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Culture and Identity in the Learning of Pragmatics during Studying Abroad: A Longitudinal Case Study

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Abstract
Studies have suggested that L2 learners are likely to experience noticeable development in L2 pragmatic competence during studying abroad owing to their exposure to rich, contextually appropriate L2 input and increasing use of L2 in communicative situations. Existing research regarding L2 pragmatic development in the context of study abroad shows two tendencies: investigations are usually focused on specific pragmatic phenomena and contexts; and L2 learning is usually assessed through comparison with language choices made by native speakers of the target language. This study aims to expand the knowledge in this field by shifting the focus: (1) from pragmatic forms chosen by researchers to moments of learning noticed and considered significant by learners themselves; and (2) from learners' approaches to the native-speaker standard to how they understand cultural meanings behind the L2 and use it to negotiate identity. Qualitative data were collected from five Chinese students in the UK throughout an academic year via semi-structured interviews and online chat. The findings indicate identity challenges that students face in daily interactions concerning L2 pragmatics; linguistic barriers and unfamiliar conventions in interpersonal communications might hinder them from expressing themselves and forming relationships in the way they desire. This process appears to be uncomfortable for some learners, but it seems differences and difficulties in L2 pragmatics nudged learners to go beyond linguistic forms to explore cultural meanings behind the language, which further triggers the development of intercultural awareness.

Keywords: Study Abroad, L2 Pragmatics, Learner Identity, Intercultural Communication

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Introduction/Background

Pragmatics, a subdiscipline of linguistics, focuses on how meaning is communicated and interpreted in specific contexts and how language is applied to fulfil social purposes and negotiate interpersonal relationships (LoCastro, 2012; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Canale (1983) was the first to include sociolinguistic competence within the model of communicative competence in using a language, which refers to the ability to use appropriate language in related situations. Bachman (1990) later proposed the term 'pragmatic competence' as one of the factors to evaluate the communicative competence of language users, parallel with one's grammatical and textual abilities.

Unlike syntax, which can be explained using written standards, pragmatics somehow resembles the 'secret rules' of a language, rarely articulated explicitly, yet acting as a tacit agreement between the majority of members in a community (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). The use of pragmatics involves assessing the specific context of the situation, including social distance, power relations, and appropriateness in both meaning and form (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008; Niezgoda & Röver, 2001; Young, 2011). Unlike grammatical flaws, which might portray L2 speakers as less proficient L2 users, pragmatic misunderstandings could reflect negatively on one as a person and lead to judgements along moral dimensions, such as being impolite, arrogant or insincere (O'Keefee et al., 2011; McConachy, 2018).

The interdependence of linguistic and cultural knowledge forms the core of pragmatics (Taguchi & Roever, 2017), which could be seen from the widely accepted distinction between the two components in the field: pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. Thomas (1983, p. 101) positions the two notions at the two ends of a continuum from being 'language-specific' to 'culture-specific'. The former refers to specific linguistic forms 'conveying pragmatic meaning (illocutionary and interpersonal)' (p.77), while the latter is concerned with one's evaluation of the sociocultural conditions within which the conversation takes place, such as social distance between participants and the cultural conventions of a community (Marmaridou, 2011). One's sociopragmatic judgement, therefore, is usually mediated by cultural meaning and understandings of social relationships accumulated through experience in previous communities (Kesebir & Haidt, 2010; McConachy, 2018; Spencer-Oatey & Kádár, 2016).

Based on the concepts introduced above, it could be concluded that the development of L2 pragmatic competence suggests not only learners' increasing language proficiency but also a growing awareness of contextually appropriate forms, an ability to present themselves and manage interpersonal relationships in desired ways in L2, and an understanding of cultural ideologies underlying linguistic forms (Diao & Maa, 2019). Hence, the study-abroad (SA) context has been suggested as a favourable environment for the development of learners' pragmatic competence in the target language. One factor contributing to such development is increasing L2 input in meaningful, contextually appropriate contexts, which fosters unintentional language acquisition and provides resources for deliberate learning (Jackson, 2019). In addition, new subject positions appearing in the target language communities can stimulate learners to reflect on their L2 language use in maintaining interpersonal relationships and thus gain pragmatic awareness (Block, 2009).

Existing research in L2 pragmatic development in the SA context shows two obvious patterns. First, previous studies have tended to focus on learners' improvement in one specific speech act or pragmatic phenomenon within a chosen context. One example is Shively's (2011) study, which investigates requests made by SA Spanish learners during counter service, with

conversation data collected from recordings. Second, most researchers in this field have assessed learners' pragmatic improvement in simulated situations, such as Discourse Completion Tasks and role plays, before evaluating learners' progress by comparing their performance with native-speaker (NS) norms. For instance, Ren's (2019) project focused on SA Chinese learners' requests. Role-play data were collected from L2 Chinese speakers and compared to Chinese native speakers' performances in the same tasks.

However, it is worth mentioning that what researchers take an interest in might not necessarily be what learners consider important in their learning and sojourning experience. I would therefore argue that data collection within a limited scope bears the risk of restricting researchers to the prescribed agenda, while at the same time neglecting critical moments related to L2 pragmatics that learners themselves notice, that cause them confusions or difficulties, that trigger sense-making and reflections, and that are considered meaningful and influential by learners in self-development.

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, learning L2 pragmatics not only involves acquiring linguistic norms but also how learners interpret the sociocultural meaning of language use and how they employ L2 pragmatics to manage social relationships and express desired identities more flexibly and freely. However, merely focusing on learners' approaches to NS conventions may disguise learners' inner struggles during L2 pragmatic use, their interpretation of meanings behind the form, and their identity investment in language choices (Ishihara, 2019; Li & Gao, 2017; McConachy, 2019). Some empirical studies have suggested that L2 learners sometimes intentionally reject native-speaker pragmatic norms, especially when the form is inconsistent with their sense of self. An example is Kim's (2014) research focusing on L2 pragmatic use among Korean SA learners sojourning in the United States. Some learners in this study refused to respond to compliments with the phrase 'thank you', even if they reported noticing such use by local American students, as they felt it conflicts with the humbleness emphasised in their home society.

This study, therefore, approaches L2 pragmatic development during SA from a different perspective, aiming at expanding existing knowledge in this field through shifting the focus: (1) from forms or contexts chosen by researchers to moments of pragmatic learning noticed by learners themselves in L2-mediated interactions; and (2) from learners' approaches to the native-speaker standard to their self-presentation through the language and their understanding of the cultural meanings behind the language. The research question is: How does L2 pragmatic learning relate to the sense of self and intercultural awareness of study-abroad students?

Methodology

Participants in this project were five students learning in a UK university for a one-year postgraduate course. There were four females and one male, aged between 22 and 32, all five from mainland China and speaking Mandarin as their native language. They had all attained English at C1 advanced level at the start of their year studying abroad (IELTS 6.5-7.5); however, before studying in the UK, none of them had sojourned outside China. Four of them also reported a lack of opportunities to use English in communicative settings in both classrooms and daily life in their home country. All of them participated in this research voluntarily, and they all signed written informed consent. Pseudonyms have been incorporated for all the participants and other names or information that could reveal their identities.

The instruments used in this study to generate data were online chat and semi-structured interviews, with the data collection lasting a total of 12 months across one academic year (October 2019 – December 2020). For online chat, the researcher first introduced the term 'pragmatics' with the definition in layman's terms and examples. The participants were then encouraged to share details of their daily encounters and conversations related to L2 pragmatics with the researcher through either voice or text messages via WeChat, a social media app widely used by mainland Chinese. Participants were told that they could report experiences they found interesting, stimulating, confusing or even awkward, and that the content could relate to specific linguistic forms and/or cultural factors impacting communication. The researcher sometimes asked questions based on stories shared by the participants and occasionally dropped messages asking about participants' SA lives. The whole process for the participants resembled informal exchanges with a friend, in the hope that an atmosphere of relaxed, casual conversation would encourage participants to share more about their pragmatic learning and express their thoughts freely.

The main aim of employing online chat as a data collection method was to capture learners' noticing of learning in daily interactions. One of the advantages of online chat is its immediacy; learners could record the details of their experience and their immediate reactions right after it happened. Moreover, it gives access to data unobservable through other data collection methods, such as recordings and observations. Online chat was also used as an optimised alternative to diaries or learning logs; it is less formal, more interactive and requires less time to use, and it is therefore considered a less demanding task for participants. In addition, the storytelling process is reflexive, and thus offers participants an external observer perspective through which to comprehend their experiences and themselves (Finlay, 2003).

The five interviews were evenly distributed over the 12 months, each lasting 30 to 90 minutes, and all in the semi-structured form following a flexible agenda. Semi-structured interviews were adopted in the belief that it encourages participants to express their thoughts freely or bring up topics that interested them without feeling constrained by the structure, while at the same time helping to avoid the possibility that participants stray away from the research topic (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013). Prompt questions were designed to probe further into participants' perspectives in relation to the research question based on experiences they shared via online chat, which was why the duration of interviews varied, as sometimes students experienced more L2 contact, which provided more resources for discussion during the interview.

Qualitative data were transcribed, organised and coded for thematic analysis. I first read each participant's stories intensively, trying to approach data without established hypotheses in order to explore each person's distinctive development trajectory and look for connections and patterns across both time and social space within the same case. Next, I compared and contrasted individual cases to find differences and common patterns and to see whether their narratives were consistent with, or provide counter-evidence to, existing theoretical frameworks. The following section will present three themes that appeared from data analysis.

Findings

Table 1 presents the amount of data generated from each participant. As easily observed in the table, some of them were more active in online chat than others, and the difference was mainly due to the varying amounts of exposure to L2-mediated interactions and learners' willingness to share. Tina, for example, proactively expanded connections with other English speakers and specified that she enjoyed chatting with me, as she felt sharing stories helped to distract her

from academic pressure and to develop in-depth understanding of the world. Despite the differences in word quantity and sharing frequency, each research participant provided rich and relevant data. This section will introduce three themes identified from qualitative data collected from both interviews and online chat, each supported and explained by one example.

Participants	Interviews	Online Chat
Chloe	4 times, 191mins in total	12,400 words
Tina	5 times, 174mins in total	37,000 words
Win	5 times, 232mins in total	2,700 words
Hanguang	5 times, 228mins in total	3,300 words
Mary	5 times, 168mins in total	2,400 words

Table 1: Qualitative Data Generated from Online Chat and Interviews

Theme 1: Identity Inconsistencies behind L2 Pragmatic Struggles

The first theme is concerned with struggles in L2 pragmatics shared by all the participants, despite differences in their English proficiency levels. It appears that difficulties reported usually went beyond the language itself and were related to identity negotiation and interpersonal relationship management. 'Identity inconsistencies' here refer to the cases in which SA students hoped to establish connections, negotiate relationships or present themselves in a certain way while failing to achieve that goal. A case in point is Win's small talk experience with a stranger before a workshop:

Win: Everyone in the room was chatting… I asked the Belgian guy next to me: 'Shall we talk? Everyone is talking. I feel a bit awkward.' He said he didn't mind remaining silent, and he didn't feel awkward. His response made me even more awkward.

Researcher: Did you chat with him because everyone was chatting, and you felt you were obliged to chat? Or you really wanted to talk with him?

Win: Yes, it's just because everyone was talking. I didn't know why they were talking. I would feel more comfortable just sitting there silently. I think I started the conversation with an awkward question.

Researcher: You preferred to sit there and remain silent. Is that because Chinese don't usually talk in this kind of situation?

Win: Yes. I didn't know what to do when all of them, who were strangers to each other, just started talking.
(Interview: December 2019)

This failed attempt at small talk seems to be a result of Win's lack of pragmatic knowledge about starting and maintaining casual conversations with strangers. It seems Win was not aware of either the communicative purpose of the small talk or L2 pragmalinguistic resources suitable for the context. One reason, as Win has pointed out, is that she had rarely done small talk with strangers in her L1 society, and therefore she had barely acquired the sociopragmatic skills required for this genre that she could refer to when encountering this situation. It also suggests that she had received only limited instructions or support on L2 pragmatics related to daily communication. All these factors combined contributed to the failed attempt to reach out and her struggles in identity negotiation. By starting the conversation, it seems Win hoped to project herself as a friendly and sociable person and attempted to integrate into the L2 speaking community through imitation; however, it appears that she was interpreted in a different way by her interlocutor.

Theme 2: Transcultural and Translanguaging Coping Practices

Theme two summarises cases where participants proactively engaged previous knowledge and experience acquired in different languages and cultural communities to interpret new pragmatic use and respond to unfamiliar situations. The prefix 'trans' here refers to the flexibility in language and cultural practices, whereby learners 'move through and across, rather than in-between, cultural and linguistic boundaries' (Baker & Sangiamchit, 2019, p. 472). The following clip from Tina's online chat data, in which she shared her experience of being invited to a Polish family to celebrate Christmas, is a good illustration of transcultural and translanguaging practices:

Tina: I didn't know how to address my friend's mother-in-law when I first arrived. My friend told me I could call her 'Helen'. However, I felt Polish people are relatively conservative, and it would be blunt if I just called her Helen. My friend calls her 'Mom'. I then also called her 'Mom'. I didn't mean that she is my mom. For me, it's like how we call older people 'Aunt' in China to show politeness and respect, but my friend told me I couldn't call Helen 'Mom', so I started to use her name again.
(Online Chat: January 2020)

It could be seen that Tina also struggled with self-presentation in her interactions with the Polish lady, as elaborated in Theme 1. Similarly, the difficulty she experienced was caused by unfamiliarity of the pragmalinguistic conventions followed by the target language community. However, the interesting finding that I would like to highlight in this case is Tina's elucidated decision-making process. Her initial assumption about modes of address, which later proved to be inappropriate, was based on the fusion of her knowledge of different languages and cultures. The use of 'Mom' illustrated her attempt to show respect to her senior in this context, which she considered appropriate within the Polish society. At the same time, she borrowed and adapted expressions from her L1 used in similar situations to achieve the communicative purpose. In other words, her language choice here was influenced by both pragmalinguistic conventions in her L1 society and her general impression (or perhaps stereotypes) about the sociocultural background of Polish people. Similar transcultural and translanguaging coping practices were reported by other participants, which will not be presented here due to the space limit. These cases demonstrate how SA learners creatively and flexibly engage cultural and language knowledge when attempting to decode new sociocultural encounters, even though this can lead to wrong assumptions and sometimes to further misunderstanding.

Theme 3: Meaning behind Language - Developing Cultural Inclusiveness

It seems that SA learners are more likely to notice new pragmatic features that deviate from conventions followed in their previous communities, which can be seen in the two data clips presented earlier. Rather than adopting or rejecting the new form intuitively, most participants reported a rationalisation process when encountering unfamiliar forms, in which they tried to understand the cultural meaning behind different language uses and behaviours. Their reflections and analysis can then foster their understanding of differences and greater empathy. One example is Tina's reflection at the end of the year about the changes that happened to her while participating in this study:

Tina: I think my identity, I mean from the cultural perspective, has changed a bit. First, I'm not viewing cultures as binary oppositions anymore. I used to make comparisons and reach conclusions like 'Culture A is better than culture B on a certain aspect', but I've realised there are deeper things under the surface, under our intuitive good/bad evaluation.
(Online Chat: September 2020)
Many cases could be found among Tina's L2 pragmatic learning experiences during the year that exemplify her general reflection on her change of cultural awareness and identity. See the example below:

Tina: The Polish are more direct when they express their feelings. Before Christmas dinner, each of us had a pancake on the table, and we walked around, took pieces from others' pancakes, kissed and hugged each other and said blessings. I feel this is impossible in a traditional Chinese family. We tend to express ourselves more implicitly. I think it has something to do with our traditional arts. We (Chinese) like the beauty of being implicit and hazy. In garden design, for example, we like those kinds of designs where people are surprised by nice views when looking through a door, rather than letting everything be exposed explicitly. For them (the Polish), it seems more important to be direct about expressing their feelings… I like their way of expressing love, though. I believe the care people have for their families are the same in both countries. If we have these feelings, why don't we simply tell our loved ones? I feel sometimes we are too implicit, and it causes unnecessary misunderstandings between families and partners.
(Online Chat: January 2020)

Although Tina mentioned no specific linguistic forms, I still decided to categorise her reflection here as pragmatic learning, as she was analysing different ways to communicate meanings and to use language in relationship management, which is consistent with the definition of pragmatics provided at the beginning of this paper. It could be seen that Tina went beyond the surface of linguistic/behavioural practices to investigate in-depth sociocultural meanings that lay behind the disparity. She creatively rationalised the implicit way to express affection, which she commonly experienced in her L1 society, by explaining the consistency between self-expression and aesthetic preference. At the same time, she recognised the positive impact of expressing affection directly in intimate relationships in her experience with the Polish family. Through this process, Tina developed understanding and empathy for both cultures and language communities, which contributed to her growing intercultural awareness and sense of inclusion.

Moreover, it seems that this new pragmatic feature not only triggered L1/L2 comparisons but also encouraged Tina to re-evaluate, and finally changed her previous pragmatic choice. Behind the change lay Tina's new preferred way to express herself and negotiate intimate rela-

tionships. Therefore, it could be argued that pragmatic-related reflections triggered Tina's identity change and development not just as a L2 speaker but holistically as a SA learner and a person.

Discussion and Conclusion

The initial objective of the project was to identify the connection between SA learners' L2 pragmatic development and their evolving sense of self and intercultural awareness. Evidence indicated identity challenges students face in daily interactions concerning L2 pragmatics, as linguistic barriers and unfamiliar conventions in interpersonal communications might hinder SA learners from expressing themselves and forming relationships in the way they want. This finding supports the significance of L2 pragmatic competence highlighted in previous literature: unlike grammatical flaws, which might portray sojourners as less proficient L2 learners, pragmatic misunderstandings can influence learners' abilities 'to do things with words and to function as a person' (Benson et al., 2012, p. 183).

This process appears to be uncomfortable for some learners, but it seems differences and difficulties in L2 pragmatics encourage learners to proactively engage their linguistic and cultural repertoires in order to interpret and cope with unfamiliar situations. The meta-pragmatic analysis reported by learners themselves indicates their translanguaging and transcultural competence in communication – to be more specific, their ability to move beyond cultural and language dichotomy and flexibly mediate between structures. Such competence is considered important especially in the context of English as a lingua franca (ELF), in which the language is used by the global community (Baker, 2011). In the ELF environment, sociocultural references of language become more fluid and diverse. The new reality thus requires speakers of the language to negotiate intercultural communication 'in a flexible and context-specific manner' (p. 202). However, the research findings also suggest that learners' attempts to decode meanings in intercultural communication using resources acquired from previous experience might sometimes lead to wrong assumptions and further misunderstandings.

Another interesting finding is that noticing and analysing pragmatic differences sometimes trigger SA learners to reflect on and even reshape their established values. Mathews (2000) used a 'supermarket' metaphor to explain this process; people moving from their original society to an intercultural zone are like those going from local shops to supermarkets. More types and sizes of goods are available, stimulating them to compare their initial options with new possibilities. There seem to be two possible consequences: consumers either changing their minds or staying with the original choice. For SA students, the case might be more complicated than the either/or situation — they could form unique perspectives through which they interpret cultures and languages and develop a communication style without fully conforming to conventions from either home or host culture (Blackledge & Creese, 2017). The process might also help develop learners' intercultural awareness and sense of inclusion (Kinginger, 2013). It could be thus concluded that pragmatic-related reflections could trigger not only language learning but also the holistic development of SA learners as people.

The study also generates insight into how institutions and tutors might help international students find their place in their adopted communities through providing pragmatic-specific support. Many SA learners in the UK come from countries where English is a foreign language and not used in daily communication. For them, expressing themselves and establishing connections in L2 can be challenging. Their interaction with the L2 community can raise awareness of their lack of pragmatic knowledge. Nevertheless, the support that most students receive from

their university is only related to their academic subjects. As a result, they have to deal with the frustrations and confusions of daily L2 communication using their own resources. Through probing into the SA experience from the students' perspective, this study highlights the necessity of pragmatic-related support in SA preparation courses and the higher education context.

In terms of teaching practice, this study suggests the necessity for teachers to familiarise learners with the connection between forms and meanings in the L2 community, more specifically, to help learners understand how specific actions can lead to certain communicative effects (Padila Cruz, 2015). This could equip students with the competence to express themselves in the way they want and prevent them from unintentionally presenting themselves negatively (e.g. being rude or insincere). More importantly, instructors should assist SA learners in unpacking the cultural and interpersonal meanings behind sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic forms, in order to scaffold learners' development not only as L2 speakers but holistically as reflexive and culturally aware individuals during studying abroad.

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Blended Learning Between Success and Catastrophe in Third World Countries: IKR as a Case

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Abstract
Despite destructive impacts on Health and economy, COVID19 brought humanitarian disaster, especially for education and learning. Social distancing gave prospects to find an alternative method for students to get connected to their academic modules and educational procedures. Educational technology and e-learning are fundamental system to progress controlling over time, place and pace. Blended learning (BL) is one of the most up to date techniques which has been used in Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) since the spread of the virus, to mention that, this method has not been applied or practiced before. University of Raparin (UoR) and University of Garmian (UoG) are sticking to the same plan (BL) to keep lecturing during pandemic stretch. This paper focuses on the quality and quantity of learning in such poorly organised environment. The method of the research is experimental. Questions have been given to students of UoR and UoG/ English departments. The data has been collected and illustrated in charts. The final figures assert that online educational materials cannot accomplish the process of BL. Also, it is not a satisfactory method for those that have never been trained or prepared for such a plan which has been generalised by the Ministry of Higher Education (MHE).

Keywords: Blended Learning, COVID19, educational techniques, technology, Third World

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Introduction

Globalisation or the process of integration is a complex and difficult term to define for scholars (Syamalamma and Reddy, 2009:14). It has affected every area of human existence. People's communication, the philosophy of teaching, education, learning techniques and technology have had giant footsteps toward the progress of prosperity. Education is one of the most affected sectors in the latter decades of the 20th century. The expansion of information technology and the method of teaching have provided a new environment for the effective and efficient implementation of learning settings. Hickman (2007) adds that communication between students and teachers has become much simpler than traditional methods.

In the last two decades, the internet has had a great impact on higher education and has helped develop a new methodology of teaching and learning. Graham (2003) details the accessibility of internet developed the educational choices available to learners and lecturers. Iraqi Kurdistan is an autonomous region in Northern Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government is the official administrative of the autonomous area. The wave of COVID-19 in Iraq and especially the IKR has prompted the Ministry of Higher Education to introduce a pathway for instructors and learners to continue studying without interruption. The MHE declared an alternative method for the pandemic period and issued an instruction that BL was to be undertaken for educational purposes. The full order was issued on 27th September 2020 and referenced 8728. At this time, BL was a technique and scheme that was new to lecturers and students in this region.

Alongside the Bologna system, the BL approach has been applied to UoR and UoG across 2020-2021. Despite lecturers' salary cuts "out of law by constitution" to cope with an economic disaster by the KRG and the pandemic crisis, the educational procedure finalised with hitches (Ghafuri, 2020). Arguably, it is clear that BL is vital as it breaks down the traditional barriers of instruction. Some of these ways are not suited to all learners and modern day access to updated resources and technology can make educational learning skills more accessible for each learner (Humaira et al., 2018:31).

If BL would be regarded as a progression of tutoring mechanism (Krasnova, Popova, 2015:4), thus in IKR is a compulsory approach to fill that gap which the virus has imposed on the educational system. The official statements of the government confirmed that the reputation of BL has not persuaded the KRG to apply it as a success method, but they deal with it as a justification to pelt the instructors' salary cuts and the pandemic crisis especially in education fields (Ghafuri, 2020).

Third World

The term "Third World" dates back to 1955 when Alfred Sauvy used it in a conference. It has since become a widely used term. Politicians and economists have diverse views on this notion. Though an adequate definition has yet to be developed. The Chinese presented the theory of the "three worlds". The "First World" was founded by the dual Soviet-American supremacy, the "Second World" consisted of the Western European States, China, Japan, Australia and Canada. The rest of the world is listed as developing countries and is described as the "Third World" (Bedjaoui: 1979).

According to Langley (1981:1), the term “Third World" is commonly used to describe less developed areas, underdeveloped stated, developing areas. It has ambiguously become associated with various subjects. For example, it can refer to certain states or countries which developed as a result of the “anti-colonial revolution” of the post-World War II period. However, the history of Latin-America rejects this view as some countries fought their anti-colonial revolutions over 150 years ago. For others, the term refers to a certain geographical identification.

Despite numerous classifications for Third World Countries, poverty, human development, economy and press freedom are the keys to examine a nation and categorise into different lists. In accordance with Jangiz, at the commencement of the pandemic in Iraq, the rate of the poverty increased %31.7. Likewise, %94.7 of income of the republic gets from oil sales (Jangiz, 2021).

Thus, Iraq is a country which can be considered to possess the characteristics of a third world country. The Republic of Iraq has neither economic nor political stability. It also meets the characteristics of under-developed, less-developed and undeveloped areas. Langley (1981:27) concludes that the condition of structural poverty guides the meaning of the concept of “Third World Countries”.

Blended Learning

Despite its reputation, BL is still a new technique in education. The concept of BL has been defined in several ways by researchers, but all of them agree that it is a cohesive learning practice which is led and controlled by the instructor in both procedures of face-to-face communication and IT or virtual presence (Bryan and Vochenkova, 2016:28). Graham (2006:5) states that BL system is a mixture of computer mediated instruction and face-t-face instruction.

This system claims transformation of outdated teacher into a tutor, who becomes guider or coordinator, as well as an indirect source of information and knowledge (Krasnova and Popova, 2016:4).Bonk and Graham (2006:6) use the following diagram to provide a convenient and comprehensive guide to BL in the past, present and the future.

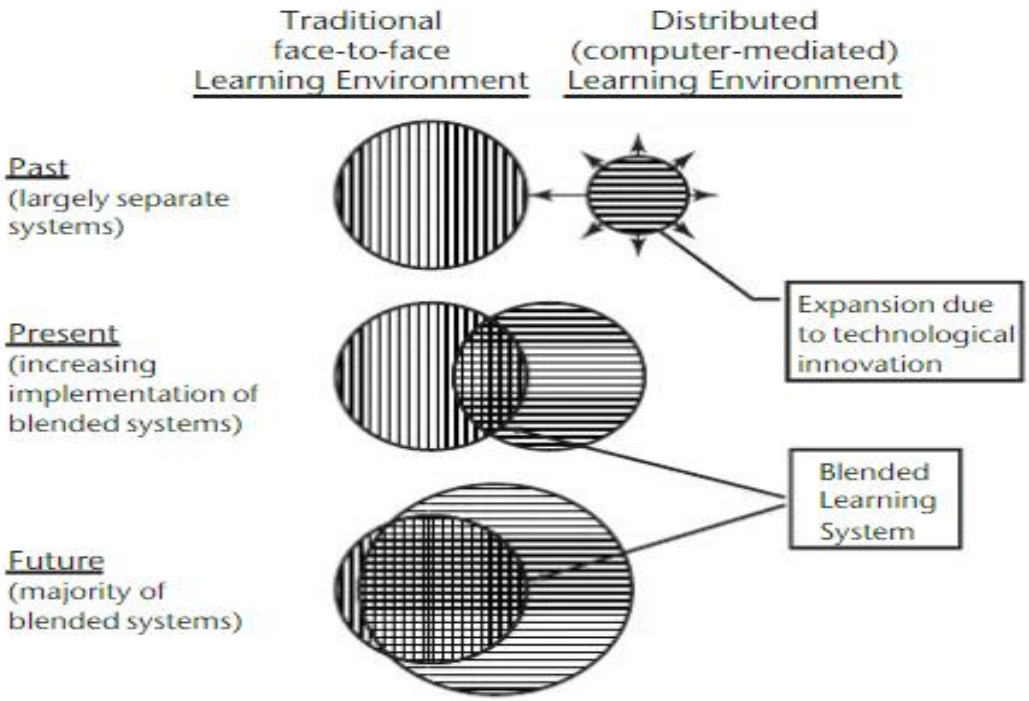

Figure 1: Graham's Diagram of BL

The figure shows the progression overtime of the merging between the outdated learning environment and distributed learning environment. He notes that the BL system will consume traditional face-to-face learning and produce an integrated system in the future. In other words, the future will be owned by BL.

Lalima and Dangwal (2017:130) explain their theory via Figure 2 and believe that BL consists of a blend of traditional teaching and supported teaching. They argue that face-to-face classroom teaching, formal interaction with classmates and teachers as well as non-formal interaction with classmates are the foundation of traditional learning methods. Whereas supported teaching embraces online individual learning, computer assisted learning, offline individual learning and online group interaction.

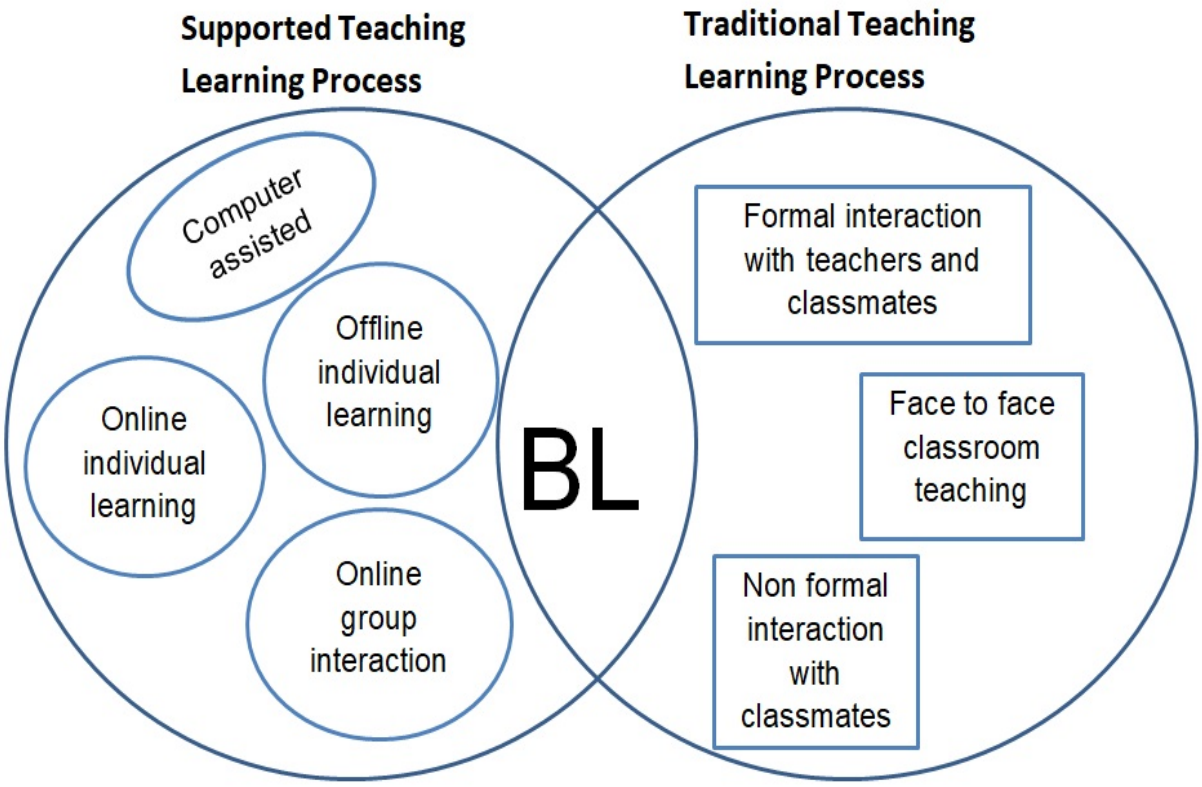

Figure 2: Lalima and Dangwal's Theory of BL

Research Method

This study examines IKR university undergraduates and involves a large-scale data collection. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for the purposes of this study. The outcome of the quantity approach has been used to support the quality of BL as either a successful or failed method IKR's higher education system. A survey methodology has been selected for this paper. The respondents were asked eight questions. The questions were distributed online via a Google survey. The form link was uploaded for participants in Google Classroom and they were given five days to respond. The survey was issued to first year English department students within the UoR and UoG. This equated to 228 students. The response rate was 67.9%.

Data Analysis

Table 1 details the participant responses. The survey results are presented in statistical mode. Students were asked if they knew the name of the system by which they were learning during the pandemic. 31.60% responded positively. However, Table 2 shows that only 19.3% of the participants were able to provide the correct answer of BL. In summary, a total of 80.7% of the participants did not know their studies had continued under the BL scheme. The success of BL was rejected by 58.70% of students and only 4 out of 155 respondents thought that the system was suited to learning during the pandemic.

Only 20% of the students considered themselves to have prepared for continuing their learning under the system and only 6.5% had taken part in courses or workshops to assist

them in using the system. The responses given around the materials provided to assist with continuing this style of studying would suggest that the MHE and universities haven't made provisions to adopt this system as the preferred method of studying. 23.20% of respondents stated they could overcome the obstacles of the studying process during the pandemic with the remainder having varying degrees of difficulty. Choosing the "Sort of" option highlighted a level of ambiguity between "Yes" or "No" than slightly knowing. When the students were asked about the name of the system, 52.30% students answered "sort of" and 31.60% answered "yes". However, Table 2 shows that those who knew the correct answer only totalled 19.3%. Hence, "sort of" is more likely to suggest a "no" rather than "yes" answer.

Questions	Yes		No		Sort of	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Do you know, which style of study did you continue your academic year during Corona Virus?	**49**	**31.6 %**	**25**	**16.1%**	**81**	**52.3%**
Do you think this system of studying is successful for the situation of Covid19?	**4**	**2.6%**	**91**	**58.7%**	**60**	**38.7%**
Have you prepared for continuing your study in the current system which your college or university is following?	**31**	**20%**	**76**	**49%**	**48**	**31%**
Have you participated in any course or workshop in order to be able to use this system of studying?	**10**	**6.5%**	**136**	**87.7%**	**9**	**5.8%**
Does your university or college prepare learning needs and requirements so as to continue this style of studying, that you have gone through during Covid19?	**28**	**18.1 %**	**51**	**32.9%**	**76**	**49%**

Were you able to overcome the obstacles that you faced while applying this style to your study?	**36**	**23.2 %**	**31**	**20%**	**88**	**56.8%**

Table 1: Participants' Responses for the Questions

The rate of accuracy regarding the name of the system does not match the first question in table 1. There are various titles delivered which cannot be listed in a graph or table.

Question	Blended Learning		Online Studying		Electronic Studying		Others	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
What is the name of this style or system of studying?	30	19.3 %	33	21.2 %	13	8.3 %	79	50.9 %

Table 2: Participants' Responses for the Name of the Learning System

The final question was multiple choices which students could pick 5 options out of 6 to demonstrate the barriers or reasons that affected BL process as a method of learning. 55.48% of respondents did not consider BL to be a suitable atmosphere for studying and therefore considered it to be a giant barrier to undergraduates. Poor internet connection and no computer are also highlighted as obstacles for students being able to progress their learning through the BL system.

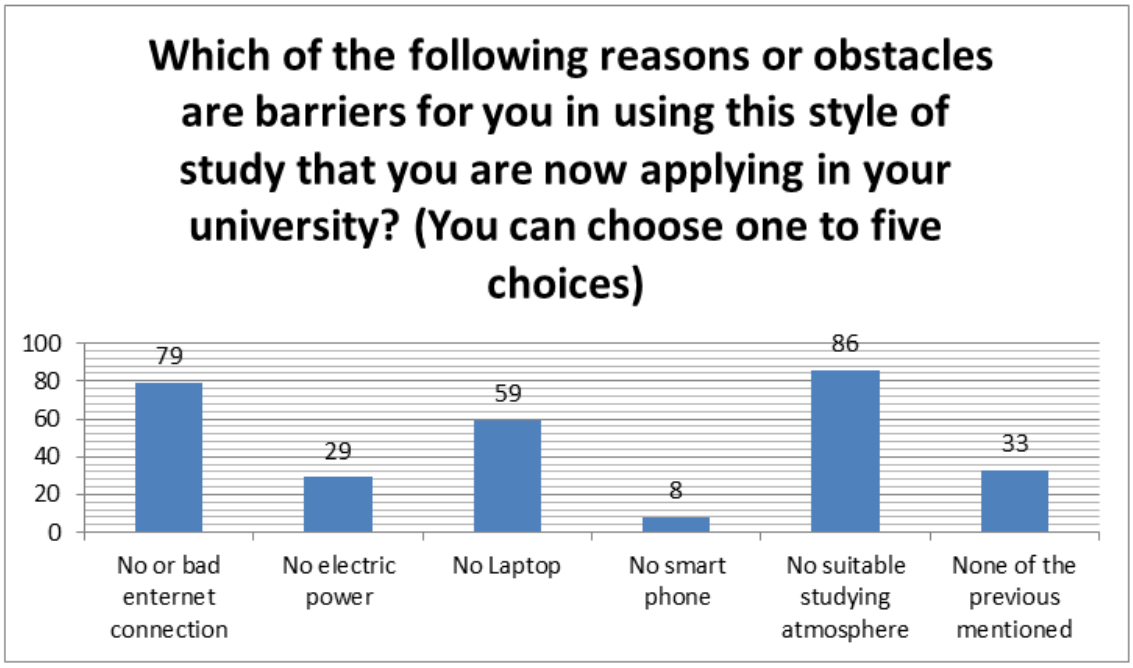

Chart 1: The Barriers or Obstacles Which Affected BL System

Conclusion

This study highlights diverse views on BL. In very short explanation, it combines traditional teaching and supported teaching by technology. The IKR is an area that can be found amongst a group of Third World countries (Jangiz, 2021). This paper concludes that BL has not been applied successfully to improve learning methods and the quality of education. It is offered to cover the absence of the classrooms' attendance during a national lockdown in the IKR. The survey responses support the argument that the MHE and universities in the Kurdistan territory have not set up an adequate academic atmosphere for the BL system. In addition, students' responses confirm that they accessed the system with no prior information or knowledge, nor have they received any courses or workshops to help integrate them into it.

Only 19.3% of students know the exact name of the system, 2.6% of them confess that this system is beneficial and 18.1% claimed that their university has not been equipped to focus on that scheme. Those low rates declare that BL is not an alternative process in Kurdistan for recent situation.

According to Lalima and Dangwal (2017:130), computer assisted, online individual learning, offline individual learning and online interaction group are the significant keys of BL. However, the answers provided in Chart 1 highlight a lack of learning tools and materials such as laptops, electricity and dropping internet connection which are required for the successful implementation of BL, as presented in Figure 2.

Although BL is a qualified method for elevating educational level, which is both time and cost efficient. In the IKR it would be a catastrophe way for recent generation who are ruled and obligated to follow the MHE's statement.

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BRANEN and BRANES Corpora

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Abstact
This paper presents two learner corpora built to investigate anaphora across learning environments: the *Brazilian Learners of Anaphora in English* (BRANEN) and the *Aprendices Brasileños de Anáfora en Español* (BRANES). Texts were written by language undergraduate students during an online course on anaphora, offered at a Brazilian University in 2020. The corpora provide insights for the analysis of the learning process of anaphora in English and Spanish by Brazilian Portuguese native speakers with intermediate-advanced level in the foreign language. Informants are 30 English and 15 Spanish learners, who were randomly divided into three sub-groups: one group that had two synchronous lessons on anaphora; another that had two asynchronous lessons; and a control group that did not take any lessons. Each participant wrote 100-150 words as a conclusion of a short story. The exercise was performed in four moments: before the course started, after the first lesson, after the second lesson, and a month after the course ended. The texts are available on *Sketch Engine*, a corpus manager and text analysis software, and contain information about the participants' group and testing moment. The BRANEN corpus was automatically part-of-speech tagged with the *Modified English TreeTagger* and has 120 documents, 1,069 sentences, and 1,678 lemmas. For BRANES corpus, the *Spanish FreeLing tagset* was used, and it consists of 60 documents, 543 sentences, and 1,299 lemmas. The *Concordance* tool was used to retrieve sentences with pronominal and zero anaphora, which were then manually and independently annotated by two anaphora experts.

Keywords: Anaphora, BRANEN, BRANES, Learner Corpora, Learning Environments

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Introduction

This paper presents two new learner corpora built to investigate the learning of anaphora: the *Brazilian Learners of Anaphora in English* (BRANEN) and the *Aprendices Brasileños de Anáfora en Español* (BRANES). They are available on *Sketch Engine* and are necessary to consider the learning environment as a variable when analysing the learning of anaphora by Brazilian learners of English and Spanish.

Anaphora is an important cohesive mechanism (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), and its knowledge is indispensable for communication in the language. Instead of overusing nominal repetition, as in (1a), speakers can use pronouns (1b), or ellipsis (1c), to refer to the antecedent in the text. While zero anaphora (1c) is commonly used in English in coordinate clauses with the same subject, it is more used in Null Subject Languages (Chomsky, 1981; Rizzi, 1982) as Portuguese and Spanish.

(1a) *Anna*i *wakes up every morning and Anna*i *goes to work.*
(1b) *Anna*i *wakes up every morning and she*i *goes to work.*
(1c) *Anna*i *wakes up every morning and Ø*i *goes to work.*

There are some corpora built specifically to investigate anaphora, such as *OntoNotes* (Pradhan *et al*., 2007), *Anaphora Resolution and Underspecification* (Poesio & Artstein, 2008), *WikiCoref* (Ghaddar & Langlais, 2011), and *Zero Anaphora Corpus* (Baptista, Pereira, & Mamede, 2016). However, they are not learner corpora.

Learner corpora are necessary in Linguistics to give insight on what learners really produce in the target language. Although there are also several of such corpora, as the *International Corpus of Learner English* (Granger, 2003), the *Multilingual Learner Corpus* (Tagnin & Fromm, 2009), and the *Corpus Escrito del Español L2* (Lozano & Mendikoetxea, 2013), they usually do not consider the learning environment in their compilation.

MiLC (Andreu *et al*., 2010) is a multilingual learner corpus that contains written synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication texts. It was used to analyse interlanguage errors in online teleconferences and emails and, though it considers synchronous and asynchronous communication, it does not consider the learning progress in different learning environments.

The BRANEN and BRANES corpora were developed as part of a PhD research aiming at analysing the effectiveness of distance learning modalities to teach anaphora in foreign languages. Thus, texts were collected during a short online course offered to language students. To analyse the effectiveness of the course, participants were randomly divided into three sub-groups: one group that had two synchronous lessons on anaphora; another that had two asynchronous lessons; and a control group that did not take any lessons. The method of data collection and information about participants will be detailed in the next section. Then, the corpora will be described.

Method

Once the learner corpora available usually do not consider learning environments within the criteria guiding their compilation, we have planned a distance course on anaphora to collect

learners' written texts and compile the corpora we needed for our research on the learning of anaphora.

A two-week distance course on the subject was taught in the first semester of 2020 to undergraduate students with a major in English or Spanish at a Brazilian university. After the informed consent was obtained, students answered a grammar questionnaire with 20 questions from Cambridge University or Cervantes Institute assessment questionnaires (equally distributed among levels A2, B1, B2, and C1) to check their proficiency level in the target language. Only those with an intermediate-advanced level attended the course.

A total of 45 learners participated in this longitudinal study. The majority is female (73%) and the median age was 20 years old (they were between 18 and 41 years). Most of them studied English (67%) at the university and were in the third semester (62%) of their bachelor's degree. The others studied Spanish and were in the fifth semester.

For each language, participants were randomly divided into three sub-groups: one group that had two synchronous lessons on anaphora; another that had two asynchronous lessons; and a control group that did not take any lessons. The university e-learning platform (Moodle) was used for the lessons. Each synchronous lesson used videoconference for 90 minutes; for asynchronous lessons, short videos, texts, discussion forums, and automatic exercises were used. The course design is further detailed in Bruscato and Baptista (2021).

The proficiency test results are presented in Table 1.

Language	Group	Mean	Standard deviation
Spanish	Asynchronous (N=5)	15	2
	Synchronous (N=5)	15	2
	Control (N=5)	14	5
English	Asynchronous (N=10)	14	3
	Synchronous (N=10)	12	4
	Control (N=10)	13	5

Table 1: Proficiency Test Results

Students wrote narratives with 100-150 words to conclude short stories and submitted their text files on Moodle. The task was planned to control the possible antecedents in the texts. To track learning over time, the exercise was performed in four moments: before the course started, after the first lesson, after the second lesson, and a month after the course ended. Table 2 presents the four stories' human antecedents.

	English	Spanish
Test 1	John, Mary, twins Joseph, Ana, parents Witch, neighbour	Juan, María, gemelos José, Ana, padres Bruja, vecina
Test 2	Luke, Louis, brothers Liz, mother	Lucas, Luís, hermanos Liz, madre

	Ariel, person	Ariel, persona
Test 3	Matthew, Laura, couple Manuel, Leonard, fathers Father Augusto	Mateus, Laura, pareja Manuel, Leonardo, padres Fray Augusto
Test 4	Alice, Helena, friends, neighbours Other girls Anthony, classmate	Alice, Helena, amigas, vecinas Otras chicas Antonio, compañero de clase

Table 2: Human Antecedents

The corpora are available on Sketch Engine[1] (Kilgarriff *et al*., 2004), a corpus managing and text analysis software, and they include metadata about the participants' group (asynchronous, synchronous, control) and testing moment (1, 2, 3, 4). The Sketch Engine corpus query system was chosen because it is used by linguists, teachers, and students all over the world and also because the European Lexicographic Infrastructure project will provide all academic institutions in the EU free access to the software, at least until 2022.

The BRANEN corpus has 120 documents and was automatically part-of-speech (POS) tagged with the Modified English TreeTagger, while the BRANES corpus has 60 documents and was POS-tagged with the Spanish FreeLing tagset. In the next section, some results from the corpora will be presented.

Corpora

We have mainly used two Sketch Engine tools to analyse the corpora: Wordlist and Concordance. Wordlist was used to reveal the most frequent nouns in the corpora, which, as expected, are the antecedents presented in the first part of each story. We have checked the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient to compare the nouns used by the asynchronous (Asyn), synchronous (Syn), and control (Cont) groups. As Table 3 shows, there was a moderate-to-high correlation.

	English			Spanish		
	Asyn-Syn	Asyn-Cont	Syn-Cont	Asyn-Syn	Asyn-Cont	Syn-Cont
Test 1	0.619	0.684	0.721	0.787	0.807	0.743
Test 2	0.663	0.749	0.734	0.717	0.872	0.710
Test 3	0.630	0.682	0.686	0.739	0.780	0.666
Test 4	0.656	0.681	0.674	0.832	0.831	0.704
All nouns	0.720	0.772	0.747	0.771	0.780	0.689

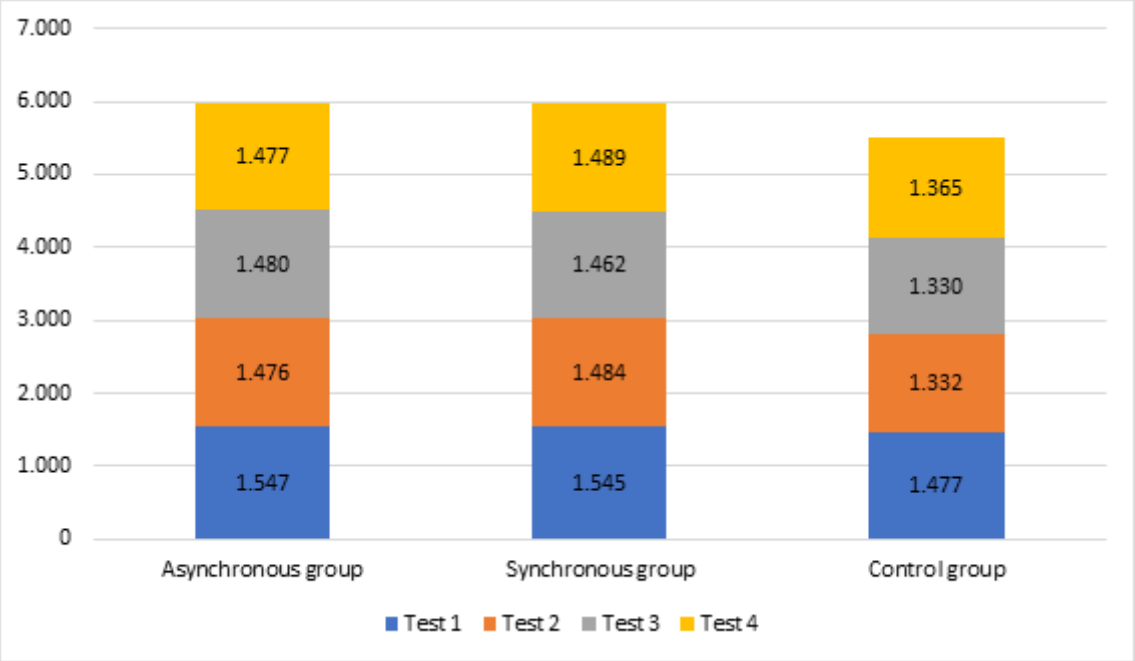
Table 3: Spearman-coefficient

BRANEN

The BRANEN corpus contains texts written by 30 English learners in 4 moments of their learning process. In total, it has 1,069 sentences, 1,678 lemmas, 2,242 unique words, 17,454 words, and 19,934 tokens. Graph 1 shows the breakdown of the total number of words by each group -- asynchronous (Asyn), synchronous (Syn), control (Ctrl) -- and in each test (1, 2, 3, 4). The relative size of each group across tests (1 to 4) is highly correlated: Pearson(Asyn,Syn)=0.968, (Asyn,Ctrl)=0.927, and (Syn,Ctrl)=0.970. The same holds for the

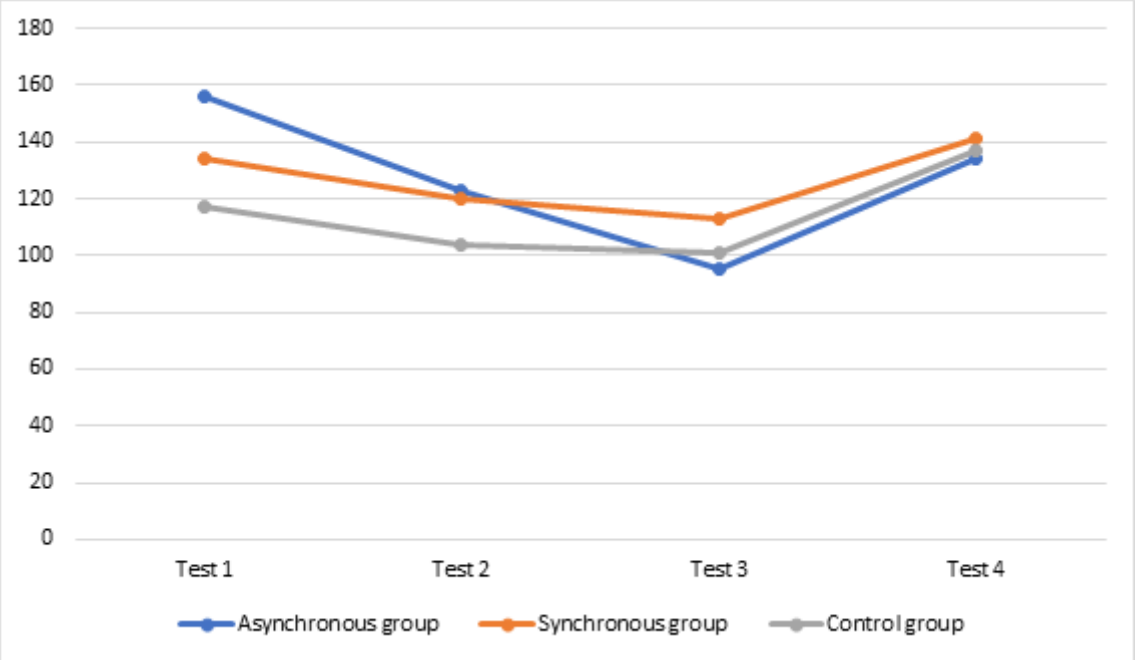
[1] www.sketchengine.eu

relative size of each test across groups, ranging from Pearson (T3-T4)=0.980 to T2-T4)=0.999. Although the control group wrote slightly less words than the other groups, the difference was not significant. This was already expected, since participants were told to conclude each story with between 100 and 150 words.



Graph 1: BRANEN Word Distribution

We then checked if there was a difference in the use of pronominal anaphora among groups over time. Thus, we have checked the frequency of subject pronouns in the corpus, as they can be distinguished for their case. The results are presented in Graph 2. The synchronous and control groups have similar results, with a slight reduction in the use of subject pronouns until Test 3 and an increase in Test 4, which was completed one month after the end of the course. For the asynchronous group, there was a significant decrease until Test 3, but again an increase in Test 4. It is possible that the asynchronous group learned how to replace the pronouns with ellipsis or nouns, throughout the course, as it will be shown below. This trend, however, was not kept, as the data from Test 4 shows.



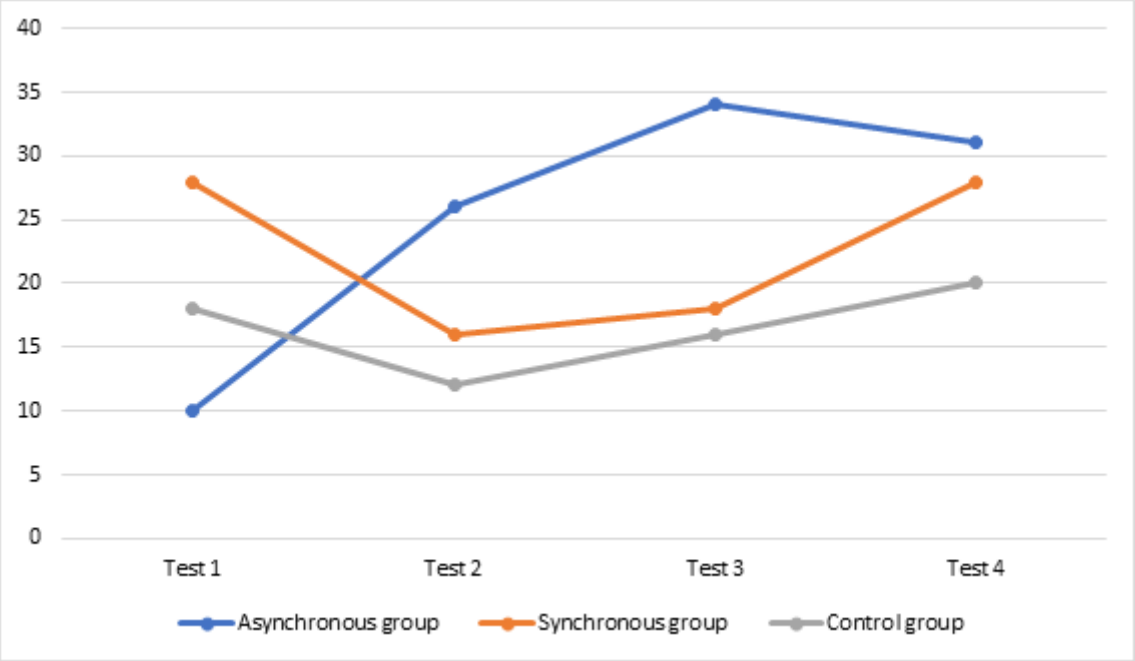
Graph 2: Subject Pronouns Frequency

An initial study was also carried out with the Sketch Engine tools, to compare the use of different types of anaphora over time, using the Concordance Corpus Query Language (CQL). The frequency of nominal, pronominal, and zero anaphora in coordinate clauses was considered. Coordinate clauses were chosen because they allow ellipsis in the subject position, a phenomenon that has been explicitly addressed during the course. At this time, only sentences with a coordinate conjunction [tag="CC"] were retrieved, when followed either by a noun [tag="N.*"] or a personal pronoun [tag="PP"] and then a verb [tag="V.*"]. Ellipsis was captured when the verb immediately follows the coordinate conjunction. Results are presented in Table 4 and, as Graph 3 highlights, there was an increase in the use of zero anaphora by the asynchronous group.

Group	Test	Nominal anaphora	Pronominal anaphora	Zero anaphora
Asynchronous	1	4	6	10
	2	8	6	26
	3	8	3	34
	4	10	10	31
Synchronous	1	7	6	28
	2	9	5	16
	3	11	7	18
	4	13	10	28
Control	1	8	4	18
	2	9	4	12
	3	13	8	16

	4	11	5	20
Total		111	74	257

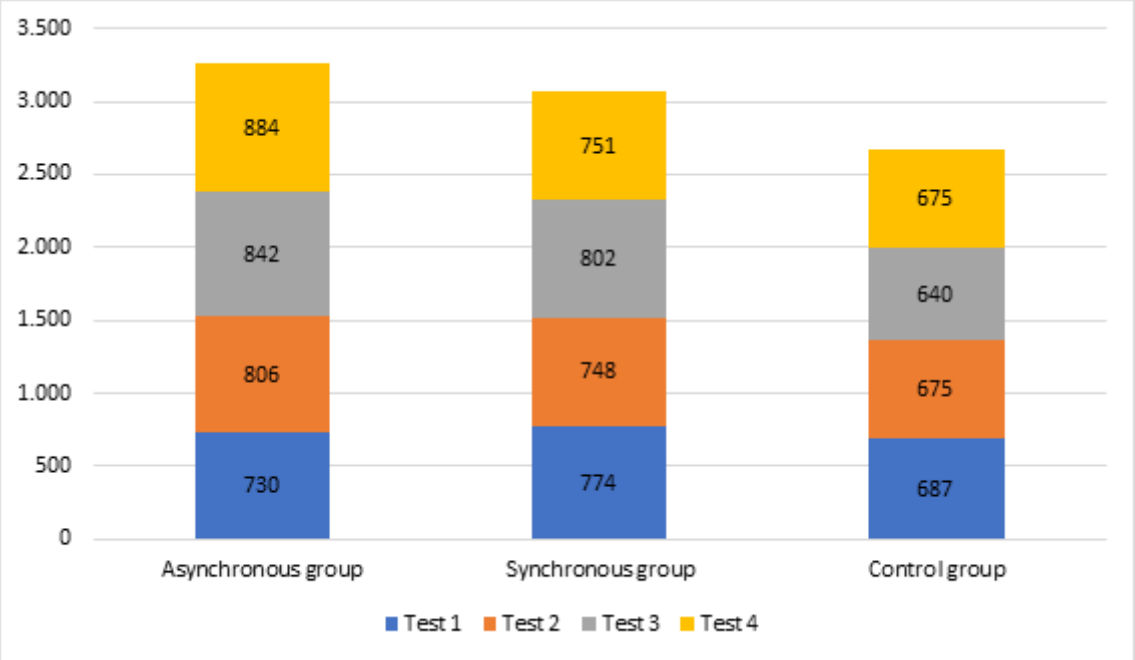
Table 4: Subject Anaphora Types in English Coordinate Clauses



Graph 3: Zero-Anaphora Subjects in Coordinate Clauses

BRANES

The BRANES corpus contains texts written by 15 Spanish learners in 4 moments. In total, it has 543 sentences, 1,299 lemmas, 2,095 unique words, 9,021 words, and 10,233 tokens. Graph 4 shows the word distribution for each group in each test. The number of written words constantly increased for the asynchronous group. While the asynchronous group wrote more than the others, the control group wrote less.



Graph 4: BRANES Word Distribution

As with BRANEN, Wordlist and Concordance were used to check the frequency of nominal, pronominal, and zero anaphora. When we searched specifically for subject pronouns, only 126 occurrences were found in the whole corpus. Due to the small number, their use over time was not analysed here. When we look directly to subject anaphora in coordinate clauses, as Table 5 shows, it is clear that learners predominantly use zero anaphora. In this matter, they behave like native speakers, probably because Portuguese and Spanish are both Null Subject Languages.

Group	Test	Nominal anaphora	Pronominal anaphora	Zero anaphora
Asynchronous	1	0	0	7
	2	2	0	8
	3	1	0	5
	4	2	0	7
Synchronous	1	3	2	10
	2	1	0	9
	3	1	0	8
	4	0	2	11
Control	1	1	0	9
	2	1	0	5
	3	3	0	9
	4	4	0	7
Total		19	4	95

Table 5: Subject Anaphora Types in Spanish Coordinate Clauses

Ongoing Analysis

After these preliminary results, the human subjects in the corpora were annotated using Recogito annotation tool[2]. This software was chosen because it allows us not only to annotate words and phrases, but also to establish unilateral (oriented) relations between them. Besides, it is freely available online and it is possible to involve multiple annotators in the task. One can also export the results into csv files and make the corpora available to the public.

Figures 1 and 2 show narratives written by English and Spanish learners in the first test. The anaphors and their antecedents are highlighted in different colours according to their category (proper nouns, common nouns, pronouns, or ellipsis). To annotate zero anaphora, we have marked the corresponding verbs (which are also highlighted). The anaphoric relations between the anaphors and their antecedents are established as intra (*in*) or trans (*tr*) sentential. In the examples below, we can see that, while the English learner does not use null subjects, the Spanish student does not use subject pronouns.

[2] https://recogito.pelagios.org/

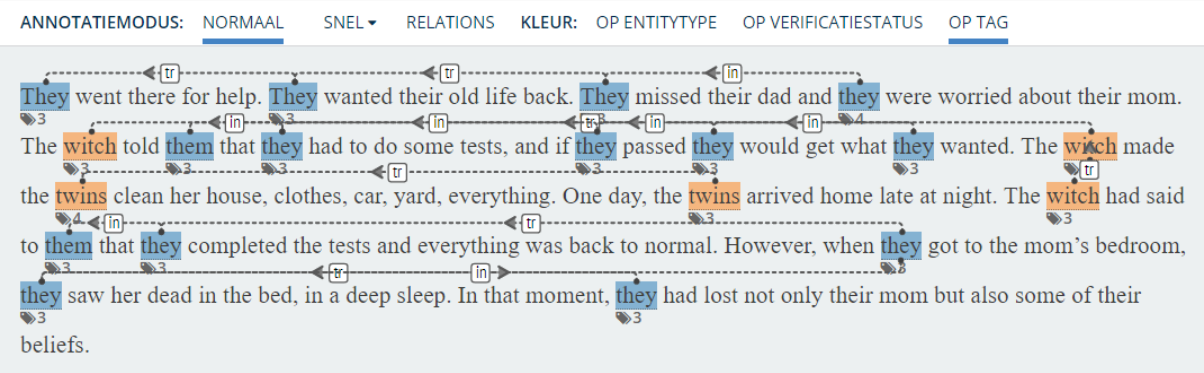


Figure 1: Subject Anaphora Annotation in English Narrative

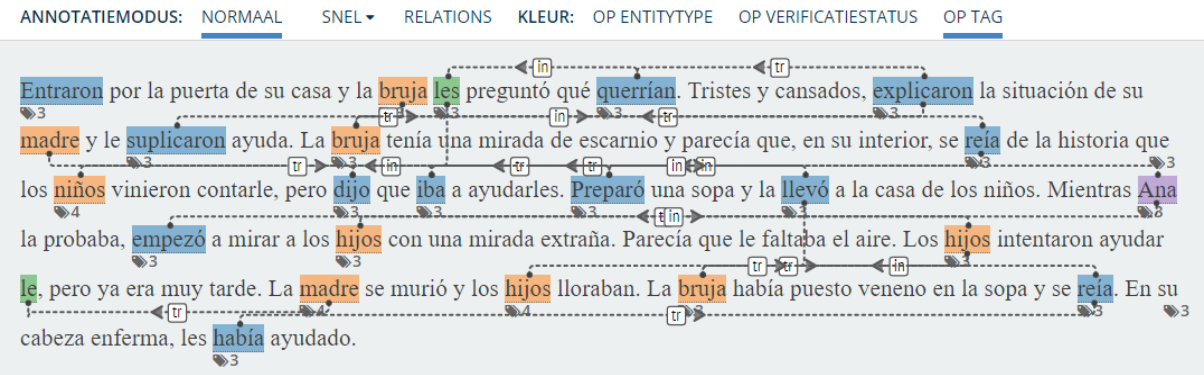


Figure 2: Subject Anaphora Annotation in Spanish Narrative

To check the consistency of the annotation, part of the corpora received a second, independent annotation, following a set of comprehensive guidelines, and then were compared for assessing inter-rater agreement. The analysis of the annotation will be discussed in a future paper, where we will also compare learners' texts with natives' texts for the same task. After the publication of the results, we will make the annotation available to the public.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to present BRANEN and BRANES, two new longitudinal learner corpora built to investigate the impact of the distance synchronous and asynchronous learning of anaphora in English and Spanish. While describing the corpora, we were also able to share some preliminary results.

Since Portuguese and Spanish are both null-subject languages, learners already used ellipsis since the first test. In English, however, those who participated in the asynchronous course learned that it is better to use ellipsis in coordinate clauses with the same subject than to repeat the noun or pronoun.

The asynchronous group performed better probably because they had to write more during the course, while participating in written discussion forums. On the other hand, the synchronous group participated orally during videoconferences. It is possible that, if we had included spoken data, evidence could have been gathered showing that the synchronous group had performed better in this respect.

In this study, we have focused on written data and have analysed only subject anaphors. A future step would be to include spoken data from the video recordings and to investigate other anaphors. Hopefully, this first version of the corpora will help other researchers, teachers, and learners to better investigate and understand the learning process of anaphora in foreign languages.

Similar initiatives can also be undertaken focusing on other linguistic phenomena pertinent to L2 learning, for example, adverb placement (Rankin, 2010).

BRANEN and BRANES are available on Sketch Engine and contain metadata about the participants' group and testing moment. After we conclude the annotation analysis, the corpora will also become available to the public on Recogito.

The results here presented, though preliminary, show that considering the learning environments in learner corpora studies is certainly a relevant variable. To the best of our knowledge, BRANEN and BRANES are the first corpora to take this factor into account in their design.

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Making Students Engaged in Improving Their English Writing Skills - A Case-Study from a Norwegian Upper Secondary School

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Abstract
Research has shown that Norwegian upper secondary school students struggle with various aspects of writing English texts as required in the curriculum. To support a group of vocational students to improve their English writing skills, a five-step method has been applied, that facilitates for self-regulation and emotional support in the learning process. The method is based on self-determination theory claiming that the basic needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness must be met to achieve intrinsic motivation. This is a pilot study investigating what students perceive stops them from succeeding with writing good texts in English, and what strategies they choose to apply to solve these challenges. The students reflected on the following questions individually and in class discussions: 1) What is important for you to learn to succeed with writing in English, and why? 2) What are you good at already that helps you write in English? 3) What is difficult and prevents you from writing in English? 4) What will you focus on improving the next few weeks? and 5) What specifically will you do to manage this? The results show that some of what stops the students is lack of motivation and insufficient vocabulary, and several students express a need to practice writing. Some students find good solutions to dealing with their obstacles, for example how to expand their vocabulary, but the majority struggle to find appropriate strategies. The study shows that to make students engaged in improving their English writing skills, extensive guidance is needed.

Keywords: English Writing, Motivation, Language Learning Strategies, Self-Regulation

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Introduction

Creating an engaging and motivational language learning context may be a challenge for teachers, particularly when it comes to writing, as students may not see the immediate need for being able to write proficiently in another language. When requirements are high, which is the case when it comes to the English subject in a Norwegian, educational context, this may be demotivating for students. An important aspect of language learning is how to facilitate for motivation through learning conditions. Some of the motivating aspects emphasized by the well-known professor of psycholinguistics, Zoltán Dörnyei (2001), are to develop a personal relationship with the students, create a positive and supportive atmosphere in the classroom, promote group cohesiveness and build confidence through regular encouragement. These are important aspects in the study presented here, reporting on an intervention where a five-step method for mastering language learning was applied, with a specific focus on improving English writing skills.

According to the English curriculum for Norwegian schools, students in upper secondary school are supposed to 'write different types of texts with structure and coherence suited to the purpose and situation' and 'understand and use an extensive general vocabulary and an academic vocabulary related to one's education programme' (The Norwegian Directorate for Educationd and Training, 2020, p. 10). This is the curriculum for the obligatory English course for both vocational and general studies students. The expectations in the exam are the same for all students, whether they choose general studies or vocational studies after lower secondary school. They are expected to write an informative, a narrative or an argumentative well-structured and coherent text, and they are to prepare on a specific topic one day in advance and use sources in the exam, which lasts for five hours. Succeeding with this type of writing exercise requires different types of language competence; linguistic competence to get the grammar and language right, sociolinguistic competence, to meet conventions of the communicative situation given in the task, and pragmatic competence, to understand what is expected in terms of style and structure of different text-types (Council of Europe, 2003).

For many vocational students meeting the requirements when it comes to writing in English may be quite challenging, as they are perhaps more practically oriented than general studies students preparing for university. There may be exercises more suitable for vocational students, for example focused on presenting values or behaviour in a future profession, in contrast to exercises aimed at general students, where they typically are to discuss literary characters from English stories, or some social issues. Even though there may be different exercises to choose from, teachers and censors have an underlying expectation that the students write a text that complies with the requirements of a five-paragraph essay (Horverak, 2016), and this type of formal writing may be challenging for students. Some of the features Norwegian students struggle with when writing English texts are to get the structure right, to ensure that the argumentation is thorough, to use sources in a sensible way and to adjust the language to purpose and situation (Horverak, 2018).

The current study investigates: *What stops students from succeeding with English writing, and how can teachers facilitate for making them engaged in improving their writing skills?* To answer this question, an intervention was carried out to identify what students themselves perceive as obstacles, what strategies they apply under guidance from teachers, and whether this helps them improve their writing. The method applied is quite similar to approaches described in the literature of self-regulation, where students are to identify problems, examine and plan solutions and monitor their own learning (Boekaerts & Niemivirta, 2005). The

current study is a pilot study with participants from one group, and it is a further development of a previous study, applying the same five-step approach with a more general focus on language learning (Horverak, Aanensen, Langeland, Olsbu & Päplow, 2020). The method is based on Ryan & Deci's self-determination theory (2017, 2000).

According to Ryan & Deci's self-determination theory, meeting the basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness supports the development of intrinsic motivation (2017, 2000), which is an important aspect of language learning (Dörnyei, 2001). Motivated learners seek new situations to explore and learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The basic need of competence is often related to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, meaning belief in one's own abilities to plan and carry out actions to achieve goals (1997, 2006). Being active in one's own learning process may lead to increased self-efficacy, which again may lead to succeeding with self-regulated learning, or autonomy in the learning process.

Autonomy-supportive learning environments that emphasise choices have been documented to promote both motivation and good performance (De Naeghel et al., 2012; Jang et al., 2012). In the context of language learning, a quite recent meta-analysis also conludes that having a feeling of control over one's own learning process leads to motivation (Lamb, 2017). Research has also shown that the feeling of relatedness may lead to motivation in language learning contexts (Chang, 2010; Koga, 2010). The current study aims at exploring how teachers can make students engaged in overcoming their own obstacles and improving their English writing skills, by applying a method aimed at meeting the needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness.

Methodology

This study is part of an action research project, developing and adjusting a five-step method for mastery and motivation to various learning contexts. This approach includes identifying what is important, success factors, obstacles, choosing focus areas and making an action plan (see figure 1).

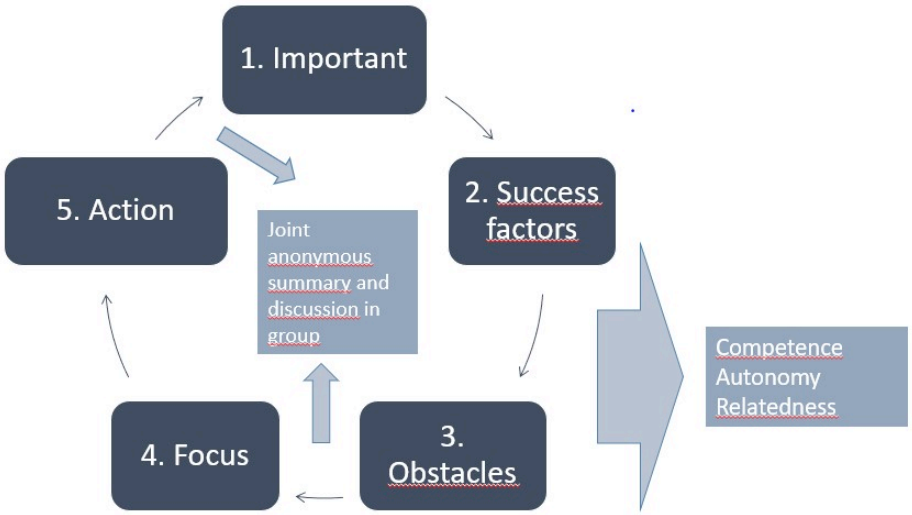

Figure 1. The Five-Step Method (Previously Published in Horverak & Aanensen, 2019; Horverak, 2020).

The study includes qualitative data, consisting of students' reflections in logbooks and pre and posttests from before and after the intervention including the five-step method. As pretest, the students were told to write an essay and discuss: What is important in your future job as a paramedic? What typical obstacles and challenges do you have to deal with at work? What personal qualities are important to succeed in this job? They were told that the essay should contain an introduction, a body and a conclusion, and a suitable heading. The posttest was a rewriting of chosen elements of the pretest. Examples of changes from pre to posttest will be given in the result chapter. The analysis of the student reflections focuses on what the students perceive to be their obstacles and what they choose as focus areas and strategies in their action plans. The sample consists of 13 paramedic students in their second year of a vocational study programme, meaning they were 17-18 years old.

Intervention

To introduce the five-step method, the teacher invited the students to discuss how they feel about learning English, using imagery of two different staircases, one with too large steps and one with more appropriate steps. The students evaluated whether learning English feels like climbing too large steps, or whether they manage to absorb knowledge step by step. Do they feel comfortable in the learning process? It is important that the students realize that an appropriate plan, or individually created strategies for how to work on the subject, in this case writing in English, usually is the best way to learn. After the discussion, the students answered and reflected on the first three questions of the five-step method; what is important to learn in English writing, and why, what are their success factors in English writing, and what are their obstacles? When discussing the first question, the teacher supplemented by giving examples of important aspects from the curriculum, so that the students could see the connection between what they think is important, and what the curriculum states.

The teacher made an overview over aspects from the students' anonymous reflections on what is important, success factors and obstacles, using a PowerPoint, and presented this the second session. The students continued the work with the method by answering questions four and five, what they wanted to focus on, and what specifically they were to do. The answers to these questions formed an action plan. The teacher supported this process, giving some examples of what they could choose to focus on, for example expanding their vocabulary or writing good introductions or paragraphs. The students were told that they were to choose strategies that could help them coping with their obstacles for improving their English writing skills.

In the third session, sometime after the second session, the students were to reflect on their obstacles again, as well as specifying their action plans, choosing focus area and learning strategies once more. During the third session, the students were also given time to follow up through writing practice guided by the teacher and the chosen focus and action in their plans. The writing practice from the third session is used as posttest.

Ethical Considerations

The data collected in this study was anonymous, as the students used codes in their writing, unknown to the researchers. The students consented that the data could be used for research purposes. This is a limited study, as only one group of paramedic studies students have been included, so it is not possible to generalise based on the findings here. Still, the study may

give some useful insight into the language learning processes of a small selection of upper secondary school students.

Results

This study investigates what stops students from succeeding with writing in English, and how teachers can make students engaged in improving their writing skills. In this section, an analysis of what the students perceive as their obstacles will be presented, as well as what they choose to focus on. The analysis is based on answers from two sessions, and the results are presented as number of occurrences of different topics. Examples of strategies planned are included. Finally, examples of pre and posttests are given to exemplify change in the students' writing.

Obstacles for Improving Writing Skills

When reflecting on obstacles, lack of motivation is most mentioned (9 occurrences), and in some cases this is related to grades, stress or feedback. One of the students write 'I lose motivation when I feel like I fail', another student writes 'I only feel that I (or the motivation within me) and my grades are going down together'. The problem with low grades is also related to struggling with dyslexia, as one of the students write 'one hears that one is doing well, but then get a really low grade, and this makes one feel that there will be more low grades'. Pressure is also mentioned as a cause of low motivation: 'I also feel a pressure, but the pressure demotivates me to write'. It is mentioned specifically two times that there are too high requirements in English. Another challenge mentioned is that as soon as something is corrected, another mistake is pointed out by the teacher, or the correction could be wrong. As we see, lack of motivation is related to different aspects of the learning process, and this seems to be the main obstacle for several of the students in this study.

Problems related to language competence are also mentioned as obstacles by several. Lack of vocabulary is mentioned six times, too low competence is mentioned two times and grammar is mentioned two times. Other aspects of writing mentioned are problems with using sources correctly and having fantasy or creativity to write good texts. Two of the students report 'everything' as being difficult, another student reports that 'nothing' is difficult. One student mentions having problems with nerves, or writer's block, and this is related to having dyslexia. Even though language issues are mentioned by some of the students as challenging, the main obstacles seem to be on a psychological level, related to lack of motivation.

Chosen Focus Areas and Learning Strategies

When choosing what to focus on improving, the students chose various elements of the language learning or writing process (see table 1 below).

Focus	Number of occurrences
Emotions (motivation, no stress)	6
Structure (building paragraphs, arguments, introduction)	8
Expanding vocabulary	8
Language mistakes (sentences, verbs, spelling, grammar)	6
Formal language	4

Table 1: Chosen Focus Areas

Some students focused on their emotions (6 occurrences), for example increasing their motivation or feeling less stressed. An example of a strategy applied was 'think positively, think about why a good grade is important'. Otherwise, there were little specific strategies of how to deal with this focus area. One frequent focus area was structure (8 occurrences), such as building paragraphs, arguments or introductions. Examples of strategies written by one of the students were "write the beginning of a text twice a week, write paragraphs, read paragraphs, search in books and on the internet and write down what I find'. Other students had similar strategies. Expanding vocabulary was another frequent focus area (8 occurrences), and there were different strategies to work with this. One student wrote: 'Write English, explain myself to others, write down plans, use a dictionary to find new words when I write, translate a book, watch movies/series, read, find synonyms (e.g. 3 words, 2 times a week)'. Another student made a plan for the week:

I will try to write more English and explain myself to others. Plan for my week:
Tuesday: before I go to bed I will write down what I did today in English.
Thursday: I will write down my plans for the weekend.
Sunday: I will try and translate a part of a book I have.

In the second session, this plan was made even more elaborate, adding the elements of using tools for translation and using more formal or varied vocabulary:

Tuesday: use a translation book and see if I can use other words when I write
Thursday: write down my plans for the weekend both in Norwegian and English and try to use more formal or other words.
Sunday: translate a part of a book I have

Other students chose to focus on reducing language mistakes (6 occurrences) related to spelling, sentences, verbs, or other grammatical issues. A strategy mentioned was to 'Read about rules, speaking, practice vocabulary'. A final focus area chosen was to write formal language (4 occurrences). An example of a strategy was 'Try to write in formal language, use a dictionary to find out what is formal'. The examples here show that the students had many specific strategies in terms of engaging in improving their writing skills, but not so many specific strategies to deal with their motivational problems.

Changes in Student Texts

To illustrate how the writing improved during the period of intervention, some examples here are included to demonstrate changes in the students' writing. Two of the examples illustrate improved introductions, and the third example show an improved topic sentence.

Focused feature	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Introduction	In this text there will be some facts about why I want to word as a paramedic and what the job contains of. There is also going to be some information about why the occupation paramedic are so important and what qualities you need to succeed in this job.	Paramedic is an occupation which carries a lot of responsibility. As a paramedic worker it demands both a good physically and mental health. In this text I will discuss more about why this occupation is important, what qualities one need to succeed as a paramedic and why this job is interesting.

Introduction	Paramedic is an important job. We need more people who want to be paramedic and work with people. Paramedic is a fun, good and important job. You can help and save who is in need.	Paramedics work hard to help people. Paramedic is a future job for me and to others who want to help people. Working as a paramedic is nice and important. The world needs more teenagers who want to be paramedic. Why does the world need more paramedics? How it is to be a paramedic? Who can be a paramedic? In this five-paragraph essay I will tell why I want to work as a paramedic. I will discuss the paramedic job and the requirements to be a paramedic.
Topic sentence	I think it is important to know how to exam a patient careful.	When you work as a paramedic, it is important to know how to exam a patient.

Table 2: Examples of Improvements in Student Texts

In the first two examples, we see how the introduction is more elaborate in the posttests compared with the pretests, and the first sentence gives more information in the improved versions. In the second example, we wee how some general information is given first, followed up by some questions for discussion, and then the paragraph is closed by describing what the reader might expect from the rest of the text. The third example here shows a more informative and elaborate topic sentence in the improved version, with a fronted adverbial clause setting the context. All examples show how the students engaged in improving their English writing skills when given the chance to work with a chosen element of the writing process.

Discussion

This study describes a method that facilitates for making students engaged in identifying what stops them from succeeding with English writing and working with improving their writing skills. The results show that lack of motivation is a serious obstacle for many students. Even though the students seem to have few strategies to deal directly with their motivational problem, using strategies to improve specific aspects of their writing may have a positive impact on their motivation. Increased feeling of mastery and competence and taking control of one's own learning process may lead to increased self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2017; Bandura, 1997, 2006).

When reflecting on success factors, some students may report that they have none, and when reflecting on obstacles, we see that some students may feel everything is difficult. Even if the students do not feel competent or proficient in English writing, they still have successes which are important in the process of learning English. In the reflections, we see that some of them realize that they in fact have some success factors, like being "motivated", "hardworking" and "positive", which are important when learning a new subject. Instead of just focusing on grades as success factors, students sometimes must be reminded that success is much more, especially since society mainly focuses on achievements, grades, and results.

There is a risk of focusing on performance goals, such as evaluations from the teacher, rather than on personal mastery goals (Ames, 1992) when working with self-regulation approaches,

as making goals is quite central, and even part of the definition of what self-regulation is (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002). When applying the five-step method, the first question used is 'What is important when learning English', instead of 'What is the goal when learning English', to emphasize personal mastery rather than external goals (Langeland & Horverak, 2021). This is a change that was made in the five-step method based on results from previous studies applying the same method, showing that asking questions about goals led to a focus on improving grades rather on improving specific skills (Horverak, Aanensen & Langeland, 2019; Horverak, Aanensen, Langeland, Olsbu, & Päplow, 2020). The results of the current study show that this change in the method has made students focus on other aspects of improving their writing skills than improving their grades. They rather focus on mastering specific skills or features of writing, showing that they have chosen mastery goals rather than performance goals.

When reflecting on obstacles, we see that many students struggle with both motivation and different parts of the writing process. When working with an approach such as the five-step method, and identifying obstacles, it is important that the students do not get stuck in their problems, but instead start the process of making an action plan, which means creating feasible learning strategies that help them dealing with their obstacles and improving their skills one step at a time. Along the way, they hopefully see their own victories, and what they have achieved. Sometimes, they perhaps need to be reminded of their success factors, as this may help them feel competent, which again may lead to increased self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997, 2006), making them feel in control of their own learning process.

When dealing with the two final questions in the method, making an action plan, the students may need some scaffolding to choose sensible and specific learning strategies. As we see from one of the examples above, plans may be revisited and improved. Receiving advice both from the teacher and from peers may lead to a feeling of group cohesiveness, as described by Dörnyei (2001), or relatedness, as described by Ryan & Deci (2000, 2017), and may facilitate for increased motivation and engagement in the learning process. Students may need several attempts to learn how to create a good and useful plan. Showing samples and discussing what could be improved, is an important part of acquiring learning strategy skills. The plans are supposed to include strategies for coping with obstacles together with improving English writing skills.

The students' chosen focus areas mirror some of the challenges Norwegian students have when writing English documented in previous research (Horverak, 2016, 2018). They struggle with writing proper paragraphs or structuring texts, and to write in a formal language. Some students mention losing motivation due to low grades, high requirements and pressure. As mentioned, English exams in Norway are challenging and require much from students - from both vocational and general studies students. Perhaps should there be less focus on evaluation criteria and grades in the learning process, and more on specific features of writing? Focusing on grades and criteria, or external evaluations, runs the risk of developing a school focused more on performance than mastery (Ames, 1992). To ensure motivation and engagement feeling competent is central (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2017). There is perhaps a need to focus more on mastery and competence in education in general, and less on external evaluations, to make students engaged in their own learning processes.

When making endless matrices of evaluation criteria and goals for students, which is the situation in Norwegian schools presently, we risk increasing pressure and creating demotivating learning environments. With a renewed curriculum on the steps (The Ministry

of Education and Research, 2017), integrating life mastery skills and student participation in all subjects, perhaps this trend of making endless criteria-lists may change, and hopefully, there will be a shift from performance goals to mastery goals. The current study supports this type of change, by making the students engaged in identifying what is important for them to improve, and choosing appropriate strategies to do so, regardless of external evaluations or grades. There is perhaps a need for a more extensive change of mentality in the educational system, to succeed with implementing the type of approach that is described here fully. Still, within the frames of the current educational system, applying the five-step method presented here may give the students some feeling of autonomy, as they may experience that they have choices, and can influence their own learning process.

Conclusion

The current study illustrates one way of creating an autonomy-supportive learning environment, with the students' experiences and agency in focus. By applying the five-step method described here, the teacher facilitates for autonomy and competence by letting the students themselves define what is important to learn and they choose learning strategies they believe will help them improve their English writing skills. Through classroom discussions about how to overcome various obstacles and what strategies could be applied, a sense of relatedness may also develop. These are all important aspects to achieve intrinsic motivation and engagement in the learning process (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2017). Choosing appropriate focus areas and learning strategies may be challenging for students, so there is a need for teachers to scaffold this process by giving examples, or choices, and supporting the students to practice applying different strategies.

This study has a limited scope, and there is a need to investigate the potential of an approach such as the five-step method presented here in more extensive studies. There is a need for more longitudinal interventions, as well as interventions in different contexts. The current study focuses on writing skills in English in general, but it would also be possible to apply the same approach in relation to writing different types of genres, for example. This may make it easier to become even more specific in the action plans. Despite of its shortcomings, the current study illustrates the potential of the five-step method to facilitate for motivation and student engagement in the language learning process.

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Assessing Pragmatic Abilities in School-Age Children

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Abstract
This study aims at developing a measure for assessing pragmatic language abilities related to Theory of Mind (ToM) in Greek, typically developing, school-age children. We developed tories, based on previous work by Sodian and Frith (1992), Baron-Cohen and colleagues (1999), and Giannakou (2008), in order to assess the reception of deception, faux pas and irony by school-age children. The story presentation was supported by pictures presented with video. We performed a validation study with adult Greek speakers and included the most comprehensible stories in our materials (32 stories in total). We tested 120 school-age children (64 females, Mean=10;2, SD=1.74). The results indicated high correctness scores (> 90%) for the deception and the faux pas tasks. Irony comprehension caused difficulties for the younger children and seemed to be significantly improved only at the age of 9. Furthermore, we performed an error analysis which showed that pragmatic errors were more frequent than semantic ones in the comprehension of these stories. Finally, we discuss these findings in the light of previous studies on the reception of deception, faux pas and irony (e.g., Baron-Cohen et al., 1999) and address the issue of age of acquisition in typically developing children.

Keywords: Pragmatic Abilities, Theory of Mind, School-Age Children

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Introduction

The study of language as a social act and appropriate behavior with communicative intention belongs to the domain of pragmatics (Mc Tear & Conti Ramsen, 1992). Pragmatic skills are often studied in close relation to socio-cognitive skills, such as Theory of Mind (ToM). ToM is the ability to attribute independent mental states to ourselves and to others in order to interpret and predict behaviors. It is considered to be an inherent cognitive mechanism that allows the representation of mental states. These mental states must be independent of the real world of events and independent of other people's mental states, because people may believe things that may not exist (Baron-Cohen, Leslie & Frith, 1985).

Studying pragmatic skills is ~~an~~ indeed a difficult enterprise due to the great variation in the manifestation of the expression and reception of these skills. Up to now, assessment of pragmatics and ToM is being performed directly or indirectly (Almehmadi, Tenbrink & Sanoudaki, 2020; Volden, & Phillips, 2010). For example, direct assessment of pragmatic skills is performed via psychometric tests, such as the Test of Pragmatic Language - TOPL-2 (Phelps-Terasaki & Phelps-Gunn, 2007) and the faux pas test (Baron-Cohen et al., 1999). By contrast, indirect assessment is performed through questionnaires or assessment lists (completed by children's parents or educators), such as the Children's Communication Checklist-2 (Bishop, 2003) and the Assessment of Pragmatic Language and Social Communication (Hyter & Applegate, 2012).

There are limitations of the assessment tasks above as there may be subjectivity of the answers in the questionnaires or assessment lists and high cognitive requirements of the immediate tasks (Bishop & Baird, 2001; Blain-Brière, Bouchard, & Bigras, 2014). In addition, the performance of the children depends on their language skills, attention and working memory (Bock et al., 2015; Brandt et al., 2016). For example, in some of the tools mentioned above, participants read or listen to a social scenario, which in most cases is complex and may contain complex language forms, such as passive syntax and sub-sentences. Moreover, stories are often long. All these features are likely to deplete the children’s cognitive resources, making it difficult for them to understand the stories. For these reasons, we have created a tool for immediate assessment of pragmatic and socio-cognitive skills, which limits the above cognitive and language requirements.

As far as Greek-speaking population is concerned, pragmatics is only assessed as part of general tests of language (for example Mouzaki, Antoniou, Ralli, Diamanti & Papaioannou, 2017 for preschool children, 4-7 years old). In addition, some materials in English have been translated into Greek but without adaptation (for example TOPL-2, faux pas). To deal with these limitations, we developed a tool for immediate assessment of school-age Greek speaking individuals. The ultimate aim of this study is to develop an assessment tool that could be employed in clinical settings for the evaluation of individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities. For the purposes of the present paper, we report the process of developing these materials and their initial employment for assessing typically developing population.

1. Methodology

1.1. Materials and Procedure

Taking into account previous work by Sodian and Frith (1992), Baron-Cohen and colleagues (1999) and Giannakou and colleagues (2007), we initially developed 50 stories (23 control stories) for Greek speaking children, which were visualized through video presentation. Specifically, to minimize the linguistic and cognitive effect on the children's performance, we adapted everyday social stories with simple syntax and vocabulary. In all stories, everyday vocabulary was used and subordinate clauses, passive voice or other complex syntactic structures were avoided. We visualized all stories and then created videos for the participants.

With respect to the procedure, an example video was presented before each task. The experimenter explains how the answer is given. A short video is presented with instead of watches, which simply describes an everyday social situation. The experimenter asks a question, which assesses: understanding of deception (8 videos: 5 experimental and 3 control stories), faux pas (12 videos: 8 experimental and 4 control stories) and comprehension of irony (12 videos: 8 experimental and 4 control stories). We performed a validation study including 20 typical adults. In addition, we conducted a pilot study with 10 children to ascertain that the stories are understandable. Based on the results of these studies, we used only the most comprehensible stories (32 stories, 11 of them are control stories). In the main phase of the experiment, the tool was administered to 120 TD school-age children.

1.1.1. Deception Materials

Our first task assesses deception. Deception involves creating false beliefs in someone else's mind. Therefore, understanding and managing beliefs is essential to deception (Sodian, & Frith, 1992), so deception is considered as a 2nd order ToM task.

Our deception task is based on previous work by Sodian and Frith (1992). The children were asked not to let the puppet-thief find the candies and if they would tell the puppet that the candy box was locked (i.e. lies) or open (i.e. the truth). There was also a control task, which is called sabotage. The experimenter puts a dessert in a box. The child was then told that he should always help his friend and never help the thief. When the thief comes, the experimenter asks the child if he would lock the box or leave it open. We developed 5 scenarios of deception, and 3 scenarios of sabotage. Objects, such as toys, chocolate and sweets, which are used daily by children at this age were used. These stories were then visualized and 8 videos were created. Each correct answer was scored with one point (so the maximum score for deception is 5 points, and for control stories is 3) (For an example see Appendix A).

1.1.2. Faux Pas Materials

The 2nd tasks assesses faux pas, which means what should not be said. The task is based on previous work by Baron-Cohen and his colleagues (1999) and it includes 10 faux pas stories. In each story there are two or three characters and at least two different statements. After listening to the story, the children answered 4 questions: a faux pas detection question, a faux pas verification question, an understanding question, and a misconception question. There are also 10 control stories (similar scenarios), in which there was no faux pas.

Most TD children succeed in ToM tasks at the age of 6. In this study we used more naturalistic tests to assess social cognition. Faux pas task attributes everyday social situations and measures different cognitive elements of social function, such as: empathy, assuming other's perspective, reasoning about mental states, and the performance of false beliefs in everyday situations.

For our faux pas task we selected only 12 stories the most comprehensible and appropriate ones for school-age children, from the Baron-Cohen's task. We simplified them syntactically and lexically, visualized them and created 12 videos, (8 faux pas stories, 4 control stories). To make the task shorter and easier to use, we omitted the last question. Each correct answer was scored with one point (so the maximum score for faux pas is 8, and for control stories is 4) (For an example see Appendix B).

1.1.3. Irony Comprehension

Finally, the 3rd task assesses irony comprehension. Verbal irony is a figure of speech that communicates the opposite of what is said (Filik, Ţurcan, Ralph-Nearman, & Pitiot, 2019). So, understanding an ironic speaker implies making assumptions about his beliefs, but also the representation of his inner situations (Bryant, 2012). The task is based on previous work by Giannakou and colleagues (2007) and evaluates the comprehension of irony, metaphor, literal and inappropriate speech (irrelevant speech). As Giannakou and colleagues (2007) assessed adults, we created our own stories, which are shorter and more appropriate for the age of the research participants. We developed 8 stories evaluating ironic speech, and 4 control stories, 2 literal stories and 2 inappropriate speech stories (irrelevant speech).

In total, there are twenty-four short stories, at the end of which someone says or thinks something. The examinee must first judge whether what is said at the end makes sense. If it does make sense, the examinee must explain what the main character actually means.

After the video presentation, we ask if what is said at the end makes sense. Then we ask what the main character of the story really means. It is not necessary for the child to say the term irony, but to explain the meaning of each statement. For an example, "the character means the opposite of what is said". Each correct answer is scored with one point (the maximum score is 8 points for experimental stories and 4 points for control stories) (For an example see Appendix C).

1.2. Participants

One-hundred and twenty monolingual Greek speaking children with typical development (TD), 56 boys and 64 girls, participated in our study. These children were recruited from speech therapy and special education centers.

In Table 1 information on the participants of the study is presented.

Table 1. The Sample of the Study

Participants	**Male (N)**	**Age** **Mean (SD)**
120	56 (46,7%)	10.2 (1.74)

2. Results

In Table 2 the overall child performance on the tasks is presented below.

Table 2. Children's Performance on Experimental Stories (Correct Answers %)

Participants	**Deception Mean (SD)**	**Faux pas Mean (SD)**	**Irony Mean (SD)**
120	95.6	93.4	85.3

As it can be seen in Table 2, 95.6% of the children answered correctly to the deception task, 93.4% answered correctly to the faux pas task while the percentage for the correct answers drops to 85.3% for the irony comprehension task.

In Table 3, the correct children's performance on the control stories is presented.

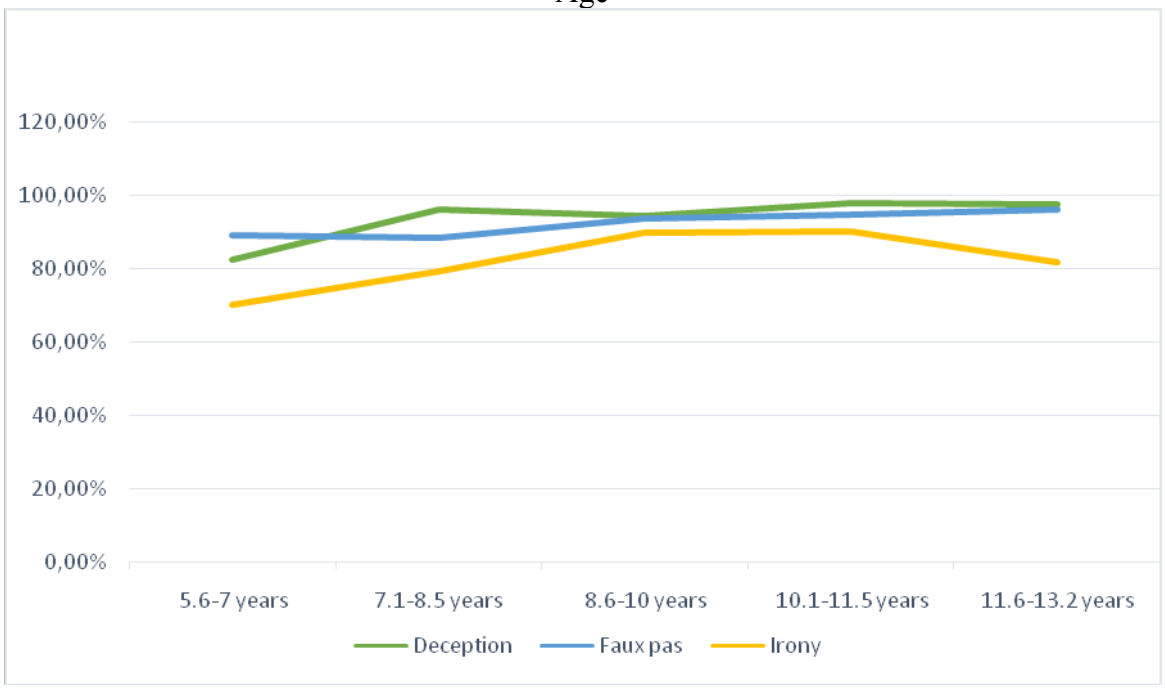
Table 3. Children's Performance on Control Stories (Correct Answers %)

Participants	**Deception Mean (SD)**	**Faux pas Mean (SD)**	**Irony Mean (SD)**
120	97.5%	94%	98%

As it can be seen in Table 3, participants performed almost at ceiling on all tasks. The table describes the performance of children in control stories, which were very high in all control tasks. More specifically, 97.5% of the children answered correctly to the deception task, 94% answered correctly to faux pas task and 98% answered correctly to the irony comprehension task.

2.1. Correlation Analysis

Graph 1. Correlations between Children's Performance on the Experimental Tasks and Their Age



In the deception task the participants show high levels even in the first age group (82.5%). Understanding of deception improves significantly in the second age group (96%) and remains at high levels beyond this age (up to 97.8 %).

In the faux pas task performance is already high in the first age group (89%). It remains stable and grows slowly reaching close to one hundred per cent in the last age group (96.2%).

In the irony task, children show relatively lower levels in the first age group (70.3%). Then irony comprehension improves significantly, by about 10 percentage points from the first to the second age group, and 10 percentage points from the second to the third age group. The highest performance is observed in the fourth age group (90.2%). In the last age group there is a significant decline in the performance of children (81.8%).

Table 4. Correlations between Children's Performance and Age

Tasks	Deception	Faux pas	Irony
Age	rho=0.232, *p*=0.011	rho=0.213, *p*=0.019	No correlation

There is a moderate correlation between deception and the age of children (Spearman's rho = 0.232), which is statistically significant (p= 0.011), and between faux pas and the age of children, which is also statistically significant (Spearman's rho = 0.213, p = 0.019). It seems that there is no correlation between irony and age (p = 0.338).

Table 5. Correlations between Tasks

Tasks	Faux pas	Irony
Deception	rho=0.124, *p*>0.05	rho=0.076, *p*>0.05
Faux pas	X	rho=0.258, *p*=0.005

There is a small non-statistically significant correlation between deception and faux pas there is a small non-statistically significant correlation (Spearman's rho = 0.124, p> 0.05), between irony and faux pas there is a moderate statistically significant correlation (Spearman's rho = 0.258, p = 0.005). There is no correlation between irony and deception there is no correlation (Spearman's rho = 0.076, p> 0.05). Finally, gender was not a significant performance factor as shown by non-parametric statistics (Mann-Whitney test p> 0.05).

2.2. Qualitative Error Analysis

In addition to quantitative analysis, qualitative error analysis was performed to investigate the error types the children produced. We point out that such analysis was not performed for the deception task as children were asked to simply choose between two answers.

This analysis was performed for all the remaining tasks and indicated the following points:

Faux Pas Task

In the faux pas task semantic errors are related to the literal understanding of the story, while pragmatic errors are related to the understanding of faux pas. For example: the aunt did not answer the neighbor (faux pas story, see Appendix B). The highest percentage of errors are pragmatic, while a small percentage are semantic (see Table 6). For example: they didn't understand that Nancy is a girl (faux pas story, see Appendix B).

Irony Task

In the irony task semantic errors are related to the literal understanding of the story, whereas pragmatic errors are related to the understanding of the ironic statement. For example: he said that to make her feel better (irony story, see Appendix C). The largest percentage of errors are pragmatic (please see table 7). For example: they didn't understand that Helen was late (irony story, see Appendix C).

Table 6. Qualitative Error Analysis for the Faux Pas Task

No answer	Semantic errors	Pragmatic errors	Total
10 (16.4%)	2 (3.3%)	49 (80.3%)	61 (100%)

According to Table 6, the total number of errors in the faux pas task was 61. 16.4% of the errors were actually tasks without any response (the children gave no answer), only 3.3% of the errors were semantic and 80.3% were pragmatic errors.

Table 7. Qualitative Error Analysis for the Irony Task

No answer	Semantic errors	Pragmatic errors	Total
16 (11.5%)	8 (6%)	115 (82.5%)	139 (100%)

According to table 5, the total number of errors in the irony task was 139. 11.5% of the errors were actually tasks without any response (the children gave no answer) only 6% of the errors were semantic and 82.53% were pragmatic errors.

3. Discussion

The aim of the study is to develop a measure for assessing pragmatic language abilities related to Theory of Mind (ToM) in Greek, typically developing, school-age children. We developed stories, based on previous works to assess deception, faux pas and comprehension of irony. The results indicated high performance for the deception and the faux pas tasks, while irony comprehension seemed to cause difficulties to the children.

In the deception task even the participants of the first age group show high levels of performance, which increase constantly after this age. These results are consistent with previous research. For example, children have been found to respond successfully to 1st order ToM tasks at the age of 4 and to 2nd order tasks at the age of 6 (e.g., Perner & Wimmer, 1985; Wimmer & Perner, 1983). In addition, Polak and Harris (2011) show that children demonstrate clear signs of intentions to deceive others by the age of 4. Finally, the ability of children to deceive improves significantly after the age of 4 to 5 years and reaches very high levels by the age of 6 (Lee, 2013). Therefore, it is expected that children of the second group, i.e. at the age of 7, will have very high performance.

In the faux pas task performance is already high in the first age group and grows slowly reaching close to one hundred per cent in the last age group. This can be interpreted on the basis of previous research. Banerjee & Watling (2005) proved that even children aged 5 to 6 years are usually able to understand faux pas and perceive the negative effect on the feelings of the offended character. Their performance though was much higher at the age of 8 to 9. Therefore, they concluded that understanding of faux pas increases progressively with age. Regarding the sex of the children, girls perform better in the detection of faux pas at the age of 7, while boys at the age of 9 (Baron-Cohen, et al., 1999). In addition, while girls and boys aged 7 and 9 had different performance in the faux pas task there was no significant difference in performance levels between boys and girls at 11 years of age.

In the irony task, children show relatively lower levels in the first age group. Then irony comprehension improves significantly. But in the last age group there is a significant decline in the performance of children. According to Happé (1994), understanding of irony is only achieved after the age of 8. Most studies claim that children's understanding of irony begins between the ages of 5 and 6 (e.g., Dews & Winner, 1997) and continues to develop over time. Loukusa and Leinonen (2008) showed that the majority of children could interpret verbal irony correctly starting at 6 or 7 years of age. Therefore, in the research of Angeleri & Airenti (2014) even children aged 3 and 4 years old can understand the real intention of an ironic communication act.

Regarding the second and third age groups (ie. from 7 to 10 years old),on the one hand, according to Filippova and Astington (2008) even the 9-year-old study participants did not reach the levels of adult comprehension skills. On the other hand, Nilsen, Glenwright & Huyder (2011) claimed that children aged 8 to 10 years were able to take into account the listener's state of knowledge when they had to interpret verbal irony. Finally, an older research showed that even 13-year-olds often fail to distinguish irony from deception (Demorest, et al., 1984).

In our study no safe conclusions can be drawn for the last group due to the small sample size (only 8 participants). The decline in irony performance cannot be interpreted on the basis of the literature. Therefore, low performance may imply task related limitations.

Conclusion

Limitations

The experimental tasks of the study are part of my doctoral dissertation and they will be administered to children with neurodevelopmental disorders. For this reason, the tool was designed on the particular characteristics of these clinical groups, such as deficits in complex syntax (e.g. Terzi, Marinis, Francis, & Kotsopoulou, 2014; Mervis & Beccera, 2007;

Stavrakaki, 2001), in verbal working memory and attention (e.g. Gilotty, Kenworthy, Wagner et al., 2002; Greer, Brown, Pai et al., 2013; Schuchardt, Bockmann, Bornemann, & Maehler, 2013).

One limitation of the study is that no clinical tests were administered. Research has shown that there is a significant correlation between executive functions and cognitive theory of mind (Yeh, Tsai, Tsai, Lo, & Wang, 2016). In addition, working memory has been associated with understanding irony in TD children aged 5 to 9 years in TD children (Filippova & Astington, 2008). Finally, performance on ToM has been found to be related to both syntax and vocabulary (e.g. Milligan, Astington & Dack, 2007; Slade & Ruffman, 2005). Nevertheless, there are no correlations between language- cognitive skills and performance in our task.

In addition, the sample is simple random and it is not homogeneous as the age groups are not represented equally.

Suggestions

The results of this study indicate that development of new, easy and children-friendly tests, with the aid of technology and games is crucial in order to assess accurately pragmatic skills. Moreover, more specialized tasks are required for specific areas of pragmatics or ToM. Finally, we would propose that the task should be assigned to a larger randomized sample.

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Apendix

Appendix A

Deception Task- Examples

1. Experimental Story

Maria has a chocolate. She puts the chocolate in the top drawer. After a while, Bill comes in the room and asks her: "Which drawer is your chocolate in, in the top or in the bottom one?" Maria does not want Bill to find her chocolate. Which drawer will Maria say that her chocolate is in, in the top or in the bottom one?

2. Control Story- Sabotage

Jenny has a donut. She puts the donut in the top closet. After a while Peter comes in the room. Jenny does not want Peter to find her donut. Which closet will Jenny lock? The top or the bottom one?

Appendix B

Faux Pas Task- Examples

1. Experimental Story

Nancy has short brown hair. She is at her aunt's house. The bell is ringing. It’s Kate, the neighbor. Kate says: “Hello! I don’t think I have met this little boy. What's your name;” The aunt said: “Hey, who wants to drink tea?"

2. Control Story

Mary helped her sister make a spinach pie for their new neighbor. When the neighbor came, Mary said, "I made this pie for you." The neighbor replied: "It looks very tasty! I love pies, especially spinach pies! "

Appendix C

Irony Comprehension Task- Examples

1. Experimental Story

Helen had an appointment with Alex outside the school at 2 o’ clock. Alex waited for an hour. Helen came to the appointment after an hour. When Helen arrived, Alex said: "Thank you for not being late!"

2. Control Story I: Irrelevant Speech Story

Nick and Carol have gone to the market for Christmas presents, all the shops are decorated and Christmas songs are played on the street. Carol thinks: "What a wonderful summer!"

3. Control Story II: Literal Story

The teacher gives back to the students the language tests. George answered correctly to all the questions of the test. The teacher says: "Congratulations! You should always do well at tests! "

Family Language Policy and Immigrant Chinese Children's Bilingual Development in New Zealand Context

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Abstract
The concept of Family Language Policy (FLP) and the studies on language beliefs, language management and language practice in terms of how immigrant families transmit their heritage language to the next generation have already drawn interest from researchers worldwide. Immigrant parents' language ideology, their bilingual learning and bicultural experiences, together with the language attitudes from the host culture determine the immigrant families' language policy at home. Data was collected through two rounds of semi-structured interviews, and the qualitative data was themed and key findings identified and discussed. The findings suggested that Chinese immigrant family's FLP is focused on their heritage language maintenance based on strong practice in domain separation. The linguistic environment in their home settings were unveiled, which included their language ideology and beliefs towards both languages, the language input and exposure in home settings, the verbal interaction patterns between the parents and the children functioning as language management, as well as the parents' effort in cultivating the children's developing bicultural identity by providing culture-related life objects. Parents' perspectives on children's bilingual development in educational settings are also explored and discussed. The study of Chinese immigrant children's FLP shed light on the understanding of inclusive teaching for learners from any bilingual backgrounds. Māori learners and Pasifika learners, as well as the many bilingual immigrant learners from various cultural backgrounds, can benefit from this deepened understanding of bilingual learners' genuine learning needs.

Keywords**:** Family Language Policy, Bilingualism, Immigrant Children

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Introduction

In New Zealand, English as the dominant language is used in nearly all areas of the social life, including education (Statistics NZ, 2019). However, with the growing number of immigrants, New Zealand is becoming highly diverse in the range of the language spoken (Office of Ethnic Communities, 2018), which makes New Zealand a country of highly multilingual environment. Young immigrant children bring their heritage language and culture with them into their daily learning and development in the early childhood education (ECE) settings, which are mostly English-medium in New Zealand. How to support these young bilingual learners to achieve bilingual and bicultural competence in ECE settings has been an emerging interest of local researchers (Podmore, Hedges, Keegan & Harvey, 2015). However, not enough research is conducted on the immigrant families' effort in supporting their children's bilingual development in home settings due to the language and cultural barriers. As part of my Master's research on the parental expectations in immigrant Chinese families, this study aims to explore the language environment in Chinese immigrant families in New Zealand, which is reflected through the structuring and implementation of their FLPs. Therefore, the research questions are:

- What FLP do some immigrant Chinese children experience in the home settings?
- How is the children's bilingual and bicultural development supported by their FLP?

Family Language Policy

Family Language Policy is identified as a set of practices that all family members continuously implement relating to language use and literacy in home settings (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008; Spolsky, 2004). The three components of a FLP are language belief, language management and language practice (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King & Logan-Terry, 2008; Schwartz, 2010), which can reflect the complex language environment in the home settings.

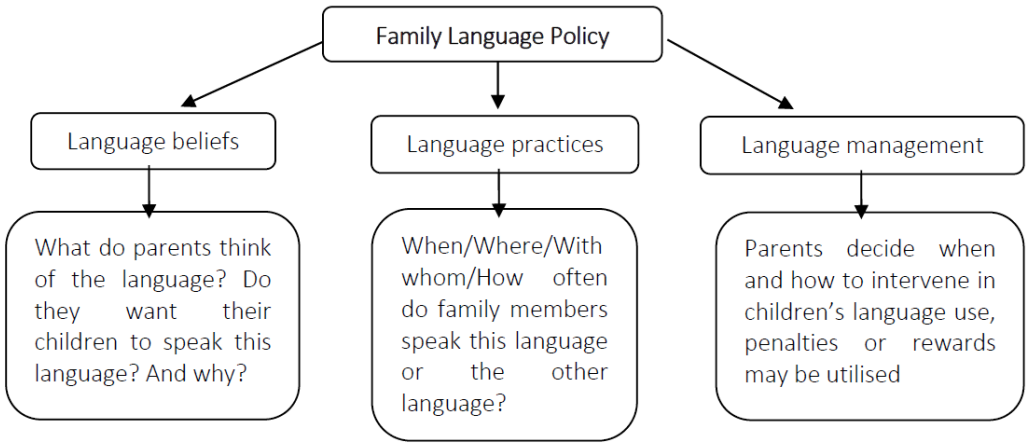

Figure 1: The Components of FLP (Li, 2020)

There are various factors that determine the structuring of the FLP in immigrants' families. Curdt-Christiansen (2009) suggests that the parents' personal experiences including their educational backgrounds, their immigration experiences and cultural dispositions will influence the shaping of their language belief. Based on their empirical studies, Hua and Wei (2016) claim that family language choices derive from family members' diverse linguistic needs in both home culture and the host culture, which are influenced by the specific socio-

linguistic contexts that each family member experiences. Schwartz (2010) further explains that family structure, especially the sibling positions may influence the implementation of language practice and management.

Bilingual Development in New Zealand

In New Zealand, children experience a plurilingual environment in all social settings, including home settings and ECE settings (Guo, 2014; Podmore et al., 2015; Turnbull, 2018). The early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) advocates that children should "grow up storng in identity, langauge and culture" (p. 7), therefore multilingualism and multiculturalism are supported and nurtured in ECE settings. However, researchers suggest that domain separation is evident for immigrant children's language use, which means that they choose different languages for different social settings (Chan, 2018; Ho, Cheung & Didham, 2017).

Based on the Principle of Family and Community in *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Eduction, 2017), ECE teachers are encouraged to proactively engage the families to participate in the teaching and learning. The first step of effective engagement will be a good understanding in the families' beliefs, knowledge and aspirations. In order to explore the immigrant Chinese families beliefs, knowledge and aspirations relating to the children's langauge development, my research uses the theoretial framework of FLP to analyse language environment in the children's home settings.

Methodology

In my research, I adopted qualitative approach to investigate the participants' meaning-making in their specific socio-cultural context (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In order to provide an in-depth inquiry of an intrinsically bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), case study was used as the main methodology.

To recruit the participating mothers, I put on a notice on WeChat (a popular social media app from Mainland China), and four mothers eventually took part in the study. They were from various backgrounds in education, immigration, family structure and overseas experiences, as shown below:

	Ana	Piper	Eve	Irene
Age	38	36	42	34
Years in NZ	20	2	15	9
Immigration	Family	Skilled (in progress)	Skilled	Skilled
Qualifications	Bachelor's	Master's	High school	Bachelor's
Overseas experiences	None	7 years in Canada	3 years in Japan	None
Child	Jimmy	Dora	Katie	Erik
Age	3 years 7 months	2 years 11 months	2 years 7 months	4 years 8 months
Siblings	One elder brother King	none	One elder brother Jake	none

Figure 2: Background Informaiton of the Particpants

There were two rounds of semi-structured interviews, which were recorded, transcribed and translated into English. The interviews were held in locations and times that the participants chose to their convenience, and the second interviews held after the participants read the transcript of the first interviews, so that they had the time to reflect on their answers and clarify any misunderstandings (Shenton, 2004).

The data collected consisted largely of the participants' interpretations and perceptions. When data collection and data analysis are spontaneously integrated together in the study (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016), the process of data analysis started from the very beginning of data collection. I use thematic analysis for the qualitative data collected to generate collective and shared meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The themes revealed in the findings present well-structured and implemented FLP in the immigrant Chinese families.

Findings and Discussions

Language Belief

The participating mothers saw Chinese and English of equal status in their lives and strive to support their children to achieve higher proficiency in both languages with similar pace. They all expressed that the learning of Chinese for their children aimed at effective communication, for their future academic studies, travelling, job market and overall development. This finding is supported by the previous research on Chinese immigrant parents (e.g. Chan, 2018; Guo, 2014; Hu, Torr& Whiteman, 2014). They acknowledged the status quo that English is the dominant language in New Zealand, and aware that there is not enough language input in Chinese language in social settings, thus they focus their FLP in home settings on the maintenance of Chinese language and culture. "There is very little Chinese language environment here [in New Zealand], so I have to do my best to support my children at home

for their Chinese learning" (Ana, Interview 1, p. 5). The FLP reflected the parental expectations on the immigrant children's heritage language proficiency aiming at gaining "membership in the ethnic culture" (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2010, p. 19). The commitment to the heritage language development is evident.

Language Practice

The language practice is observed among the interactions between family members (King & Logan-Terry, 2008). The participants shared their language choices, interaction patterns and opportunities for language use in home settings. It is evident that Chinese is the dominant language used at home for communicative purposes as well as the tool for supporting the children's holistic development.

The finding of the study confirms the domain separation in immigrant Chinese children's language learning: heritage language at home, and host language in other social settings (Chan, 2018; Ho, Cheung & Didham, 2017). The Chinese parents tried their best to create a language environment that is rich in their host language and culture in home settings, including using Chinese for communicative purposes, providing bilingual learning resources, using Chinese story-telling app and everyday life objects. The heritage language is used as one of the most important cultural tools for the transmission of heritage culture between generations in home settings (Baker, 2014). The immigrant Chinese children are significantly exposed in Chinese language and culture in home settings, which resonates with linguists' emphasis on language exposure (e.g. Fillmore, 2000; Genesee and Nicoladis, 2005). For example:

Figure 3: The Pinyin Charts Displayed on the Wall

Pinyin charts demonstrate the Romanisation of Chinese pronunciation, which support the children's early development of Chinese language. The charts are interactive; therefore, the children are encouraged to explore them freely, without much parents' interventions. The language practice shown from the parents' perspective respects the children's choices of learning experience and benefits their developing autonomy.

Figure 4: The Story-Telling App on Mothers' Cell-Phone

All participating Chinese mothers use teaching and learning app in Chinese to support their home education for the children's language development. What's more, cultural and moral education is spontaneously incorporated into the learning of their heritage language.

Figure 5: Bilingual Books that Cover All Areas of Child Development Including Moral Education

The children's cultural identity was discussed by the participants as well. The participants expect to support an integrated cultural identity for their children (Chen, Benet-Martinez & Harris Bond, 2008), and claim that the immigrant children's developing cultural identity should be transformative and complex (Bernstein, 2016), which reflects their immigration experiences,

cultural orientations and dispositions. One of the participants, Piper, designed a bilingual family logo to print on the T-shirts for all the family members, which emphasised the origin of the family and a brief history of the city. By providing this T-shirt to Dora, the mother signalled to the immigrant child that "This is our city. This is where we come from and where we belong" (Piper, interview 2, p. 4).

Figure 6: Piper Designed a Bilingual Family Logo for All the Family Members

When the participants felt that they need extra support in their children's learning in Chinese language and culture, they sought help from the language community, and arrange playdates or activities to maximise the opportunities for their children to use Chinese in authentic context. Irene joined a drama play group initiated by another Chinese mother. "We teach them to recognise their names [in Chinese], their Pinyin, a little self-introduction for warm-up. Then for the drama, the children need to know their own words." (Irene, interview 1, p.4) Such activity in Chinese can be very challenging for immigrant children who speak English in education settings. In the introduction of the group, the mother who initiated the activity wrote: "The sole purpose of the activity is about learning Chinese, Chinese, Chinese! We present the learning in the form of drama play, and help the children with lots of abilities during their performance", as shown below:

Figure 7: Chat History of the Chinese Drama Play Group in Organising Activities

English is not excluded in home education. Apart from the bilingual learning resources provided by the parents, they also support their children's English learning at home by teaching them English such as English songs to help the children fit in ECE settings. "We have English Time and Chinese Time at home" (Irene, interview 1, p. 1). However, the children are still guided to use as much Chinese as possible. "If they get the habit to always speak English at home, that'll be a trouble" (Eve, interview 1, p. 2). Even though the parents aspire and support the bilingual development of the children, the focus of their FLP is on heritage language maintenance.

Language Management

Based on the language belief in their FLP, all participants focus on the communicative purposes of using Chinese at home. Therefore, when the children start to use English in home settings, the parents would remind the children that English does not lead to understanding and communication at home among family members. For example, Irene and Piper would remind their children that their fathers did not speak good English. If they wanted to talk to their fathers, the children had to speak Chinese. Ana and Eve would tell the children explicitly that they did not speak good English and Chinese is the only acceptable language at home. The communication between the children and the grandparents was emphasised as well. "Dora has to learn how to speak Chongqing Hua; otherwise she can't understand what the grandparents are talking about. She speaks Mandarin when I speak Mandarin with her, and she speaks Chongqing Hua with her grandma" (Piper, Interview 1, p. 4).

The participants showed good understanding of the children who preferred to speak English due to their bilingual development. Instead of scolding the children for speaking English, Ana, Eve and Irene used the translation app on their phones to help their children to find the right Chinese words when they started to speak English. Their language management at home

showed respect for the children and less power imbalance between family members. “When he doesn’t know how to speak a word in Chinese, we will look it up together. We Google it. And I teach him how to say it in Chinese, then he will learn it” (Ana, interview 1, p. 1). The children had shown their developing autonomy in their language choices, and the parents would guide their language choice to fit the FLP. “When he really wants to sing English songs, I will say OK five more minute in English, then we sing Chinese songs. I don’t force him. But if he is upset, I’ll just let him” (Irene, interview 1, p. 2). Apparently, the strategies were supportive, constructive and reciprocal.

It is common for immigrant families where the parents have limited proficiency of the host language, which gives the children the spaces to make their own decisions in language choices (Fillmore, 1991). In my study, the parents supported the children’s developing autonomy but also provide effective guidance to support them to adhere to the FLP.

Supporting English Development

When the focus of home education is on the heritage language and culture, the participants also shared their expectations on the children’s language learning in ECE settings. The domain separation confirmed in Schwartz (2010) is evident in that the immigrant parents find themselves confident in support the children’s Chinese learning, and prefer the children to learn only English in education settings. They clarified that they did not expect the ECE settings to support the children in their heritage language, with the main reason that they expected the children to learn how to be a Kiwi (New Zealander) who knows how to function in dominant language and social settings. This is supported by previous research on Chinese immigrant families in their expectations on children’s learning in ECE settings (Chan, 2018; Guo, 2012; Guo & Dalli, 2012). The immigrant Chinese parents see ECE settings as the environment for the immigrant Chinese children to learn about the host language and culture, and they prefer the educators in main-stream English-media education settings to leave the job of heritage culture learning to the parents themselves, which is also evident in other Asian families’ child-rearing perspectives (Ho, Cheung & Didham, 2017).

The parents showed trust for the ECE educators in helping their children in their English development. “As long as we find the right school [childcare centre] for the children, their English is not a problem” (Ana, interview 1, p. 5). They chose to step back and respect the teachers’ work, so that they could focus on the children’s Chinese learning. “I can’t help them with their English. …for Chinese learning, what we can offer at home and in the Chinese community is pretty enough” (Eve, interview 1, p. 4). “Her English learning in childcare and future school will be enough for her, and the only obstacle for her English learning will be us, especially her father, who does not speak much English” (Piper, interview 1, p. 3). If there is any Chinese spoken in ECE settings, it will be for the social-emotional wellbeing of the transitioning children. “…so he doesn’t get so frustrated when no one can respond to his needs.” (Ivy, interview 1, p. 4). This perspective is supported by Guo and Dalli (2012) that heritage language spoken in host culture is to facilitate better participation. With the focus on learning how to function in host cultures as the learning outcomes in ECE settings, the immigrant parents do not even expect the Chinese ECE teachers to speak Chinese with their children in ECE settings (Ho, Cheung & Didham, 2017).

Conclusion

The study has presented an overall picture of the linguistic environment in immigrant Chinese children's home settings, and provided insight in answering the two research questions.

The FLP that immigrant Chinese children experience at home is focused on the maintenance of their heritage language and culture. Generally speaking, the language beliefs that parents hold show a balanced perspective towards the status of the heritage language and the host language. The parents believe that it is vital for the children to develop both languages effectively in the early age, which significantly benefit their developing multicultural identity and gaining membership in both cultures (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2010). However, when the parents feel that there are not enough resources to support the children's heritage language development in the societal domain, they focus their home education in promoting their heritage language, which gives the heritage language and culture a dominant position in their home environment. The language practice differs between families. Depending on parental expectations for children's bilingual development, the Chinese parents may create an exclusive Chinese language environment at home, or a Chinese-dominant bilingual environment. No matter in which case, the heritage language is encouraged to be used for communicative purposes as well as functioning as the cultural tool for home education. The language management tends to be more co-constructive, supportive and respectful than a stereotyped Chinese family which is focused on filial piety (Xiao) (Wu et al., 2002; Yan, 2017). The children's interest, autonomy and learning needs are respected among family members.

The FLP discovered in my study supports the immigrant Chinese children's bilingual development positively. In home settings, they have the opportunity to learn their heritage language intensively in naturalistic settings rich in language input (Ellis, 2018). The parents and grandparents transfer their heritage culture through the use of their heritage language, which enhances the children's development in their cultural identity (Debski, 2018; Baker, 2014). On the other hand, their FLP leads to the parents' choices of leaving English development totally to the ECE settings. The parents show support by choosing the right ECE services for the children and support the curriculum and participation in ECE settings (Guo, 2012, 2015). The parents' choices leave the educators the sole responsibility of supporting the children's development in only one language.

The study on immigrant Chinese families' FLP shed light on the immigrants' home education relating to their heritage language and culture. It helps educators, researchers and policy makers to gain more understanding in the immigrant young bilingual learners' learning needs and the parental expectations, not only limited to Chinese immigrants. In New Zealand context, the study can also help educators better collaborate with the families in supporting bilingual children's language development, including immigrant children as well as Māori and Pasifika children who speak their heritage languages in home settings.

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Implications of Trilingual Education on Pre-service Training in Wales

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Abstract
This paper will focus on innovations in the Welsh education system in light of the introduction of a new curriculum in 2022. Language learning is one of the areas facing changes, with international languages, Welsh and English being placed in the Area of Learning and Experience known as Languages, Literacy and Communication. Pupils will have the opportunity to learn an international language from year 5 in primary school. This development is important in the context of the Welsh government's target of creating one million Welsh / English bilingual speakers by 2050. This target has raised concerns regarding the availability of teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh and the role of initial teacher training to address this. Comparisons will be drawn with other UK nations teaching a foreign language in primary schools and the challenges that they have faced. The context of the Welsh language, as a minority language within Wales, raises questions regarding the linguistic / cultural competence of teachers able to teach in minority, (immersion or maintenance), settings, (cf. Canadian francophone minority context, Gilbert et al, 2004). The experiences of other trilingual models in Europe will be considered. Implications for pre-service training for introducing an international language within the existing varied bilingual setting of primary schools of Wales will be discussed.

Keywords: Curriculum, Wales, Language Learning

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Introduction

This paper will focus on innovations to language learning in the Welsh education system due to the introduction of a new curriculum in 2022 (Welsh Government, 2020) and the implications of these developments on pre-service training.

Firstly, the context of the Welsh education system relevant to these developments will be outlined, specifically within the context of the Welsh Government's target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and the introduction of an international language in primary schools. Secondly, questions regarding the language competence of teachers in minority education will be raised with reference to other European and Canadian contexts. Lastly, the implications of these changes on initial teacher training in Wales will be discussed.

The Context of the Welsh Education System

The new curriculum of 2022 follows on from Donaldson's review of the curriculum, known as *Successful Futures*, published in 2015. 'Traditional' subjects will be placed within 6 Areas of Learning and Experience. This paper will concentrate on the Area of Learning and Experience (henceforth, AofLE) called Languages, Literacy and Communication.

International languages, English and Welsh are all placed within this AofLE. There are 4 'What Matters' statements for this AofLE:

1. Languages connect us.
2. Understanding languages is key to understanding the world around us.
3. Expressing ourselves through language is key to communication.
4. Literature fires imagination and inspires creativity. (Welsh Government, 2020)

These 4 statements refer to Welsh, English and international languages.

However, the 'Descriptions of learning' for Statements 2, 3 and 4 are different for:

1) English and Welsh, in Welsh-medium schools,
2) Welsh, in English-medium education and
3) international languages.

It is necessary to pause here in order to explain briefly the linguistic context of education in Wales. Pupils go to either:

1) (mainly) English-medium schools or
2) (mainly) Welsh-medium schools in Wales.

In Baker's typology (1996, adapted for the Welsh context in Jones, 1997):

1) English-medium schools are known as 'Mainstream' education – i.e. English-medium education for pupils who speak English at home.
2) Welsh-medium schools can be either 'Maintenance' education, for children who speak Welsh at home, or 'Immersion' education, for pupils who speak English at home.

In English-medium schools, Welsh is taught as a subject and in Welsh-medium schools, English is introduced formally as a subject at age 7. Whilst it is acknowledged that bilingual education in Wales is not simply limited to Welsh-medium or English-medium, as pointed out by Beard (2020), this distinction will suffice for the purpose of this paper. According to Baker's typology, pupils in 'Mainstream' education will receive a 'weak' form of bilingual

education, as it will lead to *limited* bilingualism whereas pupils in 'Maintenance' or 'Immersion' education will have a 'strong' form of bilingual education, leading to bilingualism and biliteracy.

During the 2017/2018 academic year, 66,189 children (out of a total of 277,095), i.e. around 23% of all children in Wales, were enrolled in 404 primary schools where Welsh was the main or sole medium of instruction (Key Education Statistics Wales, 2019). As noted previously, these pupils in Welsh-medium schools have the same 'Descriptions of learning' for both Welsh and English, i.e. they are expected to achieve the same level in both Welsh and English. For pupils in English-medium schools, on the other hand, the 'Descriptions of learning' for Welsh is different from that of English. An example can illustrate this difference more clearly.

Progress Step 3, Statement 3: Descriptions of learning for **Welsh and English:**
I can adapt and manipulate language and make appropriate choices about vocabulary, *idiomatic language* and *syntax* in order to express myself with fluency and clarity.

Progress Step 3, Statement 3: Descriptions of learning for **Welsh in English-medium settings:**
I can adapt and manipulate language and make appropriate choices about vocabulary, *idiomatic language* and *syntax* in order to express myself.

As can be seen, there is no expectation for the pupils in English-medium settings to communicate with 'fluency and clarity' in Welsh.

Therefore, following Baker's typology, it can be argued that all pupils in Wales presently receive either a 'strong' form of bilingual education (in Welsh-medium schools) or a 'weak' form of bilingual education (in English-medium schools).

An important development in the 2022 curriculum is that all pupils will have the opportunity to learn an international language from year 5 in primary school, making Wales' situation similar to many European contexts with a minority language. Thirteen contexts of trilingual education, where a regional / minority language exists alongside a majority language and where a foreign language (English in most cases) is also taught, are described in Mercator's (2011) report. However, an important difference between these models and the Welsh situation is that in the trilingual European models:

> "All three target languages are to be taught as a school subject as well as used as a medium of instruction during a relevant number of teaching hours" (Mercator, 2011:7).

There is no expectation for the international language to be used as a medium of instruction in Welsh schools. Following Baker's distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' types of bilingual education, we can refer to Wales' version of trilingual education as a 'weak' form of trilingual education since the international language is not used as a medium of instruction.

The new curriculum is clear that any international language can be introduced in the primary school according to the individual school's choice:

> "They may choose to offer languages which are spoken by staff at the school or by the wider community." (Welsh Government, 2020)

This raises questions about which languages will be taught and the expertise of the teachers. In a previous paper, (in press), I have argued that the same international language should be taught at the primary as at the secondary school in order to ensure continuity of provision and the possibility of higher competence in that language.

Furthermore, the curriculum is clear that the intention of learning languages is to foster enthusiasm, curiosity, interest and enjoyment:

> "Learning and experience in this Area aims to enable learners to communicate effectively using Welsh, English and international languages. It aims to encourage learners to transfer what they have learned about how languages work in one language to the learning and using of other languages. This *multilingual* and *plurilingual* approach is intended to ignite learners' curiosity and enthusiasm and provide them with a firm foundation for a lifelong interest in the languages of Wales and the languages of the world." (Welsh Government, 2020)

This approach, with its emphasis on 'enthusiasm' and 'interest' differs, to a certain degree, from the aims noted in the *Global Futures* document (Welsh Government, 2015) which links the importance of learning a foreign language in year 5 with increasing languages uptake at GCSE:

> "Our strategy is to encourage learners to extend their knowledge of other cultures by becoming 'Bilingual plus 1', that is, studying English, Welsh and at least one modern foreign language from primary to examination level," (Welsh Government, 2015:3).

This quotation demonstrates that the introduction of an international language in primary school should be seen in the context of the Welsh government's target of creating one million Welsh / English bilingual speakers by 2050, (Welsh Government, 2017).) This means:

> "Increasing the proportion of each school year group receiving Welsh-medium education from 22 per cent (based on 7,700 seven-year-old learners in 2015/16) to 30 per cent (about 10,500 in each year group) by 2031, and then 40 per cent (about 14,000 in each year group) by 2050**.**" **(***Cymraeg 2050*, 2017:12).

Pupils in English-medium schools also play an important part in reaching the target of 1 million Welsh speakers:

> "The trajectory to the million is based on the assumption that in 2031, 35% (8,500 pupils) of pupils leaving the English-medium/bilingual education sector will indicate that they speak Welsh. In 2050, the target is 50% (10,500)." (Iorwerth, 2020: 5)

This target has raised concerns regarding the availability of teachers to teach through the medium of Welsh and the role of initial teacher training to address this.

Language Competence of Teachers in Minority Education

The competence of teachers in the minority language is a concern for minority language teaching worldwide. The report *Minority Languages and Education: Best Practices and Pitfalls* (2017), which looked at 13 contexts of minority language education in Europe, noted that:

> "A widely recognised problem regarding minority language education that needs to be addressed is the availability of high-quality teaching material and skilled minority language teachers." (Mercator, 2017:7).

This has been identified as a particular problem in Wales, as noted in *Cymraeg 2050*, Action plan (2021:5):

> "Reaching the 2021 targets for increasing the number of teachers able to teach Welsh, or through the medium of Welsh, has been challenging during a time of great change in education."

According to data from the Education Workforce Council, in Iorwerth (2020), the number of teachers able to work through the medium of Welsh decreased by almost 700 between 2015 and 2020. It should be noted that there has been a corresponding reduction in the number of teachers more generally and the percentage of teachers who can speak Welsh and can work through the medium of Welsh has remained constant since 2015.

A particular problem, however, is that a large number of trainee teachers, who self-report that they are fluent in Welsh at the beginning of their course, do not choose to train to teach through the medium of Welsh, (Iorwerth, 2020). For this reason, the Welsh Government has made it clear that increasing the numbers of Welsh medium teachers is key to realising the vision of the *Cymraeg 2050* Strategy.

I would argue that it is the minority language status of Welsh, and the fact that Welsh speakers lack confidence in using the language, that can explain, in part, the shortage of Welsh medium teachers. The context of the Welsh language, as a minority language within Wales, raises questions regarding not only the linguistic competence of these teachers but their cultural competence as well. Gilbert et al, (2004), referring to the Canadian francophone minority context, expand on this. They note that the role of teachers in minority settings are more challenging as they have to teach the language and be cultural role models:

> "Anyone who wishes to teach in a minority setting must have not only all the qualifications required to be a good teacher, but the parents and the Francophone community also expect them to be a model where French language and culture are concerned, to have a good command of both oral and written French and to persist in communicating in French. They are also expected to actively demonstrate their commitment to, and pride in, their language and culture within their community. Teachers must be dynamic Francophone models, whose cultural identity is firmly rooted." (Gilbert et al, 2004:16,17)

The same is true for teachers in Welsh-medium education. In order to address these issues, various implications for pre-service training will be discussed.

Implications for Pre-service Training

i) for the Welsh-medium sector and
ii) for Modern Foreign Language (MFL) competence.

i) Welsh-medium Sector

The criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher training programmes in Wales (2018) state that all initial teacher training providers have to show how they are developing the Welsh language skills of their trainees. In Aberystwyth University, all trainee teachers are placed in one of three groups, according to their needs, based on a self-assessment of their level in Welsh and an audit taken at the beginning of the year. The three groups are Beginners, Intermediate and Higher. The objective for the Beginners group is to enable them to use

'incidental Welsh' – such as the dates, classroom instructions, feedback - in the classroom. The objective for the Intermediate group is to develop their confidence to use more Welsh and to be confident enough to apply for jobs in Welsh-medium schools. The sociolinguistic realities of living in a bilingual context is discussed with them in order to explain that they have to initiate speaking Welsh with Welsh speakers as the latter will often speak English to people that they believe are Welsh learners. The Higher group is aimed at fluent Welsh speakers to improve their accuracy in spoken and written Welsh and to discuss ways of improving the Welsh language skills of their pupils.

A Welsh Language Competency Framework has been developed, based on the *Common European Framework of Reference,* to provide details about the Welsh language skills of teachers and to show how they can progress to the next level. The levels range from A1, A2, B1, B2 and C1 in all skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking. For example:

> A trainee teacher will be at a level A1 in speaking if they are able to introduce themselves and others, ask and answer simple questions, e.g. where someone lives and what they like to do. A teacher at the C1 fluency level will be able to speak extensively on complex matters, present arguments using the correct register, etc. (*Welsh Language competency framework for education practitioners*, 2019).

In addition, 'Welsh language skills' is noted as one of the Professional Learning Standards that trainee teachers need to achieve in order to obtain Qualified Teacher Status. All students, regardless of which school they're teaching or which subject or phase they're teaching, have a responsibility to develop the Welsh language skills of their pupils.

The target therefore is that teaching Welsh to all learners will be transformed, so that:

- at least 70 per cent of learners will report that they can speak Welsh by the time they leave school by 2050;
- that the number of primary teachers who can teach in Welsh will increase from 2,900 to 3,900 by 2031 and 5,200 by 2050;
- secondary teachers who can teach Welsh will increase from 500 to 900 by 2031 and 1,200 by 2050;
- and the number of secondary teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh will increase from 1,800 to 3,200 by 2031 and 4,200 by 2050. (*Cymraeg 2050; A Million speakers* 2017)

ii) MFL Competence

However, similar targets do not exist for teachers to be able to introduce an international language to year 5 pupils in the primary school and there is no such requirement for teacher training providers to enable primary school teachers to teach an international language.

This might seem surprising considering that research into teaching foreign languages in the primary sector in England since 2014 and Scotland since 2012 has repeatedly pointed out that the lack of foreign language skills has been a huge challenge to teachers, (Myles, 2020, Giraud-Johnstone, 2017).

Thus far, we have discussed Welsh language teaching and international language teaching as two distinct disciplines. However, we should bear in mind that the new curriculum's 'Descriptions of learning' have been developed based on a continuum of progression of languages, starting with little or no language and working towards proficiency. This

continuum of skills in Welsh in Welsh-medium schools and Welsh in English-medium schools has already been illustrated. This continuum is reflected further in the 'Descriptions of learning', again at Progression step 3, Statement 3, for international languages:

International Languages	Welsh (in English-medium schools)	English / Welsh (in Welsh-medium schools
'communicate using familiar phrases and sentences' **'beginning to reflect on. language use in order to improve the quality of … communication.'**	I can adapt and manipulate language and make appropriate choices about vocabulary, idiomatic language and syntax in order to express myself.	I can adapt and manipulate language and make appropriate choices about vocabulary, idiomatic language and syntax in order to express myself with fluency and clarity.

Table 1: 'Descriptions of Learning' Based on a Continuum of Language Skills

Bearing in mind that the 'Descriptions of learning' in this Area of Learning and Experience are represented as a continuum, it might be suggested that teachers should be trained for this continuum of language skills. Tarsoly and Valijarvi (2020), in a special issue of *The Language Learning Journal*, (2020) point to the:

> "Degree of separation between EML (Endangered and Minority Language) pedagogies and educators from MFL curricula and teachers. They follow different pathways in teacher training pathways."

They go on to say that the "Studies presented in this special issue leave no doubt that the adoption of pedagogical approaches used in teaching MFLs can be adapted to EMLs." I would like to suggest that pedagogical approaches used to teach a minority language can also be adapted to teaching international languages. Both teachers of minority languages and international languages can learn from each other.

This is even more important when one considers that the experience of teachers in Welsh-medium education, and immersion programmes worldwide, deal with introducing content through the second language of many of their learners. One must remember that in minority language contexts, such as the Basque Country, Wales and Ireland, native speakers of the minority language are taught alongside non-native speakers of the minority language to a greater or lesser extent. This makes the continuum of language skills very apparent within one classroom.

The fact that bilingual, or 'emerging' multilinguals, (Matras, 2009) are present within one classroom makes recent research into multilingual pedagogies relevant. New approaches in bilingual, trilingual and multilingual education point to the need to rethink the traditional approach of language separation in the classroom, (Cenoz, 2020). Earlier versions of these multilingual pedagogies were found in the Triple Literacy approach in Wales where teachers were encouraged to create links between Welsh, English and modern foreign languages, (Welsh Government, 2011**).** Multilingual pedagogies often refer to translanguaging as a planned teaching strategy (Cenoz and Gorter, 2021). However, teachers in the Basque country have raised concerns that translanguaging will be at the expense of competence in Basque and will only benefit the majority language, Spanish (Cenoz and Gorter, 2017). This has implications for the Welsh context and emphasises the importance of appropriate pre-service training so that discussions around the potential benefits of pedagogical translanguaging can be developed.

Conclusions

This paper has outlined some changes to Welsh education due to the introduction of a new curriculum in 2022 and has focussed on the Area of Learning and Experience known as Languages, Literacy and Communication. The Welsh government's target for a million Welsh / English bilingual speakers by 2050 has raised concerns to do with preparing future teachers for the Welsh-medium sector, reflecting a widely acknowledged issue for minority language education. This has led to various initiatives in initial teacher training in Wales. However, the requirement for an international language to be introduced in the primary school has not, as yet, led to changes in initial teacher training provision. Recent approaches relating to multilingual pedagogies point to a need for further research to investigate to what extent minority language pedagogies can benefit from the experiences of MFL teaching and vice versa. Wales can provide a rich context for further research in this field in order to enable teachers to teach in the varied bilingual, or trilingual, context of Wales and beyond.

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Transmission of Distress and Urgency Calls – Aeronautical English in Use

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Abstract
With ongoing challenges to the accuracy of aeronautical communications, distress and urgency calls need to be brought into sharper focus. They are the only possible ways pilots can obtain assistance in non-routine and emergency situations. Radiotelephony communication is not an after-the-fact activity: "You need to know what you're going to say before an event occurs" (Tavlin, 2019). Otherwise a minor event can be turned into a major disaster. Since research on aeronautical discourse is a relatively new research area, we face a significant gap here. The presentation aims to explore the current status of distress and urgency calls and check whether their recommended structure works well in an emergency context. In order to understand these types of messages, it is mandatory to be familiarised not only with the aeronautical context, but especially with the mechanism of radiotelephony communication as well as the linguistic code supported by plain (general) English. Moreover, the emphasis should be particularly on saying the correct message at the proper time, so that no one involved is confused. The radiotelephony language variety also has to be learned by operational personnel who are native speakers of English because its specific coded nature may impede comprehension by general users of the aviation community. The debate about whether the use of distress and urgency calls by native speakers of English and non-native speakers is similar or different will follow.

Keywords: Aeronautical English, Specialised Communication, Distress Calls, Urgency Calls, MAYDAY Calls, PAN PAN Calls, Emergency Calls

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Introduction

Applied linguistics research faces new challenges nowadays. It seems that safety-critical industries covered by complex regulatory requirements where communication is paramount need support from specialised context linguists. They can offer up-to-date solutions to professional miscommunication issues after conducting deep case studies. One of the examples that strongly requires similar support is aviation communication. That is why avialinguistics, a specialised interdisciplinary branch of linguistics, was designed to systematise the current knowledge base (Borowska, 2017). In addition, Tavlin (2019, p. 4) emphasises the fundamental nature of communication by citing an example of the tragic disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 in March 2014:

To date, no actual plane has been found. There is no known nor confirmed crash (except for several aircraft parts), no regulatory actions, or anything else. Yet here is a company and a country that were discredited in the eyes of the world. What did they do that was so wrong? It was their communication that proved to be fundamental. Communication is not the icing on the cake. It *is* the cake.

Furthermore, Mattenberger[1] (2013, pp. 126–128) underlines that there are a number of regulations that aim at covering, or avoiding all possible emergency situations. A crucial point here is communication, especially communication between the flight crew and ground-based controllers because, in addition to the technical aspects interfering with the quality of communication, there are also certain 'human factors'. These contribute to an even greater extent to the problems in aviation communication such as pilots' distraction, strong accents (both native and non-native speakers of English), stress, fatigue, discipline and many more.

In this study, I will present a selected aspect of aviation communication, namely aeronautical English discourse, in emergency situations. After the presentation of the aeronautical interaction mechanism, including Aeronautical English features, as well as distress and urgency calls requirements, I will move on to the analysis of the transmission of calls in question in the professional context. Moreover, I aim to answer the following research questions:

- What is the current condition of distress and urgency calls in the real life environment?
- How to improve emergency calls?

Two important comments have to be made at this point. First, throughout this paper I will use the term *Aeronautical English* not *Aviation English* in order to refer to pilot – air traffic controller radiotelephony language and to differentiate the term from Aviation English, which is a more general concept. Second, I will focus on the aeronautical interaction mechanism and binding regulations in this context. All of this should support the comprehension of the selected research aspect for all general linguists. This paper aims at the linguistic analysis of aeronautical emergency calls – not common in this context.

Narrowing the Scope of the Analysis

In order to understand the object of presented analysis, it is crucial to become familiarised with the linguistic context in aviation. Graham Braithwaite emphasises that in an increasingly connected world where the threat of service disruption can come from many sources – safety, security, extreme weather, natural disasters, power or communication outages, and so on – the

[1] Marcel Mattenberger was working as an instructor and a pilot (over 13,000 flight hours).

demand for effective and timely communication is growing (in Tavlin, 2019, p. xiii). The cause of communication failures is either the wrong strategy, a bad strategy, or no strategy. Communication is an issue that requires skills for every employee who deals with any audience (ibid, p. 1).

Firstly, English has become the language of aviation since 1951 (ICAO, 2007) and is recommended to be used in global aeronautical routine and non-routine situations, including exchanges between operational personnel of the same nationality at international airports. Aviation English is a special language for all aviation purposes realised in different forms of sublanguages or language tools. By *a language tool* I refer to an unnatural linguistic code, created by people for better and simplified communication (Borowska, 2017, p. 71).

One of the examples of such sublanguages is the Aeronautical English used for radiotelephony communications between pilot – controller, pilot – pilot, pilot/controller – ground services. However, Aeronautical English is partly expressed in a prescribed language or a linguistic tool which is essential for the safety and efficiency of each commercial international flight. Being a linguistic code, theoretically, Aeronautical English can be classified as a construct outside the boundaries of general English due to the occurrence of phonetic, morphological and syntactic forms not found in general English (more in Borowska, 2017, pp. 75–80). Users of English outside the aviation context, while listening to the aeronautical discourse, can classify what they hear as the English language due to familiar sounds and words, however, they are not able to figure out all the simplified grammatical structures used there, let alone the meaning of the utterances. To be more precise, Aeronautical English is composed of two elements: 1) a coded tool called standard phraseology used in routine situations (e.g. start-up, pushback, taxiing etc.) that is characterised by fixed phrases, a strict order, a closed lexicon, and the lack of productive possibilities common for natural languages; 2) plain Aeronautical English used in non-routine situations, so also in distress and urgency contexts. This element functions as a language and is similar to general English, however, it includes standard phraseology units for faster and more efficient communication.

Being familiar now with the nature of the language/English used in the aeronautical context, it is important to understand another aspect of aeronautical discourse, namely the aeronautical interaction mechanism. The way operational personnel communicate is also strictly regulated. First of all, after receiving an instruction from an air traffic controller, a pilot must read it back. It means that the pilot is obliged to repeat the controller's message. Then the controller must hear the readback and correct it, if necessary (*Eurocontrol*, 2006).

Narrowing the scope of research to the distress and urgency calls in aeronautical communication, which are also elements of Aeronautical English, will allow us to compare more reliably the requirements provided by the authorised bodies with the real-life practices. The paper does not cover aeronautical procedures in case of radio failure (see ICAO, 2007, Doc. 9432, 9.5).

Distress and Urgency Calls in Aviation

Every aspect of communication seems to be regulated in aviation. It is especially important that operational personnel know emergency procedures. In this case, there are usually calls for help and a message transmitted correctly can save lives. Additionally, it is essential that in an emergency, the message is clear, concise and correct. According to accepted aviation rules, a pilot must follow the order of priority: aviate – navigate – communicate when performing their

tasks. The more natural and efficient a call for help is, the more of the pilot's capacity is freed up to deal with an emergency situation (Hughes and Pooley, 2014).

Declaring an emergency obligates controllers – under procedures of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) and other civil aviation authorities, to give maximum assistance and priority handling to aircraft in distress. Specific terms for declaring an emergency and for telling a controller about aircraft in an urgency condition were designed to be simple but unmistakable signals taught during the basic training of pilots and air traffic controllers worldwide (*Flight Safety Foundation*, 2000, p. 2).

There are two types of emergency calls – distress and urgency calls. ICAO (2007, Doc. 9432) provides the difference between them and defines 'distress' as "a condition of being threatened by serious and/or imminent danger and of requiring immediate assistance", e.g. fire, depressurisation, electrical failure. 'Urgency' is defined as "a condition concerning the safety of an aircraft or other vehicle, or of some person on board or within sight, but which does not require immediate assistance" such as health problems, bird ingestion, fuel endurance, bomb scare. It looks like in case of urgency messages crews have more time to tackle the situation. These messages are sent in a situation that requires increased attention, but does not present an imminent danger. However, when the situation deteriorates further, a crew can upgrade the status of an urgency call into a distress call. It is worth remembering that distress messages have priority over all other transmissions, and urgency messages have priority over all transmissions except distress messages. Moreover, pilots making distress or urgency calls should attempt to speak slowly and distinctly so as to avoid any unnecessary repetition (ICAO 2007, Doc. 9432).

According to the ICAO recommendations presented in Doc. 9432, Chapter 9, distress messages should consist of the following elements provided in the correct order and should be signified by the word *MAYDAY*:

1. the coded expression: MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY[2] repeated three times (no other words or phrases acceptable) so that the message does not disappear during transmission as a part of it might be 'sucked' by background noises;
2. the name of a ground station or the message: ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS in case a pilot is unsure which station is able to provide the assistance immediately;
3. the aircraft identification number;
4. the short and exact description of the emergency;
5. the intention(s) of the pilot;
6. position, level and heading;
7. other information if necessary.

An example of a model distress call is as follows (ICAO 2007, Doc. 9432):
MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY
WALDEN TOWER
G-ABCD
ENGINE ON FIRE
MAKING FORCED LANDING
20 MILES SOUTH OF WALDEN.
PASSING 3 000 FEET
HEADING 360

[2] MAYDAY – a coded expression, originally from French *m'aidez svp* that means *help me please*

Analogically, urgency messages should include the same elements, with the word *MAYDAY* replaced by a phrase *PAN PAN / PAN PAN / PAN PAN*[3], again repeated three times for the same reasons as above (no other words or phrases acceptable):

1. PAN PAN / PAN PAN / PAN PAN
2. 2–7 as above.

An example of a model urgency call is as follows (ICAO 2007, Doc. 9432):
PAN PAN, PAN PAN, PAN PAN
WALDEN TOWER
G-ABCD C172
2 000 FEET HEADING 190
ABOVE CLOUD UNSURE OF MY POSITION
REQUEST HEADING TO WALDEN

Controllers are very sensitive to pilot transmissions which indicate urgency as they are related to a situation where a pilot needs assistance. One of them says: "When we hear these types of transmissions, there is almost a shifting of gears to the point where a considerable amount of our attention is directed toward that pilot and aircraft" (Stewart, 1989, pp. 46–47). Flight crews should expect air traffic controllers to take the following actions in the case of a declared emergency:

- Acknowledge immediately the crew's distress message;
- Take control of the communications or clearly transfer that responsibility to another controller (and notify the flight crew);
- Take immediate action to inform other ATC facilities (and aircraft operator as soon as possible);
- Warn other ATC facilities to prevent the transfer of non-related communications to the frequency in use for distress communication;
- Possibly impose radio silence on that frequency for either all stations of the mobile service (that is, all aircraft and ground facilities) in the area or for any station that interferes with the distress traffic; and,
- Announce the termination of distress communication and of radio silence, if imposed. (ICAO, 2007, *Annex* 10).

All the above mentioned recommendations have been created in order to simplify and shorten the transmission of emergency messages. They also aim at more efficient communication between all nationalities and all language accents all over the world.

However, based on submitted reports, it seems like not all pilots adapt to the rules. For example, the NTSB report that describes an accident said that the accident flight crew did not adequately communicate its increasingly critical fuel situation to the controllers who handled the flight; that the first officer (who made all recorded transmissions to U.S. controllers) incorrectly assumed that his request for priority handling by the controller had been understood as a request for emergency handling; that the captain experienced difficulties in monitoring communications between the first officer and the controller; and that the first officer did not use the appropriate phraseology to communicate to the controller the aircraft's minimum fuel status (*Flight Safety Foundation*, 2000, p. 5). The captain advised the first officer to tell the controller they were in an emergency. However, the first officer acknowledged an ATC altitude and heading instruction to the JFK tower controller, adding "we're running out of fuel." He did

[3] PAN PAN – a coded expression, originally from French *en panne* that means *breakdown*

not use the world *emergency* nor *MAYDAY* or *PAN PAN*, as instructed by the captain, and therefore did not communicate the urgency of the situation (ibid).

The question arises at this point: is it possible to follow the prescribed order in a life threatening situation or does the 'human factor' reverse the prescribed order due to other reasons? The answer is given in the following paragraphs based on conducted research in this context.

Method

Three distress transmissions and three urgency transmissions were selected at random from *www.ATClive* and *YouTube* real-life recordings in order to analyse their linguistic contents. Additionally, the selection includes both native speakers and non-native speakers of English emergency transmissions in order to compare the ICAO recommendations with the actual calls in both cases. In this way, it can be observed if there are any communication tendencies for either of the two groups. Thus, participants of this study are only pilots who experienced an emergency situation at work and had to transmit a distress or urgency call to a controller. The paper will take you through the discourse techniques used in aeronautical communication in the context of emergency.

The analysis covers the pilot's message structure, but also the level of communication efficiency measured by controllers' comprehension and the type of follow-up questions asked in order to receive the necessary information. All analysed calls come from the last decade, so the years 2012–2020. Firstly, they were listened to in full so as to judge how much efficient they had been. Secondly, a discourse analysis followed. Therefore, each transmission has been divided into chunks that correspond to the recommended parts of a given emergency call. Finally, the transmission structures by native speakers and non-native speakers have been compared in order to find out if English as a mother tongue influences the structure selection. These occurrences were categorised following the ICAO classification presented above.

Results

In order to answer the questions in the introduction, we have to compare a recommended communication model with the use of emergency calls in real, naturally occurring Aeronautical English. To carry out this comparison, we have to analyse the chunks of selected transmissions.

First, we can notice some inconsistencies with the accepted model in each of the randomly selected distress calls. Comments are provided in square brackets.

Example 1:
A pilot, native speaker (NS) of English, declares emergency: *MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY* [proper order, repeated 3 times]*, Boston* [proper order]*, Virgin 138M* [proper order] *is maintaining FL280* [position, level or heading should be provided after the description of emergency]. *We have smoke in the cabin, stand by for further instructions* [*sic* the pilot should say 'intentions' as 'instructions' are only given by controllers] ... *requesting descent to Boston* [pilot's intention]*, please*.

The pilot adds the following message later when the situation allows him to do so: *We had a seat fire in the back. We will require fire service on landing, please*.

This message has been understood by a controller, a native speaker of English, though there are slight violations of the recommended order. Due to stress, even a NS can confuse some expressions, e.g. 'instructions' instead of 'intentions'.

Example 2:
A pilot, native speaker (NS) of English, declares emergency: *Speedbird* [aircraft identification should follow a distress call declaration]*, MAYDAY MAYDAY* [should be first, repeated only 2 times], [no name of ground station provided because the aircraft is on the ground, so it is not necessary].

Speedbird 2276, request fire services [the pilot does not provide any description of emergency as requesting fire services indicates a fire on board]. Being sure, the fire services are on their way, he adds later: *We are evacuating on the runway…*

It looks like in this case there was no time for emergency details due to the spreading fire aboard, so the pilot decided to order his emergency call according to his common sense as the situation was critical: who – problem – intention. Also in this case, the message was successful.

Example 3:
A pilot, non-native speaker (NNS) of English, declares emergency: *MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY,* [the aircraft is on the ground, so no need for the name of station], *Air France 023 heavy* [proper order]*, we are on taxiway A, we have fumes on board, request fire services and we maintain position.*

In this case the pilot provides his position first and then describes the emergency and requests assistance, indicating his action as well. Though here we can talk about a slight violation of the required distress call order, we can admit that the provided message is logical and clear and includes all crucial elements of this type of call. A controller (NS) asks again for the pilot's request, probably due to the pilot's strong French accent, but this fact does not cause any miscommunication.

It looks like all the pilots transmitted the most crucial information first, bearing in mind at the same time the recommended order. All the distress calls presented above were short and to the point and did not impede the communication. However, native speakers tend to violate the requirements more than the non-native speaker, who was better at adapting to existing distress calls rules. The reason for such situations may be the fact that Aeronautical English is not natural for general English native users or the fact that NSs do not practise such linguistic behaviour on a regular basis.

Second, urgency calls presented below have been selected at random according to the same criteria as for the distress calls study. Again, we can notice some inconsistencies with the accepted model in each of the transmissions. Comments are also provided in square brackets.

Example 4:

A pilot, native speaker of English, declares emergency: *Edmonton* [a violated order, this information should be mentioned later]*, Air Canada 329, PAN PAN / PAN PAN / PAN PAN* [this phrase should be the first one as it gives a controller more time for understanding a non-routine situation], *we have lost our normal breaking, we still have alternate braking and we'll be landing on 30 shortly* [intention]*, we'd like trucks available on arrival* [request].

The message has been understood by the controller. He also asks follow-up questions. No problems with message comprehension.

Example 5:

A pilot, native speaker of English, declares emergency: *This is a PAN PAN / PAN PAN* [repeated twice]. *Qantas 7335 is descending to FL200* [the flight level information should go after the description of emergency].

Suddenly, the pilot changes the previous urgency call into a distress call as the situation requires a priority (we can also hear clearly that the pilot has problems with breathing)*: MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY, Quantas 7335, we have emergency declared*. *We have a pressure issue. We're descending*.

The message is clear and short. A controller asks the pilot about further intentions. The pilot requests the altitude and medical services, but is not sure about his intentions at the moment of speaking and needs more time to think them over.

Example 6:

A pilot, non-native speaker of English, declares urgency: *PAN PAN PAN* [not a full message, but it does not impede the understanding], [no name of the station], *TAM8078 heavy, we need to go around due to a malfunction, we'll call you for a return* [no exact problem indicated, so a controller has to ask for it].

The pilot seems to be in a hurry, but actually she does not gain any time not specifying the nature of an emergency as the controller asks many follow-up questions because he wants to be sure if the emergency can be classified as an urgency call (priority over others!): *TAM8078 heavy, I'm sorry, say again…and state the nature of your problem.* The pilot answers: *…problem with the gear. Stand by*. Definitely, such tendencies are not welcome during the transmission of emergency calls.

The study shows that not only NS, but also NNS tend to shorten the urgency calls and they do not always follow the recommended order. The reason can be classified again as a human factor. Now, the first research question can be answered:
What is the current condition of distress and urgency calls in the real life environment?

Although the ICAO recommendations for the structure of distress and urgency calls are not always met, it seems that nowadays there are not numerous critical miscommunication issues and that the controllers (NS in our study) are able to figure out the proper meaning of phrases, asking for specific information in accordance with an aviation rule – ask when in doubt. Admittedly, NS should especially follow the best practices in order to meet the conditions of coded communication. After the study, it becomes clear that real-world, naturally occurring discourse is more densely packed with shortened messages rather than with the recommended ICAO model with its seven points not easy to refer to when facing a real emergency. This may simply reflect the likelihood that Aeronautical English used in emergency situations is not likely to include the exact order of an emergency call (e.g. because of a high influence of human factor).

The main aim of this study was also to provide some guidelines in the improvement of aeronautical communication in the aspect of distress and urgency calls transmission. Therefore, the other research question – *How to improve emergency calls?* can be answered now. Following the ICAO recommendations, we will discuss the observations made during the course of the presented study referring again to parameters suggested:

ICAO parameter	*research observations*
3x MAYDAY / 3x PAN PAN	OBLIGATORY. However, the study showed that repeating the coded phrases 3 times does not always work, but this fact does not impede communication. Therefore, we can assume that due to background noises and the nature of radiotelephony communication, it is not recommended to say the MAYDAY or PAN PAN only once, however, twice seems to be fine when a pilot is really pressed for time. No problems were observed in this context.
name of ground station or ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS	It is recommended only for airborne aircraft; when on the ground, no problems were observed when a pilot omitted this information.
aircraft identification	This is always OBLIGATORY, otherwise a pilot may lose time as a controller will ask about a callsign. It is better to say it before the description of an emergency.
description of the emergency	This is always OBLIGATORY, otherwise a pilot may lose time as a controller will ask about the nature of emergency. A controller must be sure before giving a priority to the aircraft.
intention(s) of the pilot	Some pilots do not specify their intentions in the first message as they may need more time for their decisions. A pilot should be ready to do so. A controller can always ask or remind a pilot about the intentions when in doubt.
position, level and heading	This is OBLIGATORY, but it can be provided earlier if it is important for a given emergency and a pilot should mention only the crucial data in a given situation (to save time).
other information	A pilot decides about any other useful information. A controller asks about it later if an emergency allows him to do so.

Table 1. Parameters of Emergency Calls in Real-Life.

Additionally, it is worth recalling that best practices show that all participants of aeronautical discourse should use proper aviation terminology correctly articulated. The best method to communicate in the high-risk environment is to avoid inconsistencies, maintain radio silence when others transmit emergency calls and remember that there is only one language of aviation

– English. To this end, all the aeronautical discourse participants, regardless of their nationalities, will benefit from this situation. Improvements in question may be practically introduced by acts of teaching or building pilots' awareness among NNS as well as NS.

Conclusions

In this paper it has been analysed how transmissions of distress and urgency calls are dealt with in real-life aeronautical situations. The analysis was carried out with a view to estimating the chances of transmitting the distress and urgency calls according to a required model. We might speculate that all users of Aeronautical English may have developed a heightened awareness of the significance of a language/tool they use. In our context communication itself is a kind of linguistic behaviour because during radiotelephony communications controllers steer an aircraft only by the power of their words. That means that every piece of advice is a particular speech act (Sahliger & Renn, 2013, p.137).

The MAYDAY call means that pilots face an imminent danger. Given that a real situation will be stressful, it is unlikely that a call will be perfect. However, it is important that a pilot tries to include as much useful information as they can and for ease of understanding, in the correct order if time permits. Additionally, the more of the required items a pilot can pass to the controllers initially, the less likely they are to interrupt the pilot at an awkward moment to obtain the missing information (Hughes and Pooley, 2014).

Interestingly, Tavlin (2019, p. 6) compares the message to ammunition and adds that all the ammunition in the world will not help if one cannot aim and shoot. Everyone has a different level of communication skill strength, so it is a good idea to practice the delivery of any message.

The research shows that currently most aeronautical discourse participants follow the accepted standards in a more or less consistent manner that can avoid communication problems. The vast majority of encounters with the transmission of emergency calls in aviation that we have looked at are 'incidental', in the sense that their structures do not follow a very strict order, but rather the general aim of passing the emergency message in as short and clear a form as is possible. It is crucial to follow common sense when transmitting emergency calls, especially when there is a threat to life. The call must be understandable and it must include at least four obligatory elements recommended by this analysis in order to achieve an unambiguous conversation. Standard phraseology and all communications procedures indicated above may help to compensate for potential ambiguity of context inherent in pilot-controller radio communication even when English is used (*Flight Safety Foundation* 2000, p. 4).

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