the learners are aware the process of what they are going to do throughout the course, so as a result of this they can easily acquire the second languages rules so that they aware of their strengths and they have courage to learn more so that their efficacy become high and they learn without their teachers help so that their autonomy throughout the teaching/learning process is high. So in other words it is suggested that learners are the decision-makers own their learning process, as a result especially their intrinsic motivation increases, this view is also proposed in the literature part of this research. According to **Williams and Burden (2001:36)** state that especially for autonomous learners making decision independently plays a central component. So for that purpose "**motivation**" becomes another crucial issue. For instance Chinese researchers state that motivation means **strong power**, within this perspective it is understood that especially the students whose motivation is high, have an opportunity to discover their own '**strong power**' to learn. So it is understood that autonomous learners, are also motivated learners as well.

Additionally these findings are supported by the highest mean results (**3, 2973*****) show that when learners are aware of their strengths they have courage in order to internalize the information so that throughout the learning their motivation increases and the communicative aspects between the teacher and the learner increases and they become autonomous learners. Additionally the correlation between these variable are so high there is a weak positive correlation (**p<0.05**), **it is 0.01**, so it is understood that there is a weak positive correlation between learners strengths throughout the learning process and how they without their teachers help, in the comments part teachers add that learners, who are learn without the help of the teacher are high achievers and they are active in class and they are the decision makers and apply the activities that they want to, which is related to content of the course.(see **Table 6**).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Students decide learning style	37	1,00	5,00	3,1892***
Students choose which skill to focus while studying	37	1,00	5,00	3,0541
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		Students decide learning style	Students choose which skill to focus while studying
Students decide learning style	Pearson Correlation	1	,713**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	37	37
Students choose which skill to focus while studying	Pearson Correlation	,713**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	37	37

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). **Table 7**

Another correlation puts forward that, according to the teachers' ratings, who are strongly agreed that (mean=5); who decide their learning styles, are more successful learners and they are aware of what has been done throughout the teaching/learning process. In addition to this, in class there are many different multiple intelligences types such as spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical...etc, so teachers don't have difficulty while applying activities in the syllabus, so as a result of this, students' motivation increases and they aren't dependant their teacher and their autonomy increases as well, on the other hand, ITI model can easily be applied in class. So that, the activities and the content of the course can appeal all types of learners. Additionally, the highest mean results are the evidence for that finding. The highest mean result (**3, 1892*****) show that, when learners decide their own learning styles, the efficacy of the lesson increases, because teacher knows what to do so in class threat decreases so that students have courage to study and trust their teachers, they study free from their teacher and their autonomy increases.

Furthermore, there is a weak positive correlation (**p<0.05**) it is **0.01** between variables, so it is stated that learners' learning styles whether they are independently decide their own learning styles or not is one most important the-at affect learners' autonomy. These analyses are supported by the teachers' comments as well, especially experienced teachers state that learners, who take their own responsibilities are high achievers know their own learning styles and want from their teachers according to their own styles, so that the awareness between the students are raising and the communicative aspects between students and teachers is high (see **Table 7**).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
studentsuseL1inordertoas sistinL2	37	1,00	5,00	3,8378***
studentsapplyEnglishrulesc onsciously	37	1,00	5,00	3,2162
Studentscommunicatewel linterlanguage	37	1,00	5,00	3,4324**
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	Students apply English rules consciously	Students communicate well in target language
Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	Pearson Correlation	1	,189	,344
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,263	,037
	N	37	37	37
Students apply English rules consciously	Pearson Correlation	,189	1	,526**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,263		,001
	N	37	37	37
Students communicate well in target language	Pearson Correlation	,344	,526**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,037	,001	
	N	37	37	37

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8.

Another correlation indicates that, according to the teachers' ratings, who are strongly agreed that (mean=5); students, who use L2 language effectively and apply English rules consciously, and communicate well on their target language are successful learners and their language aptitude is high and their communicative aspects are enhanced.

So that their relationship both with their teachers and peers are high, furthermore their motivation increases. In other words throughout the teaching/learning process their autonomy increase as well. Because learners have opportunity to work independently and they have enough to courage in order to develop their skills activities by using their target language. The mean results (**3, 8378*****) are also the evidence for these findings, so it is stated that students, who use L2 effectively, are the ones who communicate well throughout the learning process.

Moreover, the correlations indicate that (**p<0.05**) so there is a fair positive correlation, students, who apply rules consciously, are the ones who communicate well throughout the teaching/learning process. Additionally, in the comments part teachers add that especially one of the native teacher states that especially experienced teachers know their learners' needs and accordingly apply the activities whether inductive or deductive method are applied and the key point is, teachers must know their students' intelligences so that their efficacy is high and they work cooperatively with their teachers, which effects their autonomy positively (see **Table 8**).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Students dictionary usage	37	1,00	5,00	3,1351
Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	37	1,00	5,00	3,8378***
Students skimming on general task	37	2,00	5,00	3,5946
Students scanning on task	37	1,00	5,00	3,7568**
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Correlations

		Students dictionary usage	Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	Students skimming on general task	Students scanning on task
studentsdictionaryusage	Pearson Correlation	1	,038	,526**	,376
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,824	,001	,022
	N	37	37	37	37
Students use L1 in order to assist in L2	Pearson Correlation	,038	1	,239	,419*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,824		,154	,010
	N	37	37	37	37
Students skimming on general task	Pearson Correlation	,526**	,239	1	,686**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,154		,000
	N	37	37	37	37
Students scanning on task	Pearson Correlation	,376	,419*	,686**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,022	,010	,000	
	N	37	37	37	37

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 9.

Furthermore, another correlation indicates that, there is a relationship between learners' language usage techniques and their autonomy. It is stated that learners, who use L2 effectively and know some techniques in order to prove their language skills especially reading and writing for instance dictionary usage and scanning/skimming are the ones who are successful on their L2 as a result of this, they have courage and their teacher don't intervene them throughout the learning process, so that their autonomy increases. The mean results (3, 8378***) are also evidence for that analyses, because students know some techniques in order to improve their language so that they have courage to learn more without help their teachers and their autonomy increases (see Table 9).

As a result, from all these analyses it is concluded that, when teachers' autonomy towards learners' autonomy is high. The **Pearson correlation** assess the correlation between variables of the questionnaire and the **mean results** show that which variable is the most high and effective in order to analyze the learners' autonomy. The correlations are generally resulted as ($p < 0.05$) **0.01** there is a **weak and fair positive correlation**. Additionally, experienced teachers provide stress free environment throughout the learning process, especially in the comments part experienced teachers added that learners are more relaxed the reason behind this, experienced teachers know what kind of activities are going to be applied to the students especially they analyze their students and their intelligences and accordingly design the syllabus for that purpose they also state for them their learners' cognitive development is important and generally they prefer functional-notional syllabi, for teachers learners' success and motivation is very important when these points are taken for granted so that teachers avoid threat and stress as much as possible throughout the teaching/learning process.

VIII. Discussion

To begin with, this research analyzes is teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy. So from all these analyses it is concluded that, the hypothesis of the research, which is mentioned above is proven. The results are integrated with the findings of the review part of the research so this makes the research reliable and valid. On the other hand according to the results it is stated that teachers play a crucial role so according to the findings, it is suggested that especially experienced teachers know their students' learning styles, intelligences so that they apply the activities accordingly so that the cooperation between students and teacher is high so that the threat and the stress decreases, which affect learners' autonomy positively. In other words, when these points are taken into consideration the expectations from research and results are fulfilled.

On the other hand, besides all these points that are taken for granted above, this research has some limitations as well. For instance setting is the most important determiner; if this research is conducted more than one school such as public schools most probably the results may change; but not only the setting but also participants plays a crucial role. When participants background experience and knowledge is analyzed they are (N=37) M.A. students in English Language Teaching Department and many of them work in private universities prep schools and colleges. 2 of them are Assistant Professors and many of them are native and most of them are experienced teachers; as a result under these circumstances their analysis may change when it is compared to other teachers in Turkey, especially who have little opportunity or even no opportunity to educate their learners better.

So as a result their students' background knowledge changes as well, in private schools and universities teachers have more opportunity analyze their students and apply the activities so that their communication enhanced and the stress in class decreases and students have opportunity to work independently, which affects their autonomy positively. So, it is believed that if there are more participants, who come from different background knowledge the results of this research changes. Furthermore another limitation of that research is the data is only collected from the questionnaire that was distributed to the participants, but in fact maybe making interviews or occurring focus groups it is believed that the results change because different ideas have to be analyzed.

Another issue that has to be taken for granted that, the time and space dimension of the research. If this research is applied in different times the results may change, because of the nature of the research both the teachers' and students' perspective and background knowledge changes, teaching/learning process is a dynamic process, it changes and develops all the time, then the results may change. Additionally space dimension of the research is important. Because of the nature of the research, if this research is conducted more than one setting then the results of that research can be universal, but because of some limitations such as data collection, setting...etc. As a result, when all these limitations are taken for granted it is sated that, although the research aims longitudinal research because the results of the research affects throughout time, so it is said that the findings of the research can be individualised and it is said that the class that I conduct my research is exceptional.

VIV. Implications

To begin with, teaching and learning language is not focusing on its linguistic structure, so in other words especially while acquiring the language learner autonomy is one of the most important issues that have to be taken for granted. Because autonomy affects learners' motivation and as a result their success as well. But within this framework teachers' perspective become one step further. As **Holec(1981:3)** describes autonomy "the ability to take charge of one's own learning". From all these view it can be suggested that autonomous learners have opportunity to think independently that enhances their learning capacity. As a consequence it is said that in second language learning autonomy plays a paramount role. On the other hand, **Benson (1981)** suggests that the key factor is the teacher, because if the teacher analyzes their learners' needs and accordingly applies the activities then the communication between learner and the teacher is enhanced and the most important of all is, learners don't feel themselves dependent to the teachers. In other words teachers have responsibility in order to provide a secure atmosphere for learners, for that purpose they can be more flexible they can apply semi-controlled activities rather than directly controlled ones. As a result the efficacy of teaching process is enhanced.

To sum up, it is suggested that teachers have big responsibilities in order to make the lesson as effective as possible. For that purpose teachers should be as reflective as possible evaluate themselves maybe in other words conduct an action research can be very helpful and then according to their students needs prepare syllabi, so that they avoid threat and stress in class and learners' autonomy increases and they have opportunity to their learners' autonomy more objectively, as a result if ITI based model is applied throughout the learning process as much as possible then the efficacy of the lesson increases.

X. Suggestions

To begin with, although there are many researchers are put forward the on learners' autonomy, but as far as it read few of them pointed out real classroom activities. So within this framework "what are the teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy" is analyzed very carefully. Because throughout the teaching/learning process the teachers' communication between them is very important, so if learners' autonomy decreases then as a result their motivation decreases and the efficacy is low, this cause some problems in teaching atmosphere. So in order to avoid these problems some measurements are taken for granted. For that purpose teachers have to analyze their learners' target language knowledge and their intelligence and which teaching methods are preferred by learners. Because teachers' plays a key factor on learners' autonomy, because of this teachers always improve themselves for instance they know when they are going to intervene the teaching/learning process and analyze them the best way to do this the teacher should be both practitioner and researcher for instance conducting an action is the most beneficial way it should be participatory action research and make objective criticisms, so at the end analyze their students' autonomy. But in fact generally experienced teachers know what to do throughout the teaching process so that the learners' autonomy is high because they make analysis and communication between learners and the teachers enhances as well.

To sum up, it is suggested that, if teachers wish more autonomous learners in class then before they analyze their students they analyze themselves and solve problems if any. So first of all awareness-raising among teachers has a paramount effect.

XI. Conclusion

This paper measured the ELT teachers' perspectives towards learner autonomy in terms of during the class activities. Within this framework teachers' perspective are analyzed by distributing the questionnaire to the participants. The correlations and mean results of the variables are examined. As a result it is suggested that the mean results are high and there is a positive correlation ($p < 0.05$ or 0.01) between variables, so the research question is proven. All the learners are autonomous learners they are high achievers and they have enough courage to acquire L2. These findings are also supported with the review part of the research such as **Dickinson (1977)** suggests that autonomy “**as the upper limit of self-directed learning**”. It can be understood that learners are the decision-makers and they have the responsibility throughout the learning process.

According to the findings, it is stated that teachers play a crucial factor that affect learners' autonomy, for instance experienced teachers are aware of what to do throughout the teaching/learning process, which is proposed in the review part of the research as well, **Boud(1980:30)** states that the key factor is the teacher, because if the teacher analyzes their learners' needs and accordingly applies the activities then the communication between learner and the teacher is enhanced and the most important of all is, learners don't feel themselves dependent to the teachers. For that purpose teachers should be as reflective as possible so teachers have to promote their professional profile, the best way to do is, attending in-service training programmes, because they have opportunity to analyze their students needs and design a syllabi that to be addressed to all types of multiple intelligences. So that ITI model can be applied in order to address all types of learners.

To sum up, learners' motivation is a crucial issue not only for students but also for the teachers as well. Because generally becomes a problematic issue throughout the teaching/learning process. As a result, autonomy should be analyzed both from teachers and learners perspective. Because the findings of the research also indicate that teachers' perspective become one step further. But at the end of the research the hypothesis is proven that, teachers' attitudes towards learner autonomy play a crucial role.

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XIII. APPENDIX: LEARNERS’ AUTONOMY QUESTIONNAIRE :

Dear Participants,

Autonomy plays a crucial role throughout the learning process. **Holec (1981:3)** defines autonomy, “is the ability to take charge of one’s learning.” Additionally **Little (1991)** emphasizes that learner autonomy is also defined as a capacity which helps learners to internalize what they have learned and transmit it into another context. So within this perspective not only learners’ perspective but also teachers’ perspective towards learner autonomy plays an important role. For that purpose this **questionnaire¹** aims to analyze learners’ autonomy within the teachers’ perspective. Questions don’t have right or wrong answer. This questionnaire reflects your opinions. The results of questionnaire are only used for scientific research. The questions are very easy to answer. Thank you very much for your cooperation. 😊

Gender: Male Female:

Age: 18-24 25-30 30-35 35+:

How many years have you been teaching? None: 5-10 10-20 20+ :

Scale: Strongly Agree: (5), Agree: (4), Neutral: (3), Disagree: (2), Strongly Disagree: (1)

PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING ACCORDING TO YOUR OPINION:

In class your students;

QUESTIONS	RATE	COMMENTS
1. ask the teacher to explain when something is not clear		
2. give their point of views on topics in the classroom		
3. use dictionary well		
4.skim: concentration general aspects of a task		
5. scan: pay attention to specific information of a task		
6. select the partner that they like to work with it		
7. select the topic for project work		
8. talk about their interests in classroom		
9. use words or phrases in meaningful sentences		
10. decide when to use a dictionary.		
11.use knowledge acquired in L1to help them learn L2		
12. do their homework		

¹ ***: The questions are replicated from *Thuraiya Saeed Al-Shaqsi and Dakhiliya Region’s study.*

creatively		
13. decide how to do homework		
14. evaluate their work		
15. communicate well in the target language		
16. take an active approach to the learning task		
17. apply English grammar rules consciously		
18. choose the materials that they like to study		
19. identify their own weakness.		
20. choose which skill of language to focus on when they study something		
21. decide when to do their homework		
22. identify their own learning style?		
23. identify their own strengths.		
24. learn without the help of their teachers		

A Response to Calls for Moving Away from Language Learning Strategy Research

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0050

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Abstract

Language learning strategy (LLS) research is very prolific and much has been written and discussed the LLS types and the correlation between strategy use and successful language learning across different learning contexts. In recent years, however, research interest in LLSs has been on the decline, and this decline is mainly due to growing criticisms of the theoretical inconsistencies and conceptual ambiguities concerning the construct of LLS (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Macaro, 2006) and the contradictory and questionable results obtained from the excessive use of survey methods as instruments to measure the use of LLSs (LoCastro, 1994; Tseng et al, 2006; Woodrow, 2005). No empirical data were collected for this paper; instead, the paper aims to respond to calls for replacing the construct of LLS with the 'more versatile concept' of self-regulation. It also shows the salience of taking up a more qualitative and context-sensitive approach, which views language learners' strategy use as dynamic and varying across contexts.

Key Words: *Language learning strategies (LLSs), good language learners (GLLs), cognitive psychology approaches, sociocultural theory, self-regulation*

1. Introduction

The unsatisfactory results from a focus on the methods and products of language teaching led some language learning researchers in the 1970s (e.g. Cohen, 1977; Naiman et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975) to explore the characteristics of the 'good language learner' (GLL) (Griffiths, 2008, 2013; White, 2008). These researchers believed that an identification of the traits and strategies deployed by GLLs could then be taught to their less successful counterparts and this would enable the latter to find their own means to success (ibid). As Gu (1996, p.1) vividly puts it, LLS research 'started off with the Robin Hoodian good will of breaking the secret behavioural codes of successful language learners and sharing them with the unsuccessful ones'. Rubin (1975), for instance, identified some characteristics, which, she claimed, GLLs share. According to Rubin (1975, p.4-5), GLLs are willing and accurate guessers, are attentive to both form and meaning, are extroverted and uninhibited about mistakes, are willing to practise and spend time monitoring their own speech and that of others. Commenting on the previous GLL empirical studies, both Parks and Raymond (2004, p.375) suggest that almost all of these studies were based on cognitive psychology theories, and regarded success at language learning as 'a matter of individual initiative, notably in terms of strategy use and personal motivation'. In this sense, LLSs are '*teachable*' (Oxford and Nyikos, 1989, 291, authors' emphasis), and learners can benefit from coaching in LLSs to accelerate or aid their second language learning. Although LLS research is in its fourth decade of rigorous work, this field of research may still be considered as 'quite an immature field' (Grenfell and Macaro, 2007, p.28). As Dörnyei (2005, p.162) suggests, 'nothing is clear-cut' in LLS research and some key issues regarding 'definitional fuzziness' and inaccurate uses of research instruments still need further investigations. In the coming sections of this paper, both the claims raised by the opponents of LLS research and our responses to them, in particular the proposal of using the construct of self-regulation in place of LLS will be discussed.

2. Language Learning Strategy Research: Criticisms and Insights

Some researchers utilising a LLS framework (e.g. Dörnyei, 2005, 2006; Ellis, 1994; Macaro, 2006; Tseng et al., 2006) have suggested that the research into LLSs has essentially suffered from two central weaknesses, which stem from the different conceptualisations of the term LLS and the methodological approaches usually followed in LLS research.

2.1 Definitional Issues Regarding the Construct of ‘Language Learning Strategies’

According to Gu (2012), there have been unsuccessful attempts at clarifying the construct of LLS because of ‘the elusive nature of the term [strategy]’ (Ellis, 1994: 529) and the lack of its theoretical soundness. The theoretical inconsistencies and conceptual ambiguities concerning the concept of LLS were first noted by Wenden (1991) and then have been explored by other researchers utilising a LLS framework (e.g. Cohen, 2011a; Cohen and Oxford, 1992; Dörnyei and Skehan, 2003; Ellis, 1994; Grenfell and Macaro, 2007; White, 2008). Looking for a definition pattern, Table 1 contains some definitions of the term LLS suggested by some prominent researchers in educational psychology. The original wording in these definitions is kept as closely as possible, but broken down into two columns.

Table 1 A Sample of Definitions of Language Learning Strategies

Source	What are LLSs?	What are LLSs for?
Bialystok (1978, p.71)	are optimal methods for exploiting available information and may be consciously employed by language learners	to improve competence in a second language
Oxford (1989, p.235)	behaviours or actions used consciously by learners	to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable
O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p.1)	the special thoughts or behaviours that learners consciously employ	to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information
Weinstein and Hume (1998, p.12)	any thoughts, behaviours, beliefs, or emotions a learner involved in during learning	to facilitate the acquisition, integration, storage in memory, or availability for future use of new knowledge and skills.
Cohen (2011b, p.682)	thoughts and actions, consciously selected by learners	to assist them in learning and using language in general, and in the completion of specific language tasks
Griffiths (2013, p.15)	activities chosen by learners	to regulate their own language learning

The above table depicts differences in defining the construct of LLS, and these differences, as described by Takać (2008, p.50), might be attributed to the fact that most researchers tend to define the construct of LLS in accordance with the focus of their own research. Addressing this issue, Macaro (2006) identifies three main problems pertaining to the theoretical foundations of LLS. These problems are as follows:

(1) The first problem relates to the nature of the LLSs through questioning whether they should be viewed as either unobservable mental operations such as selective

attention, or observable behaviour such as observing someone taking notes in a lecture or both. Both Grenfell and Macaro (2007, p.18) contend that it seems difficult and ‘atheoretical’ to suggest that the inner cognitive operation and the overt behaviour are condensed within one concept i.e. LLS. Considering the definitions of LLS exemplified above, many researchers adopting a cognitive psychology framework in their LLS studies (e.g. Cohen, 2011b; Griffiths, 2013; O’Malley and Chamot, 1990) tend to locate LLSs in two domains, namely observable behaviours and mental processes. However, the concern of Oxford’s (1989) definition was with the overt behaviours practised by the learners. Bearing this in mind, some researchers have attempted to overcome the problematic issue of the interrelationship between observable behaviours and mental thoughts through replacing the specific words ‘behaviours and thoughts’ with more general words such as ‘methods’ (Bialystok, 1978, p.71) and ‘approaches’ (O’Malley and Chamot, 1994, p.7).

(2) The second problem of the concept of LLS is how conscious of and attentive to their language activities learners should be in order to consider the activities as strategies. Guided by Krashen’s (1976) Monitor Hypothesis, Bialystok (1978, p.71), as shown in Table 1, notes that it is not necessary that language learners be always conscious of their choice of LLSs, especially in the strategies relevant to the speaking or listening skill where a learner does not have sufficient time to monitor the correctness of utterances. Conversely, both Cohen (2011a, p.11) and Ellis (1994, p.531-32) suggest that if a learning activity is carried out by a learner automatically such as skimming the keywords in an academic article to recognise its relevance to the topic research, it should be regarded as a ‘process’ rather than a ‘strategy’ because this activity cannot be described through verbal report and thus lose its implication as a strategy. If the learner, however, is conscious (even peripherally) of the reason of checking first the keywords, then the move would be termed a ‘strategy’. In line with Cohen (2011a) and Ellis (1994), Oxford (2011, p.51) affirms that ‘*when the strategy has become automatic through extensive practice, it is no longer a strategy but has instead been transformed into...an unconscious habit*’ (author’s italics). Dörnyei (2005, p.164-65), in turn, questions the difference between the terms ‘strategy’ and ‘motivation’ simply because the typical characteristics of strategic learning, e.g. ‘effortful’, ‘goal-oriented’ and ‘intentionally evoked’ can apply to ‘hard and focused learning’. Therefore, Dörnyei (2005) supports the idea that a learning activity can

become strategic when it is ‘particularly *appropriate* for the individual learner’ (author’s italics).

(3) The third problem pertains to learners’ motivation for using LLSs i.e. what LLSs are for. The definitions of LLS listed in Table 1 describe that most researchers have adopted a cognitive psychology viewpoint, which sees language learning as mental processes (e.g. perceiving, analysing, classifying, storing and retrieving) whereby learners deal with input and output (Gao, 2010, p.11) and their use of LLSs that activate mental processes can have a focal role in improving their language proficiency. However, some language learning researchers endorsing socially oriented theoretical perspectives (e.g. Gao, 2010; Norton and Toohey, 2001; Parks and Raymond, 2004) argue that the purpose of using LLSs should not be restricted to linguistic objectives, on the grounds that LLSs can be deployed to gain access to specific learning community. This point will be returned to later in this paper.

2.2 The Use of Strategy Inventory Questionnaires in LLS Research

Gao (2010, p.11-12) states that the development of strategy taxonomies by some language learning researchers (e.g. Cohen, 2011; Dörnyei, 2005; O’Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990) has actually played a key role in the wide use of questionnaires in the LLS research community. Oxford (1990), for instance, produces ‘the most comprehensive, detailed and systematic taxonomy of strategies’ (Radwan, 2011, p.119), through drawing a distinction between direct and indirect LLSs, which are further subdivided into six subcategories:

Table 2: Oxford’s (1990, p.18-21) framework for Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

Direct strategies	Indirect strategies
Memory strategies are used for remembering and retrieving information (e.g., applying images and sounds, creating mental linkages)	Metacognitive strategies are used to control one’s own cognition (e.g., coordinating the planning, organising, and evaluation of the learning process.)
Cognitive strategies are employed for understanding and producing the	Affective strategies refer to the methods that help learners regulate their feelings

language such as use (e.g., summarising, analysing, note-taking, listening to radio/CDs)	and learning circumstances (e.g., reducing anxiety, encouraging one's self)
Compensation strategies are used for overcoming deficiencies in knowledge of the language (e.g., using gestures and synonyms to convey meaning, guessing meanings from context)	Social strategies include interaction with others through the target language (e.g., asking questions, cooperating with native speakers, learning about social or cultural norms)

However, the excessive use of survey methods as instruments to measure the use of LLSs has been subject to considerable criticism (e.g. Dörnyei, 2005; Gao, 2004; LoCastro, 1994; White et al, 2007; Rose, 2012; Woodrow, 2005) for four main reasons:

- Strategy questionnaires tend to minimise the impact of contextual variations on learners' strategy use through attempting to use a particular strategy questionnaire in different sociocultural settings. LoCastro's (1994) study, for instance, revealed that Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was context-insensitive simply because the most frequent LLSs employed by the participants were the memory strategies although SILL implied that these strategies should be rarely used by learners.
- The items of the written questionnaires can be interpreted differently by the participants. For example, learners may become confused when responding to the following item in Oxford's (1990) SILL 'I pay attention when someone is speaking English' because they might be unable to decide who is 'someone'.
- Most strategy questionnaires focus primarily on the frequency of learners' strategy use rather than on their attitude and efficiency. That is, learners are often invited to respond to a frequency scale, ranging from 'never or almost never' to 'always or almost always' without giving them the opportunity to explain if they use specific LLSs in a particular learning context but not in others.
- Most strategy questionnaires tend to portray learners' expressed strategy preferences rather than their actual and dynamic use of the LLSs in accordance with the specific learning settings and learners' goals.

The above theoretical and methodological weaknesses related to the field of LLSs have led the decline in significance of the LLS theoretical base. Dörnyei and Skehan (2003, p.610), for instance, have supported the idea of abandoning the construct of LLS altogether in research studies. They go further and recommend the adoption of the 'more versatile' concept of self-regulation', which represents 'the degree to which individuals are active participants in their own learning' (ibid, 611). The notion of 'self-regulation' for the detractors of LLS research (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005; Ortega 2009; Tseng et al 2006) is a more dynamic concept than LLS because it describes learners' strategic efforts in managing their personal learning processes, especially how to plan, monitor, focus on and evaluate their own learning. Accordingly, language learners' self-regulatory capacity and their cognitive processes can be captured. In this sense, Ortega (2009, p.2011) encourages researchers in the field of language learning to take up the self-regulatory approach as a theoretical framework to understand language learners' '*creative and conscious* efforts' employed to control their own learning processes rather than to focus on sheer frequency of learners' strategy use, which dominates the bulk of LLS research (author's italics).

3. A Response to Major Criticisms of LLS Research

The enthusiastic attempts made by some opponents of LLS research (e.g. Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Ortega, 2009; Tseng et al, 2006) to move to abandon the construct of LLS in research studies through exploring learners' strategic learning in accordance with their self-regulatory capacity have been challenged by some LLS researchers (e.g. Cohen, 2011, Gao, 2007, Gu, 2012; Rose, 2011, 2012). Gao (2007) in an illuminating paper, for example, critically addresses Tseng et al.'s (2006) proposal to replace the construct of LLS with the notion of self-regulation through examining whether the marginalisation of LLS research is a prerequisite for introducing self-regulation into research on learners' strategic learning. Gao (2007), in effect, agreed with Tseng et al.'s (2006) view that a myriad of LLS research studies have been apparently depicted the trait aspect of learners' strategy use through relying greatly on task-free strategy questionnaires, which essentially address learners' strategy preferences independently of the situation or task at hand. Nonetheless, Gao (2007), like some other LLS researchers (e.g. Cohen, 2011; Huang and Andrews, 2010; Phakiti, 2003, 2006), believes that there are two facets of language learners' LLS use,

which are LLS as a *trait* and LLS as a *state*. The former represents language learners' general tendency to use particular patterns of LLSs 'free from a particular context' (Phakiti, 2006, p.26), whereas states of learners' strategy use symbolise 'their actual deployment of strategies in different learning settings or contexts' (Gao, 2007, p.616). Put it another way, LLS as a trait may appear to identify learners' strategy preferences more than actual strategy use contrary to LLS as a state which depicts the dynamism of learners' actual use of LLSs according to particular situations or tasks.

Gao (2007) concludes his paper by suggesting a sociocultural framework to explore language learners' strategic behaviour because such a framework, using qualitative or multi-method approaches, can capture the complex interplay between learners' actual LLS use and its underlying processes in particular contexts. From this sociocultural stance, language learners act on the world with the assistance of both some social agents (e.g., family members, friends or neighbours) and a host of material tools (e.g., textbooks, travel brochures or technology) and symbolic artefacts (e.g., language, gestures) (Kuure, 2011; Lantolf, 2013). For example, the analysis of the learners' experiential narratives in Gao's (2006) study showed that the participants' LLS use was congruent to their changing contextual needs. That is, the Chinese learners of the study mainly used repetition, note-taking and rote memorisation strategies in their Chinese learning context because these strategies enhanced them to pass the exam and address both their teachers' recommendations and their cultural beliefs which imply that 'a person can memorize a word if s/he repeats exposure to it [particularly visually] seven times' (ibid, p.63). However, the intensity of the strategies applied by most of these Chinese learners in China was decreased when they moved to the UK because the assessment method of learners' language proficiency shifted from 'authoritative' standard exams followed in China into 'coursework assessment' through the medium of English in the UK (ibid). Consequently, the learners employed LLSs up to the demands of their coursework such as retaining only vocabularies that appear many times in their coursework rather than relying heavily on a dictionary. Gao (2006, p.64) concluded that the choice of learners' strategy use was the result of not only their personal motivation and mental processes but also the social context of learning and 'the mediating agents, including teachers, learning experts, and family members'. Based on that, a more qualitative and contextualised approach in investigating learners' LLS use can be favoured because SILL and other strategy

questionnaires are likely to examine merely learners' frequency of strategy use, and underestimate the importance of both contextual variations and task influence.

Like Gao (2007), Rose (2011, p.1) challenges the proposal of using the construct of self-regulation instead of LLS and sees it as 'a matter of throwing the baby out with the bathwater' simply because the term 'self-regulation', similar to LLS, suffers from 'definitional fuzziness'. To put it more clearly, the construct of 'self-regulation' has been used more or less synonymously with different technical terms such as 'self-management' (Rubin 2001, 2005; Dörnyei 2005); 'autonomy' (Oxford, 2011), 'self-direction' (Pemberton, 2011). For this reason, the attempt of replacing the term LLS with self-regulation is 'not a healthy sign' (Gu, 2012, p.330). To support this point, Gu (2012) indicates that

...conceptual fuzziness should not be a problem serious enough to overthrow forty years of research on language learning strategies. The argument is clear and straightforward: if not being able to agree on the definition of a Planet until 2006 does not in any way discredit the scientific nature of astronomy, or necessitate the removal of the concept of "planet" altogether, why should we throw away a whole line of research on language learning strategies? In fact, the proposed alternative term "self-regulation" or even a more general and key term "learning" fall into the same fuzziness trap. (Gu, 2012, p.331)

Based on the aforementioned discussion and guided by a sociocultural standpoint, we will attempt to suggest a comprehensive definition of the construct of LLS as:

a process related to the dynamic interaction between learners' exercise of agency and social structure in order to understand their strategic language learning efforts.

In this definition, learners' strategy use is not merely restricted to cognitive and metacognitive processes but extends to acknowledge the key role of contextual conditions (e.g. material resources, learning discourses and social agents) in mediating the choice and use of LLSs.

4. Conclusion

As can be seen from the review of criticisms directed at LLS research, the bulk of LLS empirical studies have been underpinned by a cognitive psychology standpoint

and employed survey methods, especially Oxford's (1990) SILL, to examine the trait and static aspect of learners' strategy use. There is still much research that needs to be completed to obtain a more holistic picture of the pivotal role of LLSs in the process of language teaching and learning. This can be done through shifting the focus from the notion of quantity to that of quality through adopting a more qualitative and context-sensitive approach. We, therefore, hope that we can see more empirical LLS studies that are underpinned by sociocultural theory in order to disclose the dynamic and actual use of language learners' strategy use scaffolded by different social conditions.

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The logo for the International Association for Foreign Language Research (iafor) is centered on the page. It consists of the lowercase letters 'iafor' in a light blue, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a large, light blue circular arc that is partially obscured by a larger, semi-transparent red arc that also surrounds the text.

Classification of online resources in the field of language teaching

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Abstract

Teachers use the world wide web to find appropriate activities for their lessons. They are overwhelmed by the huge quantity of resources that can be found. The question is: How can we prevent them from getting lost in cyberspace? How can we support them in finding exactly what they need for their purposes in the context of language teaching?

The concept of language teaching has changed radically during the last years. Whereas in former days, it was mainly characterized by written grammar and translation exercises, nowadays more skill-oriented concepts are prevalent. But do content providers consider this changing paradigm when providing online resources?

The taxonomy presented in this article suggests a classification of language teaching and learning activities according to the four skills (speaking, writing, reading, listening / watching) and two language use types (grammar, vocabulary), representing the changing paradigm of language teaching.

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1. Theory

Resource-based learning is potentially powerful for enhancing teaching and learning processes (Combes & Valli, 2007). It can provide teachers and learners with a wide range of new and exciting experiences enriching the traditional way of teaching.

In this context the design of language teaching methods include four components: learning and teaching environment, teacher, learner, and activity (including materials/resources). Resource-based learning is a view which gives prominence to the role of resources in the teaching and learning process. It is concerned with (Esch, 2004):

- the use of such materials,
- the principles that determine the selection and the organization of the content of learning materials
- technical and professional issues, which include
 - o the design and production of materials and the appropriate use of the various media
 - o classification issues for cataloguing

The classification theory of language activities determine different factors playing a role in their design and implementation: age of the learner, teaching approach, topic, form of cooperation, type of the activities, task, assessment, equipment, technical and other pre-requisites, etc. (Häussermann & Piepho, 1996, Neuner & Krüger & Grewer, 1981, Segermann, 1994).

Further classifications exist from the technical point of view (Felix, 2002, Rösler & Ulrich, 2003, Tiutenko & Koller, 2007, Westhofen, 2001), categorizing on-line activities: virtual classrooms, Hot Potatoes, WebQests, etc.

The classification theory lacks the user involvement and though remains to be the domain of experts rather than users. When teachers look for a learning activity for their teaching goal and specific target group, they want to find resources as quickly as possible, probably within three clicks (Clements & Krajcsó & Moises & Lazonder & Pirkkalainen, 2013, Pirkkalainen, 2013).

Considering the teachers' practice, it can be stated that practitioners search by learning activity type, topic and level, as these three factors seem to be the most informative and decisive. The rest of the factors build an additional information category (called advanced search) – but they are not a core for the first searching mechanism.

For a better understanding, these three key factors are described in the following paragraph. The most recently and commonly used guideline which describes the achievement *levels* of foreign language learners is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), containing six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. The required *topics* depend on the institutional purpose (curricula), the goal of the whole class and also each and every individual taking part in the course; and can reach from everyday life themes to complex special issues.

The last category *learning activity type* is much more demanding, as the concept of language teaching has changed radically during the last years. Whereas in former days, it was mainly characterized by written grammar and translation exercises, nowadays more skill-oriented activities are prevalent (Bausch, 2003, Richards & Renandya, 2002, Hinkel, 2006, DESI-Konsortium, 2008). This applies also for the context of school (e.g. Pinter, 2006). In the next chapter a complex classification of learning activities will be proposed.

2. Classification of learning activities

According to the “new” paradigm of language teaching, language learning activities, exercises and tasks - independent from the language - can be classified as follows (see also annex I. *Language learning classification*):

- Skills
 - o Active skills
 - Speaking
 - Writing
 - o Passive skills
 - Reading
 - Listening and watching
- Language use
 - o Grammar
 - o Vocabulary

When teaching a foreign language in class, it is essential to foster all four skills mentioned above (speaking, writing, reading, listening and watching). For this purpose, it is important to subdivide these rubrics into pre-, during- and post-activities. Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) explicitly suggest this subdivision only for the passive skill of reading and the active skill of writing. However, this sub-classification makes sense for all four skills.

According to the paradigm transformation in language teaching theory *language use activities* should be embedded in the activities of the skills. Here they build a separate element – as users are used to search materials with keywords grammar and vocabulary. Anyway they should be linked to the specific skill they refer to and in a later stage they could be completely integrated to the used skill.

At the beginning of a learning scenario, knowledge should always be activated or generated in some way, e.g. by brainstorming, researching, etc. This means that students can activate their prior knowledge or research a new topic before they start with the during-activity. This helps them in terms of focus and comprehension (cf. Young & Hoffer & Harris, 2011).

After the during-activity, which is going to be dealt with specifically for each skill in the following chapters, a post-activity can involve a reflection on the during-activity, e.g. students can discuss what has been dealt with in the during-activity with their peers, share content with other students, perform their finished work in class, etc. (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011).

2.1. Speaking

As already discussed, the active skill of speaking can be subdivided into pre-, during- and post-speaking activities. After knowledge has been activated in the pre-speaking activity, according to Young & Hofer & Harris (2011), the following oral performance activity types can be classified:

- Speaking / speech - individual students produce oral language in a variety of contexts, e.g. a book talk, a recitation, an interview, storytelling, etc.
- Performance / production - students participate in a collaborative production, e.g. a dialogue, a dramatic sculpture, etc.

Furthermore, the following categories can be added to the rubric of during-speaking activities (cf. Bolte, 1996):

- Discussing literary texts, culture and other topics
- Game tasks with different levels of complexity
- Instruction tasks
- Story telling

While the categories *speaking / speech* and *performance / production* can be regarded as during-speaking-activities, the category *evaluating or critiquing speech, performance or production* has to be classified as a post-speaking-activity as students reflect on what has been performed in the during-speaking activity.

2.2. Writing

As already mentioned, the active skill of writing can be subdivided into pre-, during- and post-writing activities (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011). The following activities can be classified as pre-writing activities:

- Brainstorming or listing - students write down ideas as they pop into their minds
- Doodling – students doodle or draw ideas they have in their heads
- Webbing, clustering, semantic mapping – students use webs or clusters in order to create visual representations of brainstorming efforts
- Researching – students explore resources that contain background information related to the topic they are going to write about

Apart from the subdivision *pre-writing activities*, Young & Hofer & Harris (2001) mentions the category *organizing ideas for writing activities*. However, these should also be regarded as pre-writing activities as generating knowledge takes place. The following sub-categories are mentioned:

- Sequencing, outlining, storyboarding – students organize their ideas for writing by creating sequences, outlines or storyboards
- Higher-order webbing or clustering - students organize their ideas for writing by creating higher-order webs or clusters in which there are subsections focusing on different characteristics or categories related to the larger topic

- Choosing form or genre - students organize ideas for writing further by deciding which genre and format they are going to pursue
- Identifying the purpose and the audience - students further organize their ideas by identifying a purpose and a target audience

Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) also regards (guided) freewriting as a pre-writing activity, but this should be classified as a during-writing activity (Bohn, 2011). Further *during-writing activities* are the following:

- Drafting - students begin to compose a draft of writing based on their pre-writing activities and ideas for organizing writing; during writing, they redraft and rewrite based on feedback from others and new ideas
- Conferencing - students conference (in person or online, through audio or video) with each other (with or without a teacher) to share writing and provide focused feedback for one another
- Revising - students revise the content of their writing based on feedback from their peers and their instructor, as well as their own ideas
- Editing - students edit their papers to address language conventions appropriate to the context of the piece of writing based on feedback from their peers, their instructor and their own knowledge of accurate mechanics, usage, grammar, and spelling
- Writing fiction - students engage in various writing activities, including fiction (e.g., short stories, graphic fiction, fan fiction, etc.)
- Writing nonfiction - students engage in various writing activities, including nonfiction (e.g., autobiography, diary, essay, news writing, letter writing, persuasive writing, etc.)
- Writing other forms of text - students engage in various writing activities including other forms of text (e.g., academic notes, poetry, screenplay, storyboard, multimodal, multigenre, multimedia, web-based text, participatory media, comic creation, texting, etc.)
- Note taking - students engage in note-taking by copying their teachers' notes from some type of display tool (i.e., chalkboard, projector, etc.) and note taking by creating their own metacognitive reflections in response to texts¹

In addition, Stevick (1976) mentions *establishing coherence* as during-writing activity.

According to Bohn (2001), during-writing activities can be classified as follows:

- Reproductive writing – the text read or heard is written down without any changes
- Reproductive-productive writing – the text read or heard has to be understood and changed according to a certain intention
- Productive writing – a text is created according to a certain intention that has been chosen by the student or given by the teacher

Another way to subdivide during-writing activities is the following (cf. Bohn, 2001):

¹ Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) regards *note taking* as *reading* activity, but as it activates the skill *writing*, it must be mentioned here.

² Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) mentions *consulting resources* as *writing* activity but as it activates

- Guided writing – the writing process is related to a text that has been read or heard (e.g. a dictation, a summary, etc.)
- Free writing – the writing process is not related to a text that has been read or heard

Furthermore, the following post-writing activities can be distinguished, which allow students to share their polished writing with an audience (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011, Stevick, 1976):

- Presenting relevant information
- Sharing - students share their finished pieces of writing with a smaller audience
- Publishing - students publish their finished pieces of writing in order to share processed writing with a larger audience
- Performing - students engage in performing their finished writing in order to share it with a specific audience.

2.3. Reading

As already discussed, activities focusing on the passive skill of reading can be subdivided into pre-reading activities, during-reading activities and post-reading activities. According to Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) the following pre-reading activities can be distinguished:

- Activating knowledge - students need to make connections with the reading they have to complete; by activating or generating prior knowledge and experience, students are able to frontload meaning and forge connections with their reading
- Making predictions - as a means of drawing upon existing knowledge and generating new connections with a text, students try to make predictions about texts they are going to read

After the pre-reading activity has been completed, the following during-reading activities can be carried out (cf. Ehlers, 2006, Meißner, 2013):

- Selective reading – students understand certain pieces of information
- Global reading – students understand the general idea of a text
- Detailed reading – students understand details of a text
- Orientating reading – students search and find a specific piece of information
- Aesthetic reading – entertainment and pleasure are important
- Content-oriented reading – students focus on understanding the content
- Analytical reading – students concentrate on a certain detail of the text
- Authentic reading – within a certain period of time, students read a text attentively and repeatedly; thus, a significant progress in the understanding of a text is achieved

Furthermore, the following during-reading activities can be distinguished (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011):

- Directed or guided reading - students are provided specific directions and guidance with a particular text that might range from setting a specific purpose for reading (e.g. to determine the reliability of the narrator) to a directed reading-thinking activity or a detailed guided reading roadmap (i.e., slow down here, skim this, reread here and take notes, skip this section, etc.)
- Sustained silent reading - students read to themselves silently for a required amount of time on a regular basis during school (selections here may vary from student choice to required reading)
- Independent reading - students create individual reading plans that involve reading chosen texts outside of school
- Rereading - students read a selected text several times for increased comprehension
- Dramatic reading / reader's theatre - students participate in and observe dramatic readings of text in order to enhance interest, motivation and comprehension
- Literature reading - students read texts associated with literary study (e.g., novels, short stories, poetry, plays, graphic novels)
- Literature study - students engage in the study of a piece of literature together simultaneously
- Literature circles or book clubs - students in a class are organized in small groups and read multiple books at the same time; selections can vary based on interest, ability, theme, content focus, etc.
- Nonfiction reading - students read texts associated with nonfiction (e.g., essays, news writing, autobiography or memoir, biography, instructional writing, diary, etc.)
- Reading other forms of text - students read other forms of texts, e.g. advertising, speech, screenplay, storyboard, web-based text, e-mail, text messaging, participatory media (blogs, wikis, social networking, etc.), multimodal texts, multigenre texts, comics, etc.
- Consulting resources - students explore and consult resources that might help them writing in some meaningful way (e.g., content, research, format, etc.)²

Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) also regards the following activities as during-reading activities, but these activities should be seen as *post-reading activities* as students reflect on what they have read in their during-reading activity:

- Reading discussions - students discuss a text with their teacher(s), their peers, and possibly authors, community members, parents, etc.
- Descriptive analysis - students engage in activities focused on a descriptive analysis of a text including conducting character analysis, creating character maps, comparison or contrast, creating story maps or pyramids, answering text-related questions, etc.
- Critical analysis or reflection - students engage in activities that focus on a critical analysis including applying literary theory or criticism, identifying multiple points of view, embedded values, propaganda, etc., making inferences, evaluating sources, relevance, credibility, validity, etc.

² Young & Hofer & Harris (2011) mentions *consulting resources* as *writing* activity but as it activates the skill *reading*, it should be listed here.

Furthermore, the following post-reading activities can be distinguished (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011):

- Completing scales - students complete scales and explain their choices in order to enhance their process and better understand texts, including making comparisons, recognizing differences, drawing conclusions, distinguishing between fact and opinion, etc.
- Summarizing - students summarize a text after having read it by distilling it into shorter pieces that represent key ideas, people, events, etc. (e.g. retellings, text reformulation, book reports, etc.)
- Quizzing, testing - students reveal their knowledge and understanding of a text through their responses on quizzes or tests
- Sharing and collaborating - students extend their understanding of a text by sharing and collaborating with others about their reading experience and what they have learned (e.g. book talks, book reviews, etc.)
- Discussion - students discuss a text after having read it with their teacher(s), other students, and possibly authors, community members or parents; the format might range from open-ended discussion to more structured examples like Socratic seminars or debates
- Reconstituting or reconsidering a text - students extend the meaning of a text they have read by reconstituting or reconsidering it in different ways (e.g., re-envisioning it from another character's perspective, re-writing the ending, adding to the text, story recycling, etc.)
- Creating text-related artefacts - students demonstrate their understanding of a text by creating various artefacts related to the content of their reading (e.g. literary essay, collage, bulletin board display, web site, movie, etc.)

In this context, the following categories can also be added (cf. Meißner, 2013):

- Making comparisons
- Finding information gaps

2.4. Listening & watching

As already mentioned, activities focusing on the passive skill of listening & watching can be subdivided into pre-listening activities, during-listening activities and post-listening activities. While pre-listening activities may involve *activating or generating knowledge* and *brainstorming*, the following during-listening activities can be distinguished:

- Listening actively – students listen actively and process the information heard in order to retain it, respond to it, act on it or apply it in some way (e.g. listening to and processing information from a lecture, listening to peers in a discussion, listening to multiple points of view, listening to directions or an explanation, listening to an audio-recording, etc.)
- Watching or viewing actively - students watch and process visual images (still or moving, silent or audio-enhanced) in order to create memories, learn from them, respond to them, or act on or apply information they have gained from them (e.g. watching or viewing images, exhibits, demonstrations, etc.)

- Multimodal or multimedia interaction - students listen, watch or view, and interact with or participate in (if applicable) multimodal or multimedia texts; they also process the experience they have gained in order to think, learn, respond, react, or apply knowledge or some aspect of their experience in some way (e.g. listening to a podcast and posting a response to it online either as text or as an audio comment, viewing a multimedia blog that includes digital video segments and then posting responses to various parts of the blog either as text or as digital video, viewing or listening to original audio or video recordings and then creating a remix of those recordings that include elements of the original plus elements the student generates on his or her own, etc.) (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011)

Besides, the following listening activities exist (cf. Solmecke, 2003):

- Selective listening – students perceive certain pieces of information
- Global listening – students understand the general idea
- Detailed listening – students understand details
- Analytical understanding – students understand the speaker’s conclusions, motives, intensions, etc.
- Recognizing - segmenting phonemes
- Understanding – students comprehend the global content of the text; they are able to align pictures to the information heard
- Listening / watching passively

After the during-listening activity has been completed, an *evaluation* of what has been heard (Solmecke, 2003) in the during-listening activity (e.g. a personal statement) can be carried out as a post-listening activity. This activity allows students to process critically what they have heard in their during-listening activity in order to make sense of it and respond to it.

2.5. Language use

2.5.1. Grammar

Grammar is one of many focus areas for studying a foreign language. In order to address language on a broader scale and in ways that go beyond just addressing notions of correctness, it is essential to give students opportunities to explore language, use it, compose it, analyse it and develop a better understanding (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011). In order to achieve these goals, the following activities can be carried out:

- Sentence composing - students build sentences by using sentence composing strategies (e.g., sentence combining, sentence imitation, sentence expanding, etc.) – this results in syntactic growth
- Code switching - students practice code switching in oral and written language, thus developing a better understanding of informal and formal speech varieties as well as the contexts in which each is most effective
- Word analysis - students analyse words in various ways, including origins, parts (e.g., roots, affixes, etc.), formations, functions (i.e., parts of speech), etc.

- Sentence analysis - students analyse sentences in various ways, including the identification of patterns and types, syntax and structure, phrases or clauses, effects of punctuation on style and meaning, etc.
- Style / error analysis - students analyse language to be able to distinguish between style and error (e.g. stylistic choices that break conventions vs. errors in language conventions, dialect choices vs. errors in language conventions, error analysis, etc.)
- Semantic analysis - students engage in semantic analysis in various ways to better understand simple and complex meanings in language (e.g., language as a symbol, abstract vs. concrete language, semantic disruptions, euphemism, etc.)
- Mechanics - students develop an understanding of mechanics in the context of language, especially reading and writing, and an ability to apply it (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, etc.)
- Usage – students develop an understanding of language use concerning reading, writing and speaking (e.g., usage varies based on context, purpose, audience, etc.)

Schifko (2006) mentions also the following activities according to the learning stages in the field of grammar:

- Implicit learning – students apply a rule without reflecting it and/or are able to decide whether a phrase sticks to a rule or not
- Explicit learning – students are able to explain a rule by using linguistic terminology and/or by using their own words

When teaching a foreign language, difficulties and confusions that traditional grammar exercises often cause have to be avoided - it is essential to teach grammar in a communication-oriented way.

2.5.2. Vocabulary

Vocabulary study can have significant effects on writing and communication. For this reason, it is important for students to have opportunities for developing awareness of, engaging in analysis of, and using new vocabularies. In order to achieve these goals, the following activities can be carried out:

- Vocabulary awareness - students engage in activities that allow them to acquire new vocabularies and develop awareness about various features of sets of words, e.g. similar consonant clusters, similar vowel sounds, similar root words, similar origins, words associated with certain themes, etc.; example activities may include sight words (e.g. word lists) and word play (e.g., crossword puzzles, word search, word matching, word lists, etc.)
- Vocabulary analysis - students analyse new and existing vocabularies in order to develop consciousness about core features of it and more sophisticated understandings about it (e.g. semantic maps, word study, word origins, context clues, use, using the dictionary, etc.)
- Vocabulary use - building on awareness and analysis activities, students use new vocabulary in various contexts in order to adapt it further, developing syntactic complexity and fostering semantic growth (e.g. using vocabulary

from word lists tied to literary works or other assigned texts, practicing with homonyms, antonyms, and synonyms, word play, etc.

These activities allow students to move from the acquisition of vocabularies to comprehension and application (cf. Young & Hofer & Harris, 2011).

3. From theory to praxis

Broadly summarized, the taxonomy presented in chapter 2 classifies language teaching and learning resources according to the four skills (speaking, writing, reading, watching) and two language-use activity types (grammar, vocabulary). This classification has been introduced also into the praxis recently. Here for the main reference has been chosen a teachers' resource site One Stop English (<http://www.onestopenglish.com/skills/>) since it provides a great number of resources for teaching English as a foreign language, almost 9.000; and it is published by one of the world's leading publishers of English language teaching materials.

One Stop English classifies language teaching and learning resources as follows:

- Skills
 - Listening
 - Reading
 - Pronunciation
 - News lessons (topical news lessons based on newspaper articles that are edited by expert authors and accompanied by pre- and post-reading activities)
 - Vocabulary
 - Speaking
 - Writing
 - Integrated skills (include tasks on different skills such as reading, listening, speaking and writing as well as language and vocabulary work)
- Grammar

Obviously, the taxonomy by One Stop English differs from the taxonomy proposed in this paper as vocabulary is not classified as a language-use activity type, but as a skill, and pronunciation is mentioned as a sub-category of skills on the same level as speaking, writing, listening and reading – it could be regarded as a subdivision of the active skill of speaking.

Moreover, the category “news lessons”, which is mentioned on the same level as speaking, writing, listening and reading, could be classified as a subdivision of the passive skill of reading as it involves pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading activities.

As One Stop English provides a skill-oriented classification of language teaching and learning resources, it is easy for teachers to find what they need. They can simply choose the skill(s) they want to focus on and start looking for material.

In various online repositories in the field of language teaching and learning, resources are categorized according to the learner's level, but within the levels, there is no further classification. There is a variety of material that are in large part categorized according to certain grammatical or conversational topics, but a number of resources first have to be opened in order to find out what they are about.

Numerous other online repositories for teaching and learning foreign languages often have categories like "lesson starters", "seasonal one-offs", etc. Within these sections, activities focusing on various skills, topics, conversation goals, etc. (e.g. matching idioms, vocabulary choices, various grammar topics, etc.) can be found.

This lack of categorization makes it difficult for teachers to find appropriate material for their teaching goals. They have to spend much time for looking through all the resources offered in order to find out if there is material that fits their purposes.

Designing a lesson should always be target and goal-oriented, i.e. right from the beginning it should be clear for the teacher as well as for the students what competences or skills are going to be acquired. Therefore, it makes sense to classify language teaching and learning resources skill-oriented so that teachers can easily find material for the skill(s) they look for. This proves the need for a clear and meaningful classification of resources.

4. Conclusion and outlook

E-learning has gained more and more importance in the field of language teaching during the last years. Nowadays the Internet is used as an idea pool to find appropriate material for teaching languages. However, teachers have to be prevented from getting overwhelmed by the mass of resources that can be found in the World Wide Web. It is crucial to support them to find exactly what they need for their purposes. This paper outlined the development of a language learning taxonomy that can be used for structuring language teaching resources according to the changing paradigm of language teaching. The classification of activities presented in this article can help teachers not to get lost in cyberspace. About 100 activities have been classified so far, but the number of the existing activities is much bigger. Further activities should be categorized according to the proposed classification and each and every activity should be exemplified to verify its category or subcategory.

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Annex I. Language Learning Classification

Reading	Pre-Reading Activities	Activating / Generating knowledge
		Making predictions
	During Reading Activities	Aesthetic reading
		Analytical reading
		Authentic reading
		Consulting resources
		Content-oriented reading
		Detailed reading
		Directed / Guided reading
		Dramatic reading / Reader's theatre
		Global reading
		Independent reading
		Literature circles or book clubs
		Literature reading
		Literature study
		Nonfiction reading
		Orientating reading
		Reading other forms of text
	Rereading	
	Selective reading	
	Sustained silent reading	
	Post-Reading Activities	Completing scales
		Creating text-related artifacts
Critical analysis / Reflection		
Descriptive analysis		
Discussion		
Finding information gaps		
Making comparisons		
Quizzing / Testing		
Reading discussion		
Reconstituting / Reconsidering text		
Sharing / Collaborating		
Summarizing		
Writing	Pre-Writing Activities	Brainstorming/Listing
		Choosing form / genre
		Doodling
		Higher-order webbing / Clustering
		Identifying purpose / audience
		Researching
		Sequencing / Outlining / Storyboarding

		Webbing / Clustering / Semantic mapping
	During Writing Activities	Conferencing
		Drafting
		Editing
		Establishing a coherence
		Free-writing / Guided free-writing
		Guided writing
		Note Taking
		Productive writing
		Revising
		Reproductive-productive writing
		Reproductive writing
		Writing Fiction
		Writing Nonfiction
		Writing Other Forms of Text
	Post-Writing Activities	Performing
		Presenting relevant information
		Publishing
		Sharing
Speaking	Pre-Speaking activities	Activating knowledge
	During Speaking activities	Discussing literary texts, culture and other topics
		Game tasks with different levels of complexity
		Instruction tasks
		Performance / Production
		Speaking / Speech
		Story telling
	Post-Speaking activities	Evaluating / Criticizing Speech / Production
	Listening / Watching	Pre-Listening activities
Brainstorming		
During Listening activities		Analytical understanding
		Detailed listening
		Global listening
		Listening / Watching actively
		Listening / Watching passively
		Multimodal or multimedia interaction
		Recognizing
		Selective listening
		Understanding
Post-Listening activities		Evaluating
Grammar		
		Explicit learning
		Implicit learning
		Mechanics
		Semantic Analysis

	Sentence Analysis
	Sentence Composing
	Style / Error Analysis
	Usage
	Word Analysis
Vocabulary	Vocabulary Analysis
	Vocabulary Awareness
	Vocabulary Use

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April 17-20, 2014 - ACTC2014 - The Fourth Asian Conference on Technology in the Classroom

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May 29 - June 1, 2014 - ACCS2014 - The Fourth Asian Conference on Cultural Studies

June 12-15, 2014 - ACSS2014 - The Fifth Asian Conference on the Social Sciences
June 12-15, 2014 - ACSEE2014 - The Fourth Asian Conference on Sustainability, Energy and the Environment

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October 28 - November 2, 2014 - ACSET2014 - The Second Asian Conference on Society, Education and Technology

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November 13-16, 2014 - FilmAsia2014 - The Third Asian Conference on Film and Documentary

November 20-23, 2014 - ABMC2014 - The Fifth Asian Business & Management Conference
November 20-23, 2014 - ACPEL2014 - The Second Asian Conference on Politics, Economics & Law

July 3-6 - ECSS2014 - The Second European Conference on the Social Sciences
July 3-6 - ECSEE2014 - The Second European Conference on Sustainability, Energy & the Environment
July 3-6 - ECP2014 - The Inaugural European Business and Management Conference
July 3-6 - EBMC2014 - The Inaugural European Conference on Politics, Economics and Law

July 9-13 - ECE2014 - The Second European Conference on Education
July 9-13 - ECTC2014 - The Inaugural European Conference on Society, Education & Technology
July 9-13 - ECSET2014 - The Second European Conference on Technology in the Classroom
July 9-13 - ECLL2014 - The Second European Conference on Language Learning

July 17-20 - EuroFilm2014 - The Inaugural European Conference on Film and Documentary
July 17-20 - EuroMedia2014 - The Inaugural European Conference on Media and Mass Communication
July 17-20 - ECAH2014 - The Second European Conference on Arts & Humanities
July 17-20 - LibEuro2014 - The Inaugural European Conference on Literature and Librarianship

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